

2003 Achievements Efficiencies Accolades

By law, MoDOT is required to file an accountability report each year. But there is more to MoDOT's achievements than the facts and figures found within the report. Some accomplishments deserve a few more words and a lot more attention. Here are a few examples.

MoDOT's Quick Action Saves Lives, Money

Quick action by MoDOT crews helped prevent massive traffic jams and interruption of holiday plans last winter.

Beginning with the Christmas 2002 holiday, major catastrophes befell three bridges on Interstate 70 – two on major river crossings in St. Louis and Kansas City and one in the middle of the state.

On Dec. 20, a truck struck an overpass near Boonville, causing the overpass to sag across the interstate. That forced detours during one of the nation's heaviest holiday travel periods, the weekend before Christmas.

On Jan. 22, following several weeks of extremely cold weather, the deck of the Paseo bridge in Kansas City dropped nine inches, forcing MoDOT to close the structure.



Paseo Bridge after dropping 9 inches

This closure launched an intensive inspection effort of all the state's major river crossings, which resulted in the Feb. 4 closing of several lanes on a major Missouri River crossing in St. Louis, the

Blanchette bridge, so temporary repairs could be made to a support beam.

MoDOT staff responded to all three situations immediately to repair the bridges as quickly as possible and reopen them to traffic as well as keep the public informed so people would be inconvenienced as little as possible.



MoDOT bridge inspectors at work on a major river bridge

MoDOT crews put detours in place and worked around the clock to get all three structures repaired. The Paseo bridge in Kansas City was reopened within 10 days, the Blanchette bridge in two days and the Boonville overpass in three days.

In the end, 36 major river bridges were inspected by MoDOT with no major problems found. The department also worked with neighboring states on another 13 bridges.

MoDOT maintains 10,000 bridges on the state system and conducts about 8,500 bridge inspections every year. The department routinely inspects bridges more often than federal standards require.

Achievements

Estimating at Its Best

The Missouri Department of Transportation's ability to correctly estimate the cost of highway construction projects garnered recognition by the Federal Highway Administration as the best in the nation. The achievement also saved Missouri taxpayers more than \$4 million by rejecting excessive bids and rebidding projects. The award highlights MoDOT's success – the difference between estimated project costs and the actual low bids was 0.09 percent. This marks the second year in a row that MoDOT has come in below estimations.

MoDOT also completed 268 projects on time within 2 percent of the project estimates. This continues a four-year trend that saw a deviation of only 0.3 percent from the estimates in a more than \$2 billion program.

Redistribution of Funds

The Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission took a hard look at funding distribution and determined a better way to meet Missouri's needs. Using objective criteria like vehicle miles traveled, lane miles, population and employment statistics of various areas, MoDOT staff worked with the commission to spend Missouri's transportation dollars where they are needed most.

Listening to Missouri

MoDOT began developing a better way to involve local officials in identifying and prioritizing transportation projects. An advisory team of local planning organizations and officials is working to develop processes that will explain and link long-range planning, needs identification, project evaluation, project prioritization and the 5-year construction program. Enthusiasm for the process is high among MoDOT's partners.

Striping Every State Road

In 2003, MoDOT promised to put a centerline stripe on all paved state roads wider than 18 feet and to increase the painted edgelines. In addition to roads MoDOT always striped, the department added almost 4,600 miles of new white or yellow centerlines and more than 3,500 miles of new edgelines. The project should be 100 percent complete by the end of the calendar year. Including newly striped and restriped roads, approximately 82,000 miles of both centerline and edgeline stripes will be completed.

Getting It Right from the Start

MoDOT retooled the way it determines how a project should be added to the five-year construction plan by implementing a new project scoping process. Project scoping is the project development process when the elements and limits of a project become so well defined that accurate costs and project delivery schedules can be forecast. Done well before bids are let or construction begins, effective project scoping produces projects that meet the needs of the users in the most

cost-effective, efficient way. MoDOT's new process allows the department to scope and design projects that ensure best possible use of limited construction funds.

Learning from Our Work

MoDOT began formalizing a post-construction review process where project contractors, designers and inspectors come together to discuss what went well and what could have been improved on a particular project. The improved process will help ensure MoDOT is using its available resources efficiently.

Construction Graduates

To bring more young people and minorities into the construction industry, MoDOT partners with several agencies to support the Construction Prep Center in St. Louis. By the end of FY 2003, 519 students had graduated from the center with a 61 percent placement rate.

