STATE OF NEW JERSEY
HIGHWAY INCIDENT TRAFFIC SAFETY GUIDELINES FOR EMERGENCY RESPONDERS

VERSION 2

Endorsed by New Jersey Office of the Attorney General
Date: July 1, 2014

Acknowledgements

New Jersey Career Fire Chief's Association
New Jersey Division of Fire Safety
New Jersey Department of Transportation – Transportation Systems Management
New Jersey State Fire Chief's Association
New Jersey State First Aid Council
New Jersey State Police Highway Traffic Safety Unit
New Jersey State Police Incident Management Unit
Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission

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APPENDICES

1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this document is to provide uniform operational guidelines to ensure safe operations by emergency responders dispatched to incidents on limited access highways and other roadways as applicable in the State of New Jersey. These operational guidelines were formulated based on nationally recognized practices, with guidance from those agencies listed under Acknowledgements. Input was received from representatives of those agencies listed under the State of New Jersey Highway Incident Traffic Safety Guidelines for Emergency Responders Feedback Committee, and the document was endorsed by the New Jersey Office of the Attorney General. This document should be used by emergency responders as a guideline for decision-making. The decisions can be modified as necessary to address existing onsite conditions.

Guidelines Mission: Provide a sustainable, multi-disciplined, and consistent traffic incident management program to promote: first responder safety; safe, quick clearance practices; and prompt, reliable incident communication.

These guidelines identify safe vehicle positioning, common general safety, and onsite practices for all emergency responders. It provides guidance for maximum protection and safety for all emergency responders operating at limited access highway incidents and other roadways As applicable. These guidelines also identify the need to provide mobility for the motoring public. All emergency responders should adhere to the standards set forth in the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD), Chapter 6I, which is listed in Appendix A. All emergency responders should understand and appreciate the special hazards and high risk that personnel are exposed to when operating at highway related incidents with motor vehicle traffic, high vehicle speeds, adverse weather conditions, heavy trucks, and exposure to motorists with varying degrees of ability, with possible vision, alcohol, and drug impairment. All emergency responders shall understand that the objective is to get onto the highway, perform their duties, and get off the highway as quickly and efficiently as possible. This will reduce high-risk exposure and help to get traffic patterns back to normal. Emergency responders should always operate within a protected environment at any type of incident on or near a highway, and when exposed to motor vehicle traffic.

The guidelines in this document are general since they cannot cover all incidents or unique site-specific conditions. This document is not intended to be a textbook, nor a substitute for training, technical knowledge, experience, or effective judgment. Local or geographic conditions may necessitate the need for additional sections to this document.

In order to manage highway incidents efficiently and safely on a consistent basis, it is important that emergency responders have an awareness of expected behavior from other responding agencies. All emergency responders should make every effort to increase communication and cooperation at an incident to reduce points of conflict and to better understand each agency's concerns. Managing a highway incident and any related problem is a team effort. It is not a question of "who is in charge" but "who is in charge of what."

Objectives of the guidelines set forth in this document follow recommended strategies of the National Unified Goal (NUG) of Traffic Incident Management. The NUG is a unified national policy developed by major national organizations representing traffic incident responders, under the leadership of the National Traffic Incident Management Coalition. The mission of this document are consistent with the three goals of the NUG: promotion of responder safety; safe, quick clearance; and prompt, reliable, interoperable communications.

Training on these guidelines is necessary and will be offered throughout the state. The State of New Jersey Highway Incident Traffic Safety Training Program has been approved by the Federal Highway Administration through their Strategic Highway Research Program (SHRP 2).

2 DEFINITION OF TERMS

The following terms shall be used during incident operations, post incident analyses, and training activities related to working in or near moving traffic:

Activity Area – an area comprised of the Buffer Space and the Incident Space.

Advance Warning Area– an area established upstream of the incident to alert drivers of the upcoming incident scene. This area should be a high priority for emergency responders. Placement of advance warning devices may need to be adjusted for situations near a curve, corner, hill, or other reduced visibility situations.

Blocker Vehicle – the initial on-scene emergency vehicle, preferably a fire apparatus, positioned on an angle to the lanes of traffic creating a physical barrier between upstream traffic and the Incident Space where responders are working. This includes using the vehicle to “block to the left” or “block to the right”.

Buffer Space –the empty, unoccupied space or distance between the Transition Area and the Incident Space.

Downstream – the area past the incident in the direction of normal traffic flow as it travels away from the incident space.

Emergency Responder – Fire, Police, EMS, transportation agency, and any other personnel dispatched to an emergency scene.

Incident – any non-recurring event that causes a reduction of roadway capacity due to motor vehicle crashes, vehicle fires, natural disaster, or other unplanned event that affects or impedes the normal flow of traffic.

Incident Space –the area contained in the Activity Area which includes the incident and the necessary space around the incident required to manage the event, including vehicles and personnel.

Law Enforcement – New Jersey State Police or other law enforcement agency with jurisdictional authority.

Limited Access Highway – designation of a highway with limited access points.

MUTCD – The Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, published by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) under 23 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 655, Subpart F.

Off-ramp – exit from the highway.

On-ramp – entrance to the highway.

Protected Space – the space not occupied by responders or response vehicles between the blocking vehicle and the incident. A Blocker Vehicle should be positioned a sufficient distance in advance of responders to absorb contact by an errant vehicle.

Shadow Vehicle – the second due fire apparatus or other emergency responder vehicle, which positions upstream of the Blocker vehicle at an angle.

Taper – the action of directing several lanes of traffic into fewer or more lanes utilizing traffic control devices. This action should be used prior to the Buffer Space, and may also be used in the Termination Area.

Temporary Traffic Control Zone –defined by the MUTCD as an area of highway where road user conditions are changed because of a work zone or an incident through the use of temporary traffic control devices, uniformed law enforcement officers, or authorized personnel.

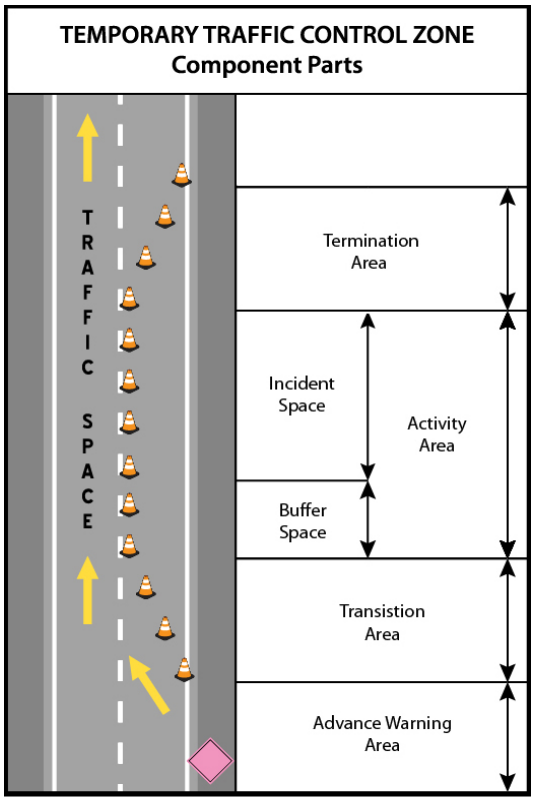
Termination Area – the area used to notify drivers that the Traffic Incident Management Area is ending and they may resume normal driving.

