



Georgia's Towing and Recovery Incentive Program (TRIP)

The Atlanta region has a number of public and private organizations that work together as the Traffic Incident Management Enhancement (TIME) Task Force to improve the management of traffic incidents. In 2006, the TIME Task Force developed a Strategic Vision of initiatives to improve traffic incident management (TIM) services in Metro Atlanta. One of several high priority recommendations in this Vision was to quickly and safely remove large vehicle incidents from the roadways in a timely manner. The TRIP program was developed as part of this Strategic Vision.

What is TRIP?

The Georgia Towing and Recovery Incentive Program (TRIP) is a recovery incentive program to pay heavy-duty recovery companies a monetary bonus for clearing commercial vehicle wrecks quickly. TRIP helps to reduce the impact of major traffic incidents in Metro Atlanta while meeting TIME's aggressive clearance goal of 90 minutes or less.

What is the purpose of TRIP?

The key purpose is to facilitate quick and safe clearance of commercial vehicle crashes by improving towing procedures. This program improves TIM in the region while building a mutually beneficial relationship within the towing community by making it more financially profitable to meet quick clearance goals.

When is TRIP activated?

A TRIP is activated when incidents meet a pre-determined set of criteria, which includes mostly complicated or extended incidents where large vehicles or spilled loads cannot be easily towed from the scene or are creating a hazard to traffic.

How is a TRIP activated?

The TRIP program is activated by the Georgia Department of Transportation with consensus of the local police. The Atlanta Traffic Management Center will send response notification when a major lane blocking crash occurs. Pre-approved recovery contractors respond rapidly to the incident scene with heavy-duty recovery wreckers and other support equipment.

Who can participate in TRIP?

The TRIP program operates with joint participation of GDOT, Georgia Regional Transportation Authority and other response agencies. Any interested wrecker company can participate in this program by responding to an open Invitation to Negotiate. When a company meets the inspection and performance qualifications, the geographic response zones are negotiated. This agreement is non-exclusive, therefore some zones may have more than one assigned wrecker company that has qualified. In these cases, companies will operate on a rotational basis.

What are the requirements to participate in TRIP?

- Prompt, predictable contractor response and 24/7 equipment availability.
- Modern, powerful 35 and 50 ton recovery wreckers with full sets of tools.
- A support truck with an extensive array of equipment and full traffic control and fluid spill mitigation capability.
- Other specialized heavy equipment like loaders, bobcats, tractor-trailers.
- Fully trained operators with national or industry certification in advanced heavy towing and recovery as well as MUTCD traffic control and Hazardous Material awareness.

What is the advantage of participating in TRIP?

The approved TRIP contractors can receive monetary compensation for meeting the following clearance goals:

- Providing emergency mobilization and timely response of three trucks within a pre-determined timeframe
- Clearing and opening all travel lanes successfully within a guaranteed timeframe.
- Supplying additional special equipment at the request of incident commanders.

Are there any risks to TRIP?

There are provisions for liquidated damages for poor performance, delay or failing to meet pre-determined time goals. The wrecker company also forfeits any financial incentive if travel lanes are not open within a certain timeframe from notice-to-proceed. The participating company remains responsible for billing the owner of the wreckage (responsible party) for all towing and potential storage fees.

What is the status of TRIP?

TRIP was implemented on January 9, 2008. As of November 1, 2008 there are 4 participating companies and there have been 50 TRIP activations.

For more information visit
<http://www.timetaskforce.com/trip.htm>

