



**Washington State
Department of Transportation**

Measures, Markers and Mileposts

The Gray Notebook for the quarter ending March 31, 2001

WSDOT's quarterly report to the
Washington State Transportation Commission
on transportation programs and department management

Douglas B. MacDonald
Secretary of Transportation



This periodic report is prepared by WSDOT staff to track a variety of performance and accountability measures for routine review by the Transportation Commission and others. The content and format of this report is expected to develop as time passes. Information is reported on a preliminary basis as appropriate and available for internal management use and is subject to correction and clarification.

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For the quarter ending March 31, 2001

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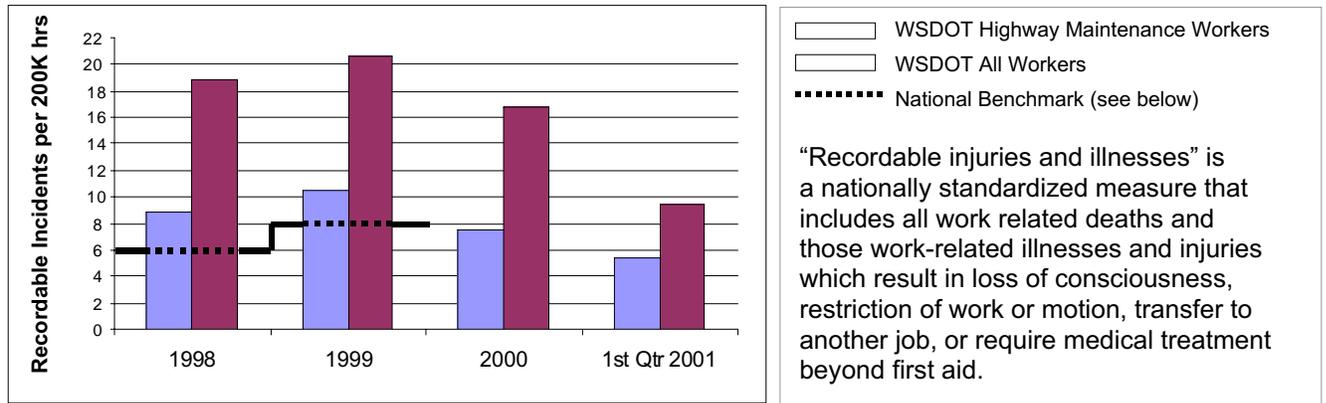
“What gets measured, gets managed.”

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Worker Safety

Recordable Injuries and Illnesses

First Quarter 2001 vs. Last Three Years



The graph compares “recordable injuries and illnesses” for the first quarter of CY 2001 against WSDOT’s historical experience in three previous years (gray bars) and a national benchmark for highway maintenance workers (dashed line). The benchmark is computed after-the-fact for each year (most recently 1999) from data published by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics compiled by the National Safety Council from submissions by 18 state highway departments.

The WSDOT data covers approximately 5,400 employees in total (lighter gray bars) and a subset of 2,200 WSDOT maintenance workers in highway maintenance, trades, equipment, and warehouse (darker gray bars). Future reports will provide additional data.

The QE 3/31/00 recordable injuries and illnesses for the maintenance workers shows 30 injuries and 4 illnesses:

- All four illnesses were caused by a loss of hearing as a result of repeated noise exposure.
- Three injuries were eye injuries that could have been prevented with use of eye protection.
- 50% of injuries occurred on the roadway, 18% on bridges, 12% in shops, 12% in sheds, and 8% other.
- The nature of injuries were 31% sprains, 17% contusion/bruise, 12% multiple, 10% hearing loss, 7% cuts and lacerations, 7% inflammations, and 16% other.
- The “Part of Body” injured shows 17% back, 12% knees, 10% fingers, 10% wrist, 10% ears, 7% eyes, 7% shoulder, 7% neck, 5% multiple, and 10% other.

