

**Director's Board Report
June 2016**

Thank you Chairman Whitehead. And good morning members of the Idaho Transportation Board.

I would like to thank Amy Revis and her staff for hosting the District 3 Director Visits and workshops on Monday and Tuesday of this week.

In addition to learning about and discussing the department's new 2016 to 2020 five-year direction, the employees shared several of their most important innovations with me.

Kevin Daughdrill and Rachele McCoy showed how District 3 replaced the original tunnel lights on Interstate 84 between Eisenman and Meridian Road with LED lighting.

This seemingly small improvement will save District 3 almost \$20,000 per year by reducing electricity costs and manpower requirements.

The Supply Office is working with Idaho Power to see if the innovation is eligible for a rebate program.

AJ Hutchinson explained that nesting crows were damaging our Road Weather Information System site near Hammett.

They were pecking out the lenses of the camera and lights.

It costs about \$4,000 to replace the lenses for one camera and light setup, not including the manpower required to make multiple visits to the site to remove crow nests.

District 3 resolved the situation by building a perch and nesting box higher than the tower and off to one side.

They made the perch out of galvanized steel and aluminum to reduce the weight of the structure and reduce stress on the tower in windy conditions.

This innovation could save thousands of dollars in repair costs and site visits.

Richard Peyer shared an innovation involving cattle guards.

ITD is required to install cattle guards on all county roads that access Interstate Highways.

District 3 has been looking for a more economical, less labor intensive alternative to the traditional steel cattle guards that we normally use.

They found a company that produces a concrete cattle guard form that can improve safety for cattle and save the district a lot of money.

Our old cattle guards cost nearly \$19,000 each, and require an excavator or crane and a large crew to unload and set them into place.

The new cattle guards only need a two-foot-deep hole, and two people to unload and place them.

And they require less material for backfill.

The new cattle guards only cost \$4,000, and are rated for 32,000 pounds per axle.

They require no specialized equipment to install and significantly reduce manpower needs and overall costs.

All we have to do is place the polyethylene form, fill it with concrete, and wait for it to cure.

Jason Brinkman, Jerry Richards, and Richard Peryer shared an innovation for highway striping.

District 3 began looking at statewide striping operations over a year ago to find ways to improve the process and save money.

They believed they could find a way to create significant savings by changing the personnel who paint the lines, and how they do it.

Districts 3, 4, 5, and 6 have been contracting for striping Interstate highways for decades due to a lack of resources to stripe all of the lanes in southern Idaho with just two striping crews—one in District 3 and one in District 5.

By combining the crews in Districts 1 and 2, and shifting one of their striping trucks to District 6, we should be able to paint all highways in the state, without the use of a contractor.

This will create nearly \$1 million in savings per year.

The new striping plan will save an additional \$40,000 per year by eliminating much of the travel time, lodging, and per-diem expenses needed for the crews that paint in other districts, requiring them to stay out of town for extended periods.

This is an excellent innovation that started with an initial plan from District 3 that was then improved upon by District 5.

The collaborative innovation developed by these two districts will improve striping statewide, saving more than \$1 million per year, and we are excited to implement it in the next construction season.

District 3 employees also shared some of their ideas on ways to improve business practices, such as:

- cross-utilizing staff
- sharing resources across foreman boundaries

- increasing communication after projects to discuss what went right and what could have been done better
- and re-designing traffic-control trucks to allow crews to place traffic devices without exiting the vehicle

This is just a small sample of the many ideas they put forth to improve the way things are done at ITD.

* * * *

On Tuesday afternoon I drove a sweeper truck with Sam Leamon on the Interstate 184 connector, followed by a crash truck driven by Bob Sheldon.

Sweeper vehicles remove loose gravel and debris from the driving surface.

This keeps rock chips and gravel from damaging windshields and paint jobs, and cleans up any litter lying on the road.

Sweeping also creates smoother, cleaner surfaces for maintenance and improvement projects.

