

TRAFFIC OPERATIONS DIVISION 2020 COVID-19 TMC / HELP Operations Plan Version 2.0

Purpose

This support plan provides the four Transportation Management Center's (TMC) leadership teams with guidance for providing operational support during the COVID-19 global pandemic that is currently impacting the State of Tennessee.

Given the proven importance of TMC and HELP Operations, Regions should strive to ensure both are fully staffed to manage daily operations. Unfortunately, the uncertainty of the current environment dictates that protocols be put in place to ensure that our valued programs continue to provide a measured response based on our capabilities.

As we navigate the effects of COVID-19 on TMC and HELP operations, it is imperative that all regions are prepared to continue operations with a limited number of personnel. While total AWS is possible, it should be looked at as a final course of action and should be used with approval from Traffic Operations Division. Staffing solutions should provide coverage paired with operational knowledge of the Region. This plan provides recommendations on how to achieve this. Remote operations accessibility is described in detail in the TMC Remote Readiness Plan.

This document addresses issues which may arise and possible solutions which can be used to mitigate them. While these are not exhaustive, the solutions or combinations of them can be helpful to maintain operational requirements

Risk Scenario 1 - Staffing Shortages

Recommended solution – Extended shifts, minimum staffing

If a TMC must go to minimum staffing schedule due to call-outs, it is imperative that a TMC Technician Senior, a TMC Supervisor, or a TMC Manager be scheduled to be on the floor during each shift to provide oversight of operations and assist the technicians. If a TMC cannot maintain a normal staffing level for consecutive shifts due to call-outs, it is recommended that the TMC go to a rotating 12-hour shift schedule. Below is a sample 2 week schedule that uses 4 supervisors and 6 technicians to cover all shifts for the week.

TMC 2 WEEK SCHEDULE

Week 1

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
S1 6a-6p	S3 6a-6p	S3 6a-6p	S1 6a-6p	S1 6a-6p	S3 6a-6p	S3 6a-6p
T1 7a-7p	T4 7a-7p	T4 7a-7p	T1 7a-7p	T1 7a-7p	T4 7a-7p	T4 7a-7p
T2 9a-9p	T5 9a-9p	T5 9a-9p	T2 9a-9p	T2 9a-9p	T5 9a-9p	T5 9a-9p
S2 6p-6a	S4 6p-6a	S4 6p-6a	S2 6p-6a	S2 6p-6a	S4 6p-6a	S4 6p-6a
T3 9p-9a	T6 9p-9a	T6 9p-9a	T3 9p-9a	T3 9p-9a	T6 9p-9a	T6 9p-9a

Week 2

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
S3 6a-6p	S1 6a-6p	S1 6a-6p	S3 6a-6p	S3 6a-6p	S1 6a-6p	S1 6a-6p
T4 7a-7p	T1 7a-7p	T1 7a-7p	T4 7a-7p	T4 7a-7p	T1 7a-7p	T2 9a-9p
T5 9a-9p	T2 9a-9p	T2 9a-9p	T5 9a-9p	T5 9a-9p	T2 9a-9p	S2 6p-6a
S4 6p-6a	S2 6p-6a	S2 6p-6a	S4 6p-6a	S4 6p-6a	S2 6p-6a	T3 9p-9a
T6 9p-9a	T3 9p-9a	T3 9p-9a	T6 9p-9a	T6 9p-9a	T3 9p-9a	

Remote Operations

Due to the inherent knowledge that TMC staff possess within their regions, this guidance requires that local participation is present as a failsafe in remote operations.

Risk Scenario 2 – Minimum staffing levels are not able to be maintained

Recommended solution – Elimination of overnight shift, Regional Pass off to another TMC / On Call protocol

In the event that available staffing levels fall to levels where it is impractical to continue with extended shifts, operational focus should be directed at the times of day with the most activity. In this case, the TMC should consider eliminating overnight shifts. Overnight shifts statistically have less activity and could be managed effectively through remote operations. At this point TMC Operations will be handed off to another Region who will take on the monitoring responsibilities of the TMC for the overnight shift. Local TMC personnel will be issued laptops to respond to backup TMC personnel for questions and local clarification.

