

## **Meeting Summary**

Following is a summary of the issues discussed at the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) – State Highway Administration (SHA) StateStat meeting on December 14, 2011. Analysis is provided by StateStat.

### **Updates**

- **Melinda Peters Appointed SHA Administrator.** Governor O'Malley has appointed Melinda Peters to lead SHA, its first female administrator. For the past six years, Ms. Peters has served as Director of the Inter-county Connector (ICC). In addition to leading the design and construction of the ICC, she played a key role in the development of the US 29 corridor improvements, the reconstruction of the I-270/MD 124 interchange, and the improvement of MD 212/Powder Mill Road. Peters joined SHA in 1995 as a project engineer in the Highway Design Division. She received her Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering from Virginia Tech University and earned a Masters in Business Administration from Mount Saint Mary's College.
- **BuildUP Program.** On December 7, SHA announced its *BuildUP* program, which is a commitment by the MDOT to contribute up to \$1 million to support On-the-Job Training programs in crafts relating to the transportation and highway construction industries. *BuildUP* will be accepting applications from December 15, 2011 to January 15, 2012 for classes starting in February 2012. The program complements and expands upon existing federal On-the-Job Training/Support Services programs, and SHA's *Ready-Set-Go* program, which started in 2011 with federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds. The panel discussed opportunities for SHA to collaborate with the Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation.
- **Special Legislative Audits.** The panel discussed the findings of the November 2011 Special Legislative Audit by the Office of Legislative Audits and followed up on the corrective measures articulated to address the June 2011 Special Legislative Audit. StateStat further discussed progress made to certify that former SHA employees are not working on SHA contracts within one year of leaving the agency and a new task order process to provide additional contract oversight by the agency.

### **Highway Accident Reporting Data**

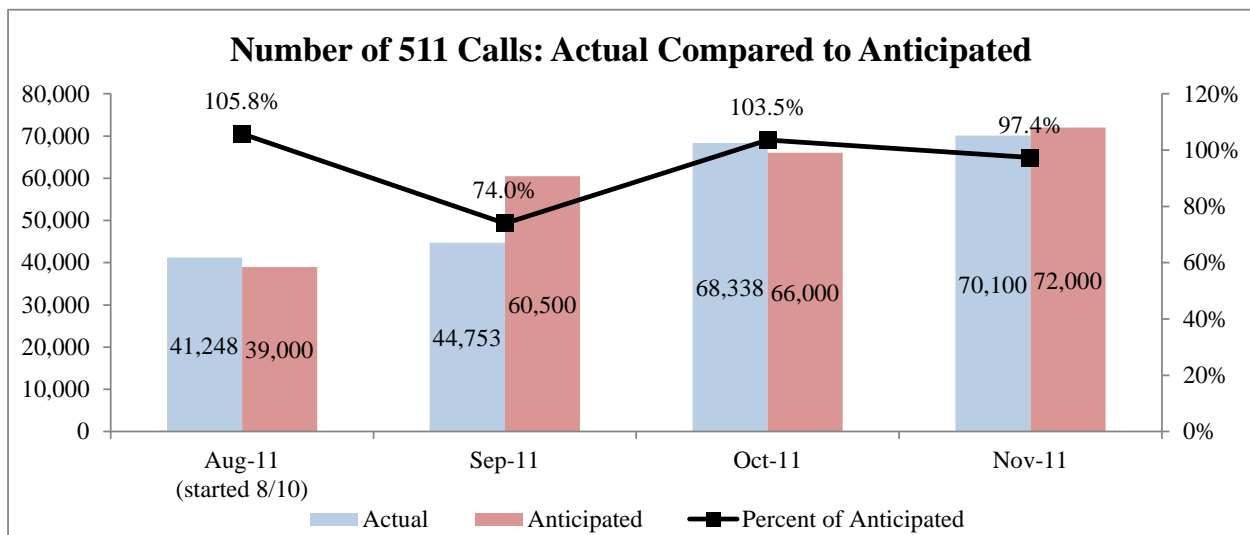
- **Automated Crash Reporting System (ACRS).** ACRS is an application that will allow accident reports to be submitted from a patrol car to the SHA database. As a prerequisite to utilization of the ACRS system, SHA must ensure that data can be transferred from Maryland State Police, which collects the data through accident reports, to SHA's system, and that live data can be satisfactorily processed by the system. The panel discussed progress made on the ACRS project and requested that the agency furnish StateStat with an update timeline.
- **Accident Reports Backlog.** At the September SHA StateStat, the agency indicated that elimination of the backlog of accident reports would be delayed beyond its initial goal of the end of October. State Highway had provided funding for full-time contractor support positions to assist State Police with data entry and expected funding for the positions to expire in mid-October. Utilizing an automated screening process, SHA reported that it was able to reduce the backlog of crashes to 934 records in November, below the level considered to be a current operating queue (1,000). With the Thanksgiving and winter holiday season, however, the agency expects the backlog to rise through the end of the calendar year.

