

WVDOH Today!



Consistency.

Transparency.

Accountability.

The goal is simple, but implementation is not. To collect quality checked data on the condition of the 6,958 bridges and each mile of the 38,770 miles of roadway that our approximately 5,000 person statewide organization is responsible for maintaining, and to have this data be available at our fingertips so that decisions made on all levels can be those that move us forward toward our collective goal of being the best Division of Highways in the country.

In each of the ten Districts around the state, new employees have been hired or are being hired for a Reporting Unit. The Reporting Units will work to collect accurate, reliable data, to be managed by the new Strategic Performance Management Division.

“This is going to help us to monitor our progress, and see where we’re going,” said Gehan Elsayed, PhD., P.E., Assistant

Director of the new Strategic Performance Management Division. “I would see this as changing the business culture of the DOT. We’re moving more towards being performance based. We’re moving more towards being data driven. We’re moving more toward breaking the silos. We’re trying to increase transparency, work more together.”

“I would say transparency is very important, because it will make the work very, very efficient,” said Elsayed. “I would say it would create a very comfortable working environment in general, for everybody.”

“There’s a lot of details, of course, but that’s the general mission,” said Elsayed with a smile at how much of an understatement ‘a lot of details’ really is. “This Division will be serving other areas of the DOT, and trying to make their life easier in a lot of ways.”

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WVDOH Today!



Teddy Johnson: "I Wish I'd Found This Job 40 Years Ago"

On a chilly morning in late October, with his Disforce Crew working on a piling wall project in Raleigh County, Teddy Johnson laughs about the only difficult thing about his job.

"For me, it's getting up. I'm 70." Johnson says. "Nothing's really tough, they usually give us what we need to do. I wish I had this job 30 or 40 years ago."

"We work for Disforce for the state and we put in piling walls. This is what we do when the road slips off. We come and drill, and put in piling, and shore the road back up. We drill down until we hit rock and then we go ten feet farther. These beams are 50 foot. It's 40 foot to the rock, and then

we go another 10, install the steel beams, put the concrete lagging in it, and fill it back in. I have a really good crew. We can put in a complete 200 foot piling wall and they don't check on us or anything."

Johnson has worked for the WVDOH for 11 years. Roads to Prosperity funding has increased the amount of work. "We

work 12 to 13 hours a day, every week," said Johnson. "There's plenty to do."



"It's just a great place to work," continued Johnson. "If you do your job, they leave you alone, District 10's that way. Alan Reed, he runs it, and he started out doing piling walls so he understands. He came from the bottom up and he understands what we do. It's good to work for him."

"I would advise people, they're looking for good people, and they pay good money now. For the longest time it was low pay, now they pay really good pay," said Johnson. "I'd advise you to get online and fill out an application."

Teddy Johnson's winning attitude has won him the hearts of many. A recent Facebook story featuring Johnson had 7,900 views (at press time), 152 "likes," and comments such as "Way to go Teddy! You guys do a good job," "I'm proud of the work our guys are doing," and one special comment, "Proud granddaughter," with a little heart.

WVDOH Today! is a monthly newsletter published by the West Virginia Division of Highways and distributed statewide via email to *5,000+ employees. All content is developed by the editor, unless otherwise credited. The purpose of this publication is to facilitate connection across the diverse worksites and professions represented among WVDOH employees to empower us to function as **one West Virginia Division of Highways**, and with our sister agencies, **one West Virginia Department of Transportation**. We encourage employees to write in and share thoughts.

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We are recognizing our people.

**This number includes permanent and temporary employees.*

WVDOH is Now Hiring with good jobs available all across the state.

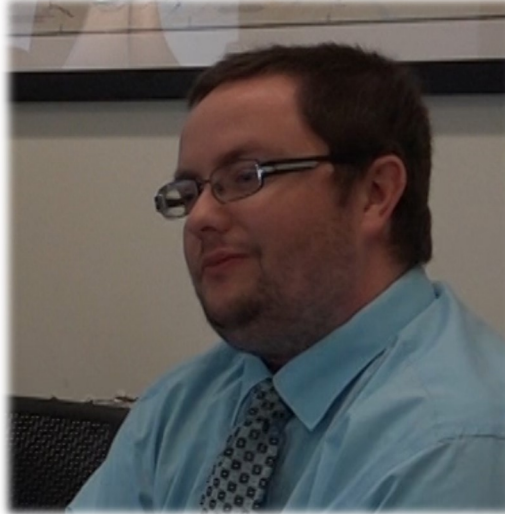


Special Feature: THE PAY PLAN

If you haven't seen Matt Ball around lately, you're not alone. No one has seen Ball except for the team working with him on revising the pay plan. Ball has done a massive amount of work behind the scenes in a few short months. "WVDOH Today!" caught up with Matt Ball behind The Pay Plan Paperwork Mountain to share an update on what you can expect.