Then I took a ride on Interstate 84 in the Incident Response vehicle operated by Kyle Wright.

We were able to help a couple traveling from eastern Idaho to Cascade. One of the tires on their trailer blew out and we arrived to change it for them.

They said it delayed them by 40 minutes, but when the same thing happened in Arizona, they were delayed by two and a half hours.

This shows our Incident-Response program is accomplishing its mission of improving safety by clearing roadside issues quickly.

This keeps traffic flowing, removes roadside dangers, and reduces crashes.

Imagine the relief of having a tire blow out on a busy section of four-lane Interstate highway and seeing the incident-response vehicle pull up to help you a few minutes later.

The smiles our response crews see on driver's faces are genuine.

So are the hearty **THANK YOUs** they receive both in person and in written letters sent to Headquarters and District 3.

* * * * *

We have another program that is also designed to keep traffic flowing smoothly, but it works in a different way.

With just a couple clicks of a mouse, drivers can now use Idaho's 511 Traveler Services system find out how long their drive time will be extended due to travel delays such as a construction project or a minor crash.

The new feature uses Google traffic speed information to calculate how long it takes to make the commute during ideal driving conditions, subtracts that from the current drive time, and shows drivers the delay time.

If the 511 system is showing an event, it will automatically calculate the delay time and give the event icon on the screen a highly visible orange glow.

This information is regularly updated every 15 minutes.

When the delay goes away, the event icon will return to normal.

Right now, this new feature is only available for the interstate system.

We are working to expand it to all U.S. highways in Idaho, and a few key state highways.

We may also be able to use the new technology to report live traffic delays for recurrent rush-hour congestion, and for delays associated with winter storms.

For now, the delay information is only available on the full-feature version of ITD's 511 website.

In the future, we hope to expand this capability to ITD 511 smartphone app and the streamlined version of the 511 website.

* * * *

Chris Victory, ITD's new Chief Information Officer, has scheduled visits to each district.

He is meeting with the employees and sharing his message that that the Information Technology staff can be valuable partners in the successes of every ITD business group and every employee.

He has already met with District 3 staff.

In preparation for the visits, he created a short video to introduce himself and the department's IT objectives and strategies. Here are a few of the key points he addresses in the video.

* * * *

In May, the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators, also known as AAMVA, met in Portland, Oregon, for its 2016 conference.

AAMVA presented ITD with three awards at the conference, including two for efforts designed to increase public awareness of critical highway-safety initiatives.

We received the Innovative Use of Technology award for **Idaho's Online Driver Record Dashboard**.

This program is both a regional and an international award winner.

ITD was the first department in the nation to provide an online tool allowing businesses to constantly track the driver's license status of their employees.

The program is designed to improve public safety by helping keep dangerous drivers off the road.

The Driver Record Dashboard allows companies to build and manage an unlimited list of drivers by entering vital information such as the driver's name, license number, or birthdate, in one online location.

The dashboard combines two tools, the driver license record status and driver medical certification status into one convenient, web-based application.

ITD partnered with Access Idaho to build and maintain the subscription-based service.

We were able to develop the program using no tax dollars or state funds.

We won an AAMVA award in the digital graphics category for an impaired driving campaign called **Grandma's House or the Big House**.

The campaign was based on the theme that impaired driving can wreck a holiday, and that drivers have a clear choice of two very different destinations for holiday dinner.

Grandma's House or the Big House.

The grandma you see is actually the grandmother of Mark Hall, who works in our Office of Communication.

ITD won a third AAMVA award in the Public Service Announcement or Television Commercial category for a video I shared with you before, called **Drive Safe, Belts On**.

Communications staff members created the video entirely in-house in the fall of 2015.

The video was targeted toward youthful drivers to address the issue of seat belt use.

They filmed the video at the College of Idaho in Caldwell with volunteers from one of the school's residence halls.

The message is to get young drivers to buckle up before the car starts.