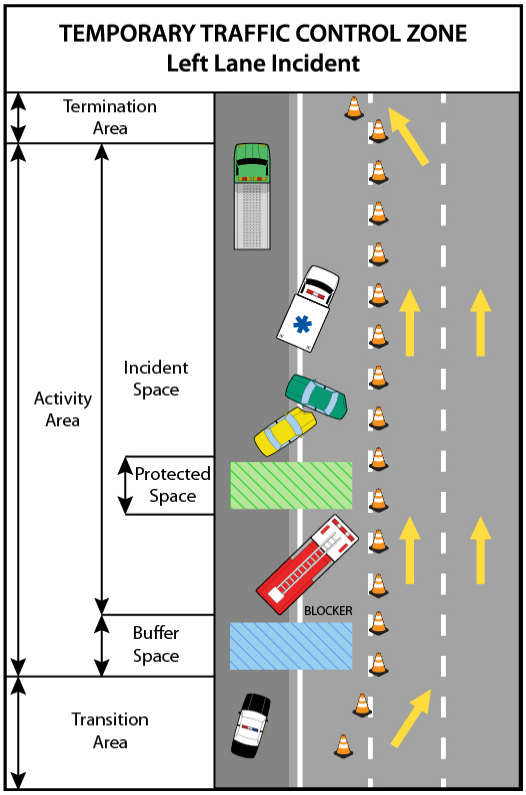
Traffic Incident Management Area – this area is a type of Temporary Traffic Control Zone and extends from the first warning device to an area where the moving traffic returns to original traffic patterns and is clear of the incident. Consideration should be given to include the area which is part of the police investigation. This area has four main components: Advance Warning Area, Transition Area, Activity Area and Termination Area.

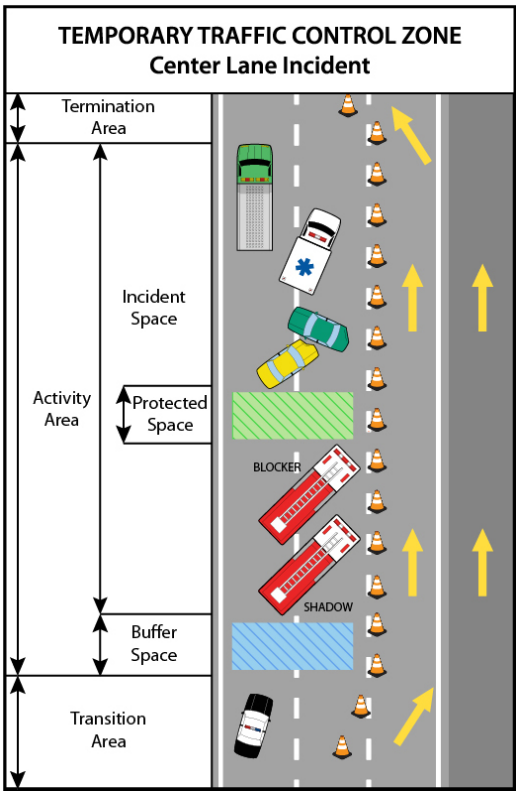
Transition Area – the area/lane of roadway where approaching motorists change their speed and position to comply with the traffic control measures established at an incident scene.

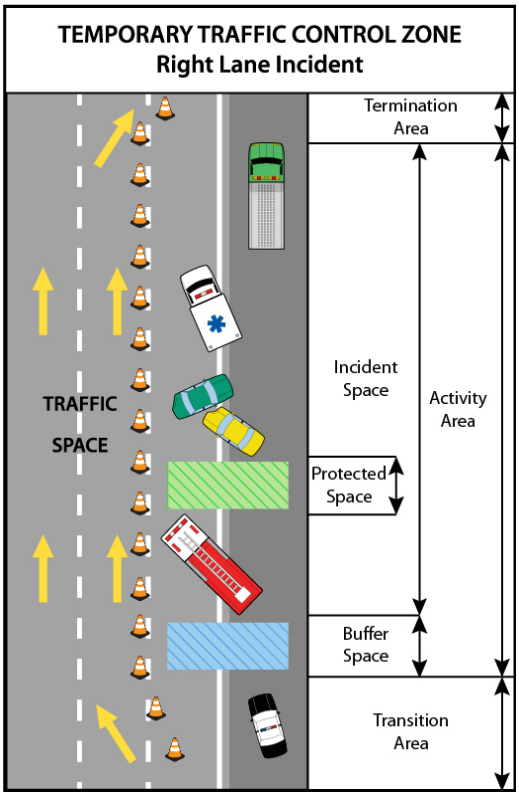
Upstream – the area prior to the incident in the direction of normal traffic flow as the vehicles approach the Traffic Incident Management Area.

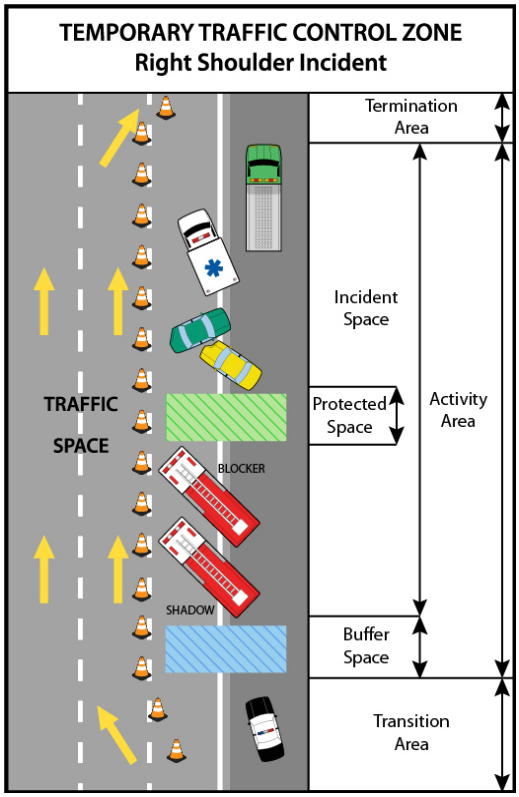
The following diagrams illustrate typical components of a Temporary Traffic Control Zone and example incident situations.