Procedure

- Regional TMC will request support from Traffic Operations Division who will designate a back up TMC to support operations based on activity.
- TMC phones will be forwarded to designated backup Regional TMC, backup TMC will maintain communications with affected regions stakeholders
- Traffic Management Office will send an essential contact and resources list to backup TMC
- In the event of an incident, the backup TMC will triage the incident. If the incident cannot be managed efficiently, the TMC will contact affected TMC on call personnel
- Backup TMC will control CCTV using the TightVNC application
- Backup TMC will control DMS using ActiveITS, On call personnel will post signs remotely as needed
- Incident information will be entered into LocateIM by the backup TMC
- See TMC Remote Readiness Plan for further information on remote access to TMC tools
- Affected TMC will contact backup TMC when personnel are back on site at the TMC

Risk Scenario 3 – TMC Staff member infected, TMC temporarily closed for deep cleaning

Recommended solution – Local remote access

In the event of a team member being identified as being compromised by the virus, the TMC may have to be closed temporarily while precautions are taken to ensure the health of employees in accordance with guidance from CDC, local Health Department, and TDOT Leadership. TMC staff shall be sent home and the TMC disinfected. During this time, it is recommended that the affected TMC operate from a remote location. This solution can also be used as a temporary measure while a longer term solution is implemented.

An on-campus solution, such as the regional radio shop, should be viewed as a primary option. A temporary radio setup can also be assembled in another location on campus if needed. If not, HELP units will be dispatched utilizing portable TACN radios. The radio shops in Knoxville, Chattanooga, Nashville (when link repaired) and Jackson also have TACN dispatch consoles if needed.

Procedure

- Identify a remote location on campus or designate an employee for each shift who will manage TMC operations remotely
- Phones will be forwarded to remote location or designated employee

- In the event of an incident, operators will need to access the network using Cisco Anyconnect
- Operator will control CCTV using the TightVNC application
- Operator will control DMS using ActiveITS
- Incident information will be entered into LocateIM/SWIFT
- See TMC Remote Readiness Plan for further information on remote access to TMC tools
- HELP operators will be dispatched through portable TACN radios if available or cell phones

Risk Scenario 4 – TMC Closure for an extended period
Recommended solution – Regional hand off to another TMC

If a TMC must be closed for an extended period, operations will be passed on to another Region TMC through remote access protocols. The backup TMC will primarily monitor incident notifications and HELP traffic for incidents. If an incident is reported they will confirm through remote CCTV operations, dispatch through the TACN network and assess the use of DMS. If the incident is complex and requires local knowledge, the backup TMC will contact on call personnel from the affected TMC. Local TMC personnel will be issued laptops to respond to backup TMC personnel for questions and local clarification.

Procedure

- Regional TMC will request support from Traffic Operations Division who will designate a back up TMC to support operations based on activity.
- TMC phones will be forwarded to designated backup Regional TMC
- Traffic Management Office will send an essential contact and resources list to backup TMC, the back up TMC will maintain communications with regional stakeholders during an incident.
- In the event of an incident, the backup TMC will triage the incident. If the incident cannot be managed efficiently, the TMC will contact affected TMC on call personnel
- Back up TMC will control CCTV using the TightVNC application
- Back up TMC will control DMS using ActiveITS, On call personnel will post signs remotely as needed. Incident information will be entered into LocateIM
- See TMC Remote Readiness Plan for further information on remote access to TMC tools
- Affected TMC will contact backup TMC when regional operational capabilities return.

HELP Operations

All HELP routes will strive to be covered with normal staffing levels during normal working hours throughout this event.

Since each Region has varying numbers of routes and HELP operators, the minimum staffing levels will vary throughout the state. It is recommended that a HELP Supervisor 1 or 2 be on duty during normal working hours, along with at least one HELP Operator.

The TMC Managers and HELP Supervisors should determine which routes will be patrolled and the best locations for personnel to stage in order to ensure quicker response. It is recommended that as staffing number drop, routes be reconfigured to maximize coverage in high volume areas. If work volume increases priority shall be given to lane blocking incidents.

If a county outside of the normally patrolled areas request assistance from HELP while minimum staffing numbers are being utilized, efforts should be made to utilize Regional Operations (construction/maintenance) personnel for those instances. After hours requests will be considered and approved by HELP Supervisors on an individual basis.



Guidelines submitted to the TMC Managers and HELP Supervisors limiting the type of interaction with the public will remain in effect until further notice.

TMC Safety

For the safety of all TMC personnel and their families, access to TMC's will be limited to essential personnel as deemed necessary by the TMC Managers. At no time will family members, special guests, law enforcement, or other guests be allowed to enter the TMC until further notice.

Workstations must be cleaned with appropriate cleaner at the end of each shift by the employee vacating the station. TMC Managers should refer to cleaning guidance provided to ensure proper measures are taken.

It is recommended that TMC and HELP staff prepare a "go-kit" of three days clothing and toiletries and medications should circumstances require extended stay at the TMC. This is also an opportunity for TMC Management to ensure temporary bedding is available should overnight stay be required.

Communication

The Traffic Operations Division will schedule regular conference calls with TMC Management to monitor the status of each region and ensure that needs are being met. As always, this will have to be a collaborative effort among regions and HQ.

An after-action review will be scheduled as soon as practical after the event is over to examine best practices and determine the areas of improvement.