



# Transportation Management System Operations Manual

TMC  
Pooled-Fund Study

TMC pooled-fund web site <http://tmcdfs.ops.fhwa.dot.gov/>

September 2004

## What are the objectives of the guide?

- Clarify the need and benefits for an operations manual.
- Provide a resource for those developing, maintaining and using an operations manual.

## When can I expect the results?

- Final results will be available in August 2005.

## How can I monitor the progress of the project?

- Work-in-progress outlines and drafts of the documents will be posted on the TMC Pooled-Fund website.

**Project Kick-Off  
Announcement**

## Guide for Developing a Transportation Management System Operations Manual

You wouldn't buy a high performance car or a stereo system without a manual. So why operate a sophisticated transportation management system (TMS) without an up-to-date operations manual? But since every transportation management system is unique and infrastructure changes are a routine occurrence, the challenge of developing an up-to-date manual can be imposing.

Fortunately a number of TMS agencies have banded together and are working to write a guide for developing an operations manual. Their collective knowledge will leverage a broadened use of TMS manuals and thereby improve the aggregate effectiveness of transportation systems. By using this extensive practitioner knowledge base as input into development of the guide, the document becomes a resource suggesting best practices.

As the project team develops work products they will be placed on the TMC Pooled-Fund website for use by anyone who is planning, designing, operating, or maintaining a transportation management sys-

tem. The final products, due in August 2005, will be broadly distributed.

So what are the objectives of this project? A key outcome is to develop a technical document that provides information on the need for a manual and provides recommended practices on the development, maintenance, and use of an operations manual. Such a manual can direct the day-to-day management and operation of a transportation management system and its center (TMC).



Another goal is to produce a project related presentation, fact sheet, tri-fold brochure, primer, distribution plan and supporting outreach material. With these products the collective work of the TMS operators can be readily distributed to a large community of users.

## Key Milestones

The project kick-off meeting was held on August 10, 2004. An initial annotated outline for the guide document was submitted September 10, 2004 and posted to the TMC-Pooled Fund website. After additional revisions to the outline have occurred a final annotated outline will be completed by November 19, 2004.

Using the annotated outline as a template

the project team will begin writing the technical document. The initial draft will be completed by February 3, 2004. After revisions and subsequent drafts, the final document ready for printing will be completed by August 2, 2005.

Throughout this process drafts of the work-in-progress will be posted to the TMC Pooled-Fund web site.



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**Who can use the TMC Operations Manual guide?**

- Anyone who is planning, designing, operating, or maintaining a transportation management system.

By using an extensive practitioner knowledge base as input into development of the guide, the document becomes a resource suggesting best practices.



**Key Aspects of the Guide**

A successful operations manual has to meet a number of needs. In some cases the requirement is for **quick response** to pressing activities. Therefore, it is important to include sections that contain emergency contact numbers and control room emergency procedures.

In other cases the need is to **communicate policies** and concepts of operations to the operations staff. These topics provide the framework for effective management of the system and identify the roles of inter-agency cooperation.

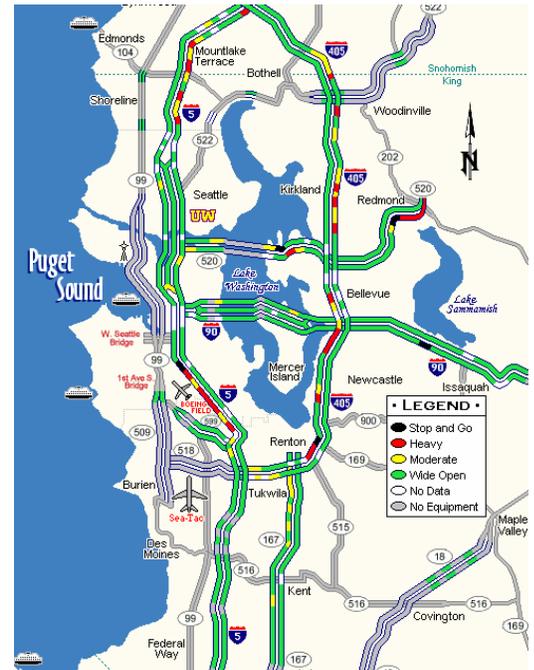
Other sections of the manual need to **describe the physical characteristics** of the system and field infrastructure so that TMC operators and field staff are able to work cooperatively to repair system outages.

Another portion should **identify daily operational practices** so that staffing can be planned, citizen service requests can be handled, and building security can be maintained.



**Additional Resources**

The *ITE Recommended Outline for a TMC Operations Manual* prepared in 2001 is available on the ITE web site at <http://ite.org/> and the TMC Pooled-Fund Study website at <http://tmc pfs.ops.fhwa.dot.gov/>. The TMC Pooled-Fund web site also contains TMC manuals that have been contributed by a number of public agencies including: Arizona, Tennessee, Texas and Washington State.



Other sections should **describe procedures for operating the systems** and equipment to effectively respond to incidents and congestion. Details should be provided for displaying messages on dynamic message signs, exchanging data with information service providers, posting information to the Internet and much more.

Many partners in the Pooled-Fund network are contributing years of experience to edit and direct the development of this guide. Their best practices can be guideposts for future TMC manuals.

**For More Information**

Visit the TMC Pooled-Fund Study website at <http://tmc pfs.ops.fhwa.dot.gov/>

Call the FHWA Operations "Help Line" toll-free (866) 367-7487