

Massachusetts Department of Transportation
Secretary's Report
Meeting of the Massachusetts Department of Transportation Board of
Directors
Board Room, 10 Park Plaza, Boston, Massachusetts
Wednesday, May 22, 2013

Opening Remarks

First off, I want to reiterate to the entire transportation family my deepest and most sincere gratitude for all that you did in the immediate aftermath of the Marathon bombings of Monday, April 15.

Acts of heroism, quick responses, and simple acts of kindness were displayed by our MBTA, DOT and Massport family as we sought to serve the people of the Commonwealth.

Again, we want to express our condolences to the families of Krystle Campbell, Martin Richard, Lu Lingzi, Officer Sean Collier, and the many others who suffered injuries that day.

I also want to say that in light of tremendous progress Transit Police Officer Richard Donohue has made, that our thoughts and prayers are still with him as he continues to make remarkable progress on his miraculous journey back to a full recovery.

MassDOT Employee Recognition Program

Donna Brennan – Program Coordinator II, Registry of Motor Vehicles' Merit Rating Board

As a Program Coordinator for the Merit Rating Board it is Donna's job to provide all Massachusetts automobile insurers with procedural information regarding the Safe Driver Insurance Plan Regulation. This includes driving history records for their policyholders; information that is then used by insurers to increase or decrease a policyholder's premiums.

When the Attorney General's Insurance and Financial Services Division received a consumer complaint and needed assistance from the MRB,

Donna was instrumental in gathering, disseminating and explaining in detail the MRB data as it related to the case. The investigation focused on one Massachusetts auto insurer for failing to refund a surcharge premium after an at-fault accident was removed from the policyholder's driving record. Donna's hours of data research and help in analyzing the results of this complaint led the Attorney General's office to settle with the insurer. In addition, the insurer will undergo a supervised audit of relevant insurance policies to determine refund amounts due to its other policyholders.

Donna's involvement in the Attorney General's investigation helped to identify and resolve one insurer's unlawful practice, resulting in financial restitution being made to all impacted policyholders. With Donna's continued help, an industry-wide investigation is now being undertaken by the Attorney General to determine if other Massachusetts insurance companies are engaging in similar practices. For Donna's diligence to all parties in this investigation, and her commitment to provide quality service to RMV customers we are pleased to honor her as the Employee of the Month.

All-Electronic Tolling: Tobin Bridge

As we all know, the DOT and the T are on constant search for new and innovative ways to do business. In that spirit, on Monday, we announced our plans to shift to all-electronic tolling on the Tobin Bridge by 2014.

Despite the introduction of transponders and electronic toll collection in the late 1990s, a significant portion of Tobin Bridge customers still elect to pay with cash. In 2012, there were 4.1 million cash transactions on the Tobin Bridge, an average of more than 11,000 each day.

While the tolls will remain, shifting to this new technology will allow us to give something back of considerable value to drivers: their time.

To that end, we have scheduled a series of meetings around the North Shore starting Thursday night to educate drivers on our plans and to answer questions and solicit feedback on our plans.

This is a major step in revolutionizing the way we toll and does so in a way that eliminates the congestion that always builds up by idling vehicles at the

toll booths. And it also sends an important message that we realize that *your* time is valuable and now we've found a way to give it back.

Gulfstream Ribbon Cutting

On May 14, I was with Administrator Willenborg and leaders from Gulfstream Aerospace at Westfield-Barnes Regional Airport to celebrate the ribbon-cutting for the Gulfstream Hangar Expansion Project.

Gulfstream's \$20 million expansion project includes a new 100,000 square foot hangar with office space and will result in 100 new jobs added to Gulfstream's existing airport workforce of 140. Aviation is an economic engine across the Commonwealth and in Westfield alone, it is responsible for sustaining more than 2,000 jobs and generating an economic output of \$180 million.

While I'm excited about new jobs in a growing industry, I also point to this as an example of how the state can partner with private business to achieve a shared goal. In this case, for a combined \$4 million investment from MassDOT and the Office of Business Development, Gulfstream's expansion project was able to move forward. What this does is set the tone for future partnerships with private business to find innovative ways to deliver better customer service, be better at sharing costs, and faster at seeing projects through that create jobs and economic activity.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That concludes my remarks.