

# Rhode Island Collaborating for Performance

## Collaboration Process

The road to implementing transportation performance management (TPM) can be a bumpy one and in order to navigate it successfully the Rhode Island Department of Transportation (RIDOT) found that collaboration with others can smooth the way.

They began this journey in 2008 with the assistance of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), as FHWA helped to arrange a scan tour of some of the leading DOTs in the area of TPM. RIDOT's Director and Chief engineer visited Missouri and North Carolina DOT's to discuss their implementation and application of performance management. Following the scan tour, RIDOT Administrative Services staff was designated to gather educational material and identify best practices around the country. In 2009 focus shifted temporarily for this staff as their workload more than doubled to support American Recovery and Reinvestment Act project delivery. Because of the increased workload, RIDOT recognized that they needed additional support to continue their journey in performance management. In 2010, RIDOT engaged a team of researchers from the University of Rhode Island's Transportation Center (URITC). The researchers from URITC assisted RIDOT in identifying the various competing national perspectives, pinpointing important key performance indicators, and by providing recommendations. During this time the team interviewed a number of leading State and International DOTs at the TRB annual meeting to gather information on best practices. One early result of this work was discovering that a small-state model approach to TPM is necessary. Larger state and international organizations have challenges, opportunities, and practices that may not scale as well for their smaller counterparts.

## KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- **Created valuable partnerships**
- **Created an Office of Performance Management**
- **Created & delivered a Performance Management 101 training course**
- **Hosted a regional peer exchange on TPM**
- **Developed the PM3 performance management approach**
- **Aligned their focus areas with key performance indicators & national goal areas**
- **Coordinated performance implementation decisions with statewide office of performance management**

Prior to their collaboration with the URITC, RIDOT had formed an asset management working group, hosted a performance contracting workshop through Highways for Life, and conducted an off-site session for senior management on performance management. All of these were accomplished with the help and support of their local Federal Highway Division.

In May of 2012 RIDOT then created its own Office of Performance Management. This was spurred by Governor Chafee's statewide performance management initiative launched in April of 2011 when he created a statewide Office of Performance Management that is currently within the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). As a result of the Governor's initiative and the passage of the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21), RIDOT adapted their key performance indicators to align them with both the national goal areas and the Governor's focus areas. Concurrently, they



also began coordinating performance implementation and decisions with the RI OMB, Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), Rhode Island Public Transit Authority (RIPTA), and Federal Transportation agencies.

Now that RIDOT had established an Office of Performance Management, they had to determine a good strategy to move forward. For this they looked to what was important, and what they wanted to accomplish. This led them to focus their vision on improvement; with a mission to lead and assist RIDOT with the implementation of performance management, their core purpose to achieve organizational and system excellence. From this they developed a performance management approach called the PM3 approach, (Figure 1.) which encompasses measurements and uses the information from those measurements for management of the program. This allows them to make good business decisions based on historical data trends, analyzing current information, and scenario forecasting while getting the message out to stakeholders and the public.

In September of 2012, RIDOT delivered a day and a half Performance Management 101 training, followed by a one day regional peer exchange in collaboration with Federal partners and the URITC. They found it to be invaluable based on the participation of representatives from the New England region states as well as participants from State Planning Offices, RIPTA, FHWA and the Governor's Office. The primary focus was to train managers and other key stakeholders on the fundamental concepts of performance management. They started with discussing what performance management is in general and in a conceptual way including real, relevant and relatable examples for the participants. They then focused on current State expectations based on the Governor's initiative and MAP-21 and how participants could use performance measurement data to more effectively and efficiently manage their programs. Part of the training included several group activities which focused on participant feedback. Participants highlighted concerns about mandates and language included in MAP-21. Groups also worked on developing an action plan focused on moving the department forward.

## Results

Through RIDOT's collaboration they have formed their roadmap to transportation performance

management. Now that people see the roadmap and where they are heading implementation is running smoothly. RIDOT staff is on board with the process, and the Governor's Office recognizes them as a leader. The collaborative effort of the RIDOT team has formed a strong foundation for them to continue to work toward organizational and system excellence in transportation performance management.



IMAGE: RIDOT

Figure 1. RIDOT's PM3 Logo

## What's Next

As the journey proceeds, RIDOT will continue working to align performance management with long and short range strategic transportation plans; collaborating with other stakeholders; sharing success stories along the way and always working to achieve organizational and system excellence.

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