



# NEBRASKA TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT Annual Report 2024



**NEBRASKA**  
Good Life. Great Journey.  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION





At the Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT), our mission is to provide the best possible statewide transportation system for the movement of people and goods. First responders who practice Traffic Incident Management (TIM) techniques play an essential role in accomplishing this mission. Serious injury and fatality crashes are on the rise in Nebraska. Two NDOT teammates were killed in crashes last year and an additional third teammate was significantly injured. While TIM can be part of the solution, drivers must also understand their role and take greater responsibility for road safety, especially when traveling through work zones or other incidents.

Our statewide TIM program has proven to be effective in strengthening first responder networks, increasing collaboration and communication, elevating responder safety and promoting best practices for safe, quick clearance. The program is collectively owned with our partners and local buy-in is foundational to success. Keeping TIM principles top-of-mind for first responders is a continual process, accomplished through training, after-action reviews and exercises.

Our multidisciplinary TIM coalitions have provided valuable insights into partner and local agency needs. Building strong relationships based in mutual trust allows us to address challenges as a team. We appreciate our partnerships, strong allies and mutual commitment to a continuously improving statewide safety culture. During this year's legislative session, NDOT is advancing bills that aim to strategically improve safety. Some of those measures include installing variable speed limit signs that can be changed according to inclement weather and/or traffic conditions, deploying speed cameras in highway work zones and school zones, and expanding the preexisting Move Over Law to apply to any vehicle with flashing lights stopped on the shoulder, not just emergency vehicles or roadside assistance. With these efforts and others, the NDOT intends to continue advocating for first responders with increased safety measures that can compliment and support their success in TIM implementation. This report outlines the positive differences the NDOT TIM program has made in Nebraska to date. Though our work ongoing, we value your interest and ask for your support as we continue working to make our roads safer for all.



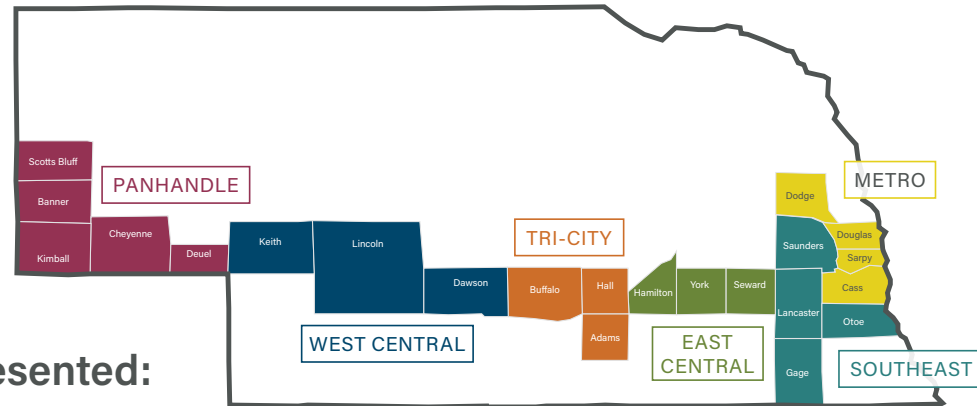
**Vicki Kramer**  
*Director*  
Nebraska Department of Transportation

# TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT BY THE NUMBERS



In 2024, Nebraska's TIM program continued to promote statewide relationships between city, county, state and federal agencies. Multidisciplinary partners engaged in our efforts to create a unified safety culture in the state.

**6**  
active  
TIM coalitions

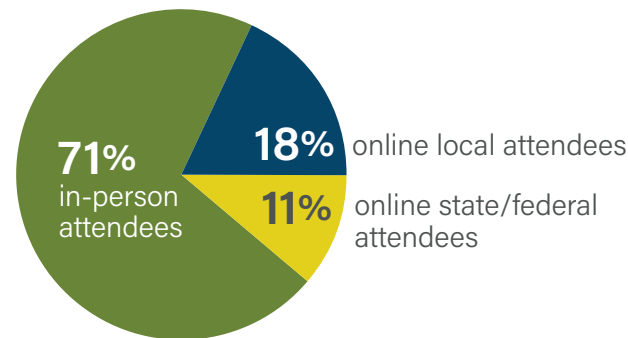
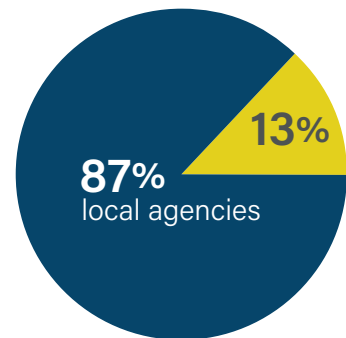


