

Security Planning

Background

SAFETEA-LU added planning for security as a integrated long range plan element, highlighting the increased emphasis placed on transportation system security. All projects listed in this plan have been reviewed to determine their potential to improve the security of the transportation system.

Though the MPO is not involved in specific security or emergency planning activities, CHATS communicates with the SCDOT, SC Department of Public Safety, the local emergency management and law enforcement agencies, and local engineering officials. Emergency personnel have been consulted to comment on transportation plans and projects with the intention of developing a transportation system that is as secure as possible.

Existing Conditions

Intelligent Transportation Systems

Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) cameras allow officials to monitor activity along Interstates within the region. Law enforcement and/or emergency personnel can be dispatched if an emergency is spotted. Dynamic Message Boards located along interstates and major highways throughout the region are capable of displaying emergency information such as weather warnings, hazardous spill information, Amber alerts, or evacuation orders.

A permanent real-time Traffic Management Center has been constructed at the SCDOT District 6 office in North Charleston. The center is staffed throughout the day to monitor traffic flow and incidents that disrupt traffic progression. Using the cameras installed along I-26 and I-526, staff can dispatch emergency response personnel more quickly, minimizing congestion and delays. As the cameras and signal systems are networked across the region, signal timing plans can be adjusted from the Traffic Management Center to respond to conditions in real -time. A Signal System Master Plan is under development using CHATS funding.

The SCDOT Incident Response vehicles provide incident response services along area interstates and routine surveillance of bridges and overpasses, keeping a look out for suspicious activity or disabled vehicles. The incident response truck operators are able to contact law enforcement or emergency personnel if needed.

Public Transit

Since the recent national focus on security, efforts to enhance security have reached a new level of importance. The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) has undertaken a series of major steps to

help local transit providers prepare against a variety of threats. Under the FTA Section 5307 program, one percent of the funding allocation must be spent on security enhancements, allowing an integration of security measures into transit operations. This continual emphasis on security, from capital procurement to hiring and training of employees, to the management of the agency, to the provision of service, is intertwined into daily activities. The security function is supported by emergency response plans, both to support resolution of those incidents that occur on transit property and those events that affect the surrounding community serviced by the agency.

Local transit providers have made great strides to strengthen security and emergency preparedness. Local transit providers are a critical transportation link everyday and during an incident. CARTA has prepared a security risk assessment and is taking steps to implement the findings by developing security and emergency response plans, training drivers and supervisors, and coordinating with local emergency management services. Security is being considered proactively in all plans or projects being developed rather than added as an afterthought.

Basic goals of transit agencies in regards to safety and security include:

- Being prepared for and well-protected against attacks;
- Being able to respond rapidly and effectively to natural and human-caused threats and disasters;
- Being able to appropriately support the needs of emergency management and public safety agencies; and
- Being able to quickly and efficiently be restored to full capability

While local transit agencies have embraced the need to update safety and security throughout their systems, there are relatively few funds to help pay for these programs. Capital expenses can slowly be absorbed through the regular improvement plans. As older vehicles are replaced, the fleet can be upgraded to include new security features, such as equipping vehicles with GPS locating devices, further enhancing the safety and security of the system. However, it would take years to turn over the entire fleet without some additional financial assistance.

Freight Movement

Trucking

The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) administers the Hazmat Threat Assessment Program, which obtains background and security checks on drivers of commercial vehicles transporting hazardous materials. In addition, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) has initiated several programs aimed at protecting against terrorists using commercial trucks as weapons or targets. Their top priority is dealing with trucks that carry hazardous materials.

Rail

The TSA has developed a series of voluntary freight rail security action items that should be considered when security plans are developed. The action items address system security, access control, and en-route security.

Air and Port Traffic

The TSA has new air cargo regulations in place that includes canine teams, site and onboard inspections, and physical screening of cargo as well as security and background checks of pilots, employees, and cargo carriers. The TSA is also responsible for air passenger security.

Bridges and Coastal Security

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the US Coast Guard are responsible for monitoring bridges and coastal waterways along the coast of South Carolina. These agencies ensure that these facilities are operating in a secure manner.

Security Planning Progress

The Strategic Highway Safety Plan in South Carolina establishes a framework for a systematic, statewide, multi-agency effort to improve the management of highway incidents- crashes, disabled and abandoned vehicles, debris in the roadway, work zones, adverse weather, and other events and emergencies that impact the transportation system.

The Department of Homeland Security administers the Targeted Infrastructure Protection Program, which in 2005 allocated \$365 million to rail, port, and inter-city bus security, and highway watch and buffer zone protection programs. The program remains active today through its strategic implementation plan, annual performance reviews of the USDOT as federal agency, and integration into other funding sources within the USDOT.

Interagency Consultation

The MPO has sought input from coordinating agencies and their comments have been incorporated into this chapter. The MPO will continue to engage emergency and law enforcement personnel in transportation planning activities. In addition, emergency management agencies have coordinated on critical link facilities, such I-26, in the event of an earthquake event. CHATS staff has recently collaborated with the County Local Emergency Planning Committees (LEPCs), who were established to monitor hazardous materials sites and transporters under the USDOT Pipeline and Hazardous Material Safety Administration (PHMSA).

LRTP and TIP Project Selection

Projects benefiting the security goals of the LRTP will be given consideration for inclusion in the Plan. CHATS requires that all parties pursuing projects funded with federal funds show how the project meets the goals and objectives of this plan, including Security.