

# Greater Hartford Coalition Newsletter

## FROM THE EDITOR

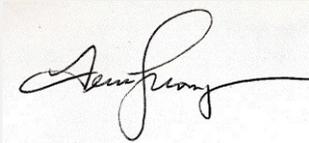
The October newsletter highlights some of the risks that responders face daily. A proven method in reducing risks during incidents is the use of service patrols. They assist in quick clearance of incidents and provide a safe environment for responders and motorists alike. We also have news on the Federal Highway Administration's efforts to further improve traffic incident management as it moves forward with technology, data and training.

Across the country, many States continue to work on ways to improve traffic incident management. I am providing links to our area States that have traffic incident management programs in place. Collaboration with each other to share ideas, strategies and plans improves the overall TIM program.

The winter season will be arriving on New England's doorstep soon and now more than ever it is vital that all stakeholders assess their needs, equipment, and revisit their policies and procedures to ensure safety in the world of snow and ice. These added hazards increase the likelihood of crashes, and exposure risks to responders that work on our roadways.

With the pandemic still ever-present, the risk to the emergency response personnel has not subsided. Clear protocols, the use of personal protective equipment and the exposure risks are always on our minds as we respond to incidents. It is important that everyone protects themselves in order to protect others.

Hoping everyone stays strong in their resilience amid the many challenges we are facing and most importantly stays safe and healthy.



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**RESPONDER SAFETY - PROMPT, RELIABLE, INTEROPERABLE COMMUNICATIONS - SAFE, QUICK CLEARANCE**



## Dodging the Disaster: Responding to Highway Debris



Photo courtesy of AAA



Photo Courtesy of O'Connor & Partners PLLC

By John Sullivan

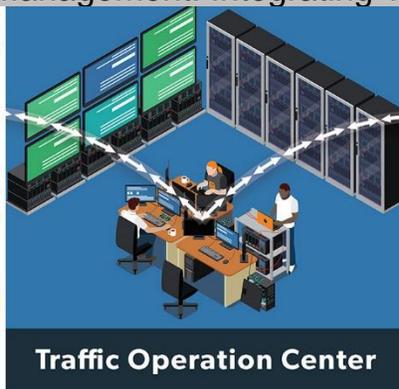
One of the main functions of Safety Service Patrols (SSP) is responding to calls for roadway debris removal. These responses can be as dangerous as any other event that we typically respond to and most require immediate attention to prevent possible secondary incidents from occurring. Sadly, while preparing this article a news story was forwarded to me relating a tragic event that occurred involving the removal of debris from the Kennedy Highway near Omaha Nebraska. On Thursday July 30th 2020 John Holcomb 70, a volunteer with the Metro Area Motorist Assist Program since 2014 was struck and killed as he stepped out to remove tire debris. Typically, the volunteer's tasks would include helping stranded motorists with gas or changing a tire or clearing debris from the roadway. This is the twenty ninth struck-by line of duty death, and the third Safety Service Patrol responder killed in the line of duty in the U.S. this year. These incidents involving debris occur daily, with an ever-increasing frequency, even with millions of dollars spent in public education campaigns warning drivers to secure their loads, and advising them on the liability of the driver being responsible for their vehicle, it's load, and contents. It is incredibly important for us as roadway responders to train on, and understand the danger involved with these types of roadway responses. [See More](#)

**Useful Link** [Reference: Prevent Road Debris](#)

**About the author John M. Sullivan:**

John M. Sullivan is a Highway Response Supervisor 1 with the Tennessee Department of Transportation 'HELP' Unit serving Nashville and Middle Tennessee since 1999. Mr. Sullivan is also a Lieutenant FF with the Pegram FD, and a TIMS, EVOC, and Vehicle Extrication Instructor.

## Next-Generation Traffic Incident Management: Integrating Technology, Data and Training



More than 6 million traffic crashes are reported each year, creating congestion and putting motorists and responders at risk of secondary crashes. Next-generation traffic incident management (NextGen TIM) builds on FHWA's national TIM responder training program to shorten the duration and impact of incidents and improve the safety of motorists, crash victims, and responders. NextGen TIM offers tools, data, and training mechanisms that can benefit both new and existing TIM programs, including local agency and off-interstate applications. [Learn More >](#)


**RESPONSE**

Excerpt from Report No. [FHWA-HOP-10-050 BEST PRACTICES IN TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT](#)

“Incident response is the activation of a “planned” strategy for the safe and rapid deployment of the most appropriate personnel and resources to the incident scene. Information management plays an important role in response; providing the necessary information to the appropriate personnel is critical in achieving optimum response. Accurate information about an incident—such as its location, traffic impacts, vehicle types involved, presence of an injury or a fatality, and other special conditions (e.g., presence of a hazardous material)—is essential in determining the proper response. The level of required response is typically determined by an on-scene responder or by a dispatcher at a communications or traffic management center. The objectives of improved response are to save lives through more rapid EMS response, ensure that responders reach the scene before the traffic backup becomes lengthy, make more efficient use of personnel and resources through “appropriate” response, and achieve a state of continued readiness for the rapid deployment of the appropriate resources to the incident scene and the area affected by it. Common response challenges relate to the following:

- Achieving optimum response.** Two common, yet undesirable, situations often result when incident response is initiated: under-response and over-response. Under-response results when too few resources or inappropriate resources are dispatched to the scene (e.g., dispatching a light-duty wrecker to an incident involving an overturned semi-truck). Typically, the inadequacy of the personnel or resources first dispatched is not realized until after they have arrived at the incident scene. When additional personnel or equipment is requested to the scene, the subsequent response usually takes much longer because traffic congestion from the incident reduces accessibility. Under-response more than doubles necessary incident response times. An inappropriate solution to the problem of under-response is to dispatch excess personnel or equipment to the scene. Equipment and personnel that are not needed at the scene can cause a bigger congestion and accessibility problem than the incident itself. In addition, over-response greatly reduces an agency’s efficiency by committing personnel and resources unnecessarily. Agencies should instead strive for optimum response, with the correct equipment and appropriate number of personnel dispatched to the incident scene. Optimum response can be attained through improved incident verification techniques and better awareness among responders of the different information needs and capabilities of each agency.
- Difficult scene access.** Traffic congestion and roadway design are the primary reasons for limited access to the scene for incident responders. Traffic congestion complicates access to the scene for responders. Flashing lights, especially amber-colored flashing lights, seem to have little effect on traffic movement (i.e., few people move to the right when a vehicle with flashing lights approaches from the rear). Historically, wide roadway shoulders have supported emergency access when travel lanes are congested. In many urban areas, however, efforts to ease traffic congestion have resulted in wide shoulders being converted to general-purpose or special-use lanes.”



Photos courtesy of (L&C) Jim Michaud-Journal Inquirer and (R) New Britain Herald

## AREA STATES TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATIONS



<http://www.njtim.org/NJTIM/>



<https://www.paturnpike.com/penntime/default.aspx>



**TRAFFIC  
INCIDENT  
MANAGEMENT**

<https://www.dot.ny.gov/divisions/operating/oom/transportation-systems/systems-optimization-section/ny-moves/tim>



<https://rangersep.com/massachusetts-tim>



<https://smpdc.org/timg>



<https://vsp.vermont.gov/trafficsafety/tim>



<https://www.crashri.com/>

**Slow down. Move over. Be safe.**



**National Traffic Incident Response Awareness Week**

**November 9th - 15th, 2020**



Please do your part to promote the National Traffic Incident Response Week on your social media platforms and websites to show your support. A pdf of the poster and an informational flyer are available for use. Please visit <https://transportationops.org/tim>