### Disciplines represented:

- Emergency communications
- Emergency medical/rescue personnel
- Law enforcement
- Towing
- Emergency management
- Fire
- Roadway owners
- Other special interests

**229** total Memorandum of Understanding signatories  
**51** new signatories from the Panhandle area

**309** unique participants attended a TIM coalition meeting in 2024.  
**73** of these participants were new to TIM this year



## TRAINING

**720**  
responders trained in 2024

**65**  
active trainers

**3**  
Train-the-Trainer classes

**24** new trainers in 2024

**70 Panhandle responders** from **21 agencies** participated in a live training

## INCIDENT RESPONSE

**20,172** property damage only crashes reported across

Nebraska in 2024, with an average clearance time of **37 minutes**

*National best practice clearance times are 30 minutes for urban areas and 45 minutes for rural areas. Data is as of January 3, 2025.*

**27** After-Action Reviews conducted across Nebraska's TIM coalitions

## WHAT IS TIM?

Traffic Incident Management (TIM) is the planned approach to detect, respond, and safely and quickly clear traffic incidents. The safe, quick clearance of traffic incidents reduces travel delay, improves travel time reliability and reduces vehicle emissions. TIM principles reinforce how safe, quick clearance, reliable interoperable communication, safe vehicle positioning, unified command and scene safety are key to bringing responders home safe after every call.

## NEBRASKA'S TIM PROGRAM

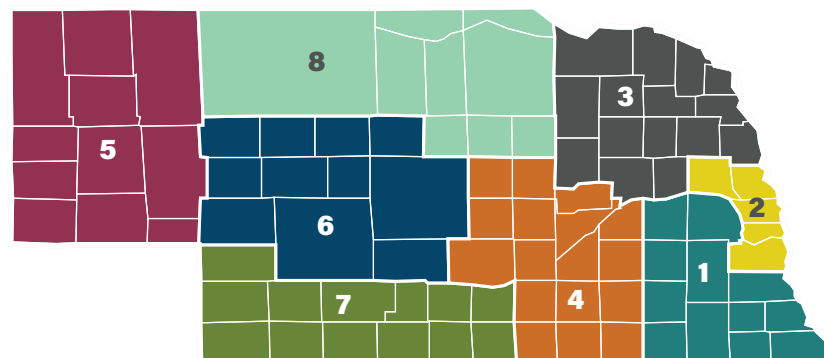
The program works to establish a culture of safety and promote continuous improvement through:

- Trainings
- After-action reviews
- Live exercises
- Monthly newsletters
- Quarterly virtual meetings

These interactions and communications are reaching multiple audiences within the responder community and support a better understanding of needs and opportunities to improve safety. TIM Districts were established to foster local ownership and measure training and engagement regionally across the state.

Given the frequency of incidents and impacts to local communities and adjacent roadways, multidisciplinary TIM coalitions have been established along the Interstate 80 (I-80) corridor, the primary east-west route for travelers and commerce in Nebraska. Initially, coalitions were established in the Omaha metro area and West Central and Southeast Nebraska. In 2020, NDOT expanded the program to cover the full extent of I-80 from Wyoming to Iowa.

Nebraska Traffic Incident Management (TIM) Districts



The Nebraska TIM program has been recognized for setting a national standard for local engagement and collaboration. Through powerful conversations, agencies in Nebraska are implementing nationwide best practices and finding success by:

- Building relationships and trust across agencies and disciplines
- Establishing and tracking baseline roadway clearance times
- Training thousands of responders in TIM best practices
- Instilling a culture of safety in other facets of NDOT's business, including Transportation Systems Management and Operations (TSMO), design alternatives and construction phasing

### SIGN UP FOR THE TIM NEWSLETTER

TIM partners receive a monthly newsletter that shares training opportunities, safety tips, best practices from actual incidents, program updates and TIM wins.



