

A photograph of construction workers at a road site. In the foreground, a man with a beard and a red shirt looks towards the camera. Behind him, several workers in high-visibility orange and yellow safety vests are working. One worker in a green shirt and brown overalls is leaning over a concrete barrier. Another worker in a red and blue plaid shirt is also visible. In the background, there are yellow construction vehicles, orange traffic cones, and a clear blue sky.

Transcript

The Ohio Department of Transportation Employee Newsletter March 2002

A Better Plan
Modern Ways
Picture This
More Money
Extra Support
Someone is Watching

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Expressing Opinions

Brian Cunningham
Central Office

Late last year, we asked our fellow employees at the department to express their opinions about ODOT's newsletter Transcript. While not everyone responded, many of the surveys were returned. Over the past couple of months we have compiled those responses and have analyzed them to determine how to improve the Transcript.

The responses varied in nature from "It's nice to see where ODOT is going as a whole" to "It is a fine waste of money." However, overall, the responses were positive as only four percent responded they were not satisfied with Transcript. Most people read and enjoy it each month, like the human interest stories, and find Transcript easy to understand. Several individuals would like to see more district information, more technical information and would like to know of retirements.

During the past few years we have worked to improve the layout of Transcript, reducing the length of stories to highlight the most important information and added more photos and other graphic elements to enhance the content. We expect to continue this trend and will continue to look for ways to make Transcript more informative and attractive.

To digress a bit, I would like to explain what the make up of Transcript has been. We have used Transcript as a forum to provide information to ODOT's employees regarding departmental initiatives, trends and accomplishments, and a little about the lives of our fellow employees outside of ODOT. We expect to continue to focus attention in this regard, and add some of the suggestions you provided.

As a result of the comments we received, we will begin to include regular information that highlights district specific activities, analyzes technical applications, and provides a monthly list of retirements. Additionally, there were numerous requests for more communications from the director. We plan to add a "director's column" that will highlight various elements within the department's core business activities.

While some of the comments we received will not be included, they have not been discarded as frivolous. We received several requests to move Transcript from paper to an electronic version that can be sent via e-mail. While this suggestion has merit, we have elected not to include it because not all of the people who work at the department have a dedicated PC and would not have regular access to the information. However, Transcript is available on line through the ODOT Intranet from the newsletters section of the Communications page.

We would love to hear your suggestions for future articles and welcome your opinions on how we can continue to improve the publication to make it more interesting and of value to you. Please send your suggestions, ideas and comments to Joel Hunt in the Central Office Communications office. Thank you for your assistance and your participation.

1. Transcript is published every month. How often do you receive it?
 - Every Month – 90.63%
 - Every Other Month – 4.87%
 - Seldom – .19%
 - Never – 1.03%
2. How often do you read Transcript?
 - Every Month – 79.01%
 - Every Other Month – 8.43%
 - Seldom – 10.5%
 - Never – 1.87%
3. I enjoy reading human interest articles?
 - Strongly Agree – 17.5%
 - Agree – 54.36%
 - Neutral – 22.12%
 - Disagree – 2.72%
 - Strongly Disagree 1.59%
4. Articles about departmental innovations are interesting.
 - Strongly Agree – 12.56%
 - Agree – 58.76%
 - Neutral – 22.59%
 - Disagree – 2.34%
 - Strongly Disagree – 1.59%
5. Articles about ODOT policy are informative.
 - Strongly Agree – 12.8%
 - Agree – 55.01%
 - Neutral – 25.87%
 - Disagree – 2.91%
 - Strongly Disagree – 1.87%
6. I find transcript easy to understand.
 - Strongly Agree – 17.43%
 - Agree – 62.79%
 - Neutral – 15.75%
 - Disagree – 1.69%
 - Strongly Disagree – .47%
7. The layout and design of Transcript is appealing.
 - Strongly Agree – 12.93%
 - Agree – 52.20%
 - Neutral – 27.46%
 - Disagree – 4.03%
 - Strongly Disagree – .84%
8. I like the selection of photos and illustrations in Transcript
 - Strongly Agree – 14.53%
 - Agree – 53.98%
 - Neutral – 25.49%
 - Disagree – 3.47%
 - Strongly Disagree – .75%
9. Overall, I like Transcript
 - Strongly Agree – 14.6%
 - Agree – 60.64%
 - Neutral – 19.68%
 - Disagree – 2.72%
 - Strongly Disagree – 1.31%
10. What if anything would you like to see changed about Transcript? (out of 1,067 responses)
 - Nothing, like the publication – 545
 - More District Information – 129
 - Dislike Entire Publication – 20
 - Change Writing/Layout – 144
 - More Technical Information – 80
 - More Human Interest – 149



Quality Control Process Speeds Pace of Construction

Joel Hunt
Central Office



Photo/Leslie Dellovade

Hassan Zahran, project engineer for District 6, examines data on the project site.

