

## Document Summary

# REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION OPERATIONS COLLABORATION AND COORDINATION: A PRIMER FOR WORKING TOGETHER TO IMPROVE TRANSPORTATION SAFETY, RELIABILITY, AND SECURITY

Federal Highway Administration

**2003 - Primer**

## Summary of the Work

This primer on Regional Transportation Operations Collaboration and Coordination is based on the premise that to improve the reliability, safety, and security of transportation systems operating across jurisdictional and organizational boundaries, continuous collaboration and coordination is essential. Agreement must be reached on a shared operations vision, a concept for how regional activities should be operated over time, what measures to use to assess effectiveness, and how to make improvements to achieve expectation in operating performance. The primer's intended audience includes transportation professionals and public safety officials from cities, counties, and states who are responsible for the day-to-day management and operations within a metropolitan region.

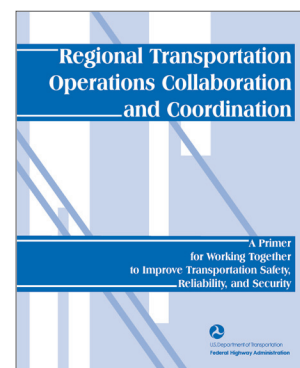
The primer is organized into four sections. The first and most comprehensive presents a framework and associated action steps for successfully applying improved coordination and collaboration in practice—to institutionalize working together as a way of doing business—through setting expectations, managing resources, sustaining relationships, and establishing responsibilities.

Action steps are presented for each component of a five-part framework:

- Structures – the set of relationships, institutions, and policy arrangements that provide a forum for collaboration and coordination
- Processes – formal and informal activities performed in accordance with collaboratively developed policies
- Products – the results of processes (e.g. concept of operations, performance data, operating plans and procedures, etc.)

- Resources – staff, equipment, and dollars that sustain and implement the concept of operations, plans, procedures, etc...
- Performance – objectives, measures, and metrics that inform success and identify areas for improvement

The primer's three remaining sections include: a discussion on how the process of developing an ITS architecture can be the impetus for new or more effective collaboration and coordination (and vice versa); a brief self-assessment for agencies to determine where they stand with respect to collaboration and coordination; and 11 short case studies illustrating regional collaboration and coordination in practice and how each effort (at least in part) follows the action steps established by the primer's framework.



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Strengths of the document include a well-organized and approachable framework for understanding why regional collaboration and coordination is important, how it can function, and where to begin in making improvements. As a weakness, the age of the document dates the case studies (as each of the example programs have advanced or evolved), but they still provide relevant evidence of the primer's framework in practice.

## Applied to Practice

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This primer's purpose is to apply its recommendations in practice to help agencies and organizations—and the operations people within them—understand the importance of regional collaboration and coordination, how it happens, and how to get started. A framework for accomplishing this is organized into five parts—structure, processes, products, resources, and performance—and includes action steps for each component to generally advance a region's ability to more effectively manage its transportation systems and resources from a less formal (uncoordinated, ad hoc) to more formal (fully collaborating, integrated) manner. Accompanying the framework is a one-page list of critical questions organized by the framework's components to help an agency or region to self-evaluate itself with respect to collaboration and coordination.