

North/West Passage Pooled Fund Study

TPF-5(093)

Phase III

Project 3.1: Corridor-Wide Consistent Major Event Descriptions

Implementation Plan

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1. Brief Description of Problem and/or Need for Project

North/West Passage (NWP) member states share a vision of integrated corridor-wide travel information delivery. In order to accomplish this vision, the North/West Passage states have long term plans to exchange messages between states that describe conditions, incidents, events, and restrictions. However, the states' recognize that the specific phrases used to describe events by each state are not consistent. Therefore, the member states agreed that the initial step to support eventual data exchange is to define a set of consistent event description phrases to be used when sharing messages. This document provides an Implementation Plan for North/West Passage Project 3.1: Corridor-Wide Consistent Major Event Descriptions Final Report, December 18, 2008.

2. Project Results / Major Discovery

A set of event description phrases has been identified to describe road/weather, roadway management, vehicle restriction, roadwork, and incident situations. A matrix has been created to map the phrases currently used by member states to the newly defined consistent phrases. Each event description phrase includes a definition.

Based upon the feedback of the member states, the various agencies expect to:

- Transition to use the event description phrases defined within this project. This will allow the phrases to be exchanged with other member agencies in a consistent manner; and/or
- Continue using the current phrases local to their state and translate the local phrases to the newly defined consistent phrases when exchanging with other member agencies or uploading events to the NWP website. All states indicated that they would be willing to use the recommended phrases as translations when exchanging events.

Most states will perform a combination of the two approaches (e.g. transitioning to use some of the newly defined phrases and also translating local phrases into consistent phrases when exchanging with other states).

3. Recommendations for Future North/West Passage Activities

The findings of this study directly relate to two funded North/West Passage projects in the 2008-2009 Work Plan:

- Project 4.1 - North/West Passage Traveler Information Website – Phase 2 (\$50,000)
- Project 4.3 - Center-to-Center Communications Concept of Operations (\$30,000)

After discussing the project results and plans for implementation with each member agency, the understanding of the project team is that the member states are most interested in exchanging consistent event messages to support the North/West Passage corridor-wide ATIS website. Therefore, the recommendation is to focus efforts of Project 4.3 primarily on the data exchange and translation of event phrases needed to populate the corridor-wide website. It is also recommended that Project 4.1 focus on displaying the events shared by member agencies on the corridor-wide website (as opposed to the original plan of only highlighting states with major events).

The recommendation is to procure both projects together as one solicitation (\$80,000) to achieve economies of scale and accomplish the desired data exchange and event posting on the corridor-wide website.

4. How the Information will be used by the North/West Passage Program

Each North/West Passage states' representatives who are responsible for traveler information and event reporting will benefit from the results presented in the Final Report.

The Final Report should be used as a basis for the Work Plan 4 projects that relate to data exchanges and modifications to the corridor-wide website.

5. How the Information will be used by the Individual Member Agencies

Each of the NWP member states were contacted to understand how they are planning to use the results of the Final Report. The findings are summarized below:

Washington State:

- Is beginning a process to review and modify their reporting system;
- Will include the Final Report of this project as a key input to the redesign process;
- Expects to make some changes to the phrases used to more closely match the recommended phrases;
- Open to translating any local phrases to the phrases defined in this project for reporting on the NWP corridor-wide website.

Idaho:

- Indicated that they have a mature traveler information system that already uses many of the phrases recommended in the document;
- Do not plan to make any changes to their current phrases;

- Appreciated the phrase definitions and will plan to use them to update training materials;
- Open to translating any local phrases to the phrases defined in this project for reporting on the NWP corridor-wide website.

Montana:

- Utilized the document in their recent efforts to update their traveler information system;
- Made several changes to event phrases to match the recommended consistent phrases in the document;
- Open to translating any local phrases to the phrases defined in this project for reporting on the NWP corridor-wide website.

Wyoming:

- Reviewed the recommended phrases and definitions;
- Made some changes to the local phrases used based upon the recommended phrases;
- Open to translating any local phrases to the phrases defined in this project for reporting on the NWP corridor-wide website.

North Dakota:

- Indicated that they are currently in the process of revamping their traveler information system;
- Stated that they plan to use most or all of the recommended consistent phrases in the document in their new system;
- Interested in sharing their information with other states and with the NWP traveler information website.

South Dakota:

- Indicated that they have a mature traveler information system that already uses many of the phrases recommended in the document;
- Expects to make some changes to the phrases used to more closely match the recommended phrases;
- Open to translating any local phrases to the phrases defined in this project for reporting on the NWP corridor-wide website.

Minnesota:

- Indicated they will reduce the number of phrases used for event entry;
- After reviewing the recommended phrases, has indicated a willingness to use most or all of the phrases in the document;
- Open to translating any local phrases to the phrases defined in this project for reporting on the NWP corridor-wide website