



# National Model

for the Statewide Application of Data Collection and Management Technology to Improve Public Safety

## NEWSLETTER

Volume 5 July / August / September 2010

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## Welcome

There are so many awesome and exciting things happening within the National Model program that you need to know about. Most noteworthy is the Steering Committee meeting that was held in Pittsburgh in August and the appointment of a new National Model Program Manager. TraCS 10 use is spreading steadily and anticipation for the release of TraCS Web is at an all-time high. The new MACH application is turning out to be an extremely valuable addition to the National Model suite of product offerings as it is rolled out statewide in Iowa and piloted in Nebraska and Wisconsin.

In this edition of the newsletter, the Incident Mapping Tool (IMAT) is spotlighted, Alaska's TraCS project status is given, an overview of the new COM Splitter utility is reviewed and the TraCS 10 Database Builder is discussed.

The National Model Newsletter aims to inform and educate about the goals and activities of the National Model in an effort to increase membership interest. You are encouraged to pass this newsletter on to anyone you think might be interested in learning more about the National Model.

## National Model News

The National Model Steering Committee Meeting was held August 12 - 13 in Pittsburgh, PA. Over forty member representatives from eight states/provinces attended while an additional eight representatives from four other states participated remotely. The meeting was very productive and a lot of after-hour fun was had.

A technology roadmap jammed packed with new ideas was introduced at the meeting. The roadmap lays out the features and functionality planned for the National Model products to ensure that the software continues to meet and exceed the expectations of the public safety community.

Also at the meeting, the new TraCS/MACH interface was showcased that allows TraCS Mobile to work in a wireless environment and have access to all of the same features as TraCS Office. The latest addition to MACH, MACH Handheld, a Windows Mobile version of MACH for use on smartphones, was introduced.

TraCS Web will be beta tested starting in October by Alaska and Iowa, and will be (cont.)



The TraCS interface of IMAT supports all of the TraCS database platforms (Access, Microsoft SQL-Server, and Oracle), and allows users to update their analysis data as often as desired. It is not uncommon for IMAT users to be viewing and analyzing mapped events captured in TraCS on the same day. The IMAT/TraCS interface supports updates of data from a remote repository when using the SQL-Server and Oracle platforms. This allows large agencies (e.g. State Police organization) to support IMAT users jurisdiction-wide using a single database.

The maps loaded into the IMAT software are the same maps used as part of the Incident Location Tool software, providing additional return on investment in these databases. The filters and charts accessible to users are configurable and can be tailored to the underlying TraCS data. Currently there are standard packages supporting Crash, Citation, Crimes, Operating While Intoxicated, and Motor Vehicle Inspection forms.

Get IMAT for your agency and empower your users with the benefits of data-driven decisions using TraCS Data!

For more information or to arrange a demonstration, contact Dan Gieseman ([dgiesema@iastate.edu](mailto:dgiesema@iastate.edu) ; 515.296.0796).

## State Report

### Alaska

by David Monroe – TraCS Alaska

Late in 2005, several members of the State of Alaska Department of Transportation (DOT) recognized a need to improve Alaska's traffic ticket and collision reporting systems that still relied on inefficient manual paper processes. The AKDOT headed a coalition of several state and local law enforcement agencies including the Division of Motor Vehicles, Alaska Court System, Anchorage Police Department, and the Alaska Highway Safety Office to bring the Traffic and Criminal Software (TraCS) system to Alaska.

In January of 2006, the Commercial Motor Vehicle Division (MSCVE) was selected as the first pilot agency using the citation form. In January of 2008, MSCVE along with 2 to 3 officers from other agencies, and 5 State Troopers were selected as the pilot group for the crash form.

Since that time, the responsibilities for the operational support and further development of TraCS in Alaska were handed to the Department of Public Safety (DPS) making DPS the "Lead Agency" for Alaska. DPS engaged Computer Task Group (CTG) as their primary contractor, who has managed the responsibilities for the project management, design, and implementation of TraCS 10 throughout Alaska. The governance of TraCS is still driven by the Alaska TraCS Steering Committee comprised of DOT, DPS, Alaska State Troopers, Department of Corrections, Alaska Court System, Alaska Railroad Police, Alaska Association of Chiefs of Police, Alaska Highway Safety Office and various local law enforcement agencies.

