



ABJ00

Spring 2010, Volume 3, Issue 2

## ABJ Spotlight

### Data for Decisions and Performance Measures

By Johanna Zmud, NuStats (Past Chair)

The Technical Activities Council (TAC) approved a new special task force relating to data, underscoring the significance of a data-focused research agenda within TRB. The new special task force would develop a strategic plan and research roadmap for TRB's performance-based data program and coordinate related activities across TRB standing committees and other associated organizations. In the short-term, this special task force will be charged with providing an organized focal point for presentation, discussion and dissemination of information on data challenges and solutions related to system data measurement issues across relevant existing topic areas (i.e., preservation, congestion/mobility, operations, safety) as well as emerging topic areas (i.e., climate change, sustainability). In the long-term, it will be asked to identify data measures for critical transportation system issues; provide guidance on <sup>3</sup>best practice<sup>2</sup> for system data collection; determine improved models and approaches for data analysis, quality control, validation; and promote research into use of data in decision making.

Johanna Zmud (former chair ABJ00) and Charlie Howard (chair of Transportation System Policy, Planning and Process Section) have been nominated as co-chairs of the new special task force. The concept of a special task force was evolved by Tom Palmerlee who modeled the concept after the special task force on climate change.

### TAC Action

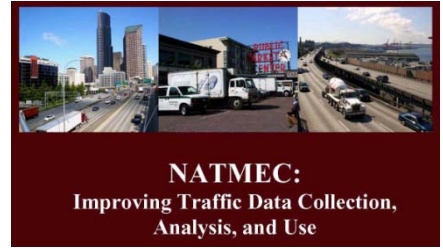
*The Technical Activities Council, Groups and standing committees are implementing actions to address comments on data for decisions and performance management made at the January 2010 TRB Executive Committee meeting.*

- The issue of inadequate data for decisions on critical issues was repeatedly raised at the January 2010 TRB Executive Committee discussions with US DOT administrators
- A Special Task Force on Data for Decisions and Performance Measures was approved as part of the April 22 Technical Activities Council (TAC) conference call
- The Special Task Force would develop a strategic plan and research roadmap for TRB's performance-based data program and coordinate related activities across TRB standing committees and other associated organizations
- The task force's charge will be to develop a plan and roadmap within a context that addresses critical data quality and availability issues impacting decision making for all modes of transportation and that may require rethinking policy initiatives, technology applications, and current transportation data programs

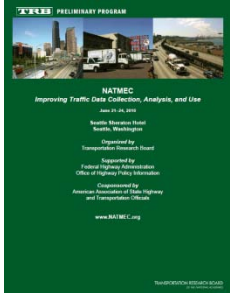
Note: On May 3<sup>rd</sup>, staff were asked to provide for the June Executive meeting an overview current TRB activities in data to support decision making and suggestions for specific future actions. One potential activity mentioned could be scoping a large-scale conference on **Data for Transportation Decision-makers**.

# ABJ Spotlight

## NATMEC!



By: Tom Palmerlee, TRB

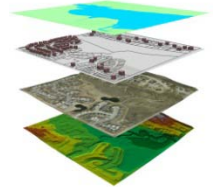


*NATMEC: Improving Traffic Data Collection, Analysis, and Use* will be kicking off in Seattle on June 21<sup>st</sup>. See [www.natmec.org](http://www.natmec.org) for the preliminary program. It continues to be the premier event for traffic data producers and users. The program emphasize data collection technologies, truck monitoring and weigh-in-motion, ;performance measures and integrating archived ITS and operations data with traditional sources. Registration is now running ahead of 2008 with 26 states and 14 MPO or local agencies represented. Those organizations account for a third of the pre-registrants. Three data committees, Traffic Monitoring, Statewide Data, and Urban Data, plus Regional Transportation Systems Management and Operations Committee, will hold midyear meetings there. Shawn Turner (ABJ25T) chairs the planning Team.

---

## GIS for Asset Management Peer Exchange

By: James Hall, University of Illinois Springfield (Research Sub Chair)



A recent survey of state transportation agencies found that the application of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) products to support Asset Management decision making is a primary interest area. However, development of these spatial products on an enterprise basis is a challenge for many agencies.

To address these issues, a peer exchange was organized by the Transportation Research Board's Transportation Asset Management Committee (ABC40), Statewide Transportation Data and Information Systems Committee (ABJ20), and Geographic Information Science and Applications Committee (ABJ60). The Federal Highway Administration's Office of Asset Management funded the peer.

