

Incident response: Percent of lane blocking crashes cleared within 90 minutes

Our strategy

A focused strategy to quickly clear traffic incidents reduces travel delay. It is an important component for improving operations and management of the state highway system. Traffic incidents account for approximately 25 percent of the congestion on the highway system, according to research from the Federal Highway Administration.

About the target

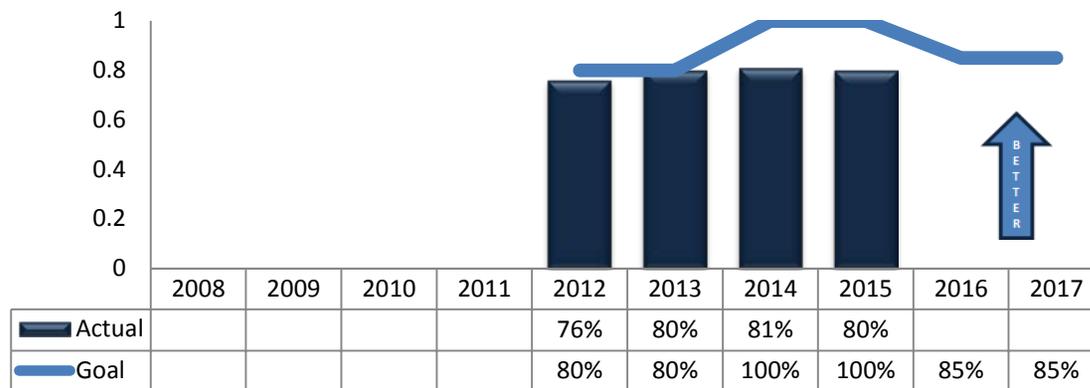
Our target for this measure is to clear 100 percent of lane blocking crashes in 90

minutes or less, as established in the Oregon Department of Transportation/Oregon State Police Mutual Assistance Agreement. Roadway clearance is defined as the time we are first aware of a lane blocking crash to the time all lanes are re-opened to traffic. Based on a legislative change in 2013, ODOT's target for this measure was increased from 80 to 100 percent of lane-blocking crashes cleared within 90 minutes or less. The target has since been adjusted to 85%, recognizing that it may not even be possible to reach crash locations in some parts of the state within 90 minutes.

How we are doing and how we compare

In 2015, we cleared 80 percent of lane blocking crashes in under 90 minutes. Our neighboring states of California and Washington have incident response clearance goals; however, the performance measure definitions vary significantly between the states making direct comparison difficult. California's target is to clear 50 percent of major incidents in less than 90 minutes. Major incidents are defined as those to which both the California Highway Patrol and Caltrans respond. Their

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Fact

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Incident Response, cont.

actual performance, for the quarter ending September 30, 2015, is 33 percent with an average clearance time of 3 hours 19 minutes (<http://www.dot.ca.gov/MileMarker/2015-3/index.html>). Currently, Washington's measure also focuses on major incidents. Major incidents are defined as incidents on nine corridors in the Puget Sound area for which Washington State Patrol is the primary responder and for which clearance times are between 90 minutes and 6 hours. Roadway clearance time is defined as the time between the IR team's first awareness of an incident and when all lanes are available for traffic flow. Washington's target for major incidents is 155 minutes. For the quarter ending Dec. 31, 2015, Washington's average incident clearance time on these nine key corridors was 182 minutes (<http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/accountability/>).

Factors affecting results and what needs to be done

Actions to clear travel lanes after a crash can range from simple to complex. More



complex incident clearance activities often involve multiple public and private responders. The complexity of the response effort impacts the results of this measure. For example, whether or not an incident involves a police investigation, hazardous material spill, cargo recovery effort, or fatality are all factors that influence the roadway clearance time for the incident. While the initial on-scene focus must be on responder and public safety, collaborating with other responders on a secondary focus to reestablish traffic flow can result in opening the lanes more quickly. Oregon is implementing the federal Traffic Incident Management Responder Training program. Oregon's group of TIM trainers

has grown to 86, representing every discipline involved in TIM and more than 35 different response agencies across the state. As a whole, over the last year Oregon has one of the most active groups of trainers in the nation. Together they've delivered the training to more than 3,000 of Oregon's responders in just two short years,

facilitating a common vision for safe and quick clearance of traffic incidents.

About the data

Data obtained from the dispatch system use by our four Transportation Operations Centers.

Contact information

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Data source

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