## PROGRAM MISSION, VISION AND VALUES

**Vision:** Safer, together

**Mission:** Nebraska TIM fosters statewide relationships and unifies a safety culture to improve safety, meaningfully reduce secondary crashes and decrease clearance times.

**Values & Strategies:** SAFER

*This is what we do.*

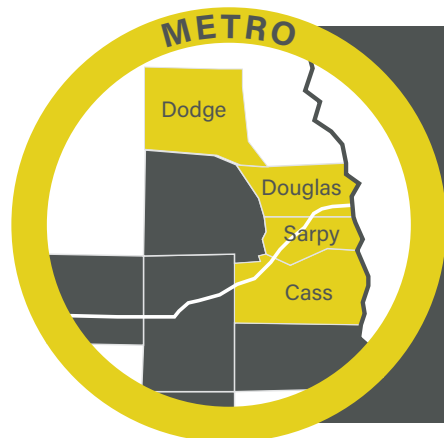
**S**tatewide Safety Culture

**A**fter-Action Reviews

**F**uture-Focused

**E**fficient Incident Response

**R**elationship Building



### SAME PAGE, BETTER OUTCOMES

The Omaha metro area has had TIM champions promoting safe, quick clearance for many years. However, meeting size soon surpassed 70 people. In 2024, four regionally focused metro-area groups were established.

"Smaller, multi-disciplinary groups make it easier to make change because you're having discussions with the people you work with on-scene." -Anonymous

**Local ownership is the foundation of Nebraska's TIM program; training is a pillar.** Training incident responders and stakeholders in best practices for safe, quick clearance **saves lives** for both first responders and the traveling public. The program equips responders with the knowledge and skills needed to keep themselves and others safe.



If an agency reaches 60% of staff trained in TIM best practices, they can receive free traffic control and safety equipment, saving local, often volunteer departments thousands of dollars.

## BUILDING A NETWORK OF TRAINERS

The goal of a multi-disciplinary TIM training curriculum is a coordinated response to traffic incidents that will **improve safety** and **reduce clearance times**. Having a team of passionate, qualified instructors is critical to getting more responders trained in best practices. In 2024, three Train-the-Trainer classes were conducted in Lincoln, Kearney and North Platte. This added 24 new trainers to the program, including academy staff and responders along the I-80 corridor and from northeast, north central, and southern Nebraska, taking a step toward achieving a vast network of TIM instructors.

**What is safe, quick clearance?** Safe, quick clearance implements multiple strategies to move crashes, incidents or hazards that block travel lanes as safely and quickly as possible. TIM strategies include directing drivable vehicles to the shoulder or the next off-ramp, using law enforcement vehicles equipped with push bumpers to push vehicles onto the shoulder, completing crash investigations with drone technology and early notification of roadway owners and towing professionals. Quick clearance is critical – the longer responders are on scene, the higher the risk for stuck-by incidents and secondary crashes.



"I am so excited to be a TIM trainer and participate in this program to keep my peers safe. TIM classes bring the different disciplines together and fosters a lot of discussion – I can't wait until I have a bigger class! I plan to have everyone in the county trained before our exercise next year."

*–Community Service Officer Joseph Leitza, Kimball Police Department*



## TRAINING ACADEMY INTEGRATION

All new law enforcement officers receive TIM training through the Nebraska Law Enforcement Training Center. This integration with academy curriculum means every officer in Nebraska is exposed to TIM fundamentals as soon as they begin their law enforcement career.

Additionally, TIM curriculum is taught as part of Firefighter 1 certification that is obtained by many Nebraska firefighters. As firefighters learn how to keep themselves and others safe, TIM best practices will be another tool they have to provide safe, quick clearance when arriving to the scene of an incident.