Seven state transportation agencies, California, Iowa, New Jersey, Ohio, Virginia, Washington State and West Virginia, were selected to participate in the peer exchange. Prior to the peer, state agency participants completed extensive questionnaires on their current situation and their needs for tactical and executive decision making. (cont.)

## ABJ Spotlight

### GIS for Asset Management Peer Exchange (cont.)

Katie Zimmerman, incoming chair of the Transportation Asset Management Committee, opened the peer exchange which was held April 11, 2010 in Charleston, West Virginia. Participants presented their current practices followed by breakout group discussions focusing on three major themes: agency needs for asset management GIS applications, data requirements for asset management, and organizational challenges.

The breakout sessions identified specific research needs in the following areas:

- Best Practices in GIS-Based Asset Management
- Cross Asset Management and Coordination
- Using GIS Technology to support Risk-Based Asset Management
- Executive Level Presentation and Communication of Spatial Information using GIS-Based Asset Management Systems
- GIS-Based Asset Management Systems to Support Safety Analysis and Emergency Operations
- Critical components of good data management for asset management
- Methods to quantify return on investment for data and data systems for location-based asset management
- Are States Ready for Data.Gov – A Synthesis of Organizational Data Transparency and the Risks Associated with Data Availability
- How Traditional Asset Management Can Support Community “Livability” Assessments
- Using GIS to Reduce Redundancy and Project Overlap
- Managing the Life Cycle of a Project – The Role of an Asset Project Manager
- Hiring and procurement rules which may hinder implementation and use of location based asset management systems

The results of the Peer Exchange will be published in an Electronic Circular through the Transportation Research Board.

#### Contacts

Katie Zimmerman  
James Hall  
Tom Palmerlee

kzimmerman@appliedpavement.com  
jhall1@uis.edu  
TPalmerlee@nas.edu



# ABJ Best Practice Shout-out

**By: Reg Souleyrette, Iowa State Univ. (Chair)**

Why is TRB organized into sections? Well, among other reasons it's to share information and practices across related committees. To that end, I am soliciting section "best practices" which can be anything one or more of our committees are doing that you feel may be useful to your peer committees and task forces. In our section, this is an easy task! I'll start by sharing the first "official communication" sent by new ABJ40 chair Guy Rousseau to committee members and friends, It also calls out the super web page of the committee – great job in transition, Guy (you too Kara!)

Dear Committee Members & Friends of the Committee:

As most of you already know, starting today, it is with great pleasure that I am taking over as Chair of ABJ40. I want to personally thank Kara, my predecessor, for making this transition as smooth and seamless as possible, and especially for her tremendous accomplishments during her tenure. She has masterfully orchestrated this Committee's activities, including the wiki-style on-line travel survey manual (<http://www.travelsurveymanual.org/>), and my goal consists in maintaining and expanding upon this momentum. This Committee is quite dynamic and productive, and I do look forward to working with you all, together as a team, drawing from our international and academic strength, combined with the experience of our many travel survey practitioners.

First I would like to remind everyone of our mid-year meeting, to be held in conjunction with the Innovation in Travel Modeling conference (to be held in Tempe Arizona) on Monday May 10, 2010 between 6 and 7h30pm (following the welcome reception) in the "Palm E" conference room of the Tempe Mission Palms Hotel and Conference Center. For additional details on the conference & registration, please visit

<http://itm2010.fulton.asu.edu/ocs/index.php/itm/itm2010/index>. The agenda will basically be a roundtable format of ongoing and planned survey efforts by meeting participants, so quite informal, as well as some discussions on potential research and presentation topics for the 2011 TRB Annual Meeting (the spotlight theme will be "Transportation, Livability, and Economic Development in a Changing World").

I also would like to draw your attention to this "Call for Presentations" on NHTS data <http://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/conferences/2010/NH/TS1/call.pdf>. All working with NHTS data are strongly encouraged to participate and submit a brief abstract to be considered for presentation.

Furthermore, I would like to share with the group the attached from TRB on cross-cutting critical issues in transportation, to be discussed at the mid-year meeting, and throughout the upcoming months leading up to the 2011 TRB annual meeting, all of your comments and input are welcome.

