

IX. TRANSPORTATION NETWORK SECURITY

The nation's transportation system is an indispensable component of American society. The U.S. economy suffered an enormous shock in the wake of the attacks on September 11 as one of the major transportation modes in the nation, air travel, was virtually shut down for days and public confidence in air travel was shaken for years. Other modes of transportation in the country strained to accommodate the displaced demand for air travel. It is obvious that transportation and law enforcement agencies at all levels of government must strive to ensure that a similar attack on the nation's transportation does not take place.

SAFETEA, drafted in 2004 and 2005 in the wake of the attacks on 9/11, established the security of the transportation system as a stand-alone planning factor. The following section briefly describes the actions taken by local, state and federal agencies to address transportation security concerns in the region. As noted by FHWA, the roles of the MPOs in the planning and implementation of transportation security projects is still evolving., The Merrimack Valley MPO will continue to support the local, regional, state and even national initiatives that have been or will be developed to improve the security of the transportation network.

Federal Transportation Security Legislation

The nation's transportation network is a critical component in responding to terrorist attacks. In addition, the attacks in London and Madrid show that the transportation network itself can become a target for terrorists and this country's experience on 9/11 show that the transportation network can even be used as a weapon.

Soon after the attacks on 9/11, the congress passed several pieces of legislation that address national security and virtually all of them have a transportation component. These include the Patriot Act, the Homeland Security Act, the Aviation and Transportation Security Act, which created the Transportation Security Administration (TSA), the Maritime Transportation Security Act, and the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act.

Key federal agencies involved in enforcing the provisions contained in these pieces of legislation include the Transportation Security Administration, the U.S. Coast Guard, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, the Critical Infrastructure Assurance Office (CIAO) and the U.S. Customs and Border Security Agency. Their roles in supporting the security of the transportation network are briefly summarized below:

Transportation Security Administration (TSA): This agency's stated mission is to protect the Nation's transportation systems to ensure freedom of movement for people and commerce. The most visible function of this agency is management of the passenger and baggage screening operations now in place at the nation's airports. However, the TSA is involved in the security of other transportation modes as well.

U.S Coast Guard: Responsible for Involved in of the nation's ports, inland waterways and coastal waters. Its key role in protecting the nation's transportation network involves protecting America's maritime borders from all intrusions by: (a)

halting the flow of illegal drugs, aliens, and contraband into the United States through maritime routes

Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration: Primary mission is to reduce or eliminate major crashes involving large trucks. Also involved in efforts to promote the safe transport of hazardous materials.

Critical Infrastructure Assurance Office: Assess potential risk and dependencies on critical infrastructure, including transportation. Also responsible for coordinating an integrated national strategy for critical infrastructure protection

Other federal agencies playing a role in maintaining the security of the nation's transportation network include the Federal Bureau of Investigation, U.S. Marshals Service and the Drug Enforcement Administration.

State Agencies

The Massachusetts State Police is primarily responsible for enforcing security on the state's roadway and bridge network. A major focus of the State Police is to enforce the provisions of permits that are issued by the MassHighway Department that regulate the transport of materials on the state's highways.

Another key component in the state's Traffic Operations Center, located in South Boston. This center is responsible for traffic incident management throughout the using loop detectors, video cameras, microwave sensor units and other technologies. Information on traffic incidents collected at the Operations Center is relayed to the appropriate MassHighway District Office that assigns the necessary personnel and equipment required to mitigate the incident.

The Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency's Operations Division manages and coordinates emergency response efforts for the Commonwealth. MEMA also operates the Commonwealth's Emergency Operations Center (EOC), which monitors emergencies on a statewide basis around the clock.

The Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety has developed the Statewide Anti-Terrorism Unified Response Network (SATURN), an information-sharing and first-responder network that enhances existing public safety delivery systems. SATURN is a first-of-its kind initiative that brings together fire, emergency management, and police officers from every Massachusetts community, and provides them with a process for receiving and exchanging information in the face of a terrorist threat.

Freight Issues

FHWA's *Freight Security Awareness Primer* acknowledges the fact that the major concern about the security of the nation's freight has shifted from theft and smuggling to preventing attacks on the transportation system. This task is expected to become much more difficult over the next 13 years as the amount of domestic freight traffic is expected to grow 66% from

2005 to 2020 while the amount of foreign freight is expected to double during the same period.

The growth in the volume of freight movement in the nation is problematic in that it will place an increasing strain on the agencies now responsible for monitoring the safety and security of the freight network. Information is still often fragmented, lacking or poorly reported, making it difficult to reliably trace freight movement. FHWA reports that few of the freight containers are tracked as they are transported to their final destinations, and the routes used are often in close proximity to some of America's most populated cities.

Coupled with the problem of dealing with this expected growth in freight volume is the fact that the nature of the economy has changed over the years in a manner that makes it more susceptible to terrorist attack. With increase reliance on “just in time” production techniques where raw materials needed for the production process arrive at the manufacturing facility just as their needed, an incident affecting the nation’s freight system will have almost immediate impacts and involve many sectors of the economy.

To address this issue, a number of new technological approaches to tracking freight are being investigated. These include “smart cards”, which contain biometric identifiers and cargo information connected to an electronic manifest can be used to establish a chain of custody for the containers as they move to their destinations. Other technologies include supply chain software that can accommodate security applications, electronic cargo seals, and wide-area communications combined with global positioning systems or other global location technologies.

Security of the Transit System

In 2004, the Merrimack Valley Planning Commission transportation staff reviewed the status of transit system security planning across the country. This analysis identified three key factors:

Location makes a difference: - Transportation systems serving communities with the following potential “targets” are at a higher level of risk:

- Symbolic American government and/or cultural sites;
- Chemical, nuclear, radiological material production and/or storage facilities;
- Places where mass casualties (> 500 people) could be inflicted;
- Areas that are easily accessible for equipment and personnel;
- “High-value targets” that have high replacement costs, high commercial impacts;

Vigilance is critical: - Promote awareness and encourage familiarity with the spectrum of threats. Transit personnel should be trained to recognize chemical or biological incidents and to be aware of the other weapons/threats that might be used to attack their system.

Resource availability must be respected: - Cost is a legitimate criterion in designing security and preparedness measures. However, many of the security measures recommended by federal, state, and local agencies have also been found to contribute to

the efficiency of public transportation operations. These include vehicle locating systems, design of and materials used in station and coach construction, good lighting at stations, timely information on system status, and visible presence of staff.

Merrimack Valley Regional Transit Authority

The Merrimack Valley Regional Transit Authority has taken a number of steps to address security on its system and to assist other agencies responsible for providing the security of the transportation system.

MVRTA is a participating member in the Haverhill Emergency Management Agency as well as the Merrimack Valley Regional-Local Emergency Planning Committee. It also participates on the Anti Terrorism Action Committee. It has also developed the Merrimack Valley *Regional Transit Authority Security Plan* and has participated in the “See Something, Say Something” program, which alerts users of the system as to the steps they can take to assist in identifying potential security threats to the transit system

The Authority has installed internal and external cameras on all its buses and vans and at major bus station facilities at the McGovern Transportation Center in Lawrence, the Haverhill Transit Center, and at Gallagher Terminal in Lawrence.

The Authority also plays a role in the Evacuation Plan for Seabrook Station that has been developed by the New Hampshire Office of Emergency Management. In the event of an emergency event at the Seabrook facility, MVRTA buses would be used to assist in the evacuation of people from the beach area in Massachusetts. In addition, MVRTA drivers attend annual training sessions sponsored by MEMA that address the actions that must be taken by the MVRTA should an emergency take place at Seabrook Station.