



APRIL 10, 2025

House Transportation Committee

Alaska DOT&PF's Role in Emergency Response

Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities
Christopher Goins, Southcoast Director
Jason Sakalaskas, Northern Region Maintenance Chief



WHY IS DOT&PF INVOLVED IN EMERGENCIES

- Maintain or restore safe emergency access and protect assets
- Perform permanent infrastructure repairs while seeking to improve resiliency and safety
- We are often first on scene
- Once emergency declaration occurs, we may be asked to work on non-DOT&PF assets
- Contracting Arm – can move quickly, greatly multiple assets



LAND – AIR – SEA

- Mode of Transportation availability to community or area
- Not all areas have multiple modes
- Interruption to mode may prioritize action
- Understand stakeholder and community needs
- Every emergency heightens the need for transportation



PARTIAL LIST OF RESPONSES

July 2024

- Glenn Highway MP 93 – Mudslide
- Grapefruit Fire Complex Response – Elliott Highway Closure
- Elliott Highway MP 51 – Closure due to flooding
- Glenn Highway MP 76 – Flooding
- Seward Highway MP 113 – Landslide

August 2024

- Juneau Suicide Basin Glacier Release – Mendenhall River Flooding
- Seward Airport and Nash Road – Flooding
- Fire at Juneau Seven-Mile
- Williamsport Pile Drive – Landslide and Flooding
- Petersville Road MP 33 – Landslide
- McCarthy Road MP 2 – Landslide
- Western Alaska – Storm
- Ketchikan – Landslide

September 2024

- Richardson Highway MP 12-15 – Large rocks in southbound lane
- Noatak River – Erosion
- Glenn Highway North Peter's Creek – Sinkhole

October 2024

- Ketchikan – Landslide across Reville Road
- Edgerton Highway MP 29 – Landslide
- Glenn Highway MP 73 – Boulders
- Fairbanks Area – Winter Ice Storm
- Western Alaska – Storm:
 - Gambell Airport – Closed
 - Nome Council – Closed (MP 16-17 debris, MP 23 erosion and log debris, MP 25 breach)
 - Kotzebue – Flooding, airport overtopped, airport closed
 - Flooding in: Shishmaref, Unalakleet, Shaktoolik, Numan Iqua, Kotlik, Hooper Bay, Scammon Bay, Chevak, Alakanuk, Gambell
- Dillingham – Ice Storm
- South Central – Snow and Ice Storm

November 2024

- Homer Spit – Storm, erosion, overtopping
- Ninilchik – Erosion

December 2024

- Southeast – Snow and Ice Storm
- Gustavus and Cordova Airports – Closed
- Klondike Highway – Closure
- Anchor Point – Flooding
- Gustavus Airport – Closed
- Homer – Ice Storm, office closure

January 2025

- Anchorage – Ice storm, freezing rain
- Southcentral – Winter storms
 - Richardson Highway MP 12-46 – Closure
 - Rabbit Creek – Pedestrian bridge damage
 - Anchorage International Airport – Diversions
 - State Office – Flooding
 - Anchor Point – Flooding
- Fairbanks – Rainstorm
- Parks Highway MP 219 – Avalanche



Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities

January 27 at 12:50 PM · 🌐

Jan. 27 #SouthcentralAlaska: We cannot overemphasize how odd the weather has been for the past 60-72 hours. What made matters worse was the early morning shift back to snow--the warmer asphalt conditions ensured that it became ice almost instantly. Our crews worked throughout the weekend to thaw culverts, clear debris, and patch the growing number of potholes (asphalt, ice and water are always a bad combo). They've switched back as quickly as they can to sanders and graders. ... See more