One more thing, as you may already know, Heather Contrino, our National Household Travel Survey (NHTS) program manager (and also ABJ40 Committee Member & All-Star Secretary) accepted a promotion to a team leader position in the office of FHWA's Transportation Policy Studies. During her tenure with the NHTS program, she took this program to a new level. Currently the feds are seeking applicants for the NHTS Program Manager position at the GS grade 14 level to manage the NHTS program. The position is located in FHWA's HQ office in Washington DC, details can be found here on this link below:

<http://jobsearch.dot.gov/getjob.asp?JobID=87279718&VSDM=2010%2D04%2D06+00%3A03%3A00&Logo=0&sort=dt&pg=1&sorter=d&jbf574=TD04&jbf565=0&FedEmp=N&vw=b&brd=3876&ss=0&FedPub=Y>

Also, for the latest & greatest TRB webpage information on our committee composition, see [http://144.171.11.40/cmsfeed/comm\\_detail.asp?c=ABJ40](http://144.171.11.40/cmsfeed/comm_detail.asp?c=ABJ40)

Lastly, a quick reminder about our own Committee webpage, [www.travelsurveymethods.org](http://www.travelsurveymethods.org).

Those of you planning on attending the ITM 2010 conference and our mid-year meeting, see you there. I also do look forward to hear from you all regarding your on-going and planned survey activities, as well as suggestions for research topics and presentations for the 2011 TRB Annual Meeting.

Sincerely,

Guy

**Guy Rousseau**  
**Surveys & Transportation Model Development Manager**  
**Atlanta Regional Commission**  
**40 Courtland Street, NE**  
**Atlanta, GA 30303**

## Travel Survey Methods



## POG Prioritizes Cross-Group Session Proposals for AM11

By Tom Palmerlee, TRB

The Policy and Organization Group received several excellent proposals for “free” cross group session proposals for the TRB annual meeting in January. Ranked by support, the topics of the proposals are:

- #1 “Transportation Systems for Livable Communities – Research Perspectives”
  - #2 “America’s Climate Choices–Results of a Major NAS Study–Comprehending the Big Picture”
  - #3 “Cybersecurity Best Practices – Keeping our Nation Safe from Cyber Attacks”
  - #4 “Transportation Information Confidentiality and Liability - What are the Risks, What are the Precautions?”
  - Recommended for TAC support: “360 Degree Look at Data for Performance-Based Decision Making” (see page 1)
- 

## Mid Year Meeting Communication Coordinator Workshop Scheduled

By Tom Palmerlee, TRB

The Committee on Critical Transportation Infrastructure Protection (ABE40) will sponsor “Putting Web and Social Network/Media Technologies to Work For Your Committee or Transportation Organization.” The workshop will be held on Sunday, July 11, 2010, 9:00am-12:45pm, at the Minneapolis Marriott City Center, Ballroom 3. Jeff Western, Western Management and Consulting, LLC and Julie Lorenz, Kansas Department of Transportation will preside. All committees should consider sending a member to this Sunday work designed for committee communication coordinators. No charge for this meeting but a capacity limit is likely and will be filled soon.

---

## NCHRP 08-36/Task 100: Development of a Framework for Agency Self-Assessment of Transportation Data Programs

By Ed Christopher, FHWA (at-large)

Soon we should hear which consulting firm got the contract out of the 3 on the task order. Jonette Kreideweis, ABJ00 member at large has been asked to chair the NCHRP 08-36 project. Regarding the new Task Force one thing for it to chew on is the whole concept behind the need for a data program self assessment guide. The assessment guide should not be the focal point of the Task Force but it certainly could be a vital component in helping the Task Force achieve its mission. I think the timing of all of this is perfect! First we get approval for 'quick turnaround' NCHRP project to focus on developing a framework for the assessment guide and now a Task Force is formed that could certainly help inform it. I am not sure if this is synergistic or just serendipitous but it sure is a "good" thing.