TEMPORARY TRAFFIC CONTROL ZONE
Left Lane Incident
Termination Area
Activity Area
Incident Space
Protected Space
Buffer Space
Transition Area
BLOCKER


TEMPORARY TRAFFIC CONTROL ZONE
Center Lane Incident
Termination Area
Activity Area
Incident Space
Protected Space
Buffer Space
Transition Area
BLOCKER
SHADOW


TEMPORARY TRAFFIC CONTROL ZONE
Right Lane Incident
Termination Area
TRAFFIC SPACE
Incident Space
Activity Area
Protected Space
Buffer Space
Transition Area


TEMPORARY TRAFFIC CONTROL ZONE
Right Shoulder Incident
Termination Area
TRAFFIC SPACE
Incident Space
Protected Space
Activity Area
BLOCKER
SHADOW
Buffer Space
Transition Area

3 INCIDENT MANAGEMENT

Responders to highway incidents will utilize a National Incident Management System (NIMS) compliant command structure. As defined by FEMA, NIMS is a comprehensive, national approach to incident management that is applicable at all jurisdictional levels and across functional disciplines. It is intended to:

- Be applicable across a full spectrum of potential incidents, hazards, and impacts; regardless of size, location, or complexity.
- Improve coordination and cooperation between public and private entities in a variety of incident management activities.
- Provide a common standard for overall incident management.

Incidents requiring the response of multiple stakeholders will be managed via a Unified Command. As such, each responding discipline will send a representative to the Unified Command Post, where they will work cooperatively and within their respective areas of expertise to safely and effectively mitigate the incident. Decisions will be communicated amongst all stakeholder representatives to ensure coordination of efforts.

The designated law enforcement member on scene will serve in the role of Incident Commander, and will have the final say in any disputes which arise within the unified command structure.

In conformance with NIMS, responders will typically be assigned to one of the following branches: Fire Branch (Rescue, HazMat, Suppression); Emergency Medical Services Branch (Triage, Treatment, Transport, Rehab); and Police Branch (New Jersey State Police (NJSP), other law enforcement, New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT), other transportation agencies, towing and recovery).

3.1 The first arriving emergency responder will establish command of the incident and remains in control until command is transferred or the incident is stabilized and terminated.

3.2 If law enforcement arrives on an established scene, they shall interface with the Incident Commander for an incident briefing and the transfer of command. While still maintaining overall incident scene responsibility, the law enforcement Incident Commander may designate incident operations to another public safety agency in order to effectively manage and coordinate incident resources.

4 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The following is an outline of typical roles and responsibilities of emergency responders who are dispatched to highway incidents. It is understood the listed roles and responsibilities may vary based on incident needs.

4.1 Common Responsibilities

Typical incident management responsibilities applicable to all branches include:

(a) Protect the incident scene
(b) Perform first responder duties
(c) Assume role of Incident Commander, if appropriate
(d) Support unified command
(e) Clear minor incidents
(f) Follow bloodborne pathogens protocol
(g) Wear appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), including Safety Vests
(h) Preserve evidence
(i) Be visible at all times

4.2 Emergency Medical Services Branch

The primary responsibilities of EMS are the triage, treatment, and transport of victims. Additional incident management responsibilities include:

(a) Provide medical treatment to those injured at the incident scene
(b) Determine destination and transportation requirements for injured victims
(c) Coordinate evacuation with fire, police, and ambulance or airlift
(d) Transport victims for additional medical treatment
(e) Provide medical monitoring and rehabilitation for emergency responders

4.3 Fire Branch

Fire and rescue services are provided by fire departments and HazMat agencies.

Additional incident management responsibilities include:

(a) Rescue/extricate victims
(b) Extinguish fires
(c) Stabilize and render safe crash damaged vehicles
(d) Assess incidents involving a hazardous materials release
(e) Contain or mitigate a hazardous materials release
(f) Mitigate minor fluid spills
(g) Establish and monitor Temporary Medevac Landing Zones

4.4 Police Branch

4.4.1 Law Enforcement

Applicable law enforcement agencies have jurisdiction over highway incidents.

Additional incident management responsibilities include:

(a) Serve as Incident Commander
(b) Secure incident scene
(c) Assist responders in accessing the incident scene
(d) Establish emergency access routes
(e) Control arrival and departure of incident responders
(f) Police perimeter of incident scene and impact area
(g) Conduct incident investigation
(h) Establish Temporary Traffic Control Zone
(i) Perform traffic control
(j) Remain at the incident scene until the tow truck or other last responder has left the scene, unless the highway agency provides that coverage

4.4.2 Transportation Agency

The applicable transportation agency is responsible for establishing traffic control.

Additional incident management responsibilities include:

(a) Monitor Traffic Operations
(b) Perform incident detection and verification
(c) Establish Temporary Traffic Control Zone
(d) Implement traffic control strategies and provide supporting resources
(e) Disseminate motorist information
(f) Assess and direct incident clearance activities
(g) Develop and operate alternate routes
(h) Assess and perform emergency roadwork and infrastructure repair
(i) Remain at the incident scene until the tow truck or last responder has left the scene, unless law enforcement provides that coverage

4.4.3 Towing and Recovery

Towing and recovery services are responsible for the safe and efficient removal of wrecked or disabled vehicles, and debris from the incident scene. Appendix B includes the Towing & Recovery Association of America (TRAA) Vehicle Identification Guide to assist in providing information needed to correctly dispatch towing and recovery units. Towing and recovery operators shall respond under guidelines established in the NJSP SOP for vehicle towing (F56).

Additional incident management responsibilities include:

(a) Evaluate scene safety with IC, discussing recovery procedures
(b) Provide technical assistance/information to other responding stakeholders

(c) Mitigate minor fluid spills
(d) Apply absorbents and remove debris/spilled fluids from the roadway, and properly dispose of, when directed by IC under the guidelines of State Statue Title 39:4–56.8
(e) Perform recovery by re-aligning the vehicle to tow truck, not tow truck to vehicle, using snatch blocks or other techniques, when able to do so safely
(f) Perform recoveries in one lane, if possible, and load vehicle for transport
(g) Clean up debris and used absorbents. Do not place debris and absorbents in the vehicle
(h) Return roadway to pre-incident condition as well as possible
(i) Check in with IC prior to departing the scene
(j) Transport occupants of the vehicle to a safe location after the vehicle is removed from the roadway

5 RECOMMENDED EQUIPMENT

All dispatched responding personnel must wear ANSI Class II (or higher) Safety Vests. In compliance with the MUTCD, and where applicable, agencies responding to incidents should have the following equipment.

5.1 A minimum of six (6) NJDOT approved reflective traffic cones;

5.2 A minimum of one (1) case of traffic flares or strobes;

5.3 A lighted arrow stick or sign board;

5.4 National Fire Protection Association 2009 Edition, NJDOT, or other agency approved reflective striping to the rear and sides of the appropriate emergency response vehicles;

5.5 A minimum compliment of Basic First Aid equipment;

5.6 A 48” x 48” retro-reflective pink sign stating “Emergency Scene Ahead”.

6 GENERAL SAFETY AND RISK MANAGEMENT

Responders to highway incidents must maintain a constant awareness of the inherent danger of operating on limited access highways. While completely closing the highway whenever an incident occurs may seem the safest option, it can cause a myriad of problems and complications:

- The number of personnel needed to safely and effectively close the highway or roadway.

