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Update on Equipment Operator Trainer

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Recommendations

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Signed By

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Background

At the Priorities Committee of April 2, 2008, Committee members requested a synopsis on driver training, driver turnover, impact of training and impact of the Automatic Vehicle Location system.

Our Equipment Operator Trainer, Mr. Norm McCandless, was hired in December 2007. Mr. McCandless is a Ministry Certified Driver Trainer with many years of experience with the Ministry of Transportation of Ontario. As with any new employee in a new organization, staff have diligently been working to orient Mr. McCandless with our employees, equipment, and internal staffing structure (Permanent, Part-Time and Temporary Employees).

Mr. McCandless has completed Truck Driver Training and assessment of all outstanding internal and external Part-Time Employees from both the internal and external pools. This has resulted in an additional six (6) Part-Time Truck Drivers and ten (10) Temporary Truck Drivers to support our winter program.

Mr. McCandless is currently continuing Refresher Training sessions with all our Full-Time Employees until the latest job posting for winter employees is awarded. It is intended that this training process continue until a suitable pool of employees has been established to complete the Winter Control requirements.

Since the arrival of the Equipment Operator Trainer, many improvements have been made both in terms of driver safety and equipment improvements. The list below identifies some of the successful initiatives undertaken to date:

- Developing training methodology that includes driver operation history, review of available information, review questions on operating procedures and regulations followed by hands-on operation to define a competency level and record of training for each driver;
- Utilizing a driving simulator to assist in identifying driver skill level;
- Training and testing:
 - understanding legislation and driver responsibilities
 - proper filing and retention of required reports
 - proper inspection of all attachments and reporting of defective material through circle checks
 - accident/collision reporting procedures
 - proper loading of vehicles
 - hands-on operation of plow/wing and use of liquid applications
- Reviewing several motor vehicle collisions/damage incidents and recommendations for improvement;
- Resolving Health and Safety concerns with Fleet regarding exposed moving parts on spreaders and multi-function units;
- Creating Operation/Safety Tip newsletters for distribution to all Depots;
- Ongoing project to develop/update an Equipment Operator's Handbook as reference for Equipment Operators for safety and operating procedures;
- Developing an electronic database and employee file to track driver information and training records.

The current priorities of the Equipment Operator Trainer are to:

- Train newly hired Part-Time Truck Drivers and temporary employees on heavy equipment with a concentration on the multi-function plows;

- Train permanent Roads Operations employees holding a DZ license on multi-function plows and graders;
- Review and implement new and existing regulations/legislations related to driver safety and training;
- Set-up Snow School (training sessions) for our Supervisors and Equipment Operators prior to Winter Control;
- Develop/adopt a safe driving awards/recognition program; and
- Carry out defensive driver training.

Impact of AVL Locating System

AVL (Automatic Vehicle Locator) units are installed on all multi-function City and Contractor plow units and have been used for two (2) consecutive winters. Staff have improved the monitoring and analysis significantly since the initial installation.

There are now two (2) AVL Technicians monitoring the plow units from a central Operating Centre during any major storm. The Overall Responsible Superintendents (ORS) also monitor the storm from the Centre and can physically locate every vehicle in the field and make decisions accordingly. Typical decisions that are made during a storm would consist of replacing units due to breakdown of equipment, moving equipment from one Section to another and calling out extra equipment if required. Missed streets during a storm have also been dramatically reduced.

Staff has also been able to investigate claims and complaints successfully by reviewing AVL data following the storms.

Overall, the impact of the AVL system can be seen in reduced service times that were achieved near the end of winter during the short duration storms; units were re-deployed to slower serviced areas and City vehicles were able to be redistributed to Class 4 to 6 rural and residential roads.

Staff are attempting to have the AVL units installed on all sidewalk MT units this winter.