

# Safety & Mobility Policy Advisory Committee

## MEETING SUMMARY

April 26, 2023

10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Via Microsoft Teams

### MEMBERS:

- Steve Bates, OTA
- Kevin Campbell, AAA
- Ed Chamberland, ACEC
- Marie Dodds, AAA
- Jason Fender, TFT Const.
- Stratos Flanders, Knife River
- John Gambatase, OSU
- Walt Gamble, AGC
- MARK GIBSON, OTA
- Erik Havig, ODOT
- John Hickey, APAO
- Cord Wood, OSP
- Jana Jarvis, OTA
- David Kim, Chair
- Erik Zander, OTA

### RESOURCES:

- Donnell Fowler, ODOT
- Christy Jordan, ODOT
- Angela Kargel, ODOT
- Mike Kimlinger, ODOT
- Justin Moderie, ODOT
- Audrey Lawson, ODOT
- Mac Lynde, ODOT
- Amy Ramsdell, ODOT
- Katie Scott, ODOT

### GUESTS:

- Leah Horner, ODOT Assist. Dir. of Operations
- Amy Joyce, DMV Administrator
- Colleen O'Hogan, ODOT Transp. Safety Office
- Rosalee Senger, ODOT Transp. Safety Office

### FACILITATOR:

- Bill Gross, Mobility Program

### AGENDA TOPIC

### HIGHLIGHTS AND OUTCOME

AGENDA TOPIC	HIGHLIGHTS AND OUTCOME
01 <b>Introductions, Roll Call, Meeting Notes &amp; Agenda Review/Objectives</b> Bill Gross and David Kim	Bill Gross took roll call. During roll call, Bill introduced a new committee member, Stratos Flanders, who is replacing Brian Gray as Knife River's representative on the committee. Draft minutes from the February 22, 2023 meeting were also approved. David Kim welcomed everyone to the meeting and reviewed the agenda topics.
02 <b>ODOT Updates</b> David Kim	David provided some updates on recent transitions in the agency: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mac Lynde has appointed Tova Peltz as the Deputy Division Administrator for the Delivery and Operations Division. Tova's previous position (Region 1 Project Delivery Manager) will be filled by Matt Freitag on an interim basis the position is permanently filled.</li><li>• Ken Patterson has been appointed as the new Region 5 Manager, and Sean Maloney will fill his Area Manager position on an interim basis.</li><li>• The Oregon Transportation Commission recently had two resignations (Marcilynn Burke and Chair Robert Van Brocklin). Governor Kotek has nominated two people to fill their positions.</li></ul> David also introduced ODOT Assistant Director of Operations Leah Horner, who replaced Cooper Brown who left the agency in December. Leah worked as Gov. Kate Brown's Deputy Chief of Staff and Infrastructure Director, providing counsel on public policy, high-profile initiatives and overseeing

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the policy advisor team. She previously served as the governor's Jobs and Economy Policy Advisor and Director of Regional Solutions.

Leah described her previous experience working as ODOT's Government Relations Manager from 2014 to 2018. Leah also described her responsibilities in her current role as Assistant Director of Operations. She said during her first few months, she has been getting familiar with the new structure of the agency and how ODOT is working to integrate its priorities. Leah said she appreciates the work that the SMPAC is doing and is hopeful to be invited back at some point to listen in or participate in discussions about the committee's direction.

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03 **Work Zone Safety Symposium  
Debrief**  
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David Kim opened the discussion by saying he thought the symposium was an amazing event, and first of its kind. He also recognized the efforts of those who helped organize the event, particularly John Hickey. David said it was good to be able to piggyback the symposium with the APO conference.

David said one area to look at is the timing with bid openings. He said it appeared quite a few attendees dropped off in the afternoon, as bid openings were scheduled for the next day. He said he recently spoke with the Project Controls office about possibly blocking out days for key construction conferences to get better participation. John Hickey agreed that scheduling around bid dates would really help to avoid conflicts.

John Hickey said they are so far planning for February 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> for next year's event. Jana Jarvis asked if we could avoid scheduling during the short legislative session, which runs through the first week of March. John said the dates are based on the availability of the convention center, but he said he's open to considering other dates. John Gambatese asked if the event could be scheduled during Work Zone Safety Week in April. John Hickey said that would be difficult to keep the event tied to the APAO conference.

John Gambatese suggested the committee plan for some kind of event during Work Zone Safety Week, in addition to the symposium. John Hickey suggested perhaps the billboard contest idea could be tied to that week. In addition to work zone safety, Walt Gamble said we also need to incorporate freight safety as well.