What the plan is not— The pay plan is not a guaranteed pay raise for all employees; now, or later. The pay plan is not an across the board pay raise. The plan is not piecemeal; it will be implemented in a coherent fashion. The pay plan is not solely about pay; it is about a clear path to advancement, employee retention, ease of hiring and solving other longstanding difficulties.

What the pay plan is—Every job classification is being reviewed and updated. Pay grades and responsibilities are being compared to other state DOT agencies, private sector jobs, and national averages. The previously approved DOH pay scale is being reviewed. A new grading system is being created based on responsibilities. Several classifications are being



combined or separated. Job classification families are being created to improve career paths. A career services unit is being created within the Human Resources Division which will have the purpose of, not only handling our job registers internally, but also providing job counseling to current employees who want to further their careers.

The bottom line — Much progress has been made on the pay plan and it is now being reviewed. Your patience is appreciated. There will be growing pains, but those will be less if the review which is now taking place is thoughtful and detailed. With changes taking place all across the DOH, it's imperative that this important step be implemented

properly. When it is done, there will be more transparency in the WVDOH Human Resources Division than ever before. Hiring and retaining employees will be easier. The reward for all the hard work and growing pains is that our jobs will match what we do and we will know where we stand and how to keep growing. There's no doubt you have questions. **Expect an update in the December of issue of "WVDOH Today!"** Good things are happening. Stay tuned.

Wellness Initiative Grows Across Districts

A committee of WVDOH employees dedicated to wellness for our employees across the state gathered in Charleston on November 12 to discuss our statewide needs.

District's 9's Brandon Cook and District 10's Kristen Shrewsbury were full of good ideas, and perspectives on the health needs of our people statewide. The group met, not simply to express problems, but to solve them. Sharing good ideas across Districts and Divisions, they talked of standing desks for in-office workers, good quality bottled water, encouraging stretching exercises, and combining wellness initiatives with safety meetings — as wellness and safety go hand-in-hand.

In the WVDOH of today, we know that taking the time to oil equipment is important. We recognize that taking care of our people, protecting our actual lives, is even more important.

"WVDOH Today!" would like to hear from you about the wellness needs in your District or Division. You can share your thoughts by writing to; DOHnewsletter@wv.gov.

Wellness in the workplace consumes a little time; your WVDOH understands. It is not wasted time. Take the time to stretch. Form support teams to help each other meet goals such as smoking cessation or weight loss. Share what you know and let us know what you need.



Across all Districts and Divisions; we are...

ONE WVDOH



We've gone public with the good work of our people!

Join the 55,000+ followers of WVDOT on Facebook; watch your co-workers solve impossible problems and do great things.



Above and Beyond: District 9 Reads to Children



Photo compliments of Steve Cole.

"Every year, District 9 Headquarters is visited by preschoolers from the Greenbrier County Library reading program," said District 9 Engineer, Steve Cole, P.E. "They read a Halloween themed book in our conference room, do a quick craft project, then do trick-or-treating throughout our building."

You never know; among the young West Virginians who are developing a love for reading while at District 9 Headquarters may be the next generation of District 9 employees. The presence of our most precious resource no doubt helps to build employee morale as we take pride in putting our young minds on the road to a great education.

"As you can see," said Cole, "Our employees enjoy dressing up and welcoming members of our community into our building. The appreciation from parents and the program managers from the library is priceless. However, when having a design status meeting first thing in the morning prior to the event — Pirates and Batman can be rather comical," said Cole, of the traditions' only downside.

Mike Spry: Exceeding Expectations in District 2

"We've been able to be more aggressive with how we've been able to maintain the roads," said Mike Spry, Maintenance Assistant in District 2. "With the additional funding and additional resources that we were given to be able to successful complete the Governor's initiative and the Secretary/Commissioner's initiatives they've allowed us free reign with being able to work the hours. Our forces have stepped up and done a tremendously good job. They've successfully pretty much completed all of our CORE maintenance plans that we've been required to do, along with the additional ditching, taking care of the roads within our areas, fixing some slips and slides, and some drainage issues — some major drainage projects."