### ACADEMIES WITH INTEGRATED TIM TRAINING

- Nebraska State Patrol
- Sarpy-Douglas Law Enforcement Academy
- Nebraska Law Enforcement Training Center
- Omaha Police Department
- Lincoln Police Department
- Firefighter 1

## PANHANDLE EXERCISE

In June 2024, 70 Panhandle responders from 21 agencies across all disciplines participated in a field exercise held at the Western Nebraska-Scottsbluff Regional Airport. It simulated a right-angle crash that involved two vehicles with one hauling hay bales. These events allow all types of responders to experience the application of TIM principles in a controlled environment. Trainers can demonstrate effective time and scene management skills in real time. It's the fourth live event the Nebraska TIM program has supported. This event was jointly planned by various agencies involved in the Nebraska Panhandle TIM coalition.

"This exercise was a great way to understand the pressures responders experience during dangerous situations. It also helped all our agencies to collaborate with each other. Our district teams can feel confident in quickly and safely clearing crashes," said Scotts Bluff District I County Commissioner Mike Blue, who also represented the Scotts Bluff County Community Emergency Response Team, one of the agencies that observed the exercise.

"It brought all disciplines together and showed the unity of the Panhandle responder community. It involved literally every agency from our tow partners to dispatchers - and dispatchers are crucial!"

*–Anonymous*



## PARTNERING WITH STAKEHOLDERS

One of the primary goals of the Nebraska TIM program is to build a strong network of trust, openness and collaboration across the state. Since support for multi-disciplinary TIM coalitions was expanded in 2020, the network has grown from a few agencies to hundreds of dedicated responders who are committed to learning and implementing safe, quick clearance. Regular meetings help break down silos and foster a sense of collaboration within each TIM region. Our stakeholders include:

<b>Emergency communications</b>	<b>Emergency management</b>
<b>Emergency medical/ rescue personnel</b>	<b>Fire</b> (paid and volunteer)
<b>Law Enforcement</b> (city, county, state)	<b>Roadway owners</b> (city, county, state)
<b>Towing</b>	<b>Other special interests</b>

The TIM program is a conduit to building relationships with transportation and safety partners like the National Weather Service, power utilities, Nebraska Game and Parks, Nebraska Trucking Association and local transit services. The program is supported at the executive level by Nebraska Department of Transportation and the Nebraska State Patrol, in collaboration with the Nebraska State Fire Marshal, Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, Professional Towing Association of Nebraska, Police Officer's Association of Nebraska and the Nebraska Local Technical Assistance Program, who provide thoughtful insight on the TIM Executive Committee.

## STATEWIDE VIRTUAL MEETINGS

In 2024, the Nebraska TIM program began hosting quarterly statewide meetings to bring together TIM champions across the state. These meetings include panel discussions of technology and applicability in Nebraska, local implementation of nationwide best practices, transportation and safety process improvements and other program updates.



## AFTER-ACTION REVIEWS

After-action reviews (AARs) are facilitated by request from local agencies. AARs are a chance for a multi-disciplinary TIM coalition to revisit an incident through a facilitated conversation with a neutral third party. The review includes a discussion of best practices, opportunities for improvement and action items. In 2024, 27 AARs were conducted across Nebraska's TIM coalitions. It takes courage and trust for responders to request an incident review, but having honest discussions is the quickest way to identify meaningful changes and action items to improve safety.



"AARs are definitely eye opening. It helps me **understand everyone else's view and perspective**. It really helps you think differently."

-Dustin McQuigg, Beatrice Rural Fire

"The **variety of participants & viewpoints are valuable**. Lessons learned can then be implemented on the next incident or adapted to other major incidents."

-Tim Hanson, Gage County Sheriff's Office

"They are informative and makes us better prepared."

-Aaron Schoen, Nebraska State Patrol (NSP)

"After-action review meetings are a valuable platform to network and interact with others in an effort to provide safer highways and a safer work environment for those of us providing emergency services"

-David Murphy, Meyer Towing



## LOCAL OWNERSHIP IN ACTION

AAR discussions encourage our partners to take action to improve safety, demonstrating local ownership. For example, at a recent AAR meeting in Hamilton County, five new-to-TIM Aurora Emergency Medical Services (EMS) personnel attended to discuss a crash they responded to. As a result, **Aurora EMS members will be scheduling time to sit alongside dispatchers** in their emergency communications center to better understand their role, challenges and opportunities for improved communications. The entire group discussed **having a meet and greet on a quarterly basis** with partner agencies to improve relationships.