The following comments about the symposium were provided in the chat:

Comments from Justin Moderie (who could not attend the meeting):

- *We have heard broad gratitude and support.*
- *ODOT, via our Qualified Products List connections, could potentially help get more vendors next year.*
- *More technical, or "best practices" during design and construction, would improve the conference.*
- *We should start communicating sooner (realize the big lift, especially by John, for this first Symposium).*

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- *(my own idea), additional focus on having an escape route or plan for the event of a work zone intrusion.*

Comment from John Gambatese:

- *An idea for the symposium next year: Starting with the needs/problems identified in the first symposium, have a student competition to come up with innovative ideas for solving work zone safety/mobility issues. The students could write/submit a brief description of their idea, be invited to the symposium next year, and the winners announced at the symposium. The competition would help generate student interest in the topic and interest in the working in the industry.*

David Kim suggested creating a subcommittee that can focus more on the lessons learned from the first symposium and start planning for next year. David also said ODOT is challenged with budgets right now for travel and training events, and he is having conversations internally about how ODOT headquarters might be able to help contribute and get more participation from the agency.

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04 **DMV Driver Manual & Work Zone Safety Content**  
Amy Joyce, DMV Administrator

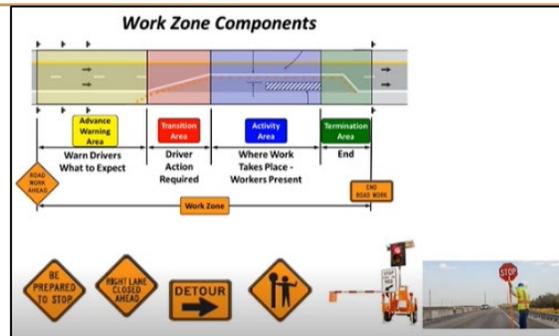
Amy Joyce said DMV updates the driver's manual after every long legislative session, to account for changes in the law. She said the content that is in the manual now, will be in there until they make changes at the beginning of 2024.

Amy said they used to do a "cut and paste" style of making updates, but she said they are now focused on a more comprehensive look at the manual every time they do updates. She said about 8 years ago, the manual had gotten very large and DMV made an effort to slim it down. She said in hindsight, they may have gone too far in reducing the content, and they are working to put some of it back in.

For work zone safety in particular, Amy said their program manager (whose duties include the driver's manual) has already been working with Justin King, ODOT's State Traffic Work Zone Engineer. She said Justin had developed a page on work zones with a diagram.

Amy said with the manual, they aim for incorporating plain language that is a fourth or fifth grade reading level. She said the work zone graphic is intended to show that a work zone is larger than just the area where the work is happening; it also includes an advance warning area, transition area and a termination area. She showed an example of a potential graphic from the draft page:

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John Hickey commented that the draft language for work zones doesn't convey a sense that there are dangers posed to workers. He said he proposed some language to include in the manual but it was rejected. He also suggested including some photos from accidents or perhaps a link to a video to describe the dangers faced by workers. John said he will send Amy the suggestions that he had submitted previously.

Amy also said that the driver's manual is one element, and that the formal ODOT-supported driver's education is a completely different piece that is much more involved than the manual. Amy said she can have her team pull some information about the education content that relates to work zones.

Mark Gibson commented that it is important to also include information in the manual about driving around trucks, as it can be dangerous for young drivers.

Marie Dodds commented that she understands the reasons behind why the driver's manual was pared down, but is glad to see an effort to put more of the information back in. She said she understands that there is a balance for making sure the audience is going to read and consume the information, but not throw too much at them. In terms of work zone safety, she said AAA did a study back in February that shows working on the side of the road is one of the most dangerous jobs. She said when you personalize that information, it can better connect the audience to the content.

Jana Jarvis echoed Mark's comment about trucks, and she said it has been something she has been asking for a long time. She said simply including a graphic that shows the blind spots around a truck would be helpful to young drivers to understand. Jana said she would also like to see work zone safety and truck safety included in the driver's education courses as well.

Walt Gamble asked if there is a required work zone safety question included in the exam. Amy said she is not sure if there is one included in the bank of questions. She said the exam has 35 questions which rotate through a pool of 170 questions. She said she is open to having a conversation about adding a required question related to work zone safety on the exam.

David Kim thanked Amy for discussing the manual with the committee members. David also shared with the committee a photo from a recent work zone incident in Region 5 last week. He said a crew member was unloading an excavator when a minivan struck the excavator. He said fortunately the

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employee was not seriously injured, and that the minivan driver had apparently suffered a medical emergency which caused the accident. David said sharing images like these might help with making work zone safety messaging more effective.



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05 **Work Zone Law Enforcement Coverage 2022 Statistics**

Colleen O'Hogan  
Rosalee Senger

Colleen O'Hogan shared some PowerPoint slides, which included crash data compiled from 2016 to 2020. She said in 2020, there were six people killed on Oregon highways with 19 serious injuries and 337 overall injuries.

