LEVEL (SEVERITY) OF TRAFFIC INCIDENTS

LEVEL	CRITERIA	EXAMPLES	AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR ESTABLISHING UNIFIED COMMAND
Level I	No Injuries, No travel lanes blocked	Disabled vehicle on shoulder, Minor Traffic Incident	Law Enforcement
Level II	Minor Injuries and/or 1 travel lane blocked	Stalled vehicle in a travel lane, Rear-end collision with minor injuries	Law Enforcement
Level III	Serious injuries or 2 or more travel lanes blocked	Multi-vehicle crash, overturned tractor-trailer (No HAZMAT involved)	Fire & Rescue
Level IV	Multiple agencies needed, HAZMAT spill, threat to life and property extends beyond the confines of the traffic incident scene, or **ALL LANES BLOCKED**	Overturned fuel/HAZMAT truck, fallen power lines, or sign structure, pavement failures in the roadway, multiple vehicle crash, life threatening injuries or possible fatality.	Fire & Rescue

TRAFFIC INCIDENT *RESPONSE* MATRIX

LEVEL	LAW ENFORCEMENT	FIRE & RESCUE	EMS	EPD/HAZMAT	TOWING & RECOVERY	H.E.R.O. UNIT	GDOT Georgia Department of Transportation
Level I	■ Notify dispatch ■ Identify nearest shoulder or safe area for relocating vehicle(s) ■ Relocate vehicle(s) to the shoulder or safe area, to await recovery	No Responsibility	No Responsibility	No Responsibility	■ When directed, respond & remove vehicle(s) from the roadway shoulder, as quickly & safely as possible	■ Notify TMC ■ Relocate vehicle(s) to shoulder/safe area, to await recovery	■ Notify TMC ■ Assist relocating vehicle(s)
Level II	■ Notify dispatch ■ Establish ICP ■ Assist the injured ■ Control crowds & traffic ■ Conduct investigation	■ May be dispatched to care for injured	■ Provide medical care to the injured	No Responsibility	■ When directed, remove vehicle(s) from roadway ■ Remove crash debris from roadway	■ Notify TMC ■ Assist the injured ■ Establish Traffic Controls ■ Assist in relocating vehicle(s) from roadway	■ Assist in removal of vehicles ■ Assist with clean-up ■ Check for State property damage
Level III	■ Secure traffic incident scene ■ Assist the injured until Fire and EMS arrives ■ Assist with Traffic Control ■ Conduct Investigation	■ Secure scene ■ Protect life and property ■ Establish ICP	■ Provide medical care to the injured	■ Secure area ■ Clean-up of debris	■ When directed, remove vehicles from roadway, after injured are treated ■ Remove crash debris from roadway	■ Notify TMC ■ Assist the injured ■ Establish & maintain traffic controls ■ Assist with the removal of vehicle(s) from the roadway	■ Establish Detours as needed ■ Check for State property damage ■ Provide support equipment & materials
Level IV	■ Secure traffic incident scene ■ Assist the injured until Fire and EMS arrives ■ Assist with traffic control	■ Secure scene ■ Protect life and property ■ Establish ICP ■ Request clean-up and/or containment of hazardous materials	■ Provide medical care to the injured	■ Secure area ■ Clean-up of hazardous materials and debris	■ When directed, by the *Investigating Officer*, remove vehicles from roadway, after injuries and /or HAZMAT dangers have been addressed ■ Remove crash debris from roadway	■ Notify TMC ■ Assist with the injured ■ Establish traffic controls ■ Assist with the removal of vehicle(s) from the roadway	■ Establish detours as needed ■ Assist with clean-up ■ Check for State property damage ■ Provide support equipment & materials

NOTE: Shaded areas [ ] denote Key Agencies for each Level of Traffic Incident, during initial response.

REMEMBER: "The responding agency arriving first at the traffic incident scene, by default, is the traffic incident manager, at least until the nature of the incident changes and/or additional response agencies arrive on the scene and assume command."

TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT

Traffic incident management involves minimizing the impact of incidents on traffic congestion and reducing the probability of secondary incidents. *This can be achieved by:*

✪ Reducing the *time* required to detect a traffic incident
✪ Reducing the *time* required to respond to a traffic incident
✪ Efficiently and effectively managing personnel and traffic at the scene
✪ Reducing the *time* to clear the traffic incident from the roadway

THE CHALLENGES

Stalled vehicles, highway debris, spilled loads, and crashes are examples of traffic incidents that account for about ½ of all delay due to traffic congestion on our nation's highways. Along with weather, construction, and special events, these non-recurring incidents are responsible for nearly **60%** of delay caused by traffic congestion.

Traffic congestion caused by traffic incidents affects the safety and mobility of all travelers. Major traffic incidents can affect thousands of vehicles in an entire highway corridor or across a major portion of the metro-Atlanta area. Traffic incidents cause secondary incidents that also require response from the same agencies already engaged in the primary incident. Secondary incidents are not just crashes but also include engine stalls, overheating, and running out of fuel. Studies have shown that approximately **20%** of all traffic incidents are secondary crashes and **20% (1 out of every 5)** of all secondary crashes involve fatalities.

IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNICATION

Rapid response with appropriate resources to a traffic incident and quick clearance of that incident are, of course, the main purpose of a traffic incident management team. Effective traffic incident clearance must achieve the seemingly conflicting goals of protecting the safety of the on-scene responders and travelers while maximizing traffic flow past the traffic incident scene. This can *only* be accomplished by understanding, agreement, and close coordination among those in charge of their agency's resources on-scene. Adopting an "Open Roads Policy" and establishing local T.I.M. Teams can enhance the overall effectiveness of managing traffic incidents in metro-Atlanta.

UNIFIED COMMAND

Coordinating response resources from various emergency service agencies is crucial to the safe and timely clearance of traffic incidents. *It requires:*

✪ Clear command hierarchy
✪ Designed responder roles and responsibilities
✪ Clear procedures
✪ The ability of all responders to communicate clearly and effectively

Unified Command provides the framework for **command**, **control**, and **coordination** of resources at the scene of the emergency.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE UNIFIED COMMAND

✪ Remove endangered occupants and treat the injured
✪ Stabilize the traffic incident and provide safety
✪ Conserve property
✪ Provide for the safety, accountability and welfare of all personnel operating on the incident scene
✪ Prevent "Free-lancing"
✪ Keep decision makers at command post
✪ Maintain a "Big Picture" prospective of the incident
✪ Communicate, cooperate, and display confidence

"WHO'S IN CHARGE?"

The real question, however, is *"Who's in charge of what?"* Managing a traffic incident and related traffic problems is a *TEAM* effort, and each emergency service agency has a role to play. Although our roles and responsibilities may vary, working together we can reduce traffic incident delays and enhance the effectiveness of traffic incident management in metro-Atlanta.

Metro Atlanta
TIME
Task Force

CONTACT INFORMATION
PHONE
404-635-TIME (8463)
WEBSITE
www.dot.state.ga.us/specialsubjects/time/index/shtml

Traffic Incident Management

"Who's In Charge?" or "Who's In Charge Of What?"

Georgia Department of Transportation