## THE IMPACT OF AN AAR

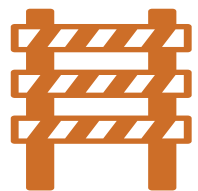
"We had an incident occur just one day after a TIM meeting. **The overall response had gone smoother because TIM was fresh in everyone's mind**. That is the impact TIM meetings have on responder safety and incident management."

-Chief Travis Harlow  
Waterloo Fire Department

## NEBRASKA DOT TRAINING MODULE

AAR discussions frequently mentioned an opportunity for improved communication, specifically notifying NDOT of incidents. A video training module was developed that summarizes NDOT's role in TIM and details the resources available through the State Operations Center (SOC) that help support safe, quick clearance of roadway incidents. The training also covers how to notify the SOC of an incident and what to report so responders receive the timely support they need. The module may be easily integrated into agencies' existing electronic training platforms.

## CONSTRUCTION COORDINATION



There has been an enhanced effort to improve first responder coordination and engagement prior to major construction projects on state and local roads. The TIM program has become a natural platform to communicate traffic impacts like short- and long-duration closures, access changes and discuss ways to improve incident response during construction.

## PANHANDLE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING CELEBRATION

In September 2024, the Nebraska Panhandle area TIM coalition celebrated the signing of their Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with a ceremony in Gering. At the ceremony, representatives from NDOT, NSP, Scottsbluff Fire Department and Cheyenne County Emergency Communications spoke about the critical work our responders do to keep our roadways safe in Nebraska. Formalized TIM partnerships support the group's progress in moving TIM initiatives forward to improve safety, reliability and efficiency on the roadway. The MOU is a formal handshake as all agencies agree to work together and implement TIM best practices in the name of safety. This marks a major milestone for the group and for the program as the Panhandle group is the newest group along the I-80 corridor to achieve this milestone.



## CRASH RESPONDER SAFETY WEEK

Nebraska DOT recognized national Crash Responder Safety Week November 18-22. Together with NSP, the week honored emergency responders who showcase bravery, skill and dedication in performing their critical role in keeping travelers safe.



From left to right: NSP Major Jeff Wilcynski, Lt. Gov. Joe Kelly, NDOT Director Vicki Kramer, Seward Police Chief Brian Peters

"Protecting Nebraskans and emergency responders requires everyone, especially drivers, to do their part by slowing down, moving over and respecting those serving as first responders," said NDOT Director Vicki Kramer. "At NDOT, we are committed to uniting responders across the state to improve incident response, share best practices and conduct essential training through Nebraska's eight regional TIM working groups. But we also need the public to step up and give responders the space they need to work safely on the road."

Also, Gov. Jim Pillen signed a proclamation declaring Crash Responder Safety Week in Nebraska, highlighting the essential role crash responders play in swiftly and effectively managing and clearing traffic incidents.

## PERFORMANCE MEASURES DASHBOARD

NDOT has launched a Crash Clearance Dashboard for agencies to evaluate roadway clearance performance across the state and elevate performance discussions. The dashboard uses data from the Nebraska Investigator's Motor Vehicle Crash Report (NDOT Form 40) to average roadway clearance times. Within the dashboard, agencies can filter data by county, city, agency or other crash metrics. Agencies use this tool to analyze performance measures and make data-driven decisions.





## FOR MORE INFORMATION

 Nebraska TIM Program  
[NDOT.TrafficIncidentManagement@Nebraska.gov](mailto:NDOT.TrafficIncidentManagement@Nebraska.gov)

 [dot.nebraska.gov/safety/tim](https://dot.nebraska.gov/safety/tim) (QR code at right)

 [dot.nebraska.gov/safety/tim/training](https://dot.nebraska.gov/safety/tim/training)



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