For the Work Zone Law Enforcement Presence Program, she said ODOT has moved to a direct project charging system. She said they now use the Work Zone Decision Tree to identify the work zone business need and figure out how many hours are going to be needed for projects. She said they've just completed one full year in 2022, and are working to determine lessons learned for improving the program.

She said one area for improvement that has been discussed is communication, to ensure project managers are communicating with law enforcement and the Region Transportation Safety Coordinators. She said it is a new process and that everyone is still learning, but she said they have had more successes than issues with the new direct charging system.

Colleen said in 2022, there were 29 projects identified the need for work zone law enforcement, compared with 28 projects so far in 2023. She also showed slides summarizing the budgeted funds and a breakdown of hours by activity.

Colleen said law enforcement in work zones is one of the best measures against deterring risky behavior by drivers. But she says one of the challenges is the availability of law enforcement statewide. She pointed out that back in 1980, Oregon State Police had 624 troopers patrolling Oregon's highways, compared with just 359 today.

She said a Work Zone Safety Task Force has been created to improve safety in work zones for ODOT workers and contractors through risk mitigation, public education and outreach, process improvement and policy change.

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Colleen shared statistics from the Near Miss Report form, which can be accessed by a QR code. So far for 2023, she says they have reported 13 near misses so far.

Colleen said they are also planning education campaigns for work zones with streaming ads on Facebook, Instagram and on billboards.

Colleen said her office is also working to pursue legislation to address work zone crashes through the use of mobile photo radar enforcement. She said they are looking at efforts done in other states including Washington, which just passed a bill expanding the use of speed ticket cameras. John Hickey said it is his priority to get Oregon law changed to allow photo radar ticketing in work zones when police presence is not available.

It was noted that the links in the presentation are not all accessible to those outside ODOT. David Kim asked Colleen work with Bill Gross to export some of the information and provide it to the committee.

John asked if it is possible to get information that shows from an annual basis, of all the projects that identified a need for law enforcement presence, which ones actually received it and how much did they receive. Rosalee Senger said she could look into providing that information.

Rosalee also commented that from her experience in her Region, ODOT is lacking in a number of areas, including law enforcement availability. She said OSP currently does not have any photo radar equipment, and they are the primary agency that provides coverage in work zones, since most projects are located on state highways. She said Region 3 had a project where the city of Medford was able to provide its photo radar equipment, but the narrow roadway made it difficult to use the equipment.

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06 **Travel Lane Width Working Group Update**  
Mike Kimlinger

Mike Kimlinger said the work group had a good discussion at its last meeting, where they had a "regrouping" to see how they will proceed. He said the work group discussed changing language in ODOT's guidance documents, potentially coming up with recommendations for the Oregon Highway Plan. He said the group also discussed potential changes to statutes as to when a truck can use a buffer space in places where narrower travel lanes are used.

Mark Gibson commented that he thinks the last two meetings were positive and that they are making some progress.

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07 **Work Zone Safety Technical Work Group Updates**  
Mike Kimlinger

This item was moved to the next SMPAC meeting.

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08 **Work Zone Safety Billboard Contest**  
John Hickey

John Hickey said this idea came from the Massachusetts Department of Transportation. He said they're holding a competition for local colleges to design a billboard focused on work zone safety. John said he would like propose a similar contest in Oregon, but involve high school students in the competition. He suggests the students could be provided design guidance for the billboard, and that

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scholarship money could be offered for those who submit the winning design. He said this would be a great PR campaign for ODOT and industry, and a great opportunity for young drivers to learn about work zone safety. John said if we want to do the contest for 2023, we should get started now since the end of the current school year is coming up in June. John suggested ODOT could coordinate securing the billboard space, and industry could coordinate with the schools and funding the scholarships.

Walt Gamble said it sounds like a great idea. He said the schedule sounds aggressive, but AGC has a network of teachers already in place that they might be able to work with.

David Kim also said it is a great idea, but he thinks it might be better to launch the contest in the fall and perhaps do an unveiling at next year's Safety Symposium. He said that would give us more time to plan and target certain schools and programs. Jana Jarvis also commented that the billboard contest is a great idea, but waiting to launch it this fall might be a better strategy. Mari Dodds added that schools likely already have their curriculum set for the rest of this school year. Colleen O'Hogan said her team would likely need until fall at the soonest to plan and make the billboard arrangements. John suggested he would like to start with planning one billboard in each of the five ODOT Regions.

David Kim suggested scheduling this topic for the next SMPAC meeting and allow some time to flesh out more details for the contest.

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09	<b>Mobility Program Customer Service Survey</b> Christy Jordan	Christy will follow-up with this topic via email.
10	<b>MAC Charter Minor Revision</b> Christy Jordan	Christy will follow-up with this topic via email.
08	<b>Final Comments</b> David Kim	David Kim thanked everyone for participating in the meeting and said Bill Gross will provide a list of action items from the discussions.

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