

Traveler Information “Meet and Greet” Summary Meeting Notes

December 2, 2014

Next Quarterly Traveler Information Meeting:

TBD in 2015

Action Items:

- Caltrans will hold Routes of Significance (RoS) Focus Group Meeting to discuss the criteria and answer questions.
- Caltrans will distribute the 2014 Real-Time System Management Information Program (RTSMIP) compliance report to all agencies.
- Caltrans will schedule the next quarterly Traveler Information meeting, target March 2015.
- Caltrans will determine if Traveler Information representatives will attend annual Intelligent Transportation Society of California (ITS-CA) meeting and hold breakout sessions.
- Agencies participating in the RoS effort will review criteria for designating RoS for the focus group meeting.
- Caltrans will develop a process for adding RoS at a later date.

Decision Points:

- RoS are due to Caltrans April 10, 2015. Caltrans collects and provides the information to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) in the 2016 RTSMIP report.
 - Specific questions regarding federal regulation 23 CFR 511 are directed to FHWA contact Kevin Korth: (916) 498-5860 kevin.d.korth@dot.gov.
 - Caltrans and Traveler Information team agree to meet face-to-face once a year and will meet face-to-face in the next six or seven months.
 - Caltrans and Traveler Information team agree to quarterly teleconference or WebEx conferences.
 - Caltrans and Traveler Information team agree to hold additional focus group meetings as necessary.
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Introductions

- 1) James Anderson – Chief, Office of Traffic Management, Caltrans
 - a. Called meeting to order; agency identifications.
 - b. Caltrans is reinventing itself and has new mission and vision statements.
 - c. Traveler Information is interwoven into Caltrans’ business plan.
 - d. Caltrans is committed to conducting Traveler Information quarterly meetings and face-to-face meetings.
- 2) Jennifer Ashby-Camp – Traveler Information Coordinator, Caltrans
 - a. Presented agenda overview and introduced Larry Wooster, Chief, Transportation Management Center (TMC) Operations & Incident Management, Caltrans.
 - b. Caltrans recently submitted the 2014 RTSMIP compliance report in November to FHWA to meet the federal requirements in 23 CFR 511. Caltrans received a conformance letter from FHWA demonstrating Caltrans is in compliance.

511 Traveler Information Status Updates Statewide

- 3) Derrick Fesler – Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC)
 - a. For the past several months, MTC has been working on the next generation planning for 511 and developing what the future of 511 will be for the Bay Area.

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- b. Another large project is roadway expansion coverage of the current network that is reported on the traffic page. The project looks to expand those roadways that are covered to include some of the roadways in the southern part of the Bay Area, such as express lanes and also a few arterials.
 - c. James Anderson clarified the 2014 RTSMIP compliance report focused on interstate highways only. The next step for the 2016 RTSMIP report is for Caltrans to work with the agencies to identify non-interstate roadways to be included in the RTSMIP. This is in line with the work MTC is doing to expand their coverage area to non-interstate roadways.
- 4) Mark Heiman – Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG)
- a. The Sacramento 511 system covers a good portion of the counties of Placer, El Dorado and San Joaquin. SACOG is also working with the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) to cover that area.
 - b. SACOG is in the process of automating the methodology to load all local area routes. The majority of the routes were already in the system and work is being done to fill in the last few minor holes.
 - c. The National Weather Service (NWS) feeds are now online and automatically implemented into the system.
 - d. The new Interactive Voice Response (IVR) platform is fully operational with customized user information availability.
- 5) Stephanie Hicks – San Luis Obispo Council of Governments (SLOCOG)
- a. The 511 phone system is operational and there is also an online, web-based real-time traffic tool as well as a recently built multi-modal trip planning tool.
 - b. The 511 website was just upgraded and re-launched and is run out of the rideshare program at www.rideshare.org (ITS department at rideshare is slightly less robust).
 - c. SLOCOG is working with QuickMap provided by Caltrans to implement real-time traffic data, construction and California Highway Patrol (CHP) feeds online.
 - d. There was previously an IVR phone tree system but it is no longer available as funding continues to be an issue with the 511 system. There is not a lot of traffic congestion in San Luis Obispo and the feeling in the area is 511 is not necessarily a tool that will be widely used.
 - e. SLOCOG is preparing to launch a big marketing campaign for the 511 system in this region.
- 6) Scott Aaron – Placer County Transportation Planning Agency (PCTPA)
- a. Placer County is part of a larger six county region and SACOG implements the 511 system for this area.
- 7) Kali Fogel – Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (LACMTA)
- a. Kali works on the Regional Integration of Intelligent Transportation Systems (RIITS) program. LACMTA recently signed an agreement with Waze to get Waze incident data statewide. LACMTA is working to see how the data will be used and also looking at how to give this data to their partners in the future. This agreement differs from previous RIITS agreements because Waze requires a sub-license agreement to access the data.

