

Media Coop Minutes – January 15, 2004
Virginia Tech Transportation Institute

Members Present:

Shelly Alley, Roanoke Police
Lindsey Nair, The Roanoke Times
Kathy Laskowski, VTTI
David Cooper, VSP
Tom Foster, VSP
Laird Manlove, Crime Line
Mike Stater, VDH
Kimberly Ortiz, Channel 7
Jennifer Faulkner, Roanoke Fire-EMS
Marty Gordon, WFNR Radio
Joseph Zagraban, Radford AAP
Joy Case, Radford AAP
Mike Green, Salem Police
Ray Clark, Salem Police
Robin Lindner, WSLs
Rachel DePompa, WDBJ
Jason Bond, VDOT

Welcome – Shelly Alley and Lindsey Nair welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were conducted.

VTTI and Smart Road Presentation –

Tim Martin, VDOT Smart Travel Coordinator, opened the presentation. He spoke about the Variable Message signs.

He explained the Message Priority – High to Low

- 1 – Road Closed
- 2 – Lane Closed
- 3 – Weather Advisory
- 4 – General Advisory
- 5 – Test message

The signs alert motorists to sudden changes in travel conditions, such as accidents, disabled vehicles, flooding, special event traffic, maintenance activities, construction, sudden change in weather conditions and Amber Alert and Ozone Action Day. The basic message content alerts motorists to the what, where and effect of the situation. The messages are two frames or less. VDOT can determine the best sign to use based on the information provided. To activate a variable message sign, contact VTTI: at 540-231-1596 or 540-231-1519. Hazard Advisory Radio will be launched this spring.

Kathy Laskowski shared information on the 511 system. Information is captured from CAD and once an accident occurs and is verified, the information is put on the system through phone, internet and email. The system has been live for one year.

Stephanie Baker shared results from a survey that was conducted rating the performance of the system from 8/14/01 – 1/31/04. The coverage area is the interstate and primary roads within the Staunton, Salem and Bristol Districts. The survey showed that there was a 19% awareness in the coverage area. A full report will be available in June.

VTTI is a multi-faceted testing center. There is a hardware and electronics lab. The smart road currently consists of a 2.2 mile section of testing. Cameras will be placed along Interstate 81, between exits 140 – 152 to get traffic and speed data.

A tour of the facility was conducted and more questions were answered for the group.

Recent Items of Incidents of Discussion –

The group discussed ways in which the media can get basic information during the nighttime hours when PIOs are not on duty. The media requested to be notified when the PIOs are out of town and who to contact. Salem Police shared that they have numerous promotions and there are various new contacts.

The next meeting will be March 18th at the Roanoke Times and will include a tour of the new press.