- The greatly increased chance of secondary crashes, both on the affected highway and on secondary roads not designed for the increased traffic volume.
- The likely delay for additional emergency units attempting to access the incident scene.
- Significant traffic congestion in a large geographic area, impeding responses to additional emergency incidents which may occur.

Therefore, police and other emergency responders must work cooperatively to employ the necessary traffic diversions to establish a safe work zone for responders, without unnecessarily restricting the flow of traffic through the area.

Each responder at an incident must be constantly aware of his or her personal safety. While traffic control devices and visibility enhancing garments will increase your safety, they will not protect you from a driver who loses control of their vehicle and/or is not paying attention to the road. Therefore, your greatest protection is to keep a physical barrier (blocker vehicle, guiderail, crash vehicles, etc.) between you and moving traffic whenever possible.

The following are additional protective measures you can take to maximize your protection at an incident scene. Be safe. Act safe.

6.1 In accordance with Federal Regulation 23 CFR 634, all emergency workers operating on a highway who are exposed to traffic shall wear a Class II or higher vest complying with ANSI/ISEA 107, 2004 or 2006 or a Public Safety Vest complying with ANSI/ISEA 207, 2006. Firefighters or other emergency responders engaged in emergency operations that directly expose them to flame, fire, heat, and/or hazardous materials are not required to wear a vest, provided they are attired in retro-reflective turn-out gear that is specified and regulated by other organizations, such as the National Fire Protection Association.

6.2 Notwithstanding the visibility requirements described above, fire department members are expected to wear full Personal Protective Equipment (coat, pants, helmet) while operating on the highway. As noted above, an approved Class II vest must be worn over the coat (unless the above described exemption criteria is met). The IC may allow firefighters to remove their coats after the hazard has been mitigated, however, the Class II vest must still be worn.

6.3 Responders shall never operate in a live lane. Crossing a live lane should be done with extreme caution and should be avoided when possible.

6.4 Hose lines/equipment should be deployed from the protected, downstream side (opposite live traffic lanes) of emergency vehicles whenever possible.

6.5 Do not enter or exit apparatus near or in live lanes of traffic.

6.6 Do not drive against the flow of traffic without law enforcement approval and confirmation that traffic has been stopped.

6.7 Use designated entrances and exits. Do not use median turnarounds unless there is a life threat or other extenuating circumstances.

6.8 Shut down forward facing emergency lights to reduce opposite direction incidents.

6.9 Limit the amount of equipment on the roadway, thus reducing your liability exposure. Risk vs. Need.

6.10 Always communicate, coordinate, cooperate, be professional, and work within the framework of unified command.

6.11 Ensure all members are aware of and trained on these guidelines.

7 INCIDENT RESPONSE

Response to limited access highway incidents should be made by the agency that has the safest and most efficient access to the incident. This may require agreements to be executed so a municipality can cover incidents that are in another municipality or geographical area. Consideration should be given to using mutual aid to cover the opposite direction of the highway. Mutual aid should be considered to share and provide an adequate response and adequate resources. Once the location and scope of the incident is determined, only essential vehicles should be committed to respond. All other apparatus should be returned or assigned to staging. It is important to note that if emergency responders are cancelled by law enforcement while en route to any highway assignment, they shall go available and return.

7.1 Only official vehicles will be permitted on the highway. Under no circumstances will personal vehicles respond to incidents on any limited access highways.

7.2 A sufficient crew of emergency responders is recommended for units responding to incidents to limit the number of apparatus on scene.

7.3 Companies may be assigned responsibility for a specific area of the highway, and may be directed to enter the highway via a designated ramp. Absent extenuating circumstances, or specific orders to the contrary, companies will utilize their assigned entry ramp whenever responding to incidents.

7.4 As a general rule, full size fire apparatus should utilize normal entrances and exits to reverse their direction of travel. Use of the median or paved U-Turns should be reserved for life threatening emergencies and extenuating circumstances.

7.5 Emergency responding units should utilize normal entrances and exits to reverse their direction of travel. Use of the median or paved U-Turns should be reserved for life threatening emergencies and extenuating circumstances.

7.6 In the absence of other options, it may be necessary for emergency vehicles to travel against the normal traffic flow to access an incident scene. No units or vehicles will employ this maneuver unless and until they receive specific approval from law enforcement and confirmation that traffic flow has been stopped. Once approval is received, the emergency vehicle shall proceed with extreme caution utilizing the shoulder portion of the roadway if possible.

7.7 Communicate with the appropriate transportation agency's regional traffic operations center or dispatch center to assist with detection and verification of the incident location.

8 ARRIVING ON SCENE

8.1 The first arriving emergency responder will establish command and provide an arrival report with the following information:
- (a) Location of the incident (direction of travel, milepost, landmark, waterway, etc.)
- (b) Lanes affected by the incident
- (c) Number of vehicles involved
- (d) Vehicle condition (on fire, overheat, occupied, entrapment, overturned)
- (e) Best access for responding units (left shoulder, right shoulder, etc.)

8.2 A detailed size-up should be conducted as quickly as possible. Based on the size-up, a determination will be made regarding the resources needed to handle the incident. Units not needed should be directed to staging or recalled.

8.3 Standard practice will be to position emergency response vehicles in such a manner that best protects the incident space and passing motorists.

8.4 Consideration should be given to traffic flow and to providing an avenue for additional resources to access the incident space.

8.5 When possible, crew members should enter/exit their units on the side opposite the traffic flow. Emergency responders should always check for approaching traffic before exiting their vehicle.

8.6 The magnitude of the incident should be estimated, within the first fifteen (15) minutes of arrival, using the criteria set below:

Minor – 30 minutes or less

Intermediate – 30 minutes to 2 hours (contact Highway Agency)

Major – more than 2 hours (contact Highway Agency)

All incidents should be updated every 15-30 minutes.

8.7 Emergency responders should always be aware of their visibility to oncoming traffic and take measures to move the traffic incident as far off the traveled highway as possible or to provide for appropriate warning. Emergency vehicles should be safe-positioned in such a manner as to optimize traffic flow through the incident scene. All subsequent arriving emergency vehicles should be positioned as to not interfere with the established temporary traffic flow.

8.8 EMS units should routinely be positioned downstream of the incident, within the incident space.

8.9 If a second fire apparatus responds to the scene as a shadow vehicle, it should safe-position at least 50 feet upstream of the blocker vehicle, to help ensure an adequate buffer zone. The crew in the shadow vehicle shall abandon the vehicle and report to the incident space. The shadow vehicle assumes a fend-off position to deflect any high speed impact that would otherwise crash into the incident space.

8.10 Unit operators shall cancel any warning lights, which impair the vision of approaching traffic (i.e. headlights, spotlights, clear warning lights).

