



**MAINE TOWING WORKSHOP MEETING NOTES**

This is a combined summary of two workshops held at Maine Turnpike Authority in Portland, Maine on December 1, 2017 and June 8, 2018 respectively.

The format is to be able to follow the progress and solutions drafted from one workshop to the other.

<b>Meeting Notes: Combined Effort between Agencies and Towing Association</b>	
<b>Status of TIM Training Calendar</b>	
<b>Workshop #2</b>	<b>Workshop #1</b>
<p><b>Discussion:</b> Set up a Sat morning in September in Sanford for TIM training. It was suggested to send some dates around in the Sanford area and get feedback and provide to association.</p> <p>Try to schedule training in Bangor and Augusta on a Saturday in September (if they have their own trainers) – this was suggested but is it realistic to see if this can be done this year – or is this a “next year” task.</p> <p><b>Action Items:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <i>Reach out to Cindy Meservey from the Bangor MPO, Lt. Scott from Maine State Police and Jamie Andrews from Maine DOT (Augusta TIM Committee) to further discuss and set up training.</i> <b>Update:</b> TIM class was scheduled in Sanford in late September but was cancelled due to lack of participants. Another scheduled for 10/26 at Cumberland fire – looks good for attendance with some towing/recovery signed up.</li> <li>✓ <i>SMPDC will try and link their Facebook page with the Towing Association as a way to connect via social media</i> <b>Update: Completed</b></li> <li>✓ <i>Tom will update a contact list to share with everyone and send back out if needed.</i> <b>Update: The list is up-to-date.</b></li> <li>✓ <i>Can the trainer list be updated?</i> <b>Update:</b> Wayne Emington from FHWA sent out a request to the list for more trainers. He received 2 or 3 responses and is working on getting those to shadow a class to prepare for teaching</li> <li>✓ <i>Can Wayne Emington (FWHA) provide the current list so that there is a reference from which to start?</i> <b>Update: Completed</b></li> </ul>	<p>Develop a yearly calendar for TIM training and coordinate with the Towing Association on the dates and times of the training.</p> <p>The Towing Association works with Tom and Steve to set this yearly calendar</p> <p>Look at 3 weeks in April and 3 weeks in October or a combination and schedule the training by the year. These are the best training months for towing.</p> <p>Look at multiple training locations to hold TIM training (possibly Portland, Augusta and Bangor)</p>

**Staffing Changes, Rotation & State of the Practice Workshop #2**

The typical request is to *“Give us the closest wrecker”*  
 The dispatch staff that were physically located at Grey, Maine are moving to Augusta. They will maintain the same frequencies – it is just that field personnel will be talking to Augusta. The dispatch staff is integrating with the PSAP. The rotation discussion effects On Interstate versus Off Interstate/Turnpike call outs. Typically, Interstates do not use a rotation list but off the interstate, there is open discussion about using one. Troop A has contacted Sanford about using wrecker rotation at Sanford Dispatch. The date of when this pilot with Sanford is to start is yet to be determined.

**Action Items:**

- ✓ *A good next step is to have Association members and State Police meet to talk this program through.*
- ✓ *Next Meet with LT Ross, Maine State Police Troop A, Bill Tower from Sanford Regional Communications Center and the Association and go from there to further vet the concept.*  
**Update:** *There is discussion of having a more targeted meeting between specific agency, law enforcement and towing personnel in order to better vet some of the more institutional issues and challenges with integrating towing into incident management. Outreach to set up this meeting is now in process.*

**Minimum Equipment Requirements versus Certification and Training**

Workshop #2	Workshop #1
<p>Equipment listings are in the Association’s court</p> <p>It is better to do certification plan than minimum equipment requirements</p> <p>Maine does not require to be certified – there needs to be minimum requirements for those responding to the interstate events. 3 state agencies need to act on this.</p> <p><b>Action Items:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <i>The Association should look to design a class to train the tow operators</i></li> <li>✓ <i>Wayne will look to determine source of funding for eligible certification process.</i>  <b>Update:</b> <i>Contact Wayne Emington and Steve Landry for an update on sources of eligible funding.</i></li> </ul>	<p>Have the Association create a recommended minimum equipment list for incident response towing requests.</p> <p>Send it to Greg Stone so that MTA could use this list as a requisite for tow operators to get on the rotation list.</p> <p>The Association develops a Training and Certification Plan and then works with the State Agencies to find financial support.</p>

**Dispatch Checklist for Incident Response**

Workshop #2	Workshop #1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Should tow operators wait until getting information is received from on scene rather than enroute?</li> <li>✓ A draft checklist noted below was drafted during the working session for use by SP Communications dispatching.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Have the Association create a checklist for use by SP Communications dispatching.</li> <li>✓ Have the Association work on the development of a cheat sheet/checklist for incident response.</li> <li>✓ The Association gives the incident checklist information to SP Communications (Tim) who will review, vet with the Association if needed &amp; then distribute out to his staff for their use</li> <li>✓ Dispatch will work to collect better and more complete information for the tow operators.</li> </ul>