Safety and Health Program Highlights QE 3/31/01

The most important health and safety program outcome this quarter was the excellent performance and good luck (thanks in no small measure to drills and training) that the system exhibited in the many challenges presented by the Nisqually earthquake. This has already been extensively commented upon.

The most important incident in the quarter was a very serious work zone accident reported later in this report.

Other safety and health highlights included:

- Testing of driver back-up warning alarms on WSDOT vehicles.
- Worker training brochure development on hazard communication, respiratory protection and lead awareness.
- State advisory group on traffic safety at construction sites and work zones.
- Submitted a grant proposal to Labor and Industries for funding of a work zone safety video.
- Assisted regions in developing lead abatement plans and procedures.
- Assisted NW engineers on soil remediation for construction project at Deception Pass Bridge.
- Investigated several indoor air quality complaints in various facilities.
- Two state-wide meetings on flagging and pilot escort vehicle operator training.

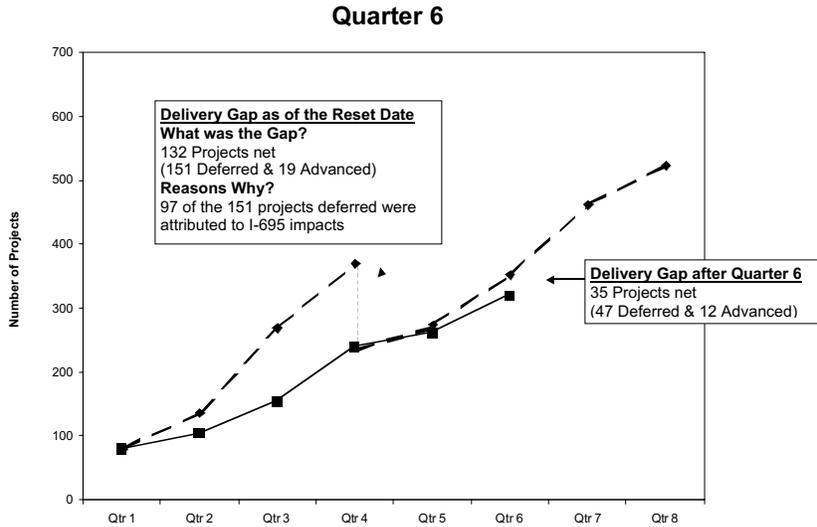
Work Zone Accident

WSDOT employees Michael Gassner and Tarik Albershushi are out of the hospital following the March 30 accident on I-405 in which both were critically injured. They have now been released and are showing good progress toward recovery.

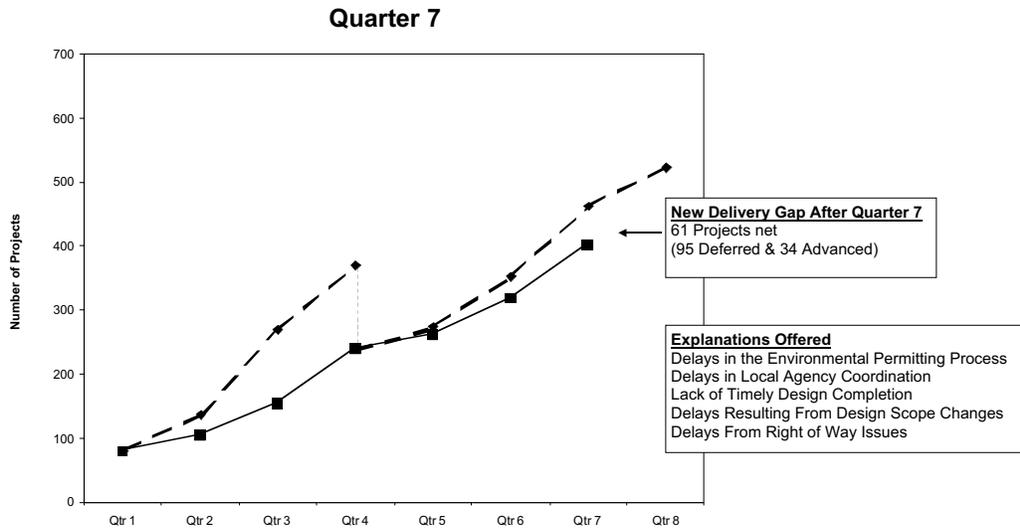
The incident occurred near the Northeast 44th Street exit on I-405 in Renton. According to their supervisor, the two men were working on a project to do an inventory of drainage systems on Northwest Region routes using Global Positioning System equipment. A car traveling in the HOV lane swerved to avoid the arrow truck that was diverting traffic into the general-purpose lanes. The car overcorrected, turning back into the HOV lane where it struck the WSDOT pick up truck, which then hit Gassner and Albershushi. The impact of the collision threw both men onto the shoulder of the northbound lanes.