8.11 Position emergency vehicles on the same side of the roadway as the incident.

9 TRAFFIC CONTROL

Emergency responders shall control oncoming traffic prior to turning their attention to the incident. Understanding that there is no absolute means to protect emergency responders at the scene of an incident, responders are urged to constantly keep in mind the “four guiding principles” when operating in or near moving traffic. Recognizing the following principles will increase the margin of safety.

Provide Advance Warning
Use traffic control devices such as signs, other emergency vehicles, or any other appropriate device that will warn or direct motorists away from an approaching incident.

Protect the Scene
Position vehicles and traffic control devices in such a way that allows for adequate space between the point where the traffic is diverted and the actual incident space. Fire apparatus should position in a manner that best protects the incident space. Such

positioning affords protection to responders from the hazards of working in or near motor vehicle traffic.

Be Visible
All responders operating at an incident with moving traffic shall wear highly visible, highly reflective garments to increase the ability of motorists to see the emergency responders during day and night operations.

Protect Yourself
Responders should make every effort to keep a physical barrier between themselves and moving traffic. If engaged in emergency activities, try to position a blocker vehicle between you and moving traffic. If standing-by at a scene, sit inside your vehicle, or stand behind the guide rail. The less time you're exposed to moving traffic, the safer you are!

9.1 Traffic control is primarily the responsibility of applicable law enforcement or highway authorities.

9.2 If the above agencies are not present, it is the responsibility of initial responders to establish a safe Traffic Incident Management Area. Traffic cones, flares and/or emergency vehicles may be used for this purpose, until appropriate equipment becomes available.

9.3 Scene conditions may necessitate the use of a buffer lane to provide an additional margin of safety for emergency workers, or to protect against any other unforeseen circumstances which would expose emergency workers to increased risk from passing traffic.

9.4 When placing traffic control devices, consideration should be given to drivers' reaction time and visual obstructions. Advance warning may need to be extended upstream based on factors such as topography, time of day, and weather to reduce the potential for secondary crashes.

9.5 Responders should face traffic at all times when placing and retrieving traffic control devices. Placement of cones shall begin at the corner of the blocker or shadow vehicle, while moving upstream, tapering at an angle. An "Emergency Scene Ahead" retro-reflective pink sign should be deployed upstream of all apparatus and cones, on the shoulder, as per MUTCD guidelines.

9.6 Traffic should not be allowed to pass the incident space on both sides of emergency responders, unless approved by the Incident Commander. Traffic should be diverted to the left or the right of the scene.

9.7 If law enforcement arrives on scene and determines that a previously closed lane must be opened to traffic, fire department and/or EMS responders must comply with this order.

A reasonable amount of time will be afforded for responders to move to a safe area before the lane is opened.

9.8 If the senior fire or EMS officer does not feel adequate safety measures are in place, they should direct their personnel to a safe area until the situation is resolved with the Incident Commander at the scene.

9.9 The closing of additional lanes not affected by the accident, to include on and off ramps, shall require the approval of law enforcement and transportation agencies.

9.10 When communicating with other personnel responding to an incident, it is important to note the exact location of the incident, and the most efficient route to access the incident.

Lane Designations

For purposes of uniformity, the following plain text guidance, which has been adopted by the National Traffic Incident Management Coalition, will be used to communicate the lane or portion of roadway affected by the incident:

9.10.1 Use plain English where possible to identify incident location and lane designations. On roadways with 3 or less lanes, they are named left, center, and right when facing in the direction of traffic flow.

9.10.2 When roadways have more than 3 lanes in any one direction, the lanes can be identified and labeled with numbers, starting with the far left lane.

9.10.3 When using lane numbers, the far left lane shall be called “Lane 1.” Each lane to the right is numbered sequentially 2 through n.

9.10.4 Shoulders should be identified as “right shoulder” or “left shoulder.”

9.10.5 Indicate the relative direction of travel (e.g. northbound or southbound) along with other incident location detail and any specific position assignments. For example, an incoming unit might be told to safe park or “Upon arrival, position as a blocker for the right shoulder and right lane.”

9.10.6 If the incident is located before the merge point it shall be considered a separate roadway and identified as such, i.e. left hand exit ramp.

9.10.7 The use of specific terms which apply only to certain sections of the response area (i.e. I-76 Local and Express lanes) are acceptable, provided the terminology is NIMS compliant and is communicated to all companies/units who normally respond to those areas.

9.11 To aid with traffic management and support responder safety, the NJDOT and other transportation agencies monitor traffic along their facilities using traffic operations centers or resource dispatch centers. Additional advanced warning of incidents can be provided using the resources available from these centers (Dynamic Message Signs (DMS), portable DMS, or traveler information systems like 511).

10 DEMOBILIZATION

10.1 Demobilization of the incident must be managed with the same aggressiveness as initial actions. Apparatus and equipment should be removed promptly, to reduce exposure to moving traffic and minimize traffic congestion.

10.2 Demobilization begins at the downstream termination area and ends at the furthest most upstream advance warning device. All responders and apparatus should clear the travel lanes before the last device is picked up and secured.

10.3 Vehicle operators shall ensure that all equipment has been properly returned to the apparatus, and all doors are closed and secure.

10.4 All personnel should be properly seated and secured with seat belts.

10.5 Departing the scene can be hazardous for emergency responders, especially when attempting to merge large fire apparatus into traffic moving at highway speeds. Merging into the left lane from the center median is particularly hazardous. If the company officer does not feel the apparatus can safely merge into traffic, assistance should be sought from law enforcement and/or the transportation agency to employ a slow down or other protective measures to assist the apparatus in safely departing the scene. When possible, apparatus should use the shoulder as an acceleration lane before merging into traffic. Emergency warning lights should be cancelled only after the vehicle has completely merged into traffic.

11 GUIDELINE MAINTENANCE AND UPDATES

A significant effort was exerted to make this document as comprehensive as possible in identifying appropriate and applicable highway incident traffic safety guidelines. However, it has been acknowledged that this must be a living and evolving document that will be strengthened and enhanced over time as it is exercised and tested.

Continued collaboration, coordination and communication among stakeholders are critical to reinforcing and maintaining the State of New Jersey Highway Incident Traffic Safety Guidelines

for Emergency Responders. The guidelines should be reviewed on at least an annual basis. Collaborative and regular review keeps the plans current and relevant, incorporates new partners or processes, and retires obsolete content.

No change shall be made to this document unless coordinated through the State of New Jersey Highway Incident Traffic Safety Guidelines for Emergency Responders Feedback Committee Members and the New Jersey Office of the Attorney General and communicated to all organizations impacted by these guidelines. New Jersey State Police Incident Management Unit will coordinate the process of arranging meetings to discuss modifications to the document.

Each revision will be numbered and documented. As new versions are created and distributed to the participants, older versions will be replaced. This will assure that all users are working from the same version of the guidelines. The table below will keep a record of revisions made to the plan since it was first published.

