



By DOUG ALLPORT
Transnomis Solutions Inc.
FAHAD SHUJA
Member Services Coordinator, OGRA

Establishing the ONTARIO ROAD INFORMATION EXCHANGE

OGRA is taking a leading role in solving a longstanding problem for Ontario travellers and emergency responders. The problem relates to the communication and presentation of road closures, obstructions, restrictions, conditions, incidents, and events on municipal roads.

Renfrew County was the first of many Ontario counties to address this problem regionally. In a desire to reduce emergency response times their paramedic service, like paramedic services throughout Ontario, navigate roads maintained by 19 public works departments, MTO and MNR within the County. They also respond in six adjoining Ontario counties and regions, and travel to hospitals in Ottawa. The problem is that they receive road obstruction information from each road department by email and fax. This information is hard to map, and, for example, used to determine the impact of a 63 km detour around a lake. Today they have a live map, and their road obstruction information is provided to them from popular navigation applications such as Waze and TomTom.

Truckers face similar and additional challenges. In one day, three different trucks struck the same low bridge in eastern Ontario because there was no central reporting system that accurately mapped truck routes, hazardous material routes, low overheads, load restrictions, and poor approach information.

Transnomis Solutions Inc., an Ontario technology company introduced a solution to these challenges in 2017, and they now serve about one third of Ontario municipalities. Transnomis developed a web service known as Municipal511 and Responder511. Users log in to a web service, enter road data, and have it distributed for them. The road information is presented on a provincial map (see www.Municipal511.ca), and

Responder511 where additional situational awareness information can be added. The information marked “public” is distributed to leading navigation companies (e.g. Waze), data providers to specialized trucking applications, and vendors of specialized applications used by responders. Perth County was an early adopter of the technology as well, and their implementation was recognized by three national public safety organizations in 2018.

Transnomis has a unique combination of expertise to tackle a problem of this scale. Dr. Simon Foo studied intelligent transportation systems (ITS) and has developed ITS solutions for the City of Toronto, York, Durham, and Waterloo Regions, and the Ministry of Transportation. Doug Allport led the development of provincial and national public safety situational awareness systems, and he laid the groundwork for our national public alerting system. When OGRA started looking for technology to support the OGRA - Municipal Alliance for Connected and Autonomous Vehicle (MACAVO) initiative, Transnomis provided OGRA with the MACAVO web map at no cost.

Working with Transnomis, OGRA will establish an Ontario Road Information Exchange Advisory Committee in the coming months. It will consist of municipal public works, emergency responders, and other key stakeholders. The committee will identify goals, objectives, policy, and direction for the Exchange.

For more information on this innovative solution please contact Fahad Shuja (fahad@ogra.org), OGRA Member Services and OPS Coordinator or Doug Allport (doug@transnomis.com), Transnomis Solutions Inc. (www.transnomis.com) ●