## Towing Draft Dispatch Information – Top Informational Requirements

Data Field Requested	Possible Entries	Key Comments
Reason for tow (1)	Disabled	
	Arrest	
	Accident	On side of roadway
	PI	Upside down
	Fatal	In the woods
		Water has an impact
Type of vehicle that (2) needs to be towed	Light, medium or heavy	Pick up or car, AWD or FWD (i.e. Honda CRV) Need a car carrier??
Accurate brief description	Medium	UPS or Beer truck; box truck
	Heavy	Tractor trailer units
Exact location (3)	Mile marker, Closest cross street,	On side of roadway
		Upside down
		In the woods
		Water has an impact
No of passengers that need to be relocated		

## Appendix – Additional General Meeting Notes Workshop #1

<p>Why be TIM trained?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ The one most likely to get hurt is the tow operator – national numbers show that.</li><li>▪ The least trained person is the one that puts others at risk. (Not wearing PPE or not parking a vehicle correctly puts others at risk).</li><li>▪ The big incidents are not the problem – it is the little events that create the tragedies.</li><li>▪ Tow operators need to be treated as professionals along with the others.</li></ul>
<p>How can we get TIM training done?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Tom Reinauer provided an update as to the status of TIM training.</li><li>▪ There are approximately 35 people who have been trained to be train the trainers.</li><li>▪ There are nine very active trainers in TIM.</li><li>▪ We should train some of the tow operators to train their own people.</li><li>▪ Weekdays is tough for training for some tow operators.</li><li>▪ Can training be done on weekends? There is a need to make a pitch to be trained.</li><li>▪ There is a two hour locally modified course for training in Maine.</li><li>▪ There is no cost to attending the training; the motivating factor is for safety.</li><li>▪ Can we make it a timeframe for training?</li><li>▪ Let's just physically pick some dates and do it.</li><li>▪ Let's start training by county and pick south first for training.</li><li>▪ Let's develop a yearly calendar and coordinate with the Towing Association on the three training times.</li><li>▪ Invite Steve and Tom to do the TIM training</li></ul>
<p>How do we improve the transfer of incident response information to tow operators?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ There is a need for more detailed info from dispatch about the incident scene.</li><li>▪ This is a two-way street in that tow operators need to ask questions about the incidents as well so they don't bring the wrong equipment.</li><li>▪ In some cases, more information from the State Police on scene would be helpful.</li><li>▪ There is a need to be more descriptive in the information.</li><li>▪ The Association will create a checklist for dispatching for Tim developed by Association</li><li>▪ The Association will work on the development of a cheat sheet/checklist for incident response.</li><li>▪ The Association will give this information to SP Communications (Tim) who will review, vet with the Association if needed and then distribute out to his staff</li><li>▪ Dispatch will work to collect better and more complete information for the tow operators.</li></ul>
<p>How can we better manage requirements for towing equipment?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Have the Association create a recommended minimum equipment list for incident response towing requests.</li><li>▪ Send it to Greg Stone so that MTA could use this list as a requisite for tow operators to get on the rotation list.</li><li>▪ MTA should periodically update their rotation lists.</li><li>▪ Tow operators need to be qualified to tow.</li></ul>
<p>How do we retain, certify and professionalize the Towing Workforce?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Internal Staff Training is a continual process- this is the mechanics of the job and not TIM training. This is critical for employee retention.</li><li>▪ The Association must police itself on both TIM and internal training. It can do this by developing a Training and Certification Plan (i.e. using Wreckmaster or TRAA)</li><li>▪ There may be opportunities for the Association to work with the state agencies for financial support.</li><li>▪ The association can require the training or strongly suggest the training to improve the professionalism.</li></ul>

### How can we improve the Call Out process?

- Should we look at performance standards – to be discussed at a later date.
- Rotation lists are used on Maine roadways with the exception of Interstate or Turnpike facilities.
- State Police does not have a rotation list. They call who is the closest on their list to the incident.
- If based on incident severity and level of impact to the roadway, the “closest” tow operator is called by State Police, there is a need to better define “closest”.
- If Troopers are calling Tow Operators who they want rather than calling the closest, how does this get addressed?
- How can tow operators improve their opportunities to be called out by State Police? A recommendation is to improve on call availability. Dispatchers want to talk to a real person and not an answering machine for incident call outs so they can shave time. This involves working nights.
- On the Interstate system, there is a directional response system for towing – so when calls don’t make sense, it may be due to the directional access to the roadway to reach the incident.

### Recommendations to the Association

- Relay to Tow Operators to call and ask for a Trooper if they do not feel safe.
- It is key to have a strong association which goes back to the owners of the tow companies.
- It would be helpful to see the towing association establish a set of parameters to be a member of the association.
- Raise the standard to be a member.
- Create your own medallion that will help to professionalize the association.
- Develop a pricing structure for towing charges. (Look at NJ as a sample)