Wetlands

MoDOT made great strides in the preservation of Missouri wetlands by completing a 140-acre wetland "bank" that will help the department meet federal guidelines for wetland replacements. Wetlands replacement is required if a project receives federal funding.

External Audit Gives MoDOT Top Rating

For the fourth year in a row, MoDOT received the top financial rating from an independent auditing firm. KPMG of Kansas City told MHTC members it has again given the department's financial statements an "unqualified opinion," which is as good as it gets in auditing terms, according to auditors.

Efficiencies

By taking a hard look at several areas of its operations, MoDOT managed to save Missouri taxpayers more than \$5 million in 2003 in addition to the \$24 million it saved through staff attrition. Here are some examples.

Fleet management – MoDOT made adjustments in how it manages its vehicles. By altering oil-change schedules, eliminating some truck repairs, reducing the number of vehicles, selling off equipment and generating money through auctions the department had an estimated cost efficiency of more than \$4 million.

Server Consolidation – Each MoDOT district had many different types of computer hardware including tape drives and numerous server hard drives. New technology allowed Information Systems to replace all the old equipment with just one kind of computer server that could take care of all the jobs. The move saved taxpayers approximately \$1.5 million.

Accolades

The Missouri Department of Transportation was recognized by a variety of institutions for outstanding achievements throughout 2003. Here is a brief review of some of them.

UMC's Top Engineering Award

MoDOT was recognized by the University of Missouri – Columbia for its promotion of engineering education and professional development; its ongoing pursuit of a safe and efficient transportation system for the people of Missouri; and for its contributions to the economic development of the state. Only nine organizations have won the Missouri Honor Award since 1951.

Globe Award

Bruce R. Watkins Drive won the “Globe Award,” sponsored by the American Road & Transportation Builders Association-Transportation Development Foundation for outstanding achievement in protecting or enhancing the natural environment in planning, design and construction of transportation-infrastructure projects.

AASHTO Pathfinder Award

The MoDOT Governmental Accounting Standards Board Implementation Team received the 2003 Pathfinder Award from American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials for its work on evaluating the value of state-owned roads, bridges, rights of way and for implementing other required changes in department financial reports. MoDOT is a state agency leader in implementing GASB-34 standards.

AASHTO Trailblazer Award

The Social Economic Indicator Resource Team received AASHTO's 2003 Trailblazer award for its work providing information to transportation-planning groups about the impacts of transportation projects on area residents and their local economies.

Two for Right of Way

MoDOT's work with scenic byways and its efforts to chronicle the proliferation of outdoor advertising have won the right of way program a pair of awards from the Federal Highway Administration. The department also received honorable mention in FHWA's “Excellence in Right of Way” competition, which recognizes innovations that enhance the right of way professional's ability.

Best General Airport Project

The North Central Missouri Regional Airport in Linn County has been selected the best reliever and general-aviation airport project by the Missouri/Kansas Chapter of the American Concrete Pavement Association. This airport is a new facility built to replace outdated airports in nearby towns.

Best Interstate/Divided Highway Project

Route 63 between Moberly and the Boone County line was selected as Missouri's best Interstate/Four-Lane Divided Highway project by the Missouri/Kansas Chapter of the American Concrete Pavement Association.

Two Awards for Communication

MoDOT received two communications awards from AASHTO Public Affairs Subcommittee for Excellence in communication in FY 2003. MoDOT was one of two top winners for both its new Work-Zone Safety Campaign and for the “No MOre Trash!” public-service announcement.

Gold Excel Award

Motor Carrier Services received the “Gold Excel” first place award from the Society of National Association Publications in the “Newsletters, Most Improved” category for its *News On Wheels* quarterly publication. The publication is distributed to commercial carriers and keeps them informed about changes in government regulations.



Reprioritized projects

By coordinating better with planning partners in determining needs and priorities of construction projects, MoDOT has reprioritized fewer projects in 2003 than in the previous four years. This effort will be continued in future STIP developments as identified in our planning framework.

Projects are reprioritized when planning organizations respond to unforeseen changes in environmental reviews and right of way considerations. It is a normal aspect of the construction process. Reprioritization can include delay, acceleration or removal of a project.

Many of the projects are urban improvements in the St. Louis and Kansas City metropolitan Planning areas.

Reprioritized Projects in the Highway & Bridge Construction Schedule

