WINTERS WRATH 2009-2010
LESSONS LEARNED
AND NEXT STEPS TO EFFECTIVE WINTER STORM MANAGEMENT

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IMPROVING WINTER OPERATIONS FOR THE PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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As a result of the February 15, 2007 Valentine's Day Ice Storm and the resulting closures of I-78, I-81 and I-80, the Department Embarked Upon a Journey to Improve Winter Operations!

Many Changes Have Been Made to Date and Many More Changes Will Be Made!
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I-78 on February 15, 2007
Motorists Stranded for 12 – 18 hours
By Mark Scolforo, Associated Press Writer

HARRISBURG, Pa. — The state has addressed many of the logistical and communication problems that stranded hundreds of motorists along highways during a severe Valentine's Day snow and ice storm, Pennsylvania emergency and transportation officials said Monday.

"Last Valentine's Day is seared in our memories," said Transportation Secretary Allen D. Biehler, appearing at a news conference with state police Commissioner Jeffrey B. Miller and Gen. Robert P. French, director of the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency.

"We're confident we're going to be prepared this year," Biehler said.
Presentation Will Concentrate on how PennDOT has improved winter operations since The Valentines Day Storm of 2007 with particular emphasis on lessons learned from the past winter season and how we are continuously “Upping Our Game”!
How was the winter of 2009-2010 in PA?
How was the winter of 2009-2010 in VA & WV?
How was the winter of 2009-2010 in PA?

February 5th - 6th, 2010 Snow Accumulation
How was the winter of 2009-2010 in PA?

Blizzard of 2010 - February 9th - 10th
How was the winter of 2009-2010 in PA?

February 24th - 27th, 2010 Snow Accumulation

SNURRICANE
How was the winter of 2009-2010 in PA?

MEMORABLE ------ But ---

We were “on our game” every storm!

http://www.atmos.millersville.edu/~wic/penndo/snowfall_data_2009-2010.html
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✓ FY 2009 – 2010 Winter Budget
  ➢ $182,159,000

✓ FY 2009 – 2010 Winter Expenditures
  ➢ $216,250,000

$34 MILLION OVER BUDGET
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What Will We Improve for Next Season?

- Management
- Technology
- Communications
- Planning and Preparation
**Management**

- **Involvement in National Programs and Committees** – Aurora, Clear Roads, TRB Winter Maintenance Committee, CLARUS, AASHTO Sub-committee on Maintenance, Scanning Tours, etc.

- **Winter Services Strategic Plan** – Performance Management Model.

- **Winter Leadership Presentations** – “How does the Governor and Secretary know you’re ready for winter?”

“The minute you think you've got it made, disaster is just around the corner.”

- Joe Paterno
Improving Winter Operations

**Management**

- **Snow Academy** – Update curriculum and retrain managers, supervisors and field staff every 4 years.

- **Metrics** – If you don’t measure it, you don’t improve it! Tells staff what is important to management and drives performance.

- **Policies, Procedures, Processes, Protocols** – Update and add new ones every year.

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Technology

- **RWIS** – Replacing our system over the next year.

- **AVLS** – Implemented basic system last November and will have fully viable one by 2012.

- **MDSS** – Pilot in 3 Districts this winter. All District implementation next winter.

“Technology has the shelf life of a banana.”
- Scott McNealy
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Technology

- **Chemshield** - Pilot this winter; natural sticking agent for anti-icing with salt brine.
- **2011 Dump Truck** – Permanent pre-wet tank, tailgate chevron, built-in LED warning lights.
- **Plows** – Piloted **Tow** Plow last winter; purchasing 3 more, piloting **triple** blade plow.

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Communication

- 511 Traveler Information System – Implemented last fall, enhancements for this year; floodgate messages during events.

- Twitter - PennDOT will be tweeting this winter during emergencies and other events as required. Policy developed and implemented.

- Pre-storm and In-storm press releases – Set expectations and keep customers informed.

“Think like a wise man but communicate in the language of the natives!”
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**Communication**

- **Pre Winter Storm Webex** – Updated; conducted 10 last season.

- **Winter Services Guide** – Some Districts published in past; developing online version which will cover everything from Anti-icing to ZV spreaders.

- **Blackberrys** – Managers involved in winter services have them, tried with supervisors and will deploy statewide.

“Think like a wise man but communicate in the language of the natives!”
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Planning and Preparation

- **Winter AAR** – Identified over 30 items we need to improve for next winter. Done at County – District and Statewide level!

- **AccuWeather** – Brainstormed with them what improvements were needed. Included County, District, CO and consultant staff.

- **SOG’s** – Updating Standard Operating Guideline’s for MPH and traffic restrictions and road closures

“Fail to plan – Plan to fail!”
**Planning and Preparation**

- **Tabletop Exercises** - Winter exercises to test whether improvements are viable and train new staff.

- **Winter Services Strategic Plan** - We now have it completed. Next step is implementation plan.

- **Anti-icing Decision Tree** - Implemented this past winter. Will be making a few slight changes.

“Fail to plan – Plan to fail!”
“Being successful with winter services is 90% related to planning and preparation and setting and communicating expectations with your staff! As managers, that’s job one!”

— Charles C Goodhart
Dear Fellow PennDOT Employees,

Although it is officially summer and we have soaring temperatures outside, I’m sure the memories of this past winter are still very fresh for many of you. While I have long known how outstanding all of you are in your dedication to PennDOT, especially during the most trying times of snowstorms and floods, I would like to share with you a letter from Governor Rendell where he also recognizes your outstanding efforts to serve Pennsylvania citizens.

Dear Secretary Biehler,

I want to take a moment to thank you for the work your agency has done to support operations during the snowstorms we experienced this winter. As we all experienced, this was one of our more devastating winters. As a result, it took an uncharacteristically high toll of resources and human capital. President Obama's Presidential Declaration is evidence of the severity of the winter we faced.

Your agency responded to the severe weather challenges with professionalism and perseverance. Whether operating in the field, coordinating operations at your headquarters, or providing Emergency Preparedness Liaison Officers at the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency, the work done by you and your personnel provided a much-needed safety net to the citizens of our commonwealth. The long hours and commitment to the missions, during both the response and recovery phases of the storms, are truly noteworthy.

Again, thank you for the work you did and your positive contribution to the safety of all Pennsylvanians. It is yet another example of the great work, accomplished daily, that helps everyone in the commonwealth.

Sincerely,

Edward G. Rendell
Governor
Thank You and are there any questions?

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