

# Background

## ODOT Communications Division: Functions & Programs

### Functions

#### Public Affairs Section

- Primary communications advisers to director, executive staff and Oregon Transportation Commission
- Public information: Educate and inform
- Media relations (24/7/365): Provide information and perspective
- Community relations (how highway construction projects affect residents, commuters, businesses, neighbors)
- Employee communications (~4,600 employees spread over 10<sup>th</sup> largest state)
- Emergency and crisis communications (winter storms, landslides, flooding, forest fires, crashes); all PIOs trained in National Incident Management System and Incident Command System processes
- Public safety
- Maintain communication channels with local/state/federal agencies (FHWA, AASHTO, U.S. DOT)
- Traffic information (national)
- Project information (800+ projects around the state)
- Interstate communication coordination (Washington, California, Idaho) (example: studded tire season beginning and end)
- Plan and conduct information programs that support the Region and Division missions
- Conduct/oversee Statewide Transportation Improvement Program public outreach process
- 2008: Won three Public Affairs Excellence awards from National Association of Government Communicators

#### Business Management Section

- ASK ODOT (Ombudsman, complaint line, help desk: 68,000+ citizen contacts in 4½ years, with 99%+ answered in detail within 5 days)
- Administrative support for Oregon Transportation Commission and ODOT front office
- Budget management for OTC and ODOT HQ

#### Strategic Communications Team

- Agency Web home page content and linkages with Oregon government
- Plan and conduct all the communications functions listed above for Central Services Division, Transportation Development Division, Transportation Safety Division, Public Transit Division, Motor Carrier Transportation Division, Rail Division. Plan and conduct all the communications functions listed above for special agency-wide or statewide projects, including Solar Highway, Electrical Vehicles; Sustainability.
- Publications design and content for informational brochures, fact sheets, maps, Web pages, press kits, reports for all parts of the agency and all programs.
- Back up for field Public Information Officers
- Multi-agency conditions (work zone photo radar pilot project; OSP and county law enforcement; Operation Truck Check; mover stings; transportation safety))
- Training (writing, speaking, media training)

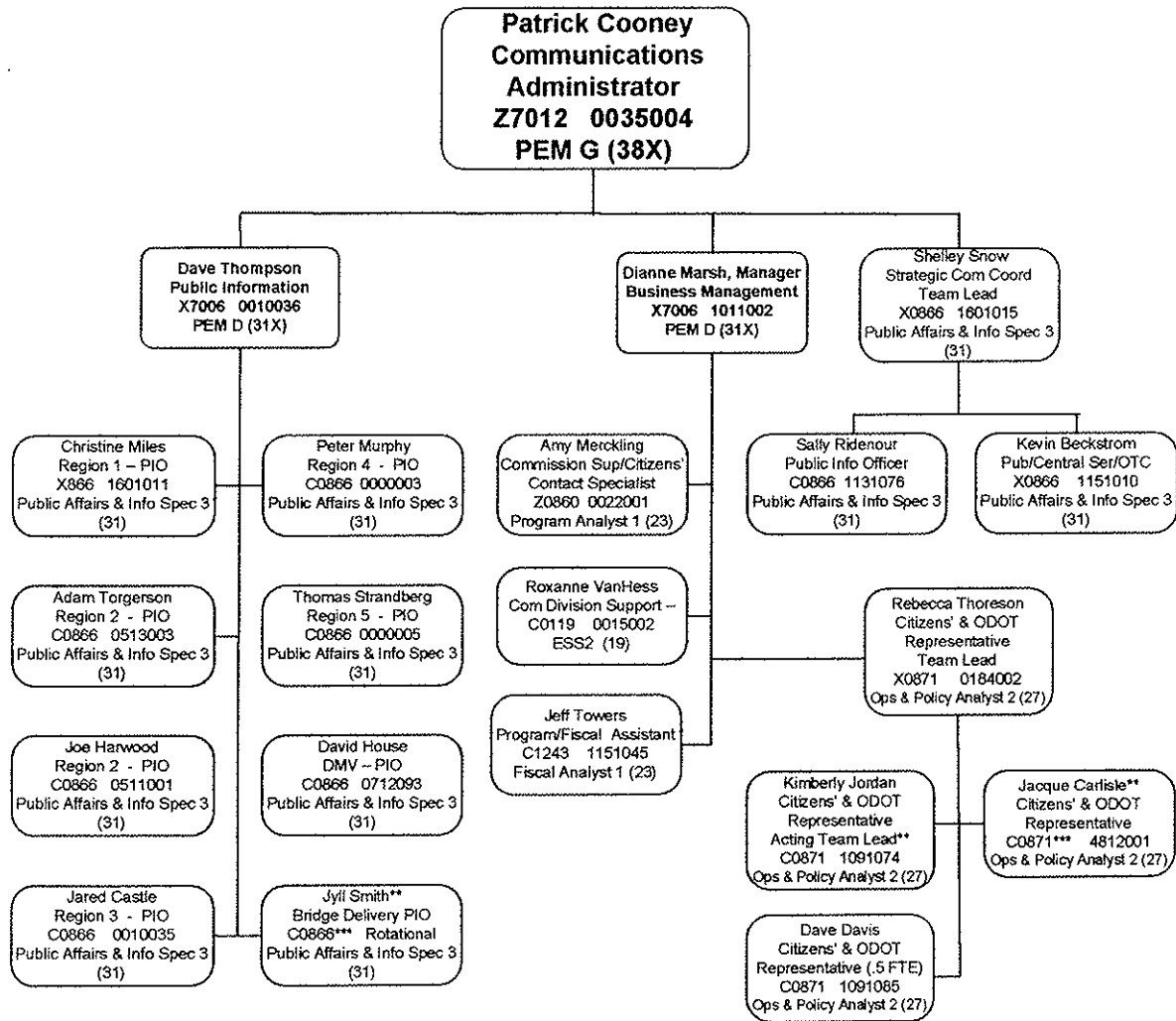
## Programs

- Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (800+ projects; 4-year plan updated every 2 years in cyclical process)
- Oregon Transportation Investment Acts I, II, III (\$3 billion, hundreds of projects over 10 years, beginning in 2001)
- *Connect*Oregon I and II (both the selection processes and program execution/project delivery)
- Road User Fee Task Force – migrated into Vehicle Mileage Fee Pilot Project
- Solar Highway Pilot Project
- Electric Vehicle Charging Network
- Sustainability Program
- American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (100 projects)
- 10 Area Commissions on Transportation
- 15+ Advisory Committees
- Columbia River Crossing
- Travel & Tourism; Scenic Highways
- Oregon 150
- State employee food drive
- State Holiday Toy Drive
- Plain Language legislation

## Workload Drivers

- The 24-hour news “cycle” is gone: It is now continuous and instantaneous.
- Citizens have independent access to information and they want it any hour of the day.
- Disinformation has exploded exponentially via the blogosphere; we are now getting media queries on what reporters read on line.
- We have insufficient staff to fully engage new uses of social media; we just try to monitor them.
- Each new program has been absorbed with no additional communications resources, except for one position that accompanied the O’TIA III Bridge Program.
- Technology—and how best to use it—changes constantly.

COMMUNICATIONS DIVISION



\*\*Rotational Assignment. Retaining permanent position number

\*\*\*Rotational Assignment Classification