Bringing Vital CVO Information to San Diego and Imperial Counties' Truckers

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Traveler information is predominantly focused on the motorist. Agencies have been enhancing their 511 IVR and websites with information for bicyclists and transit riders, but only a handful serve the trucking community with key CVO information. This project, one of the first that focuses on CVO, serves an average annual daily traffic of more than fifty-thousand truckers traveling in and through San Diego and Imperial Counties. The system additionally serves truckers involved in over a million border crossing operations at the four US-MX commercial vehicle ports of entry in the region. The region is a combination of rural desert, mountain, and urban area transportation environments adjacent to the international border with Mexico with all of the associated challenges for the region's truckers.

This traveler information project included two phases of the ITS Priority Corridor CVO Planning Study for the San Diego Association of Governments. Phase I work involved conducting best practices research of similar systems nationwide; and the development of a user needs assessment focused on the trucking community serving the transportation facilities. Personal interaction and interviews with truck drivers and trucking management were key to the success of the user needs assessment. Data collection and travel surveys were performed through intercept surveys at truck trip generation points (such as inspection stations, port terminals, airport cargo facilities, and international border crossings). An extensive Concept of Operations was developed for the CVO component of the 511 system envisioning the system to be a comprehensive information source for truckers, to eventually offer road, traffic, weather, parking routing, hazmat, security and emergency conditions information. The Phase II work included requirements, data provider interface specifications, detailed design, stakeholder agreements, test scripts, installation and deployment, and an operations and maintenance plan.

While there were many different categories of information that were desired by the truckers, a list of high priority items was developed according to the availability of data from contributing systems and in order to work within the funding available for this phase. The current website and IVR offer information on weigh stations, rest area, truck routes, permits, and current truck route restrictions. Information about ports and terminal access is also presented as well as links to the port website. Other items such as real-time fuel prices, PrePass information, hazmat safe parking, and truck stop amenities may be added as future enhancements to the system.

We will share our lessons learned through the entire process, including approaches to engaging the trucking community and freight transportation stakeholders, and discuss key considerations when making the decision to add CVO elements to your 511 system.