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Data Section News

Leadership Changes

Statewide Transportation Data and Information Systems (ABJ20) chair Anita Vandervalk is completing her sixth year as chair and setting down in April. Jack Stickel of Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities will be replacing her. Likewise Ed Christopher is ending his second 3-year term as chair of Urban Transportation Data and Information Systems (ABJ30). Catherine Lawson of SUNY Albany will become chair of that committee. Ben Ritchey will finish his initial 3-year chair appointment for Freight Data Committee (ABJ90). His co-chair, Scott Drumm of the Port of Portland will assume full leadership responsibility.

Data Section Retreat

The Data and Information Systems Section will hold a 1-1/2 day retreat at the Beckman Center in Irvine, CA, on March 19-20, 2008. Retreat will be chaired by Ed Christopher. The retreat goal is to define the key issues and priorities for the Section.

This retreat will provide an opportunity for seasoned committee chairs to share experiences and wisdom for defining and carrying out committee missions. For new chairs, it will be an opportunity to understand the interrelationships among the committees, and to identify ways to focus committee activities. For all participants, the retreat will help define the Data Section and its committees as the focal point for data issues for the larger TRB community, and as a source of leadership and support for transportation data programs, analysis

tools, applications, and idea sharing. When the retreat is over, we expect to have produced a focused vision of the collective needs, issues and concerns of committees within the Section, along with strategies and best practices for communicating the value of committee activities.

The retreat will be discussed at the annual meeting. Committee chairs have been tasked with using their TRB annual meetings to discuss and prioritize issues facing committees. Chairs may submit as many issues as they wish, but we want to know the top three issues for discussion at the retreat. We will use the results to build an agenda for the retreat and identify a small number of key theme areas to focus our efforts on in the upcoming year(s).

More Section News . . .

Committee Rotations. As part of the process of keeping committee memberships dynamic, each TRB committee rotates every 3 years. One-third of its membership rotates off and a replacement group is appointed, with the chairs submitting proposed changes no later than Feb. 15, 2008. Six of our committees are due to rotate -- these are:

- ABJ10 National Transportation Data
- ABJ20 Statewide Transportation Data
- ABJ30 Urban Transportation
- ABJ40 Travel Survey Methods
- ABJ60 Geographic Information Science
- ABJ70 Artificial Intelligence

TRB Technical Activities Action Plan

The Technical Activities Council recently adopted an action plan drawn from the newly updated TRB strategic plan that might be of interest to committees as they identify their priority issues in preparation for the upcoming retreat. Seven broad areas of “action” were identified:

1. Strengthen ability to address critical and cross-cutting issues
2. Increase involvement of key constituencies and groups (i.e., SHRP-2 programs, state DOTs, women, minorities, young professionals)
3. Increase contributions to identifying needed research, monitoring ongoing research, and sharing research results.
4. Optimize the effectiveness and value of the TRB annual meeting and conferences
5. Enhance the quality, stature, accessibility, and usefulness of TRB publications
6. Take maximum advantage of new technology tools for communications and information
7. Facilitate ability of chairs to effectively manage, and volunteer members to effectively participate



Completed NCHRP Projects of Interest

A Guidebook Using American Community Survey Data for Transportation Planning, NCHRP Report 588, Jan. 2008.

Standardization of Personal Travel Surveys, NCHRP Report 571, April 2008.

NCHRP 8-36, Quick Response

1. Implications of New 8-Hour Control Strategy Development on Transportation Programs, Task 68
2. Disaster Response in Transportation Planning, Task 69
3. Making the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) Work for Transportation, Task 63
4. Institutional Needs in Safety Planning, Task 57
5. Best Practices in Using Programmatic Strategies in Statewide Transportation Plans, Task 67



Research Problem Statements Funded

NCHRP funded the following four Section-originated Research Needs Statements:

- Developing Performance-Based Investment Programs and Data Systems (08-70B)
- Setting Effective Performance Targets for Transportation Programs, Plans, and Policy (08-70A)
- Integrating Individual Transportation System-Level Performance Programs to Determine Network Performance (08-67)
- Scoping Study for a Freight Data Exchange Network (08-36)

NCFRP will fund:

- Freight Data System Architecture



Annual Meeting News

The Section will meet on Monday, January 14, from 10:15 a.m. to 1:15 p.m. at the Hilton, in the 1919 Grill. A preliminary agenda has been distributed. See you for lunch!

