



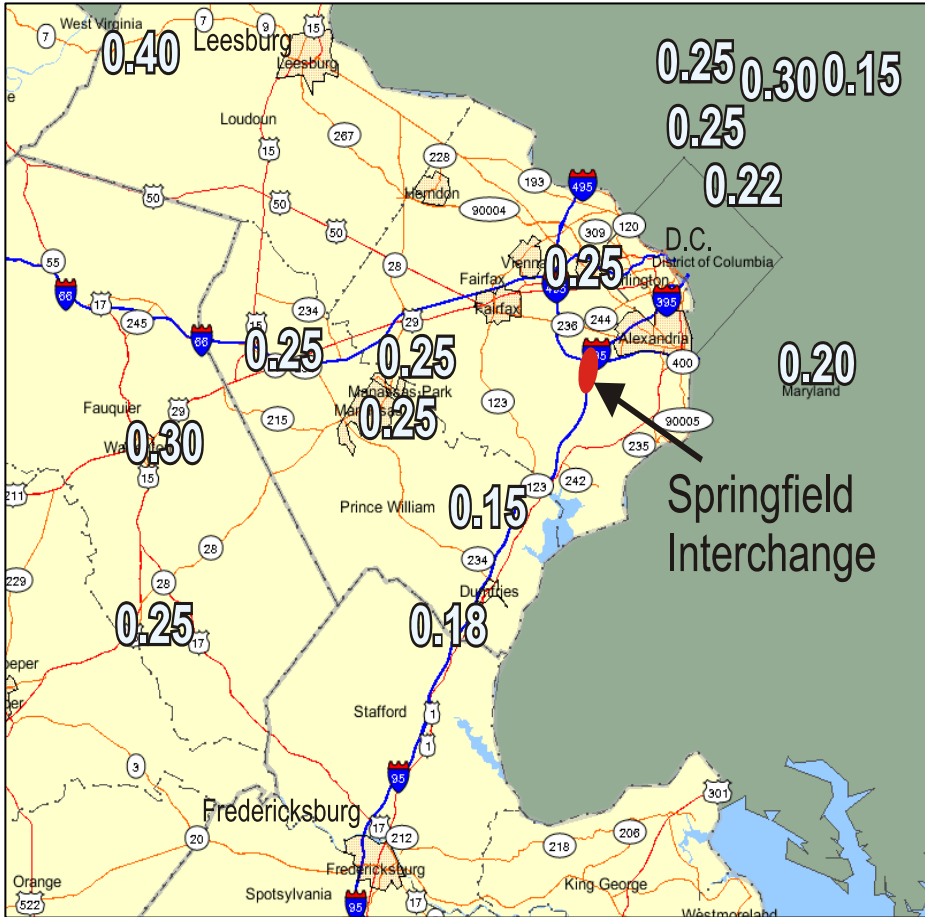
VDOT'S FOCUS ON EMERGENCY RESPONSE  
*Forward Plan From Feb. 12 Springfield Interchange Icing*