(cont.)

Currently, Alaska has TraCS 10 deployed to roughly 24 state and local agencies and it is being used by over 200 officers and troopers statewide.

Alaska is still in an advanced pilot phase for TraCS 10 and currently has two forms in use; Alaska's 12-200 Crash Form and the 12-213 Alaska Uniform Citation. Other than any minor issues or pending changes, both forms are considered complete. Other forms are also in the beginning stages of development as we analyze the feasibility of using them in TraCS.

A web-based submission to a secure http site for ALL TraCS users statewide has been developed, tested, and implemented in a test environment and is expected to be put into production in September, 2010. We have also designed an exception for individual Law Enforcement Agency's with their own IT staff to be able submit to a local supervisor workstation or server which can then proxy the submission to the Alaska Statewide Repository.

We have installed TraCS 10 to a Windows Terminal Server 2003 in a test environment successfully and configured it to support multiple users logging in and running TraCS 10 connected to the TraCS SQL Server database. We are in the process of duplicating this functionality on a Windows 2008 Server. We are awaiting the opportunity to evaluate the TraCS Web client to determine if the Web client would be better suited for our use as opposed to incurring the licensing costs of Windows Terminal Services. With either solution, our intent is to use a web-based client to allow the use of an SSL VPN for access to the repository data based on login.

We had our first Statewide TraCS User Meeting in Anchorage on February 3 & 4, 2010.

- Sgt. Jim Daily from NYSP was our keynote speaker.
- The majority of Alaska Law Enforcement Agencies were represented.
- We demonstrated TraCS 10.
- Several TraCS 10 users provided feedback on the application.
- Any new reported issues were resolved during the meeting.

Alaska has been utilizing many funding sources in addition to federal grants. We recently were made aware of FMCSA funding requirements that include Full Disk Encryption (FDE). FMCSA included a requirement that this FDE must be centrally managed. They have been unable to provide any suggestions of how to accomplish this when the equipment is deployed across multiple agencies. We are awaiting their response to this scenario. FDE management across multiple agencies, specifically those without IT departments, has been our biggest road block with moving forward to comply with this requirement.

Alaska's TraCS development team has continued their ongoing work with TEG to test new versions of TraCS 10 and identify bugs in the application as well as request enhancements that we believe most other states would also find necessary or at least useful. We also have been working with Dan Gieseman on the ILT. He provided us with a beta version of the ILT for testing using the Alaska maps we had from the old version of the ILT already. We're now attempting to get a more complete set of current maps *(cont.)*

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for the State of Alaska in the newest version of the software.

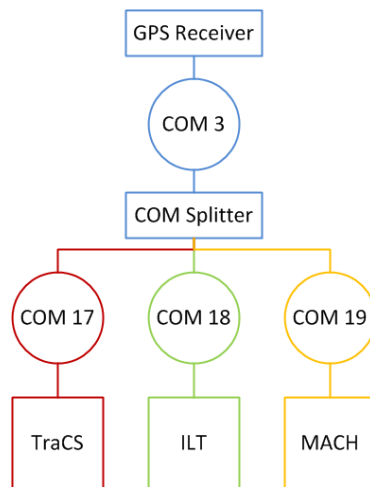
The following is a summarized list of Alaska TraCS 10 deployment activities:

- A test Alaska TraCS Statewide Repository is currently in use to receive TraCS data via https from all agencies statewide.
- Some larger agencies have successfully deployed a local TraCS server or gateway for processing their TraCS data prior to submission to the Alaska TraCS Statewide Repository.
- Statewide distribution delivered via Secure Web (https) has also been implemented resulting in standardized updates for all Alaska TraCS users.
- Agencies requiring customized communication files are able to utilize the statewide distributions.
- A 24/7 Centralized Support Line has been setup for TraCS users statewide to contact to report issues or seek assistance with TraCS.

## Legacy Lowdown

### COM Splitter

The COM Splitter is a handy standalone utility that is available through the National Model that even the most seasoned TraCS users aren't typically aware of. It is a useful tool that allows you to use serial peripheral devices like GPS receivers and barcode scanners in more than one program at the same time.