11.1 Record of Changes

Change Number	Date of Change	Section of Plan
1 (Version 2)	March, 2014	Modifications of all sections in Version 1 to comply with current National TIM Practices and FHWA Training Approval. Addition of Section 4, Roles and Responsibilities. Addition of Section 6, General Safety and Risk Management. Update of Appendix A to include the 2009 edition of the MUTCD, Section 6I.

11.2 State of New Jersey Highway Incident Traffic Safety Guidelines for Emergency Responders Feedback Committee

This committee shall consist of members of the following agencies:

New Jersey Career Fire Chief's Association
New Jersey Department of Health EMS Advisory Council
New Jersey Department of Transportation – Transportation Systems Management
New Jersey Division of Fire Safety
New Jersey State Police Highway Traffic Safety Unit
New Jersey State Police Incident Management Unit
New Jersey State Fire Chief's Association

New Jersey State First Aid Council
New Jersey Turnpike Authority
South Jersey Transportation Authority

12 FEEDBACK AND RESOLUTION PROCESS

Level I Feedback & Resolution:

Feedback and issues that arise during incidents on limited access highways which are not adequately addressed or resolved by these guidelines should be addressed at the local level. This should be conducted with representatives from all concerned parties at an agreed upon date and location. The specifics of this session should be forwarded to the New Jersey State Police Incident Management Unit for their reference and processing.

Level II Feedback & Resolution:

Issues that cannot be resolved through the Level I process will be forwarded to the New Jersey State Police Incident Management Unit, for review and further direction. Personnel within the Incident Management Unit will examine the specifics of the issue and attempt to resolve the matter through formal personal dialogue with the supervisors/commanders of the entities in question. They will work in conjunction with personnel from the Feedback Committee to render a binding decision. If necessary, they will enhance their Incident Management training program to include the recommended best practices gleaned from this particular incident. All decisions made by the Feedback Committee will be deemed final. Issues which require additions to training or amendments to these guidelines will be addressed during the annual committee meetings.

The Feedback Committee will be comprised of select personnel who are assigned to the entities represented in Section 11.2 of this document.

APPENDIX A
CHAPTER 6I. CONTROL OF TRAFFIC THROUGH TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT AREAS
(from Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD), 2009 Edition)

Section 6I.01 General

Support:
01 The National Incident Management System (NIMS) requires the use of the Incident Command System (ICS) at traffic incident management scenes.

02 A traffic incident is an emergency road user occurrence, a natural disaster, or other unplanned event that affects or impedes the normal flow of traffic.

03 A traffic incident management area is an area of a highway where temporary traffic controls are installed, as authorized by a public authority or the official having jurisdiction of the roadway, in response to a road user incident, natural disaster, hazardous material spill, or other unplanned incident. It is a type of TTC zone and extends from the first warning device (such as a sign, light, or cone) to the last TTC device or to a point where vehicles return to the original lane alignment and are clear of the incident.

04 Traffic incidents can be divided into three general classes of duration, each of which has unique traffic control characteristics and needs. These classes are:

A. Major—expected duration of more than 2 hours,

B. Intermediate—expected duration of 30 minutes to 2 hours, and

C. Minor—expected duration under 30 minutes.

05 The primary functions of TTC at a traffic incident management area are to inform road users of the incident and to provide guidance information on the path to follow through the incident area. Alerting road users and establishing a well defined path to guide road users through the incident area will serve to protect the incident responders and those involved in working at the incident scene and will aid in moving road users expeditiously past or around the traffic incident, will reduce the likelihood of secondary traffic crashes, and will preclude unnecessary use of the surrounding local road system. Examples include a stalled vehicle blocking a lane, a traffic crash blocking the traveled way, a hazardous material spill along a highway, and natural disasters such as floods and severe storm damage.

Guidance:
06 *In order to reduce response time for traffic incidents, highway agencies, appropriate public safety agencies (law enforcement, fire and rescue, emergency communications, emergency medical, and other emergency management), and private sector responders (towing and recovery and hazardous materials contractors) should mutually plan for occurrences of traffic incidents along the major and heavily traveled highway and street system.*

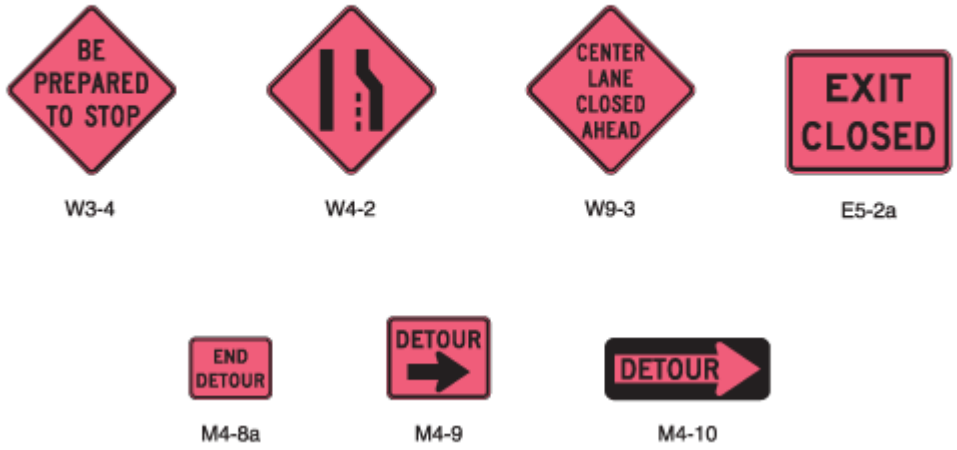
07 *On-scene responder organizations should train their personnel in TTC practices for accomplishing their tasks in and near traffic and in the requirements for traffic incident management contained in this Manual. On-scene responders should take measures to move the incident off the traveled roadway or to provide for appropriate warning. All on-scene responders and news media personnel should constantly be aware of their visibility to oncoming traffic and wear high-visibility apparel.*

08 *Emergency vehicles should be safe-positioned (see definition in Section 1A.13) such that traffic flow through the incident scene is optimized. All emergency vehicles that subsequently arrive should be positioned in a manner that does not interfere with the established temporary traffic flow.*

09 *Responders arriving at a traffic incident should estimate the magnitude of the traffic incident, the expected time duration of the traffic incident, and the expected vehicle queue length, and then should set up the appropriate temporary traffic controls for these estimates.*

Option:
10 Warning and guide signs used for TTC traffic incident management situations may have a black legend and border on a fluorescent pink background (see Figure 6I-1).

Figure 6I-1. Examples of Traffic Incident Management Area Signs



Support:
11 While some traffic incidents might be anticipated and planned for, emergencies and disasters might pose more severe and unpredictable problems. The ability to quickly install proper temporary traffic controls might greatly reduce the effects of an incident, such as secondary crashes or excessive traffic delays. An essential part of fire, rescue, spill clean-up, highway agency, and enforcement activities is the proper control of road users through the traffic incident management area in order to protect responders, victims, and other personnel at the site. These operations might need corroborating legislative authority for the implementation and enforcement of appropriate road user regulations, parking controls, and speed zoning. It is desirable for these statutes to provide sufficient flexibility in the authority for, and implementation of, TTC to respond to the needs of changing conditions found in traffic incident management areas.

