

Three MDOT ITS Projects Designed in Record Time to Meet Stimulus Target

In an effort to secure stimulus funding, three large MDOT ITS projects were designed in record time to meet the "shovel ready" condition required by this legislation. As lawmakers in Washington began toiling over the stimulus package, MDOT set out to complete these three designs with a vision that related construction would not only create jobs for the numerous industries that fall under the ITS umbrella, but also provide a smarter and greener solution to address traffic management needs in Jackson, Hattiesburg and for the coastal communities along the Gulf.

The projects, detailed in the box on the following page, are by far the three largest ITS projects the Department has undertaken. "It is a testament to the dedication of our partner firms and agencies, along with MDOT staff, to have prepared and reviewed final design plans and specifications for these three projects in such a short time", said Mike Stokes, MDOT ITS Program Manager. "MDOT is committed to effectively using ITS technologies to improve travel in the state, and these projects are a reflection of that commitment."

The projects are meant to provide incident management for the areas as well as provide for greater capability in terms of hurricane evacuation and response. "Since Katrina, we know all too well the need for traffic management and coordination during hurricane evacuation and response", explains Mike Stokes. "Then, when Gustav hit, we were able to use the newly installed Jackson Dynamic Message Signs (DMS) and msTraffic web site to alert travelers before, during, and after the event, truly learning the value of our current ITS infrastructure and also identifying the needs. The three projects, along the Gulf, in Hattiesburg and Jackson, serve to meet both incident management and those identified hurricane response needs."

Of the three projects, it has been confirmed that the Hattiesburg Project will be funded through stimulus dollars.

Newsletter prepared by MDOT ITS Integrator Team

April 2009

NEWSLETTER

Working Together to Save Lives: MDOT Connects the State-wide Medical Center to the msTraffic Network

In the first project of its kind, MDOT has partnered with The Mississippi Statewide Medical Center, integrating the travel information resources of the state-wide msTraffic network with the state-wide medical emergency response system, Mississippi MED-COM.

The new partnership provides the MED-COM center with direct access to the most current travel information and control over MDOT's expanding traffic camera surveillance system. With an eye on the roadways in Mississippi, MED-COM center staff can better allocate resources, guide ambulances to emergency scenes and subsequently reaching medical facilities, and appropriately ascertain the need for air support. This allows the MED-COM center to more effectively provide emergency response throughout the state by providing for more timely medical response and communication.

The Mississippi MED-COM center is responsible for emergency response on a local, regional and state-wide level. The center coordinates with local emergency management agencies, disaster preparedness services, other hospitals and emergency responders in the event of a disaster or hazmat situation, during emergency referrals, and out of state transfers. The MED-COM center also facilitates multi-agency coordination and communication by creating the ability to cross patch between numerous radio frequency ranges and radio systems in support of emergency services in Mississippi. Having the latest msTraffic travel information available at the MED-COM center allows it to be efficiently shared with all statewide emergency medical agencies.

MED-COM center staff view the integration of the msTraffic Network as an extremely valuable resource in delivering medical emergency services to the public. Jonathan Wilson, clinical



The MED-COM Center & University of Mississippi Medical Center in Jackson, MS



msTraffic camera images at the MED-COM Center

- "Working Together" continued on Page 4

- "Stimulus Target" continued on Page 2

“Stimulus Target” continued

Gulf Coast Incident Management / Hurricane Response Project

- Dynamic Message Signs (DMS) prior to decision points on evacuation routes: I-10, I-110, US 49, US 607 and new US 67
- Full Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) and Radar Detection System (RDS) Coverage for operational use, to provide travel times (future), traffic flow conditions and streaming video to msTraffic.com
- Highway Advisory Radio (HAR) to provide detailed information
- Fiber optic communications to Gulf Regional Traffic Management Center (TMC) and DS3 communication link to State-wide TMC in Jackson
- Estimated Cost: \$11,400,000

Jackson Metro Incident Management II / Hurricane Response Project

- DMS prior to decision points for inbound and outbound traffic day-to-day and in support of hurricane evacuations in and around Jackson Metro Area: I-55, I-20, I-220, US-49
- Fiber optic communications infrastructure to all existing inbound DMS currently on leased lines
- Full RDS coverage and additional CCTV coverage to fill blind spots and in advance of DMS for operational use, to provide travel times (future), traffic flow conditions and streaming video to msTraffic.com
- Fiber optic communications to State-wide TMC in Jackson
- Estimated Cost: \$9,600,000