## Automated Vehicle Locator (AVL) System and CHART cameras

- AVL Phase I.** The AVL project was divided into two phases to ensure that Phase I was completed as soon as possible. Phase I constitutes location-only AVL deployment to be used for vehicle tracking only. In the most recent template (October 2011), the agency reports that 96 percent of the SHA 918 vehicles slated for AVL have been equipped. The AVLS were operational for the October 29<sup>th</sup> and December 8<sup>th</sup> snow storms, which both blanketed parts of Maryland with nearly a foot of snow. The panel discussed the management benefits of the AVL system and SHA's improved ability to ensure that snow trucks are plowing the correct routes.

<b>Automated Vehicle Locator (AVL) System</b>					
	<b>Jun-11</b>	<b>Jul-11</b>	<b>Aug-11</b>	<b>Sep-11</b>	<b>Oct-11</b>
Percent of agency vehicles (918 units) that are AVL equipped	32%	42%	77%	91%	96%

- AVL communication and radio interference issues.** The agency reported that firmware updates, hot-fixes, and hard resets have resolved a modem lock-up issue previously identified. After investigating the reports of radio interference with the help of the vendor, SHA has concluded that the AVLS do not interfere with the two-way radios but do, in some specific trucks, interfere with the AM/FM radios. The AVL manufacturer has proposed a shielding solution that should eliminate the problem.
- Percent of operational CHART cameras.** Since June, the number of view-only cameras has remained constant, while the number of controllable cameras has increased from 237 to 249. As the CHART system has expanded, however, there has been a decline in the percent of cameras that are operational. The proportion of operational cameras reached a high point over the 2011 calendar year in April with 97.9 percent operational before declining to 90.2 percent in October 2011. The panel asked the agency to determine why the percent of operational cameras has been declined and update StateStat before its next Stat session.
- 511 Traveler Advisory Telephone System.** The 511 system is a public number designed to allow travelers easy access to travel related issues that covers Maryland, as well as D.C. and parts of Northern Virginia. SHA has also developed a website to accompany the phone number. The System went public on August 10, 2011 and had received nearly 250,000 cumulative calls by the end of November. The panel discussed funding for promotion of the 511 system and the correlation between particular events and 511 traffic.



## **Inter-County Connector**

- **Cracks in ICC Overpasses.** In October, state inspectors found hairline cracks in the supports of three bridges over the ICC. The cracks have been attributed to a deficiency in the steel reinforcement of the concrete in the pillar caps. As a temporary solution, the contractor has wrapped the caps in high-tension cables to prevent further cracking. In order to ensure long-term durability, however, a long-term solution is being devised that is likely to include reinforcement or rebuilding. The contractor will be responsible for the cost of the repairs. The panel requested that the agency provide StateStat with a timeline for approval of the designs for the repairs.

## **Highway Access Permits**

- **Access Permit Stakeholder Recommendations.** In June, the agency posted a status report updating progress on implementing 14 recommendations to improve the timeliness, predictability, consistency and transparency of the access permit process. The panel asked the agency when its next status report will be updated on the website, and discussed progress on establishing a triage process and an improved narrative to accompany permit application checklists.
- **Fast Track Eligible Projects.** At the July StateStat meeting, the panel asked the agency to identify how many current projects in process would qualify for Fast Track. The agency reported that there is a collection of projects that might qualify for the Fast Track process. The panel requested that SHA continue to work to identify Fast Track candidates and collaborate with the Department of Business and Economic Development to improve the state permit process.