# ABJ00 Who we are ...

## ABJ00 Section - Data and Information Systems

**Reginald R. Souleyrette**, Chair  
Iowa State University  
[reg@iastate.edu](mailto:reg@iastate.edu)

TRB Staff Representative  
**Thomas M. Palmerlee**  
Associate Director, Technical  
Activities Division  
Transportation Research Board  
[tpalmerlee@nas.edu](mailto:tpalmerlee@nas.edu)

## Committees

**ABJ10** National Transportation Data Requirements and Programs  
**Timothy J. Lomax**, Chair  
Texas Transportation Institute (TTI)

**ABJ20** Statewide Transportation Data and Information Systems  
**Jack R. Stickel**, Chair  
Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities

**ABJ25T** Task Force on the Traffic Monitoring Conferences  
**Shawn M. Turner**, Chair  
Texas Transportation Institute (TTI)

**ABJ30** Urban Transportation Data and Information Systems  
**Catherine T. Lawson**, Chair  
University at Albany

**ABJ35** Highway Traffic Monitoring  
**Peter L. Keen**, Chair  
Digital Traffic Systems, Inc. (DTS)

**ABJ40** Travel Survey Methods  
**Guy Rousseau**, Chair  
Atlanta Regional Commission

**ABJ50** Information Systems and Technology  
**Frances D. Harrison**, Chair  
Spy Pond Partners, LLC  
**C. Douglas Couto**, Past Chair  
Citrix

**ABJ60** Geographic Information Science and Applications  
**Harvey J. Miller**, Co-Chair  
University of Utah  
**Cesar A. Quiroga**, Co-Chair  
Texas Transportation Institute (TTI)

**ABJ70** Artificial Intelligence and Advanced Computing Applications  
**Shinya Kikuchi**, Chair  
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech)

**ABJ80** Committee on Statistical Methods  
**Simon P. Washington**, Chair  
U.C. Berkeley

**ABJ90** Freight Transportation Data  
**Scott R. Drumm**, Chair  
Port of Portland, Oregon

**ABJ95** Visualization in Transportation  
**Michael Anthony Manore**, Chair  
Vispective Management Consulting, LLC

**ABJ99D** Using National Household Travel Survey (NHTS) Data for Transportation Decision Making: A Workshop

## Subcommittees

**Research Subcommittee**  
**James P. Hall**, Chair  
University of Illinois, Springfield

**Metadata Subcommittee**  
**Frances D. Harrison**, Chair  
Spy Pond Partners, LLC

## At Large Members

**Thomas Bolle**  
USDOT/RITA

**Edward J. Christopher**  
Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)

**Jonette Rae Kreideweis**  
Minnesota Department of Transportation

**Ellen M. Oman**  
Washington State Department of Transportation

**Joseph L. Schofer**  
Northwestern University

**Johanna Zmud**, Past Chair  
NuStats



# ABJ Upcoming Events

## Innovations in Travel Demand Forecasting: 2010

May 9, 2010  
Tempe, Arizona

## Toward Better Freight Transportation Data: A Research Road Map

May 19-20, 2010  
Beckman Center, Irvine, CA

## 2010 Environment and Energy in Transportation Summit\*

June 6-10, 2010  
Raleigh, North Carolina

## NATMEC: Improving Traffic Data Collection, Analysis, and Use

June 21-24, 2010  
Seattle, Washington

Committees meeting there:

- Statewide Transportation Data and Information Systems Committee (ABJ20)
- Urban Transportation Data and Information Systems Committee (ABJ30)
- Highway Traffic Monitoring Committee (ABJ35)
- Regional Transportation Systems Management and Operations Committee (RTSMO)

## 2010 TRB Joint Summer Meeting

July 11-13, 2010  
Minneapolis, Minnesota  
Committees meeting there:

- Information Systems and Technology Committee (ABJ50)
- Artificial Intelligence and Advanced Computing Applications Committee (ABJ70)
- Freight Transportation Data Committee (ABJ90)
- Visualization in Transportation Committee (ABJ95)

## 2010 University Transportation Centers Spotlight Conference: Research Perspectives on Transportation Systems for Livable Communities

October 18-19, 2010  
Keck Center, Washington, DC

## ABJ00 Strategic Planning Meeting?

October 20, 2010  
Keck Center, Washington, D.C.

## Using National Household Travel Survey (NHTS) Data for Transportation Policy Decisions

October 25-26, 2010  
Keck Center, Washington, D.C.

## Commodity Flow Survey (CFS) Workshop

November 16  
Washington, DC

## Data Section Spring Conference Call!

Friday, May 14, 12:30 PM Eastern  
(877)339-0018, Access \*360-7711\*

- **Make** workshop plans for annual meeting
- **Discuss** potential fall strategic planning section meeting
- **Share** updates from section members
- **Hear** about key data initiatives