Compared to other states, and to the private sector, ODOT's material testing processes are out of date.

That's what ODOT learned when it looked at the results of its recent six-state study of best construction practices used by departments of transportation around the country. But with the implementation of Strategic Initiative Eight, dramatically change the way ODOT currently

Welker said ODOT will assume some risk by using the QC/QA process, "but the knowledge we have about the materials likely failing really makes those risks very minimal."

Strategic Initiative Eight identifies four goals which will help ODOT dramatically change the way it currently tests and accepts materials:

One, partner with FHWA and the industry to develop a QC/QA approach to utilize contractor developed mix designs and in-process quality control programs to ensure material quality

Two, partner with FHWA and the industry to establish certification programs for currently tested materials

Three, modify the existing CMS computer system and its testing component TAS to allow the use of certified materials

Four, form a team of ODOT contractors, materials and construction personnel to evaluate all materials processes for need, documentation requirements and computerization modifications with a goal of lowering current testing documentation by at least 50 percent.

Welker said reinforcing steel, fencing, guardrail, wood products and metal pipe suppliers already must be certified by ODOT, which means the department has begun using the QC/QA process.

"ODOT will test the QC/QA process on seven concrete projects this year," Welker said. "In 2003, 20 percent of ODOT's concrete projects will use the process and by 2004, 100 percent will use it. In addition, just this year ODOT's aggregate certification program became voluntary. In 2003, the program will be mandatory."

tests and accepts materials, ODOT will shift the responsibility of testing products onto its suppliers and speed the pace of its construction projects.

According to Lloyd Welker, administrator of the Office of Materials Management, ODOT will soon adopt a quality control/quality assurance (QC/QA) process that other states and private companies have long been using to approve materials.

The process is simple. A manufacturer, in this case ODOT, relies on its suppliers, who are certified, to perform quality control tests on their products before they are shipped out. Welker said ODOT currently uses a four-tiered approach to assure its materials meet ODOT's specifications, which, in some cases, is a duplication of its supplier's efforts:

First, contractors are directly responsible for quality control of asphalt with ODOT only performing random quality assurance tests.

Second, project engineers are responsible for all other materials, quality control including sampling, testing, acceptance, and final materials documentation.

Third, district laboratories support project engineers by performing acceptance testing for asphalt and aggregates; approving documentation for other materials; and performing independent assurance sampling, testing, and procedure verification.

Finally, ODOT's central laboratory performs aggregate quality tests and oversees the aggregate quality program; approves asphalt mix designs; performs concrete compression testing; and controls the approved materials list (or qualified products list). A plant sampling and testing program is also operated that includes pre-sampling and testing. Quality assurance reviews are performed depending on the material acceptance procedure. Geotechnical design and subsurface investigation functions are the central laboratories responsibility.

By using the QC/QA process and certification programs for materials acceptance, ODOT can more effectively use its workforce. ODOT will additionally gain the benefits of industry's knowledge, expertise and ingenuity along with suppliers and contractor's quality control programs.

Hobby
Shoppe

A Big Hit in Little League Competition

Jennifer Richmond
District Four

When it comes to achieving a dream, Chris Tiberio has hit a grand slam. After 28 years of umpiring little league baseball games, the District 4 design transportation technician has been asked to umpire the Big League World Series for 17 and 18-year-olds in Easley, South Carolina August 1-10.

Tiberio is one of 10 umpires chosen from across the nation to call the games, which will feature five teams from the United States and five international teams.

Little League Baseball Umpire in Chief Andy Konyar recognized Tiberio's outstanding performance in a letter inviting him to serve on the World Series team.

"Having you as a member... will certainly provide them with quality and dedication which you have so freely given of yourself in support of your District, Section, State and Region," Konyar wrote.

Being chosen to officiate the World Series is no small feat. Candidates must be certified umpires, and must have umpired locally and at the state and regional tournament levels. World Series umpires are nominated by the Little League District Administrator and state tournament officials, who base their nominations on both performance and evaluation.