Highway Construction Program Delivery

Statistics on Actual vs. Plan in Advertising Highway Construction Projects for 1999-2001 Biennium



Above is a graphical re-statement of data as of Quarter Ending 12/31/00 that was presented to the Commission on March 14, 2001 in the report titled "Quarterly Report on Delivery of the Highway Construction Program."



This graph shows the continued deterioration of the trend line when extended into Quarter 7.

A presentation of this report will be made by a staff group to help the Commission understand its purpose, its limitations, and the further information that must be developed. Approaches that staff are now developing to address its management implications will also be presented.

Narrative Highlights of Program Activities for QE 3/31/01

SR 202 Re-Opened

The roadway re-opened with weight restrictions on May 11th reconnecting the Eastside to Snoqualmie Falls. The road was closed for more than two months after the Feb. 28 earthquake left a 900 foot long crack. A permanent repair is planned for next year, from June to October 2002. The project is estimated to cost \$4 million. This east-west artery carries an estimated weekday travel volume of 8,000 vehicles including significant truck traffic.

Deschutes Parkway Repair – Olympia

The parkway is under the jurisdiction of the state's Office of General Administration (GA), but WSDOT (Olympic Region) and FHWA have joined in a partnering project management team to augment GA's roadway engineering and repair capability (limited) and to assure smooth coordination of available federal reimbursement from FHWA and FEMA, with whom WSDOT has significant ongoing experience. Repair is required because of damage from the Nisqually Earthquake making the roadway impassible. Normally the roadway carries 7000 vehicles per day, serves for overflow parking, and is an important access to jogging and nature trails.

I-5 Bridge Deck Work at Northeast Ravenna Boulevard

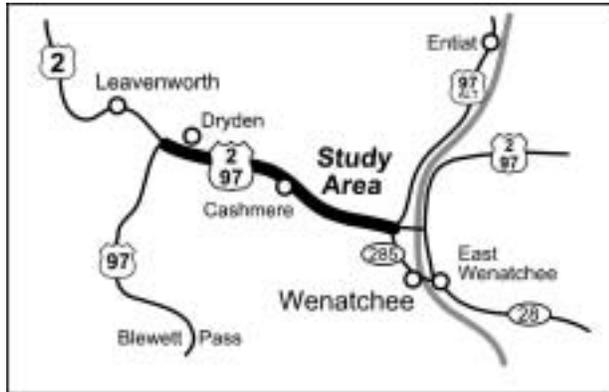
An important project to rehabilitate and resurface the I-5 bridge attracted considerable traffic reporter attention when an around-the-clock two lane restriction of northbound I-5 was set to begin on May 6. This restriction is expected to be required for 19 days (weather cooperating) ending May 25, to permit preparation and resurfacing of the bridge deck. Traffic impacts may be significant. After consideration, it was decided not to delay the work in light of the Alaskan Way viaduct restrictions which would, in WSDOT's opinion, simply lead to cascading of even more troubling traffic disruptions into summer months when other significant projects must also be performed.