"Here in the District, our guys really stepped up and did a fantastic job," said Spry. "They always want to do more, they've just not been able, in years past, due to budgetary issues, they've not been able to successfully just go out and fix the projects — we've had to manage the funding that we have available to the projects that were in need at the time, versus the lower keys. We've actually been able to address lower key issues this year."

"They, for the most part, have seemed more at ease with how they've been able to finally be able to do their job without constraints," said Spry, on the way employees rose to the occasion when 'roadblocks' were removed.

Shane Hudnall: Keeping You Alive and Well on the Job

Years ago, in a sixth grade classroom, a youngster named Shane Hudnall got to wear an AARP Safety Belt. One of the things sixth graders can do is develop an interest in saving people's lives. That's what Hudnall did.

"I always liked to look out for other people," said Hudnall, now the WVDOH State Safety Officer. "What can I do to make them not get hurt? So, that's kind of where it started, in sixth grade, with the little orange AARP, or whatever that was called, safety belt. From there, I started in mining, and in construction, and just kind of worked my way up."



There are many safety issues impacting WVDOH workers now. Here are some of the things Hudnall is focusing on as he works cooperatively with Safety Officers in all ten Districts.

Silica Dust can be present in concrete or stone. Protecting your lungs from silica dust is a big deal because when the dust is in your lungs, harmful effects may show up years later. OSHA has decreased the allowable limits for silica dust on a job site. Hudnall is working with District Safety Officers to make sure our WVDOH employees have respirators when needed, or can use

wet techniques when applicable to keep silica dust from being something awful they have to worry about when they reach their retirement years.

Hard hats are another major focus. All ten Districts received the same memo; OSHA regulations must be followed. Head injuries have happened to WVDOH employees, and it can be a life altering event.

Work Zone Safety is always important because bad things happen fast. Bad things can happen at 70 miles per hour on a cell phone that wouldn't happen at 55. In addition to worrying about people

speeding through work zones, our workers also have to worry about impaired drivers. It's not fair, or good, or wonderful, but it's real and our people need to do everything they can to keep each other safe, including going Above and Beyond the minimum standards for traffic control in work zones.

"The thing with safety is you don't see some of the payoff. If you avoid having someone get an injury, you don't know whether you did or not," said Hudnall.

There are only 49 other states.

The goal of being the best Division of Highways in the country isn't impossible. It's a real thing.

To be the best educated. To be the most motivated. To be the most empowered.

To go above and beyond... and then some... for safety in our work zones.

To be the most transparent and efficient with our use of resources.

To be the most connected across all Districts and Divisions.

To be the best at implementing our PLAN.

To build the best quality workplace for our people who will build and maintain the best roads.

Why not? Who can stop us?

Happy Birthday From WVDOH to Secretary Byrd White.



The West Virginia Division of Highways wishes our highly esteemed Secretary and Commissioner, **Byrd White**, a **Happy Birthday**. Since joining the WVDOH in March, Secretary White has worked tirelessly to implement positive change and create a better working environment for all of us. With plenty of laughter but not an ounce of nonsense when it's time to make a decision, Secretary White's leadership has been solid and his service to the State of West Virginia has been admirable.

Cindy Butler: Keeping State Rail on the Rails



If you ask Cindy Butler, Executive Director of our Department of Transportation sister agency the State Rail Authority, how her agency is doing, you'll get dry humor, "I'm keeping it on the rails."

The State Rail Authority is a small agency, with an enormous work-load. Butler doesn't let that phase her. From operating the South Branch Valley Railroad and the West Virginia Central Railroad, to promoting tourist trains, to maintaining train stations for MARC train commuters, to managing "rail-banks" of abandoned railroad trails, Butler never seems to slow down.

This time of year, tourists from all across the country and beyond are buying tickets for our special, seasonal train rides. They come to West Virginia to see the sights, and play along as children learn to be an Elf, or catch a dinner train for the experience of a lifetime.

While the tourist trains have earned West Virginia a special place in the hearts of many, passenger trains and freight railroads have helped keep our economy growing. Butler has had a hand in all of this. Keeping the SRA on the rails is not an easy task, but it's one for which Butler is perfectly suited.

Randy Damron: The Voice of Work Zone Safety

"It's become a passion, actually, to be involved in a campaign or a drive, if you will, to attempt to communicate the idea to slow down in work zones," said Randy Damron, who has come to be known as the voice of work zone safety in West Virginia — literally. Damron is the voice you hear on the radio urging drivers to "Just. Slow. Down." Combining his other passion, for excellent sound quality, properly mixed levels, and a pleasing tone, with the important message of work zone safety, Damron has worked tirelessly to protect us and save lives.