March 20, 2008

**David S. Ekern, P.E.**

*Commissioner, Virginia Department of Transportation*

# FEB. 12 EVENT OVERVIEW

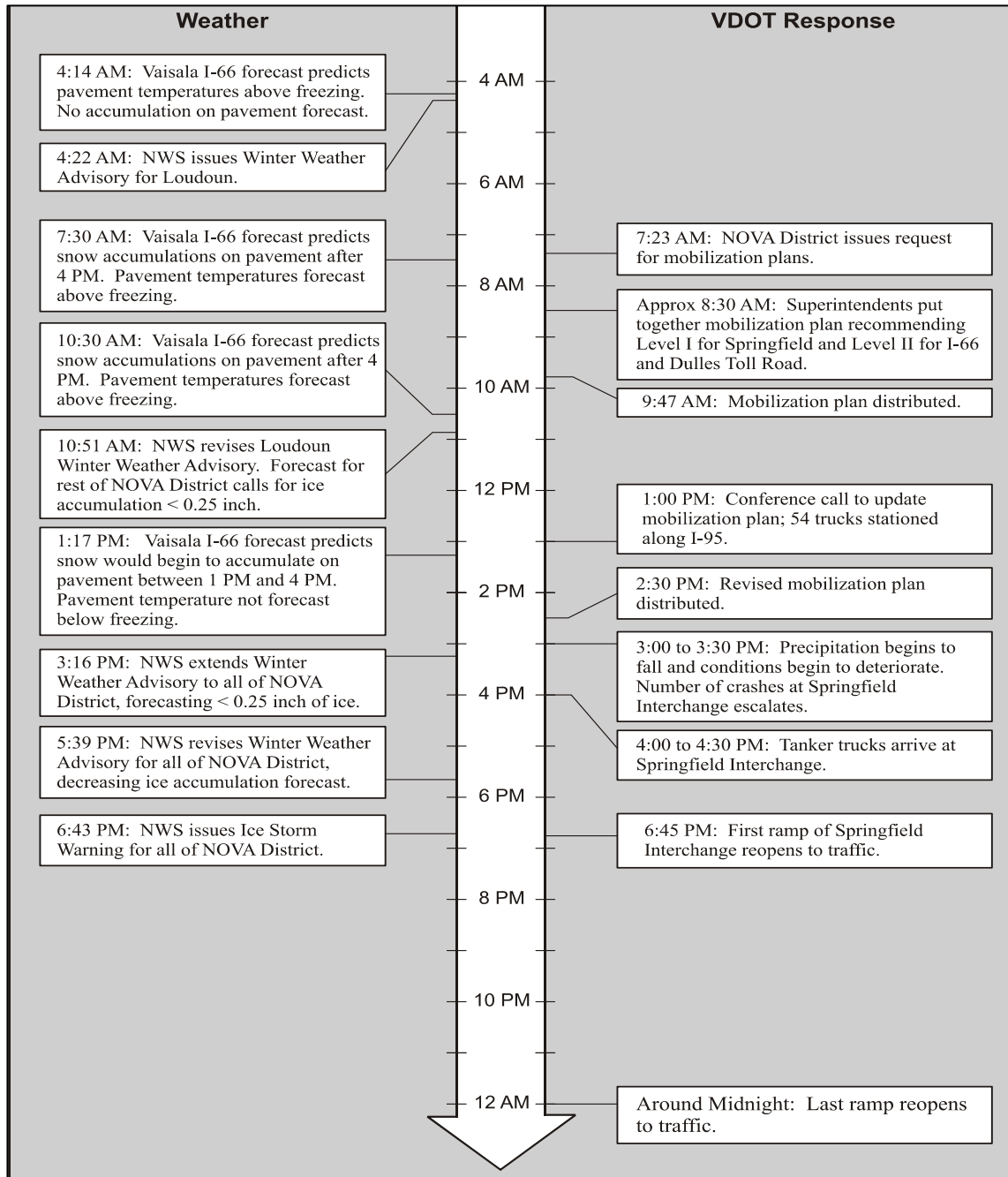


**Precipitation Amounts in the Northern Virginia Region on 2/12/08**



**Map of lane closures on Springfield Interchange. Red Lines are closures reported by VDOT and VSP, Blue Lines are closures reported by VDSP Only**

# RESPONSE TIMELINE



# KEY FINDINGS

## Weather

- Forecasts and weather data not comprehensive for Springfield Area
- Weather event spread across NOVA, not just Springfield
- Rapid change in weather set off events and overwhelmed resources

## Mobilization

- Mobilization plan was good, but time to mobilize contractor equipment as conditions changed was 1.5 to 3 hours
- Equipment availability and number of crashes delayed reopening ramps

## Communications

- No common interface to communicate between agencies
- Communications protocols between TMCs, TEOC, and field staff not effective

## Traveler Information

- 511, VDOT's Web site and media outreach hindered and delayed
- Variable message signs underutilized

## Chain of Command

- Incident command (NIMS) principles not followed for snow and ice, although they exist for other types of emergencies

## Snow and Ice Removal

- Insufficient road temperature data to accurately predict pavement conditions
- VDOT lacks comprehensive anti-icing/pre-treatment program

# FOLLOW-UP

- **Feb. 13** — Press release acknowledging unacceptable level of service and announcing formal review
- Action steps immediately implemented to ensure adequate coverage for Springfield Interchange and around the state
- VDOT schedules debriefings with Maryland, D.C. and State Police to collect data and share information about storm response
- **Feb. 14** — Commissioner appears before Senate Transportation Committee to outline agency review and forward plan
- **Feb. 20** — Commissioner calls multi-agency after-action meeting to identify contributing factors, lessons learned, and forward correction plan
- **Feb. 28** — Interim after-action report submitted to Governor's Office
- **March 7** — 16 immediate actions implemented to ensure appropriate winter weather response for remainder of '08 season
- VDOT begins work on long-term agency-wide effort to focus emergency response activities and enhance snow and ice removal programs

# IMMEDIATE ACTION STEPS SUMMARY

## **Implemented 16 immediate action steps by March 7, 2008**

- **Consolidated Springfield Interchange snow and ice operations for to one location, and better deployed VDOT equipment to manage winter weather events**
- **Designated clear chain of command focusing emergency response to Northern Virginia Traffic Management Center**
- **Improved communications protocols between VDOT, local, regional and state EOCs, and emergency response agencies such as the Virginia State Police**
- **Better use of technology and equipment to monitor traffic, report on pavement conditions and communicate with the public**
- **Established clearer chain of command procedures and training to ensure delivery of emergency response services for snow, ice and other incidents**

# LONG-TERM FORWARD PLAN

- **By April 15, Commissioner will deliver long-term forward plan to address agency emergency response mission**
- **Launch program to improve emergency response training and practices**
- **Implement best practices statewide for consistent, dependable and timely response**
  - **Adopting NIMS principles for *all* emergencies**
  - **Clear chain of command and protocols**
  - **Balancing VDOT and contract resources to speed response and staging appropriately**
  - **Develop additional funding and equipment policies and resources to strengthen response**
  - **Streamline maintenance and operations into comprehensive emergency response focus**

# THANK YOU

- *This event makes it crystal clear that VDOT must refocus on its emergency response mission to address the significant human impact of emergency events.*
- *Emergency response is the driving mission for everything we do to Keep Virginia Moving*