This I-5 project also includes bridge rail and expansion joint repair work on the northbound I-5 bridge crossing Northeast 103rd Street.

The contractor for this work is Concrete Barrier, Inc., from Everett. Total construction cost is \$1.3 million. The project was designed throughout 2000 by project engineer Bruce Nebbitt. The WSDOT construction project engineer is Bob Linden. Media outreach on the project has been handled by NWR Public Affairs Office.

Public Meetings on US 2/97 Corridor Study: Blewett Junction to Easy Street/Wenatchee

The goal is to plan for safety improvements on this 14-mile highway stretch. A first round of meetings was held during February in Monitor, Sunnyside, Wenatchee, Cashmere and Dryden. Additional meetings will be held in September and next February so that safety improvements can be planned with broad public support with the highest priority improvements moving into construction in the 2003-2005 biennium. The corridor was identified for study because of its high accident experience, including both high accident rates and high accident severity. Within this 14.5 mile corridor, there are four identified high accident locations and an additional 5.5 miles of the study area have been identified as being high accident corridors.



Short term solutions to address safety issues and community concerns have included installation of two signals on the corridor with two more planned in the near future. Unfortunately, installation of signals brings inherent safety problems on high-speed corridors. The long term solution in the corridor is expected to include interchanges.

WSDOT Participation in AASHTO Standing Environmental Committee

Shari Schaftlein and Charlie Howard attended this meeting in New Orleans, which focused on states' responses to TEA-21 requirements on air quality and habitat protection compliance issues. Staff participated in Standing Committee on Environment (SCOE) resolutions supporting flexible use of programmatic and outcome-based approaches to environmental streamlining, and urging USDOT to consider AASHTO reforms to Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act. SCOE and Standing Committee on Planning (SCOP) split on their support for a resolution to defer the new Federal DOT regulation on planning and NEPA pending reauthorization of TEA-21. Staff participated in a panel on regional governance that shared states' experiences and provided guidance to a reauthorization committee consultant working on the benefits of transportation. We hope that through this participation to influence reauthorization decisions and benefit from learning about approaches used in other states are taking on environment and planning.

WSDOT's Continuing Involvement in CVISN

CVISN stands for "Commercial Vehicle Information Systems and Network," information systems and communications networks that support the motor carrier industry in working with government at all levels on programs like safety assurance, electronic credentialing and targeting of enforcement. CVISN enhances productivity both for the industry and for the governments and supports rapid and efficient freight movement including particularly important benefits for cross-border movements and trade. Washington is the first state to successfully deploy its CVISN program. WSDOT's video, *CVISN Driving the Future*, is in demand around the country for viewing by associations, legislators and regulators and has won several awards, most recently the 2001 Summit Creative Award.

Incident Response Team (IRT) One-Day Training Workshop

The fifth annual training workshop, attended by 55 IRT members and six spill response personnel from the Department of Ecology along with two WSP troopers. The workshop was held at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration in Seattle on April 19. The workshop's chief purpose is to assure that WSDOT, WSP, and Ecology have prepared to work effectively and collaboratively in spill emergencies. Coordination for WSDOT was by Doug Pierce of Field Operations Support. Also during the day prior to the workshop, WSDOT participants received their required eight-hour hazardous materials annual refresher training.

WSF Safety Management System Implementation

WSF implemented the Safety Management System (SMS) throughout the fleet in April. The SMS policies and procedures provide a common language and expectation for execution of daily duties that emphasizes and reinforces commitment to safety and environmental protection. SMS also provides a method for employee participation in improving safety and environmental protection processes.

The next report will include data on condition assessment of asphalt surfaces and progress on overlay work, data on signal re-timing programs, and a narrative report on bid award experience. Other topics will also be added. The staff welcomes suggestions and questions from the Commission about the future directions of this report.