Statistics show that if seat belt use becomes a habit at a young age, it will likely carry through for an entire lifetime.

Please play the video.

Using seat belts is one of the most effective ways to prevent fatalities and serious injuries.

This campaign also used radio ads, web ads, mobile phone ads, and social-media platforms.

This is the second year in a row that ITD has won three AAMVA awards, and I congratulate our staff in the Division of Motor Vehicles and the Office of Communication for their excellent and award-winning work.

* * * *

I would also like to congratulate ITD Public Transportation Manager Mark Bathrick.

He was selected to participate in the **American Public Transportation Association's Class of 2017 Early Career Program**, known as ECP.

The year-long program begins with a conference in Phoenix, where Mark will attend a three-day ECP conference from June 16 through the 18th.

Then he will attend the American Public Transportation Association's Rail Conference from June 19 through the 22nd.

The program is designed to develop and improve skills in many areas, including:

- communication
- administration
- project management
- personnel supervision
- career development
- and goal setting.

Mark is one of only 30 people chosen for this prestigious program nationwide.

He will begin working with industry leaders in a 10-month mentorship program starting in July.

* * * *

In May, several members of the District 2 maintenance team volunteered to participate in emergency preparation drills for the students at Potlatch High School.

Approximately 200 students at the school witnessed the emergency scenario, which also included volunteers from the Potlatch Rural Fire District, Potlatch Ambulance, the Latah County Sheriff's Office, Idaho State Police, and Life Flight.

High school students donned makeup to give the appearance of injuries, then acted as injured passengers, in two donated cars. A few of the students were extricated from the wrecked vehicles.

As part of the presentation, a deputy performed mock field sobriety tests on one student participant.

That student was then arrested on suspicion of impaired driving, cuffed, and placed in the back of a patrol unit.

Potlatch EMS provided medical assistance and transport to the football field.

Life Flight then landed and loaded a student participant for transport to the Idaho Transportation Department shed near Potlatch.

The event is presented about every three to four years.

It coincides with graduation season to help students make better decisions about not driving while distracted or impaired.

The district employees said they enjoy participating in these scenarios.

And that it is great training and raises awareness around the community as they do their part to help reduce traffic fatalities.

* * * *

To continue promoting work-zone safety throughout the construction season, the Office of Communication recently interviewed District 6 employee Troy Monk.

Troy was struck and severely injured by a car nearly 20 years ago in an ITD work zone, and he has a very powerful message.

Please play the video.

We believe that sharing messages like this with the public can reduce the number of crashes and improve safety in work zones.

It is a difficult message to forget, especially when spoken from the heart.

* * * *

During this time of year, work-zone safety is one of our top priorities, but so is bicycle and pedestrian safety.

On May 26, Governor Otter issued a proclamation declaring May 2016 **Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety and Awareness Month**.

The event was open to the public, and held on the steps of the Idaho Statehouse in Boise.

Guest speakers included:

Governor Otter,

Idaho Transportation Board Member Julie DeLorenzo,

ITD Chief Deputy Scott Stokes, and

Representatives from the Boise Bicycle Project and the YMCA Safe Routes to School Program.

The Governor's proclamation stated that bicycling is:

An excellent form of recreation and exercise, as well as a viable, environmentally sound form of transportation used by many Idaho families throughout the year.

And that thousands of Idaho children ride a bike or walk to school daily.

Chief Deputy Stokes was the emcee, and Governor Otter read the proclamation—but the star of the show was 6-year-old **Max Wyatt**, who was struck by a car while riding his bicycle in Boise last September.

Max's injuries were so severe that he had to be flown to Utah for medical attention.

After 13 surgeries, several skin grafts, and a three-month stay in the hospital, Max was finally able to return home to Idaho.

The horrific accident received so much media attention that it led to a major community movement to add mandatory questions about bicycle and pedestrian safety in the Idaho Driver's License Tests.

Here is a video showing a few of the high points from the Governor's proclamation.

If you look closely, you will see Max in the background, full of energy and enjoying his time in front of the crowd.

Lisa Brady, the Safe Routes to School Director for the Treasure Valley Family YMCA sent the following letter thanking ITD for the event.

She wrote, and I quote:

"My deepest appreciation and thanks go to all of you for making the event at the Capitol yesterday one for the books.

It was a true honor to be involved and to be part of the movement toward zero in Idaho.

It's so easy to be critical, to turn our heads away, to allow someone else to do it or just stay in status quo.

Though I am rather new to the ITD environs, I have seen nothing but a true effort to keep all road users safe, no matter what mode they use.

There is communication to the entire state, a willingness to try new things, and an open ear to listen to the needs of communities and the people in them who need to get "to" places, not just go through them.

Thank you for standing up for the safety of all citizens of the state, especially our most vulnerable."

End quote.

* * * *

This week, the Division of Aeronautics held their 25th **Aviation Career Exploration Academy**, also known as the **ACE Academy**.

It provides teenagers an opportunity to learn about careers in aviation.

The event was open to high school students between the ages of 14 and 18, and was sponsored by:

The Division of Aeronautics

Idaho Ninety-Nines

The Warhawk Air Museum

The Idaho Business Aviation Association

The Idaho Aviation Hall of Fame

and the Idaho Aviation Association.

During the three-day academy, students heard from experts in various aviation-related fields and representatives of regional and national aeronautical schools.

They also toured the Boise Airport, local aviation businesses and flight operations, and the Idaho Army and Air National Guard.

Tammy Schoen from the Division of Aeronautics says that every student comes in wanting to be a pilot, and that once they participate in the experiences we offer, they begin to look beyond the ordinary and leave excited about other aviation-related careers they might pursue.

Students participated in many activities, but some of the real highlights included navigating small airplanes, controlling air traffic, and exploring Blackhawk helicopters.

The academy was capped off with flights to nearby airports, such as Idaho City or Garden Valley.

Each student had the opportunity to experience a flight under the guidance of a veteran pilot who donated time and an airplane to make this possible for ACE participants.

We thank the pilots and our partners for making the **25th ACE Academy** a great success.

* * * * *

It is once again the annual ITD Equipment Roadeo season. Beginning on May 18, Equipment Roadeos were held in each of the six districts.

They included events such as knowledge tests and competitions driving and maneuvering front-end loaders and snow plows.

Equipment Roadeos test the drivers' skills as they maneuver snowplows and heavy loaders through obstacle courses.

They are also given a limited time to detect at least five mechanical problems in a designated truck.

The top three finishers and top foreman from each district advanced to the statewide competition, which was held this year in District 6's Idaho Falls maintenance yard on Tuesday.

These events are always competitive, and it is not out of the question for a district to bring in a ringer.

If you look very close at this photo, you may recognize a certain cleverly disguised board member photographed at District 3's roadeo held last week.

After a careful review of ITD's official **Roadeo Rule Book** and the flipping of a coin, it was determined that having a board member participate in the statewide finals in Idaho Falls would have given District 3 an unfair advantage.

While no one can be sure if that decision affected the final outcome or not, District 6 was declared the winning team of the 2016 ITD State Equipment Roadeo.

District 6's Trent Maupin, who works at the Sugar City maintenance shed, won the 2016 state roadeo title, joining an elite group of former winners who have earned back-to-back state titles.

Only three other competitors have won consecutive titles in the event's 23-year history.

District 6's Camilo Serrano, who works at the Dubois maintenance shed, won second place.

Sarah Wooley, from the Twin Falls maintenance shed, earned third place.

Followed closely by New Meadows Foreman Robin Freeman, in fourth place.

I congratulate them all for their wins, and for showing other drivers the kind of skills that are possible with training and practice.

* * *

I would now like to turn the microphone over to Chief Administrative Officer Char McArthur, for her June Report.

* * *

Mr. Chairman and members of the board, this concludes my Director's report for June.