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- 8) Iain Fairweather – Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (LACMTA)
 - a. Iain works with the 511 program. LACMTA is in a similar place as MTC and is exploring the next generation of 511 and hopes to have it in place in the next 18-24 months. LACMTA is looking to incorporate some of the Waze data into the 511 system along with updated mapping information. One million dollars of improvements are planned on the 511 system in the next six months in order to have multi-modal trip planning, an updated mapping system and updates to the mobile applications.
 - b. LACMTA received a grant from the Veterans Administration to add a veteran’s component to the 511 system and launched this one-click shop on Veteran’s Day. It offers information on transportation to VA hospitals, housing, finance etc and is a closed network providing anything a veteran may need after returning from overseas.

- 9) Tegan Speiser – Santa Cruz County Transportation Commission (SCCRTC)
 - a. SCCRTC completed a 511 feasibility study and implementation plan using Caltrans’ planning grant which provided a road map to implementing 511 in the region.
 - b. SCCRTC is currently in the process of implementing the 511 program and the expected launch is the first quarter of 2015.
 - c. Currently available resources are being utilized to implement the program such as Caltrans’ QuickMap with the Google Application Programming Interface (API) and various layers and Google multi-modal trip planning.
 - d. All of the service oriented aspects of the agency such as rideshare and other resources having to do with bikes and so forth are being rebranded Cruz511.

- 10) James Dreisbach-Towle – San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG)
 - a. SANDAG has had a 511 system with phone and web since 2008.
 - b. A mobile application for both Android and iPhone was launched earlier this year.
 - c. SANDAG is currently upgrading the system to a new vendor with changes to include personalization, route choices and a multi-modal trip planner for solo, carpooling and vanpooling transit. The new phone and web system will launch at the end of this month.

- 11) Becky Napier – Kern Council of Governments (KCOG)
 - a. KCOG has had an IVR and web based 511 system up and running for about two years.
 - b. KCOG is currently marketing to attract more users by putting up billboards over the holidays.
 - c. User feedback on the 511 system has been positive to date.

- 12) Yvette Davis – San Joaquin Council of Governments (SJCOG)
 - a. SJCOGs 511 system is part of SACOGs 511 system.
 - b. Independently of SACOG, SJCOG is in the process of developing a multi-modal trip planner.
 - c. Per James Anderson, Caltrans would be interested in learning more about multi-modal trip planning. Integration and sustainability are part of Caltrans’ new mission statement

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and part of that is to provide real-time traveler information and incorporate other modes of transportation in a timely manner.

13) Kelly Lynn – San Bernardino Associated Governments (SANBAG)

- a. SANBAG works closely with the Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC) who manages the 511 program for SANBAG. San Bernardino and Riverside comprise a huge region and there are a number of areas without loop detectors due to construction; therefore, real-time traffic information is not provided. SANBAG has been working with Caltrans and RCTC and has executed a contract with NAVTEQ to provide additional real-time traffic information. An upcoming meeting is scheduled with NAVTEQ which should provide more information on when the currently unrepresented routes will have data available to commuters. One of the problems SANBAG has been struggling with is the lack of real-time traffic information that leaves commuters unaware of current traffic conditions.
- b. Another enhancement that is being rolled out for the 511 system is incorporating rideshare Inland Empire (IE) Commuter to make the 511 system more of a one-stop place. On IE511, you can now do your ridesharing, ride matching, transit matching etc in one place.
- c. SANBAG is making a similar effort to LACMTA and has joined forces with VetLink which will be like a one-stop shop for veterans in the IE.

14) Jenny Herrera – San Bernardino Associated Governments (SANBAG)

- a. The 511 program was rolled out in 2010 and has an IVR and website. Over the years a fully functional app was released for Android and iPhone. There is also a Facebook account and a Twitter account with a couple thousand followers.
- b. The stats have remained pretty stable over the years with approximately 400,000 website hits per month. There have been more website hits than IVR which saves money per phone call and emphasis has been given to using the app.
- c. Per Kelly Lynn, there is a “Know Before You Go” marketing campaign for safety reasons to encourage users to avoid looking at the phone while driving. The campaign seems to be working given the increased website hits versus IVR calls.
- d. James Anderson inquired if the rideshare program being rolled out has designated points for people to meet for ridesharing such as park and ride lots. Per Kelly Lynn, these areas have not been designated and there are internal discussions as requests have been received for these areas. One of the major concerns with areas like this is the liability to the government agency. At this time a user can set up a personalized rideshare site on the website.
- e. Per Larry Wooster, is NAVTEQ data probe data, cellular data temporary detection? SANBAG is unsure of the type of data but NAVTEQ recently changed their name to HERE.

15) Robert Yates – Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC)

- a. HERE data is cell phone probe data.

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- b. SANBAG mainly covered the 511 updates. There is no direct interface with VetLink as the site is not yet live. Currently there is a static page but in the future there will be a direct interface into the database.

Contact Confirmation

16) Jennifer Ashby-Camp

- a. 511 and RoS contacts were confirmed for each agency; a contact list will be provided.

Next Steps and RoS Criteria

17) James Anderson and Larry Wooster

- a. On October 20th, Caltrans submitted a report to FHWA for interstate highways demonstrating compliance in four critical areas: construction activities, roadway or lane blocking incidents, roadway weather observations and travel time information. Our points of compliance were primarily the databases, and Caltrans was required to describe monitoring and reporting on all four provisions with 85% accuracy and 90% availability.
- b. James requested Jennifer provide all agencies with the 2014 RTSMIP compliance report which is also posted on Caltrans’ intranet on the Traveler Information page. FHWA sent Caltrans a letter of conformance for the 2014 RTSMIP compliance report along with an observation and recommendation.
- c. Caltrans met with FHWA last week regarding the 2016 RTSMIP report. FHWA expects a report in 2016 which is very similar to what was submitted for the 2014 requirement for all designated RoS.
- d. The question was asked to clarify the availability of the data in the Commercial Wholesale Web Portal (CWWP) or on QuickMap to achieve compliance. James explained the federal regulations require Caltrans to have databases established for the four provisions for traffic and travel monitoring and reporting. The CWWP is where the information is housed and made available to the public; this was not a point of compliance. For construction activities, Caltrans uses the Lane Closure System (LCS), which is the database to house highway lane closures, and this is the point of compliance. This information is available more than 90% of the time and Caltrans runs reports to show the data is 85% accurate.
- e. The question was asked if LCS data is available to the public more than 85% of the time through some outlet, or if it lies purely on Caltrans’ internal database. James explained it is in the CWWP and shown on QuickMap. There are two types of reports Caltrans considers when looking at LCS: status reports and planned lane closures. If a lane closure is planned but does not actually get implemented, that is not included in the report to FHWA. When Caltrans plans a lane closure, it does not get entered onto QuickMap. The public never sees this planned lane closure. When looking at Caltrans’ ability to status planned lane closures, once the cone is placed (1097) and picked up (1098) within the specified time frame, than the reporting meets the required accuracy level. Caltrans does not report on planned work that is not completed.

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- f. A problem with this was posed as many 511 systems look at, for example, a closure scheduled for that evening, but it is unknown if the cone is going to be placed until after the fact. If the 511 center closes at 10 p.m., the cone may not get placed until 11 p.m., or not at all. In this case what is being reported are the closures that are currently lifted, whether or not it happened, as there is no way of knowing late into the night if the closure happened because the 511 center was closed. James explained Caltrans is working on a mobile app that enables contractors and Caltrans’ staff to status lane closures in a more timely fashion. Larry clarified the criteria for reporting the lane closure status is only for what is on the ground. The data point the agencies need to be tapping is the CWWP. When Caltrans starts statusing in LCS through the mobile app, the TMC will not be aware and there is no input point at the TMC; the information feeds directly into the CWWP.
- g. April 10, 2015 is a critical milestone. Caltrans needs the proposed RoS and strategic plan explaining how reporting requirements are met with 85% accuracy and 90% availability for each RoS by this date. These points of compliance apply to all four provisions. Caltrans developed the criteria that must be met by this date.
- h. The question was asked if the locals were involved in developing the criteria. James explains this information was shared with the locals in February 2013 and the locals had input. FHWA’s expectation is that Caltrans collects the information from the agencies and shares the report with FHWA. In order to do this, a standard needed to be set for how the information was received and reported.
- i. Larry shares the example of proposing Highway 50 as a RoS in the Sacramento area. For construction activities, Caltrans has the construction data activity for state highways. For an arterial, the agency needs to have a system in place for how work zones are fed to the agency and pushed to Caltrans within the specified timelines. James explains the proposed route has to have detection of some sort and agencies must be collecting the data for a proposed RoS. If the agency is planning to do this, it is probably not a good idea to designate the RoS at this time. Keep in mind the points of compliance for the four reporting provisions when proposing RoS.
- j. The question was asked why an agency might designate a RoS, what potential benefits may exist and what would be required to add a RoS at a later time. Caltrans defers to FHWA on regulation specific questions and recommends contacting Kevin Korth directly: (916) 498-5860 kevin.d.korth@dot.gov. Performance measures were supposed to come out in December and will probably come out in February 2015; there may be performance measures regarding congestion and travel time.
- k. The agencies were asked for feedback regarding the April 10, 2015 deadline. SACOG agreed the date is obtainable and data can be provided for the Sacramento area 511 system, but there are further technical questions to be handled at a future meeting. Larry clarified Caltrans needs to have the data in XML format in real-time within 10 minutes for urban areas and 20 minutes for rural areas to get information to the public. The CWWP is the data point for the public. Once the data is delivered to Caltrans and is in the CWWP, Caltrans handles the remainder of the reporting requirements. James explained that for 2016, Caltrans needs an explanation of how the data is 85% accurate and how the systems are available 90% of the time. Once Caltrans has access to the data,

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the reporting requirement is met. To establish the program per federal regulations, Caltrans also needs written descriptions discussing accuracy and availability.

- l. Larry explained Caltrans is in compliance for incidents because as soon as a 911 call comes in, the CHP inputs the data into the Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD) and Caltrans’ system pulls the information out from the Media CAD side. Depending on the scrub rate for the CWWP and interfacing with the CAD, the data is available within minutes at the most. If the incidents are coming to the 511 system through a 911 phone call to the CHP, then the agency is in compliance. If the information is going to a local 911 outside of the CHP, then Caltrans does not receive this data and the agency would need to provide the data source.
- m. Per James, if the majority of the agencies decide not to designate RoS at this time, FHWA has made it clear Caltrans needs to have a process for adding routes at a later date which can be discussed at future meetings.
- n. A follow-up meeting is requested with Caltrans to discuss the criteria, RoS and the process in more detail.

Adjourn

18) James Anderson

- a. April 10, 2015 is the critical date to take away from the meeting. Caltrans is willing to provide assistance regarding designating RoS.
- b. Caltrans will be in touch in the next month and a half regarding a focus meeting for RoS.
- c. Caltrans will follow-up this quarterly traveler information with future quarterly teleconferences or WebEx conferences. There was concern regarding new information becoming available too close to the next quarterly meeting and Caltrans agrees to hold additional focus meetings as necessary.
- d. Caltrans and the agencies agree to face-to-face meetings once a year, possibly in the next six to seven months. It was proposed to include 511 in the annual ITS conference and hold face-to-face break-out sessions as a way for the team to meet once a year.