"The day we dedicated the Workers Memorial, located at the Williamstown Welcome Center on I-77 just inside the state lines, was a sad day," said Damron. "We had families there, the ones we could reach, the ones we could get in contact with. Our records went back to the 1930's, trying to retrieve names of workers, Division of Highways workers, who had been killed while working on the road."

"We had many families there, and it was a sad day," continued Damron. "It was a realization as you look around at this memorial, that you think to yourself 'Really, did this have to

happen?' There was a sadness among the crowd, I think, realizing that in reality, it didn't have to happen."



"I admit, it's frustrating," said Damron. "I'm a motorist too, and I'm on that same road you're on. You see the sign ahead, 'Left lane closed in 1500 feet, reduce your speed to 55.' Okay, so you get over in the right lane and you do that. What happens? Yea. You see people, they got to get around you. For whatever reason, they've just got to be in front of you." To travel safely through work zones, it's important to remember that slow, smooth driving moves a large number of cars through the work zone more

quickly than everyone trying to gain a car-length by cutting in. By setting a good example for other drivers, we can each help Damron in his mission to keep us safe.

"Just. Slow. Down." Each time a motorist in a West Virginia hears that familiar voice, whether on their radio or replayed in their memory, our work zones get a little bit safer. "Just. Slow. Down." With increased roadwork all around the state, that little bit safer could be enough to save the life of your co-worker or friend.



He Plays a Mean Tenor Sax, but That's Not Why We Call Him Dr. Musick



Ryland plays a mean tenor saxophone, but that isn't why we call him "Dr. Musick." In November, after many years of juggling meaningful and significant work with the WVDOH by day and working on his doctorate degree by night, an exhausted Ryland Musick, P.E., became Ryland Musick, Ph.D., P.E., completing his doctoral degree in Civil Engineering, Transportation Management. As Deputy State Highway Engineer for Programming, Planning and the new Strategic Performance Management Division, Musick's passion for building the best WVDOH possible is apparent. Musick has developed a reputation for being reliable and dependable; answering his work phone at 5 a.m. or 11 p.m. with the same diligence he would at noon. In addition, Musick has been a long-standing member of the Advisory Committee for the West Virginia Bridge Design and Build Contest, helping develop love of engineering in our next generation. He is an asset not only to the WVDOH, but to his profession.

WVDOH's Champion for Tuition Reimbursement: Susan Hutchison

From an Associate's Degree to a Doctorate, WVDOH employees seeking a degree which they will use in the course of their work can thank Training Coordinator, Susan Hutchison, M.A., for helping to clear the path for them. Hutchison, who came to the WVDOH from WVDHHR, brought with her a special dedication to developing employees to reach their potential. At DHHR, Hutchison met an Office Assistant who, despite knowing, up-close, the difficulties of a Child Protective Services Worker job, wanted to go to college to become a CPS worker. Hutchison worked to expand that program so the OA could reach her goal. Hutchison brought the same spirit to the WVDOH. We invest in equipment, and supplies — we also invest in the people who invest in our organization. The tuition reimbursement program helps WVDOH meet the need for qualified workers to fill vacancies, while helping employees who already know this is where they want to build a career.

The Cat at Cooper's Rock: District 4 Reunites Joe and Lady Griz

Lady Griz, pictured below with her cute white feet clinging to the coat of Joe, her Hooman, recently allowed WVDOH employees in District 4 the honor of assisting her.

"This isn't my crew working out on a job, but this is my crew going above what is expected of them to help someone," said Tina Bragg. "I'm not surprised because this is Cooper's Rock."

"The guy's all tried to catch her on several attempts," said Bragg. "We noticed she had a collar and a tag. The guys went and bought cat food and made sure she ate every day. Eventually, they were able to catch her and called the number."

It turns out, Lady Griz was a visiting tourist from Livingston, Montana. At the overlook, she got out of her Hooman's R.V. in search of a better place to take a much needed nap. After her nap, she decided to go for a hunt. She, in fact, found the biggest trophy squirrel District 4 has ever known, but she decided to let him go. After two more naps, she returned to the R.V. to find it gone. Having read that WVDOH folk are very good people, and many of them are owned by cats as well, Lady Griz knew where to go for help. On November 12, at 11:52, Lady Griz and Joe, her Hooman, were reunited thanks to her quick-thinking on the kind of Hooman's who work for WVDOH.



Photo compliments of Tina Bragg