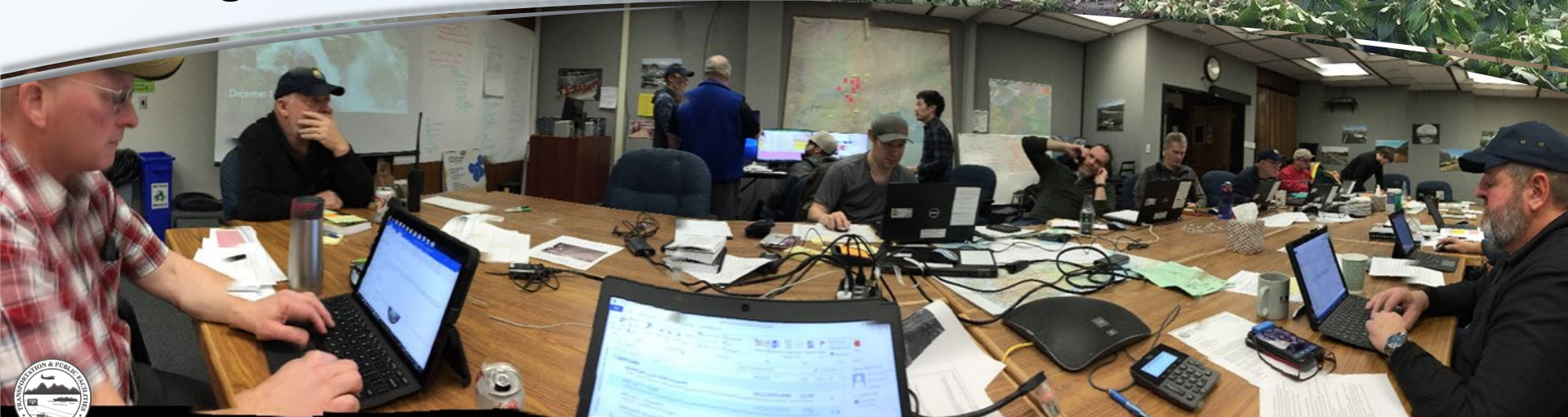
👍 143

12 comments 37 shares



DOT&PF USES INCIDENT COMMAND STRUCTURE

- Scalable structure depending upon size of event
- State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) – Joint agency involvement and communications
- Resource and information sharing



DOT&PF SUPPORTS INTERAGENCY RESPONSES



Joint agency examples:

- Wildfire support – Traffic control, maintenance for access, public messaging of impacts
- Department of Military & Veterans Affairs (DMVA) / State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC)
 - Emergency housing, city / community road repairs, etc.

RIGHT-OF-WAY MANAGEMENT

- Right-of-Way serves a critical role in transportation
- Expansion of roadway for safety features such as multiuse trails, sidewalk, bike lane, acceleration/deceleration lanes, turn pockets
- Clear zones to allow for safe lane departure events
- Emergency access, staging, and debris management often require additional rights and immediate use of private land
 - Clear communication with landowners is critical
 - Proper documentation protects all
 - Temporary construction easements tracked
- Emergency detour routes (i.e. Ketchikan Wolfe Point slide)



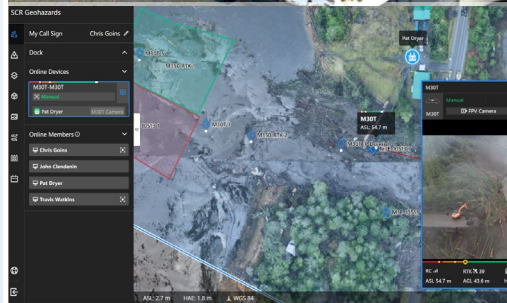
DOT&PF SHARES EMERGENCY UPDATES ACROSS OUR CHANNELS



- Internal emergency channel
- Interagency channels
- External facing channels
 - 511 banners, alerts
 - Facebook (DOT&PF's largest social media audience)
 - Email lists for emergencies such as building closures
 - Instagram
 - X (formerly Twitter)