When a program opens a COM port to access a peripheral device, it has to lock the port and no other programs can access it. The COM Splitter replicates a physical COM port into multiple virtual COM ports. Several programs can then access the physical COM port that the device is connected to at the same time by opening one of the virtual COM ports instead. When a barcode is scanned or GPS coordinates are detected, the data is transferred over the physical COM port by the device and then automatically sent over each of the virtual COM ports simultaneously by the COM Splitter.

The COM Splitter is a key component for computers that are running TraCS, ILT, and MACH at the same time when a single GPS receiver is to be used with all three applications. It is also helpful if you want to run two instances of TraCS at the same time on the same computer and use a connected barcode scanner in both instances.

Both TraCS 7.3 and TraCS 10 can take full advantage of the COM Splitter's functionality. The COM Splitter is available for download to National Model members from the National Model web site.

Remember that state and provincial National Model members can post and track software issues and questions by registering with the National Model Issue Tracker.

Contact the National Model software support line to register at [at \(724\) 368-4500 x 121](tel:724-368-4500)

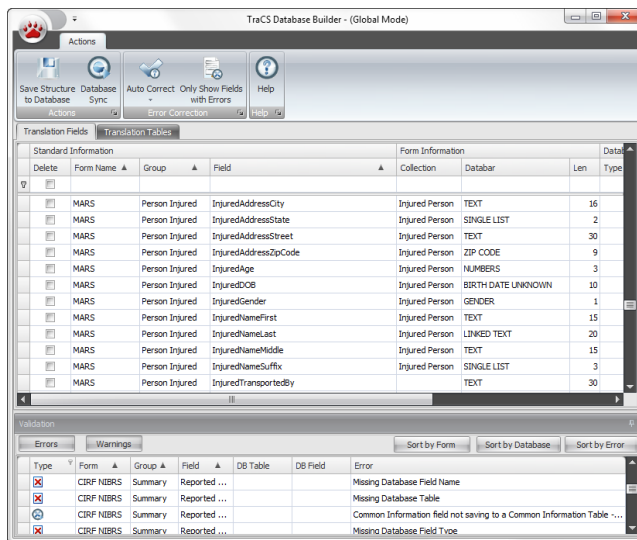
# Tech Blog

## TraCS 10 Database Builder

The TraCS 10 Database Builder enables you to build the underlying database structure definition where the data collected through TraCS forms is to be stored. The Database Builder is used to create translation tables used to cross reference all of the fields within a form with Database tables and fields within the TraCS database.

In TraCS 10, creating a new database structure or modifying an already existing one is easier than ever before. The new interface is more intuitive than the TraCS 7.3 Database Builder and with the automatic configuration feature, the TraCS 10 Database Builder automatically creates tables based on each group you have defined for the form in the Forms Builder and fills in the database table name, field name, field type, and field length for you based on the field properties you set in the Forms Builder. The common

information table and field entries are also auto-populated based on the setup done in the External Information editor. There is even an on-the-fly error log that immediately tells you if something is wrong with your structure.



Once the database structure is created for your TraCS forms, the Database Builder updates the translation tables (Translation\_Tables and Translation\_Fields) in the Support database and allows you to run a Database Sync

directly from the Database Builder screen. The Database Sync creates the appropriate data.xml file and generates and displays the SQL scripts needed to update your Microsoft SQL Server or Oracle TraCS databases. Separate scripts for applying suggested indexes to the TraCS database are also created.

Now that TraCS 10 accommodates as many customizable columns as you want in the Forms Manager grid (Prd\_Header), the Database Builder can assist in creating the appropriate records in the Translation\_Fields table by simply right clicking on the definable field entry last added through the Database Builder.

TraCS 10 was built not only with the field officer in mind, but also with taking into consideration the TraCS forms developer's job. The process of taking a paper form and making it an electronic TraCS form has been significantly simplified over the TraCS 7.3 process and the easy to use TraCS 10 Database Builder contributes significantly to that end goal.

# Next Newsletter

Stay tuned for the October/November/December 2010 issue of the National Model Newsletter where we will feature:

Product Spotlight      **MACH HANDHELD**  
State Report            **WISCONSIN**  
Tech Blog                **TraCS/MACH Interface**

*Questions or Comments? Would you like your state/province report to be included in this newsletter? Do you have any corrections or suggestions? E-mail us at:*  
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