Tiberio, who lives in Boardman, has attended numerous training schools in addition to his yearly schedule of umpiring. In 1999, Tiberio umpired his first regional tournament and then returned in 2001 to umpire the regionals for a second time.

"I've learned a lot from other umpires at the training schools," Tiberio said. "I've learned through the years how to cool my temper, how to tune out parents and coaches who may not always agree."

While experience is a key factor to becoming a good umpire, Tiberio also credits his love for the game and his community.

"I was seven years old when I started playing baseball," Tiberio said. "I grew up playing the game, and I believe in giving back what I received as a kid." Although being an umpire in the World Series is not a once in a lifetime event, it comes close. Umpires can only be chosen twice to officiate the games, and Tiberio said he plans to make the most of this honor.

"Strike three!" shouts District 4's Chris Tiberio, umpiring from behind the plate at the Little League Central Region Tournament (11-12 years old) in Indianapolis, Indiana in 1999.

Photos Courtesy of Chris Tiberio

Job profile



Photo/Leslie Dellovade

Michael Cull
Central Office

After years of decentralized management of agreements between ODOT and railroads, the department has returned coordination to Central Office and made Heidi Nunemaker ODOT's rail coordinator.

Nunemaker ("none-a-maker") began work in Central Office last November, bringing extensive experience with rail companies. The native of Gahanna, a Columbus suburb, spent seven months acting as a liaison for the Ohio Rail Development Commission and a year as a lobbyist representing CSX. She has also worked for two members of the Ohio Legislature – Senator Charles Horn of the Dayton area and Senator Robert Gardner of Lake County.

In her new position, under Rail Grade Separation Program Manager Mike Ciotola, Nunemaker will assist the district offices on ODOT projects that involve rail coordination. Some examples of projects include widening, replacement of bridges, resurfacing, grade separations, deck overlays and deck replacements.

The department does between 20 and 30 rail-related contracts a year, Nunemaker said.

When a highway project involves a railroad, an agreement is needed. These agreements act as a legal contract between ODOT and the railroad. They describe the scope of work, right of way issues, contractor expectations, payment schedules, insurance qualifications and specific State of Ohio laws as well as Federal Code of Regulations.

In the past, to reach an agreement with a railroad it has taken an exorbitant amount of time, stated Nunemaker. We hope to develop master agreements in order to facilitate a more streamlined and consistent process.

Nunemaker, 30, and Ciotola have traveled to Atlanta, Georgia and Jacksonville, Florida to meet with Norfolk Southern and CSX Corporation to develop better practices for Ohio projects.

"I am pleased to be a part of ODOT," said Nunemaker. "The people I get to work with are focused on reaching agreements that are fair to the railroad corporations and also to Ohio communities. There is a great deal of cooperation and goodwill on all sides and that makes my job a lot easier. I also like the opportunity to travel a bit – to get out

ands see district people and projects and to visit the headquarters of the rail companies; the variety keeps the job interesting."

"We have made real progress in coordinating with the railroads," Ciotola said, "and Heidi has been instrumental in that progress. She is good at working with our district coordinators and with the various railroad corporations. Her previous experience in the Ohio Legislature, the Ohio Rail Development Commission and with CSX has given her a broad and practical view of the relationship among the various parties."

The district personnel possess extensive knowledge of their projects and offer skills and abilities which are extremely useful in completing the rail agreements, stated Nunemaker. Unfortunately, they all have other positions and rail coordination is just one their many responsibilities.

Under the revamped system, district personnel still design plans and manage the projects.

Nunemaker, who has attended Capital University, is currently attending Franklin University. She just recently purchased a new home in the suburb of New Albany.

Kickoff in Candy Land

Jennifer Richmond
District Four

Gov. Bob Taft and ODOT Director Gordon Proctor recently joined local officials and community leaders at Harry London Candies in the city of Green to mark the beginning of construction on Phase II of the seven-phase, \$250 million project to reconstruct Interstate 77 in Stark and Summit counties.

The 13-mile stretch of I-77 from just north of the U.S. Route 30/I-77 interchange in Canton to a location just south of State Route 241 in Green will be widened from four to six lanes during the next eight years to accommodate the substantial increase of interstate traffic in the region.

I-77 provides a national link to manufacturing and business in the region. Taft emphasized the importance of investing in the I-77 corridor to help continue Ohio's economic stability and provide future development opportunities for the area.

"It is imperative that we widen Interstate 77," Taft told the crowd. "I-77 serves as Northeast Ohio's lifeline."