NEW TOOLS: DRONES

- Alaska Rural Remote Operations Work Plan (ARROW)
- Scalable Operations with Advanced Remote Technologies (SOAR)
- Drone in a box
 - Remote flights (out of line of site)
 - GIS Mapping, change analysis, monitoring
 - Live streaming
- Thermal Detection
- Capable of flying challenging weather conditions
- Communications (Mobile Starlink)
- Underwater submersible



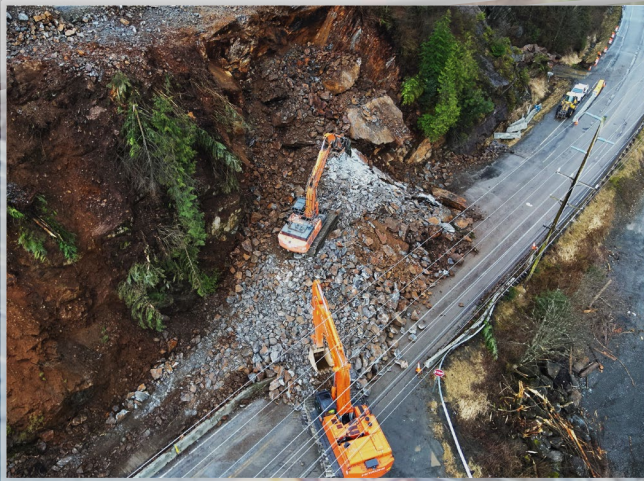
WRANGELL LANDSLIDE

- Site safety monitoring
- Search and Rescue / Search and Recovery
- Integration / coordination using ICS (Incident Command System)
- Rapid initial damage assessment
- Geotechnical risk evaluation
 - Initial and post repairs
- Prioritize restored critical access and utilities
- Clear and regular public communication
- Contingency and detour plan development



KETCHIKAN LANDSLIDE

- Safety first
- Rapid initial damage assessment
- Coordinated efforts using ICS
 - Ketchikan Gateway Borough
 - National Weather Service
 - Department of Military & Veteran's Affairs
- Geotechnical risk evaluation
 - Initial and ongoing
- Prioritize restoring critical access
 - Contingency detour plan
 - Limited access windows
- Clear and regular public communication



MERBOK: WESTERN ALASKA STORM

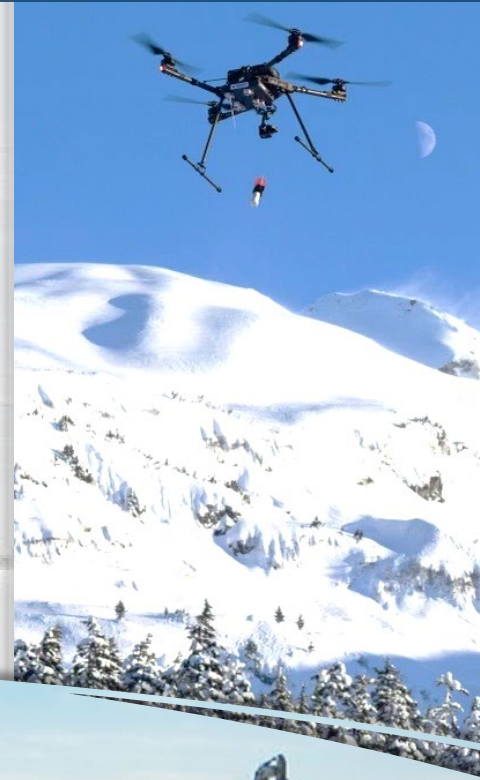


- Department assets impacted
 - Airports – Lighting systems, debris, access roadways
 - Roadway – Nome Front Street and Nome Council Road
- Community assets impacted and repaired
 - Barge landing access roads, housing , heating systems, power, etc.



Sag River Flooding Winter 2015

- Incident Command System (ICS) structure
- Joint Stakeholder Involvement – Alyeska, industry, borough, and Department of Natural Resources
- Alternate transportation modes used
- Addressed emergency response event preparation for second spring flooding event



THANK YOU

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