

Virginia's Dashboard: Driving VDOT Success

At one time, in order to find the status of a project at the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), one had to track down varying reports from multiple people in different departments across the agency.

Now, it no longer takes a “room full of people” to get up to speed—It simply takes a dashboard.

In order to sustain their success, VDOT knew they needed to build the public's trust in them by communicating more effectively externally and internally. They needed to be more transparent—operate in the open and update their stakeholders on their progress, successes and challenges. In essence, they needed to report out on VDOT's performance. But how?

The Dashboard

Many States utilize dashboards as a quick way to check the speed of their performance. Therefore, 10 years ago, VDOT created their first dashboard. The dashboard increases public awareness of their performance and, through that, increases VDOT's accountability to their stakeholders. The dashboard also provides a platform to measure, monitor, evaluate, and report performance to assist in establishing clear business rules and improve internal communication. Previously VDOT would have had to round up several departments for a meeting to get the same information that is summarized in the dashboard.

The dashboard concept is based on the ability to drill down to multiple levels of data to gain more detail, so the user can get the level of detail with which he or she feels comfortable. The main dashboard level gives a general feel of the status of projects by showing traditional gauges with green, yellow and red status indicators. Then it gets interesting as

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- **Established clear business rules.**
- **Increased accountability and performance.**
- **Provided a platform to measure, monitor, evaluate, and report performance.**
- **Increased public transparency.**
- **Recognized that external or internal distractions affect performance.**
- **Recovered from a lapse of progress utilizing the dashboard.**

the next level, **Level 1**, allows the viewer to find information on on-time and on-budget performance by fiscal year, district, and funding source. Drilling further down to **Level 2** allows the viewer to see and search contract-level performance and information. **Level 3** then shows the fine details about each project under construction or design. Since its inception 10 years ago, VDOT has expanded this concept where possible to other areas of the business, not just project delivery. As with the dashboard, project delivery has become more efficient and effective. When VDOT first started their dashboard, performance on delivery was well below established goals.

Choose Measures that Matter

A major part of a successful dashboard is having clearly defined measures and targets to track. These measures help manage expectations and show what achievements the agency is working toward. Rather than