The Stark and Summit county region has experienced major growth and large increases in interstate traffic since I-77 was originally constructed in the late 1950s and early 1960s.

Since its construction, I-77 quickly evolved into the major transportation link between Canton, Akron and Cleveland. Designed to manage approximately 23,000 vehicles per day, portions of the interstate now handle more than 80,000 vehicles each day.

Frederick Krum, Director of Aviation for the Akron-Canton Regional Airport, said the



Graphic courtesy of www.roadwise.org

airport will be the biggest benefactor of the widening project. Access to I-77 plays a major role in the airport's \$50 million capital improvement program.

In addition to working with the airport and community leaders, Proctor told those in attendance about ODOT's recent public awareness campaign in which ODOT representatives visited more than 240 local businesses and residents affected by Phase I and Phase II of construction.

Phase I, extending from 13th Street to the U.S. Route 62 interchange, is expected to be completed by late fall 2002 while construction on Phase II, from Applegrove to the Akron-Canton Airport

interchange, will be completed by fall 2003.

Proctor encouraged patience among motorists traveling the route while the widening occurs, and stressed that two lanes of traffic would be maintained in each direction on the interstate.

The construction kick-off event attracted about 40 guests and several local media outlets. Taft jokingly attributed the large turnout in part to the choice of location for the event - a chocolate factory.

Construction 2002

Michelle May
Central Office

ODOT kicked off its 2002 construction season this month with \$1.3 billion in resurfacing, reconstruction and major new projects, including 68 projects to improve Ohio's interstates. But with the construction also comes a battle plan for reducing construction-related delays.

During 2001, ODOT spent an additional \$30 million to make work zones more convenient for motorists. The department expects to spend a similar amount this year on construction strategies that will make work zones less stressful for Ohio drivers.

"We have a significant number of projects on one of the most heavily traveled highway networks in the nation," said ODOT Director Gordon Proctor. "That's why we're making extraordinary efforts statewide to reduce congestion in work zones and ease the impact of construction on motorists."

Of the 68 interstate construction projects planned for this year, 59 include contract provisions that restrict work to off-peak travel times, speed the pace of construction, or reward or penalize contractors for early completion or delays.

In addition, Ohio may be the only state in the nation that requires contractors to maintain at least two lanes in each direction during daytime hours on the heavily traveled interstates. Exceptions are granted only under rare circumstances.

"Years ago, it was common practice to close a lane of traffic without regard to traffic volumes, which often resulted in large-scale backups," Proctor said. "But, today motorist delays and the cost of congestion are critical when planning work zones."

Key projects around Ohio include at least one, if not several, of these congestion-reduction initiatives:

- Reconstruction of Interstate 670 in downtown Columbus includes contractor disincentives of \$20,000 per day to encourage timely completion. In addition, ODOT

and the City of Columbus have condensed the construction time from four years to 18 months.

- Reconstruction on Interstate 71 in Wayne County and Interstate 90 in Cuyahoga County near Bratenahl will limit lane and ramp closures to nighttime hours. In addition, contractors are assessed penalty fees for delays.

- Building a new interchange on Interstate 75 and 70 in Montgomery County. ODOT is maintaining three lanes in each direction. Crews are working longer hours to expedite the construction and the contractor will be assessed fees for delays.

- Pavement replacement projects on I-670 near Grandview and I-270 on the southeast side of Columbus will maintain two lanes in each direction at all times using temporary pavement. The contractor will also be assessed penalty fees for delays.

As part of the kick off, ODOT is also distributing its 2002 Interstate Construction Brochure, which is available through local ODOT offices.

The brochure is a good tool to help motorists plan ahead for local or statewide interstate travel.



Tiberio signals from the third base line to the homeplate umpire a two-out timing signal to let hi of the inning.

FYI

North American Snow Conference and Roadeo

The Ohio Chapter of the American Public Works Association (APWA) will host the North American Snow Conference in Columbus April 14-16 at the Greater Columbus Convention Center. The Ohio Invitational Roadeo will be held the following day, April 17, at the Ohio State Fairgrounds.

The Snow Conference attracts more than 800 public works professionals from the snow belt across the United States and Canada each year. The conference features professional keynote speakers, technical sessions, and exhibits of more than 100 vendors.

For more information or to register, visit www.apwa.net or call Clyde Seidel, P.E. at 614-252-1776.



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Our mission is to provide a world-class transportation system that links Ohio to a global economy while preserving the state's unique character and enhancing its quality of life.

Cover/ Leslie Dellovade