Option:
12 For traffic incidents, particularly those of an emergency nature, TTC devices on hand may be used for the initial response as long as they do not themselves create unnecessary additional hazards.

Section 6I.02 Major Traffic Incidents

Support:
01 Major traffic incidents are typically traffic incidents involving hazardous materials, fatal traffic crashes involving numerous vehicles, and other natural or man-made disasters. These traffic incidents typically involve closing all or part of a roadway facility for a period exceeding 2 hours.

Guidance:
02 *If the traffic incident is anticipated to last more than 24 hours, applicable procedures and devices set forth in other Chapters of Part 6 should be used.*

Support:
03 A road closure can be caused by a traffic incident such as a road user crash that blocks the traveled way. Road users are usually diverted through lane shifts or detoured around the traffic incident and back to the original roadway. A combination of traffic engineering and enforcement preparations is needed to determine the detour route, and to install, maintain or operate, and then to remove the necessary traffic control devices when the detour is terminated. Large trucks are a significant concern in such a detour, especially when detouring them from a controlled-access roadway onto local or arterial streets.

04 During traffic incidents, large trucks might need to follow a route separate from that of automobiles because of bridge, weight, clearance, or geometric restrictions. Also, vehicles carrying hazardous material might need to follow a different route from other vehicles.

05 Some traffic incidents such as hazardous material spills might require closure of an entire highway. Through road users must have adequate guidance around the traffic incident. Maintaining good public relations is desirable. The cooperation of the news media in publicizing the existence of, and reasons for, traffic incident management areas and their TTC can be of great assistance in keeping road users and the general public well informed.

06 The establishment, maintenance, and prompt removal of lane diversions can be effectively managed by interagency planning that includes representatives of highway and public safety agencies.

Guidance:
07 *All traffic control devices needed to set up the TTC at a traffic incident should be available so that they can be readily deployed for all major traffic incidents. The TTC should include the proper traffic diversions, tapered lane closures, and upstream warning devices to alert traffic approaching the queue and to encourage early diversion to an appropriate alternative route.*

08 *Attention should be paid to the upstream end of the traffic queue such that warning is given to road users approaching the back of the queue.*

09 *If manual traffic control is needed, it should be provided by qualified flaggers or uniformed law enforcement officers.*

Option:
10 If flaggers are used to provide traffic control for an incident management situation, the flaggers may use appropriate traffic control devices that are readily available or that can be brought to the traffic incident scene on short notice.

Guidance:
11 *When light sticks or flares are used to establish the initial traffic control at incident scenes, channelizing devices (see Section 6F.63) should be installed as soon thereafter as practical.*

Option:
12 The light sticks or flares may remain in place if they are being used to supplement the channelizing devices.

Guidance:
13 *The light sticks, flares, and channelizing devices should be removed after the incident is terminated.*

Section 6I.03 Intermediate Traffic Incidents

Support:
01 Intermediate traffic incidents typically affect travel lanes for a time period of 30 minutes to 2 hours, and usually require traffic control on the scene to divert road users past the blockage. Full roadway

closures might be needed for short periods during traffic incident clearance to allow traffic incident responders to accomplish their tasks.

02 The establishment, maintenance, and prompt removal of lane diversions can be effectively managed by interagency planning that includes representatives of highway and public safety agencies.

Guidance:
03 *All traffic control devices needed to set up the TTC at a traffic incident should be available so that they can be readily deployed for intermediate traffic incidents. The TTC should include the proper traffic diversions, tapered lane closures, and upstream warning devices to alert traffic approaching the queue and to encourage early diversion to an appropriate alternative route.*

04 *Attention should be paid to the upstream end of the traffic queue such that warning is given to road users approaching the back of the queue.*

05 *If manual traffic control is needed, it should be provided by qualified flaggers or uniformed law enforcement officers.*

Option:
06 If flaggers are used to provide traffic control for an incident management situation, the flaggers may use appropriate traffic control devices that are readily available or that can be brought to the traffic incident scene on short notice.

Guidance:
07 *When light sticks or flares are used to establish the initial traffic control at incident scenes, channelizing devices (see Section 6F.63) should be installed as soon thereafter as practical.*

Option:
08 The light sticks or flares may remain in place if they are being used to supplement the channelizing devices.

Guidance:
09 *The light sticks, flares, and channelizing devices should be removed after the incident is terminated.*

Section 6I.04 Minor Traffic Incidents

Support:
01 Minor traffic incidents are typically disabled vehicles and minor crashes that result in lane closures of less than 30 minutes. On-scene responders are typically law enforcement and towing companies, and occasionally highway agency service patrol vehicles.

02 Diversion of traffic into other lanes is often not needed or is needed only briefly. It is not generally possible or practical to set up a lane closure with traffic control devices for a minor traffic incident. Traffic control is the responsibility of on-scene responders.

Guidance:
03 *When a minor traffic incident blocks a travel lane, it should be removed from that lane to the shoulder as quickly as possible.*

Section 6I.05 Use of Emergency-Vehicle Lighting

Support:
01 The use of emergency-vehicle lighting (such as high-intensity rotating, flashing, oscillating, or strobe lights) is essential, especially in the initial stages of a traffic incident, for the safety of emergency