Hattiesburg Incident Management / Hurricane Response Project

- DMS prior to decision points on evacuation routes: US 49, US 98 and I-59
- CCTV and RDS prior to DMS locations and at major interchanges for operational use, to provide counts during major events, and streaming video to msTraffic.com
- Highway Advisory Radio to provide detailed information
- Fiber optic communications to Hattiesburg Regional TMC and DS3 communication link to State-wide TMC in Jackson
- Estimated Cost: \$4,800,000*

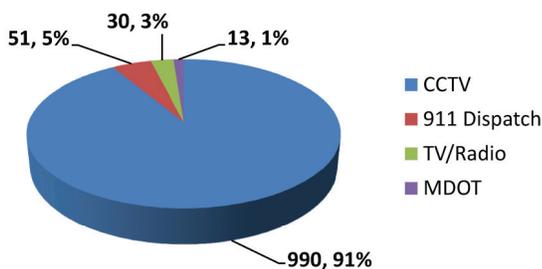
*Estimated Cost does not include contingency

Although it is still uncertain whether the other two projects will receive stimulus funds, Mike Stokes is hopeful that whichever funding mechanism is used the projects will come to fruition. “The State was only allotted a certain amount of funds which is only exceeded by its needs. I know that these projects represent MDOT’s goal of applying all tools at its disposal to increase the capacity of our existing interstates, and improve the quality of travel, both day-to-day and during major events. At its very core ITS is all about doing more with what you have - building smarter, operating greener. There is no question in my mind of the enormous benefit these projects will bring; I am hopeful that the projects will be built, be it sooner or later, through ARRA [American Recovery and Reinvestment Act] or other means.”

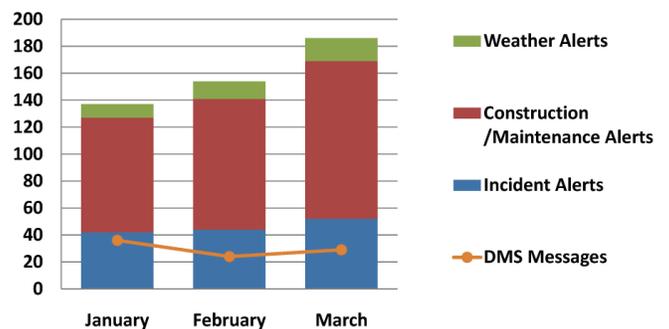


MDOT Statewide Traffic Management Center & msTraffic.com Quick-Stats

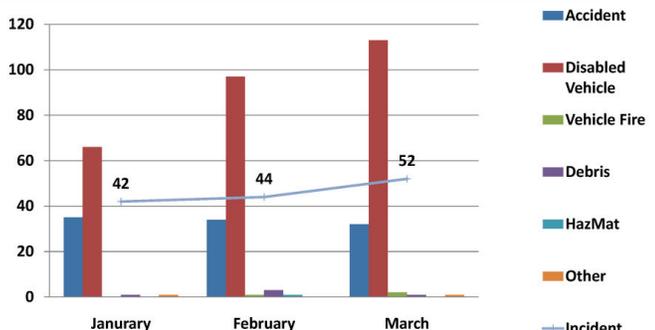
Incident Events by Detection Source August 2008 to March 2009



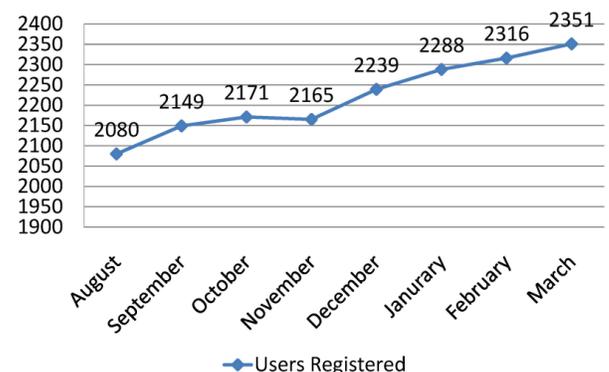
Total Alerts Issued by Type and DMS Messages Posted



Incident Events Managed and Incident Alerts Issued



Total msTraffic Users Registered for E-mail and/or Text Alerts



Note: If an Incident event is not affecting traffic an Incident Alert is not issued. Ex: A disabled vehicle may not require an alert. TMC Staff coordinate with various incident management partners to manage and clear incident events, regardless of whether an incident alert is issued.



