

ORBA - MTO Highway Maintenance Committee Meeting Notes

Date: Monday, January 15th, 2024

Time: 9:30 am - 12:00 pm

Location: Teams Video Meeting

Attendee	Organization	Attendee	Organization
Doug Wipperman	The Miller Group	Walid Abou-Hamde	ORBA
James Stracey	Emcon Services Inc.	Jasan Boparai	MTO
Frank Rizzardo	Emcon Services Inc.	Brian Utigard	MTO
John McBride	Fowler Construction	James Hamilton	MTO
Paul Krajc	Fowler Construction	Valérie Labbé	MTO
Abdallah Tannoukhi	Webber Infrastructure	Andrew Alkins	MTO
Thelep Ampalavanar	Webber Infrastructure	Nedim Oren	MTO
Lindsay Tallon	Webber Infrastructure	Neil Pawluk	MTO
Greg Ehman	Ledcor	Lori Zimak	MTO
Rocky Coco	GIP Highway Maintenance	Michael Sleeth	MTO
Brian Green	GIP Highway Maintenance	Nasr Slabi	MTO
Simarpreet Kaur	ORBA		

*Strikethrough = Did not attend the meeting

General:

1. **Past Minutes** – reviewed and accepted by all.
2. **Presentations** – None.
3. **Standing Items:**
 - a. **MTO Application update** – no update.
 - b. **Winter Materials Working Group** – no update.
 - c. **Operators Working Group** – addressed in New Business.
 - d. **Equipment Working Group** – see Post meeting note.
 - e. **Winter Operations Working Group** – see Post meeting note.
 - f. **Summer Operations Working Group** – see Post meeting note.

- Emcon – suggested that a Working Group be considered to address administrative issues (ex: issues with contract interpretation such as Risk Mitigation and when to use T&M).

Post meeting: Industry provided a list of participants for Working Groups (d, e, and f) via email, and will provide an update to the list at a later date once they canvas both Ledcor & GIP who were unable to participate in the discussion.

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ACTION ITEMS:

- MTO to assign staff to Working Groups (d, e, and f)
- MTO & Industry to assign Chair & Co-chairs for each Working Group (d, e, and f)
- MTO will review the suggestion for an Administrative Issues Working Group internally.

4. New Business:

a. Operator Challenges:

i. Update on the Winter Season

- Emcon – Staffing has improved greatly in many areas, but there are still challenges in some areas. Winter equipment supply chain for parts is improving, but still having issues on acquiring components for hydraulic controls (backlog and/or short supply), and anything related to emissions/DEF continues to be an issue – would like to see an exemption similar to other emergency response (ex: fire).
 - MTO suggested that the task of exploring an exemption for emission control/DEF should be assigned to the Equipment Working Group.
- IMOS – Staffing has improved in many areas, but there are still challenges in NE and one in NW. Snowplows are getting hit due to drivers trying to overtake/pass. Winter equipment supply issues are similar to Emcon.
- Fowler – Staffing has improved. Winter equipment supply hasn't been an issue due to newer fleet and the opportunity to increase training on post-storm maintenance (due to mild winter). There has been an increase in aggressive behaviour from the public and we would like this to be addressed by this group. The safety of our workers continues to be a growing concern – and we would like to see our staff protected by legislation similar to other emergency response staff. We now have to provide training to our staff on how to deal with aggressive behaviour from the public. Ongoing aggressive behaviour from members of the public could have a negative impact on staff retention and/or attracting new talent.
- Webber – Staffing is optimal. Winter equipment supply is similar to others, but manageable. We have been informed that there will be body shortages (specifically “rail”). We are also concerned with worker safety and would like to see strict consequences for the behaviour towards our staff.
 - MTO advised that internal dialogue on initiatives to improve worker safety is ongoing.

ii. Update on Work Program (SOLGEN)

- IMOS – Supportive of the idea, however, have not had success. It seems as though field staff are not well informed and/or not onboard with the idea.
- Emcon – Similar feedback regarding field staff and have not had success.
- Fowler – Not pursuing at this time due to staffing not being an issue, but will continue to monitor the project and use if/when required. Will ensure that our internal process is in place should the need arise.

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- Webber – We have had similar issues as others.

ACTION ITEM:

- MTO will reach out to Ledcor and GIP to obtain feedback on these items.
- MTO will reach out to senior representatives at SOLGEN to have a focused conversation about captivating field staff, and explore the idea of providing information sessions at the field level.

iii. Update on Driver Certification Program

- IMOS – We have submitted documentation to the DCP and are awaiting feedback.
- Emcon – Curriculum has been approved, and we are now at the level of obtaining an external audit.
- Fowler – Not pursuing at this time, but reviewing internally. Will provide more feedback at a later date.
- Webber – We have submitted documentation are awaiting feedback (to be confirmed)

ACTION ITEM:

- MTO will create a Table to clearly identify the steps and will forward to industry to obtain feedback on what step they are at currently. MTO will also follow up on this item monthly to ensure movement, as well as reach out to the Director to ensure this is a priority.

b. ORBA – update on Safety Working Group (previously worked on by Andrew Hurd):

- ORBA will follow-up and provide feedback at next meeting.

c. Update on DSM 0001 – migration of Designated Sources of Materials from Road Authority to Technical Publications (Sydney Enterprise):

- MTO advised that the standards haven't changed however the information for DSM has been moved from a 3rd party over to MTO's Technical Publications website (the website was shared with the group)
- No questions/concerns from industry

d. Crash Truck & Winter Equipment Conspicuity

- IMOS – industry acknowledges that the number of incidents continues to increase, but increasing conspicuity is not the solution – increased education and enforcement are required. The issue isn't conspicuity, it's that drivers are not paying attention.
- Emcon – we agree with IMOS. Drivers are distracted and don't respect maintenance staff on the road. Changing visibility on its own won't improve safety.
- MTO advised that the activity of reviewing conspicuity is primarily focused on standardizing the conspicuity of crash trucks across the province. We will also review the conspicuity of winter equipment to confirm if updates are required, but

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this is secondary to the crash truck item. The purpose of the assignment is to provide a consistent approach for crash trucks in both maintenance and construction work.

- IMOS – we have no objection to having standardized conspicuity requirements, however we would like to participate in the development of the standards, and would like to further highlight that we have equipped our Incident Response Equipment differently compared to standalone crash trucks and would ask that this is a consideration during the development of MTO standards. Distinguishing between standalone crash trucks and Incident Response Equipment is important. Please provide information on who will be invited to provide feedback.
- MTO has no objection to reviewing those two items differently and will make note for further review. Options are being reviewed internally and MTO will schedule meetings to consult with industry soon.

e. Use of Time & Material (T&M):

- Industry is requesting a workshop with MTO to review the use of T&M because it has become more commonly used for change order work. We understand that some situations warrant its use, but the methods used to determine when T&M should be used verses when it shouldn't be used, is not consistent across the province and industry would like a more standardized approach.
 - MTO would like industry to provide examples so that we can determine which area in our Change Order training needs improvement. There are generally 3 major categories that warrant the use of T&M (disagreement on pricing, cost recovery, and if the scope of work is unclear).

ACTION ITEM:

- Industry to provide examples to MTO for improper use of Risk Mitigation as well as frequent use of T&M.

5. Roundtable:

- MTO advised industry that PVMS in Northern Ontario are being activated in advance of severe weather to provide the public with advance warning.

6. Next Meeting: March 18th, 2024.

Adjournment: Meeting was adjourned at 11:11 AM.

Meeting Minutes Prepared by: Valérie Labbé