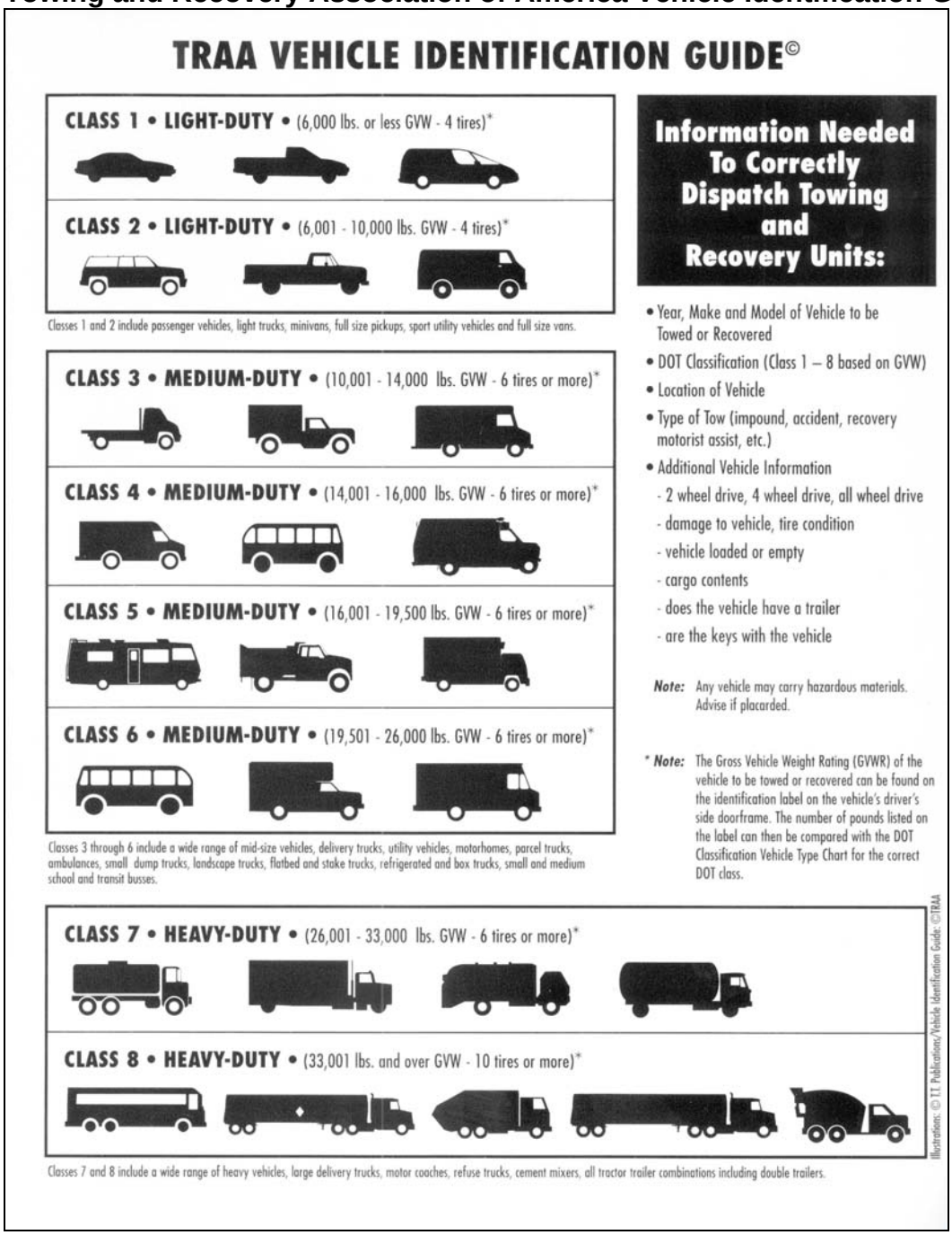
responders and persons involved in the traffic incident, as well as road users approaching the traffic incident. Emergency-vehicle lighting, however, provides warning only and provides no effective traffic control. The use of too many lights at an incident scene can be distracting and can create confusion for approaching road users, especially at night. Road users approaching the traffic incident from the opposite direction on a divided facility are often distracted by emergency-vehicle lighting and slow their vehicles to look at the traffic incident posing a hazard to themselves and others traveling in their direction.

02 The use of emergency-vehicle lighting can be reduced if good traffic control has been established at a traffic incident scene. This is especially true for major traffic incidents that might involve a number of emergency vehicles. If good traffic control is established through placement of advanced warning signs and traffic control devices to divert or detour traffic, then public safety agencies can perform their tasks on scene with minimal emergency-vehicle lighting.

Guidance:
03 *Public safety agencies should examine their policies on the use of emergency-vehicle lighting, especially after a traffic incident scene is secured, with the intent of reducing the use of this lighting as much as possible while not endangering those at the scene. Special consideration should be given to reducing or extinguishing forward facing emergency-vehicle lighting, especially on divided roadways, to reduce distractions to oncoming road users.*

04 *Because the glare from floodlights or vehicle headlights can impair the nighttime vision of approaching road users, any floodlights or vehicle headlights that are not needed for illumination, or to provide notice to other road users of an incident response vehicle being in an unexpected location, should be turned off at night.*

APPENDIX B
Towing and Recovery Association of America Vehicle Identification Guide



Law enforcement communications with towing and recovery operators describing an incident and the vehicles involved can insure quick and efficient clearing of these scenes and less disruption to traffic flow. In an effort to standardize communications, the towing industry is adopting the federal vehicle class standards as outlined herein.

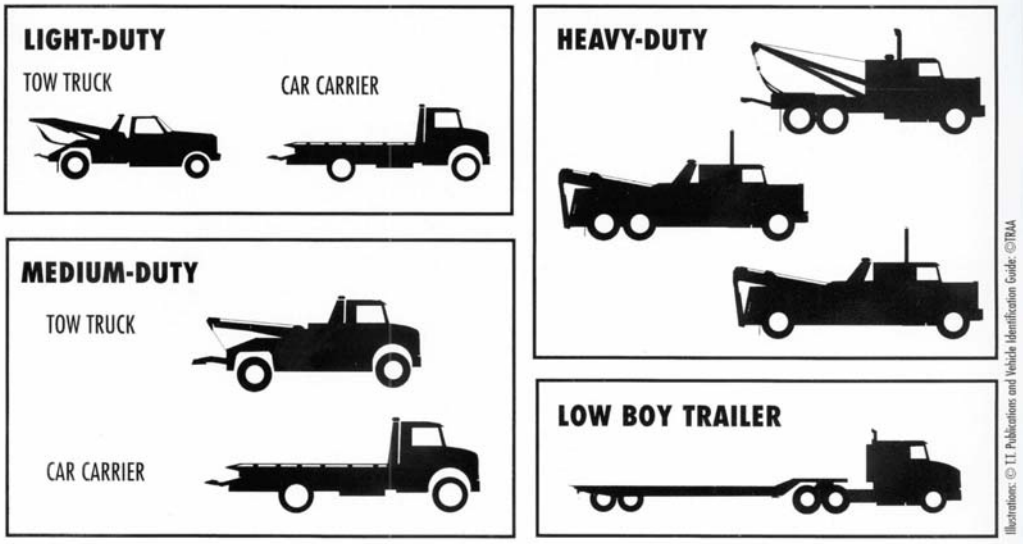
VIN CODES

The year of the vehicle is critical information for towing operators in order for them to reference correct towing procedures. The diagrams on the front are examples of classifications. The following information about vehicle identification numbers affixed to the chassis will help determine the vehicle's year. As noted, the vehicle's year, identified by a letter or number in the VIN sequence, is the eighth character from the right.

EXAMPLE 1995 VIN NUMBER: 1P8ZA1279SZ215470

1980.....A	1987.....H	1994.....R	2001.....1	2008.....8
1981.....B	1988.....J	1995.....S	2002.....2	2009.....9
1982.....C	1989.....K	1996.....T	2003.....3	2010.....A
1983.....D	1990.....L	1997.....V	2004.....4	2011.....B
1984.....E	1991.....M	1998.....W	2005.....5	2012.....C
1985.....F	1992.....N	1999.....X	2006.....6	
1986.....G	1993.....P	2000.....Y	2007.....7	

TOW TRUCK/CAR CARRIER CLASSIFICATION



Compliments of Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission.