



## RESOLUTION

URGING THE MAYOR AND THE CHIEF OF THE HONOLULU POLICE DEPARTMENT TO ESTABLISH A MULTIDISCIPLINARY ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION TEAM TO RESPOND TO MAJOR VEHICULAR ACCIDENTS ON OAHU ROADWAYS.

WHEREAS, in July 2011, a vehicular fatality resulted in the shutdown of H-2's town-bound lanes during the morning rush hour, creating gridlock and stranding motorists for almost five hours; and

WHEREAS, lengthy and prolonged road closures such as this adversely impact individuals, businesses and society by preventing: 1) students from reaching their schools; 2) workers from reaching their places of employment; 3) businesses from making normal deliveries; and 4) responders such as ambulances and fire engines from reaching community emergencies in a timely fashion; and

WHEREAS, although public safety and data collection are important priorities in any lane or roadway closure, accident investigations in Hawaii proceed at a slower rate than in comparable U.S. metropolitan areas; and

WHEREAS, as an example, the average length of time for lane closures in Hawaii ranges from two to four hours for major traffic accidents to over eight hours when a fatality occurs. In contrast, the California Highway Patrol average for lane closure ranges from thirty minutes for major collisions to sixty minutes for fatal accidents; and

WHEREAS, unlike Hawaii, other states such as California, Oregon, Washington, Utah and Arizona employ what is known as a multidisciplinary accident investigation team ("MAIT") that responds to major vehicular accidents or other serious incidents on their roadways; and

WHEREAS, a typical MAIT includes personnel who are trained in collision reconstruction, occupant kinematics, vehicle dynamics, traffic and automotive engineering, interviewing and interrogation, and the use of laser technology and digital equipment such as total station survey systems that replace time-consuming, manual surveying in order to perform on-site measurements and collect data, thereby accelerating data collection and minimizing the time the roadway is closed; and

WHEREAS, the typical MAIT system also relies upon good communication, collaboration and coordination between law enforcement and emergency response agencies so that emergency responders such as ambulances and fire crews, and the medical examiner often respond to accident scenes simultaneously with police officers, or are alerted to the incident and are poised to respond quickly if necessary; and



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WHEREAS, the Council finds that the Honolulu Police Department should establish a MAIT that will be composed of skilled, trained investigators equipped to conduct effective and expeditious investigations of major vehicular accidents on Oahu roadways and thereby alleviate the harm caused by extended road closures that is currently the norm; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City and County of Honolulu that it urges the Mayor and the Chief of the Honolulu Police Department to establish a multidisciplinary accident investigation team to respond to major vehicular accidents on Oahu roadways; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Honolulu Police Department, in establishing the MAIT, is also urged to:

1. Staff the MAIT with personnel who have received specialized training in the following areas: 1) traffic collision reconstruction; 2) traffic engineering; 3) automotive engineering; 4) vehicle dynamics; 5) occupant kinematics; 6) interviewing and interrogation; and 7) any other necessary investigation techniques. MAIT personnel may be drawn from the ranks of the police department or contracted from other state and county departments or from the private sector, as necessary;
2. Develop and implement a program of training to acquire and maintain the expertise required of MAIT members;
3. Acquire the equipment necessary to accomplish the purpose and duties of the MAIT, including total station survey systems, digital cameras and other related equipment, computer-aided drawing software and printers, and equipment transportation vehicles, if necessary. To fund equipment needs, the HPD should assess financial needs, research the availability of federal funds to establish and equip the MAIT, and submit budgetary proposals to the Council during the next budget cycle;
4. Establish a protocol to coordinate major accident investigations among law enforcement, emergency responders, the medical examiner and other agencies as necessary. This protocol should, at a minimum, include the following: 1) Immediate communication with all jurisdictional and responding agencies to respond or be prepared to respond quickly to a major vehicular accident; 2) Preservation of evidence; 3) Documentation of the investigation; and 4) Testimony in court proceedings; and



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- 5. Develop a mechanism for collecting, measuring, and reporting data to determine the effectiveness of the MAIT program, including reduction in the duration and extent of road closures during major accident investigations, findings relating to highway or vehicle design, and the outcome of any criminal prosecutions arising from MAIT investigations;

and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that copies of this Resolution be transmitted to the Mayor and the Chief of the Honolulu Police Department.

INTRODUCED BY:

Tom Borch

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DATE OF INTRODUCTION:

**OCT 24 2011**

Honolulu, Hawaii

Councilmembers