



Report on Communications and Outreach TDOT Community Relations Division, 2009

Good communication with the public is one of the basic values of the Tennessee Department of Transportation. Our leadership recognizes that a key to keeping the public's trust and confidence in TDOT is to have an openness and transparency in our contact with all Tennesseans. The public expects it and TDOT employees have embraced the need for high quality and professional communications.

Communication is more than openness and transparency. Reaching out to individuals and groups who may not otherwise be involved or request information is also important to us. Through tried and true methods like news releases and our TDOT website, we continue to reach traditional audiences. We are also using new tools such as "social media" to communicate with specialized target audiences as we open up critical channels of communication for delivering information.

Granddaughter of the worker on a Recovery Act bridge project meets Governor Bredesen at one of several groundbreakings planned by the Community Relations Division.



The TDOT Community Relations Division was involved in a number of agency initiatives during 2009 including:

- American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA)
- Better Bridges Program
- Between the Barrels
- Clear the Air
- Fans Don't Let Fans Drive Drunk
- Project Orange Video Contest
- Roadscapes
- SmartFIX40
- TDOT SmartWay

Our Division also supported critical public information efforts that included flooding, rockslides and snow removal during Tennessee's worst winter in over a decade and special annual events such as the Bonaroo Music Festival.



1K runners on I-40 on the eve of the re-opening of the interstate was one of several highway and bridge openings planned and coordinated by Community Relations in 2009.



Community Relations Division staff facilitated this field report by a CBS Evening News crew on one of TDOT's first Recovery Act projects.

Communications by the Numbers

NEWS RELEASES AND ADVISORIES

Knoxville/Upper East TN:.....	20
Chattanooga/ East TN:	41
Nashville/Middle TN:	30
Jackson-Memphis/West TN:	28
Headquarters:.....	671
TOTAL 2009 News Releases:	790

News Releases by Category299

- Better Bridges Program:66
- ARRA:36
- Between the Barrels:35
- Transit:33
- Governor's Highway Safety Office(GHSO):.....23
- Aviation:9
- Civil Rights:2
- Other95

Grant News Releases:491

- GHSO:276
- Aeronautics:129
- Enhancement:41
- Transit:31
- Roadscapes:14

OUTREACH

- 551,921 incoming calls to Tennessee 511
- 4,683 Constituent Correspondence
- 900 Record-A-Comments
- 43 Public Meetings/Hearings
- 531 Public Hearing Comment Cards
- 3,000 public meeting attendees

SOCIAL MEDIA

- 3,041 Twitter followers (6-6-09 to 12-31-09)
- 3,579,713 tweets read by followers (6-6-09 to 12-31-09)

WEBSITE

- Average monthly hits to TDOT homepage: 190,000*
- Annual hits to TDOT homepage: 2.2 million*
- Top webpage hit count: TDOT SmartWay main page with 2.5 million hits*

*2009 numbers estimated based on average hits in January/February 2010.



Commissioner Nicely interviewed by local media.

A presentation at one of 43 public meetings held in 2009 coordinated and facilitated by the Community Relations Division.



TDOT's social media efforts include 20 Twitter pages that connect to motorist information.

One of several onsite media briefings conducted by the Community Relations Division in 2009.



The Community Relations Division organizes special events each year including Work Zone Awareness Week.