Natchez Bridge Set to Get ITS Retrofit

The US 84 and 65 Mississippi River Bridges in Natchez, MS will get an ITS retrofit this year. MDOT made the decision to add ITS to the bridge aesthetic lighting project with the condition that the ITS portion could not delay the project further. Successful in this endeavor, the plans were completed and the project is scheduled to be let in May with the additional ITS elements. Devices and fiber will be added to the bridge structure and bridge approaches in Louisiana and Mississippi, serving important traffic management, security and regional connectivity functions.

Closed circuit television (CCTV) cameras and video detection systems (VDS) are to be installed for the purpose of monitoring vehicular traffic on the bridge and barge traffic below. Fiber optic backbone cable will run the length of the bridge, from Mississippi to Louisiana, providing the necessary infrastructure for center-to-center communications across state lines.

The CCTVs will be monitored from the statewide traffic management center in Jackson and alerts of incidents occurring on or near the bridge will be posted on msTraffic.com and sent to subscribers of this free service. In addition, once connections to the bridge backbone fiber are made between MDOT and LADOTD, traffic data statewide may be shared between the two entities. "This connection is just another step toward our goal to develop a regional system," explains Mike Stokes, MDOT ITS Program Manager. "It will allow for seamless coordination and the ability to better manage traffic during major events and incidents affecting our two states."

Bank Robber Caught Thanks to Partnership Between Southaven PD & MDOT NW Regional TMC

The co-location of the MDOT Northwest Regional Traffic Management Center with the Southaven Police Department proved its merit this quarter as Southaven Police were able to use MDOT traffic cameras, controllable from the center, to track and capture a bank robbery suspect.

Minutes after the 911 call was made from the Trustmark Bank, located at the corner of Goodman Road and Airways Boulevard, police were able to locate and apprehend the suspect with the use of MDOT's traffic cameras. Police Chief Tom Long said dispatchers at the center were able to use the cameras to locate the suspect's vehicle, a silver Ford Taurus, and determine the direction it was heading. "By the time (the suspect) got to Stateline Road, five or six cars were waiting on him," explained Long.

"We have a responsibility to the citizens of the state to coordinate with other agencies . . ."



John Gilligan, MDOT Statewide TMC Manager, said that he is pleased that this partnership has proven to be a benefit to Southaven Law Enforcement. "As we continue to expand our traffic incident management role, and in turn better serve Mississippians by keeping them informed of real-time traffic conditions, we continue to look for and really depend on our law enforcement partners. We have a responsibility to the citizens of the state to coordinate with other agencies as it allows us to keep the public better informed of incidents, clear incidents from roadways more quickly, and keep Mississippi roads safe. Although it is not our goal to catch criminals, we are pleased that this partnership has allowed both agencies the means necessary to better serve residents of the state. We consider law enforcement agencies key stakeholders of the MDOT ITS Program and msTraffic network and we hope to continue to work together as incident management partners."

“Working Together” continued

director of emergency services at the University of Mississippi Medical Center, said the center is the lifeblood of all emergency communication between health care facilities throughout the state.

“In emergency medicine, the first sixty minutes after the occurrence of multi-system trauma is commonly known as the ‘golden hour’. A victim’s chances of survival are considered to be greatest if they receive definitive care in the operating room within the first hour after a severe injury. Having the best and most current travel information as provided by msTraffic is an important contributor to this rapid response.”

The msTraffic/MED-COM Center Project was submitted this year for a coveted ITS America, Best of ITS Award. The project was recently selected as a finalist for this award in the Best of Innovative Practices Category, making it two years in a row that MDOT has had a project make it to the finalist round.



Ask Mike

Q&A with Mike Stokes, MDOT ITS Program Manager

Question: With the recent ban on red-light enforcement cameras in the state, can you clarify the difference between these cameras and MDOT traffic cameras in regards to their use by MDOT and other agencies?

Answer: MDOT Traffic Cameras are used to monitor traffic congestion, incident/emergency response and for traffic data collection on Mississippi’s Highway System. MDOT Traffic Cameras are shared with various law enforcement agencies and incident management partners for the purposes of better serving the public by providing the ability to more quickly respond to incidents, not for the purposes of issuing traffic tickets. Traffic Cameras are NOT used for enforcement. The legislature’s recent ban on Red-Light Enforcement cameras did not include traffic cameras used for real-time traffic information to the motoring public. Traffic Cameras coupled with the www.msTraffic.com web site and permanent Dynamic Message Signs assist motorists in making intelligent decisions concerning their travel plans.