New chairs in the Section are invited to a “new chairs briefing” on Jan. 14 from 8-9:45 am at the Hilton in the Jackson room.

The spotlight theme for 2008 is "Partnerships for Progress in Transportation". Collaborative sessions for our section will include:

- Local and Statewide Coordination in Safety Data, Jan. 16, 2-4 p.m., Marriott, Marshall West
- Transforming Transportation Organizations: Strategic Executive and Data Partnerships, Jan. 13, 1:30-5 p.m., Shoreham, Executive



Carey Distinguished Service Award

Alan E. Pisarski, Consultant, Falls Church, Virginia

The Carey Award—in honor of W. N. Carey, Jr., the Board’s Executive Director from 1967 to 1980—recognizes individuals who have given leadership and distinguished service to TRB. Alan E. Pisarski has been honored for helping to build TRB’s expertise on data-related issues and providing significant volunteer leadership and service on many other aspects of transportation.

Award will be presented at the Chairman’s Luncheon, Wednesday.

2007 Charley V. Wooten Award for policy & organization

Two papers reviewed and accepted by Section Committees were selected as Outstanding Papers for 2007

“Investigating Transferability of National Household Travel Survey Data” Abolfazl Mohammadian and Yongping Zhang, University of Illinois, Chicago, Urban Transportation Data and Information Systems Committee

“Wide-Area, Four-Dimensional, Real-Time Interactive Transportation System Visualization” Michael L. Pack, Phillip Weisberg, and Sujal Bista, University of Maryland, College Park. Visualization in Transportation Committee

Award Presentations are Monday at the Marriott (Salon 1) 6 -7:15 p.m.

Nominations for 2008 due Feb. 15 to Tom Palmerlee.



New & Young Attendees Welcome Session

New and Young Attendees Welcome Session will be held from 2:30 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. in the Marriott Salon 2. There will be a table for each Group and/or Section so that the new and young attendees can be directed to interest areas that are of most interest to them. Our Section Table is #8. If you would like to staff the ABJ00 table with me on Sunday, let me know (jjmud@nustats.com).

Section Events Scheduled for 2008

Data for Good Movement Impacts on Air Quality Workshop, March 17-28, Irvine, CA

Highway Economic Requirements Modeling and Data Integration Conference, April 8-9, Irvine, CA

Western Traffic Data Workshop: Successful Strategies in Data Collection for Corridors and Planning, April, 10-11, Irvine

Information Systems and Technology (ABJ50) Midyear Meeting, AASHTO Information Systems Conference, April 12-17, Biloxi, MS

Open Architecture for Data Integration Peer Exchange, Marcy 13-14, Washington, DC (invitation)

Aligning Data to Support Transportation Decisions Peer Exchange , May 15-16, Washington, DC (invitation)

Travel Survey Methods (ABJ40) Midyear Meeting, 8th International Conference on Survey Methods in Transport, May 25-31, Annecy, France.

Other News of Interest

TRB Innovations in Travel Modeling 2008

This conference takes place June 22 to 24, 2008 in Portland, Oregon. The Call for Papers is available at this location: www.trb-forecasting.org/innovationsConference2008.html. Submissions of 3-5 page white papers are due by Wednesday, January 9, 2008. One of the conference themes is Communicating Forecasts. The “Communicating Forecasts” description in the Call for Papers ends with the following: “The organizing committee seeks proposals for papers or posters or demonstrations on these communication issues. Potential submissions include but are not limited to:

- Good descriptions of the modeling process (potentially reports, books, or graphics),
- Good graphics illustrating model results,
- Good public presentation materials,
- Thought pieces on how to communicate or criteria for effective communication.

Transportation Research Record Process Change?



TRB has set up a panel to assess the idea of converting TRR to a year-round process. If this were done the process would not necessarily amount to a monumental shift in procedure. Papers would be accepted August 2 through August 1 of the following year. Publication decisions would be made throughout the year. Each August/September, committee chairs would examine all papers received during the preceding 12 months and provide recommendations for the Annual Meeting program and for Publication. With year-round reviews, the review workload in August/ September would be considerable less than it is now. By making TRR appear more like a regular peer-reviewed journal, it is believed / hoped that the standing of the journal would rise along with its impact factor. Having separate TRR categories (A, B, C, D, etc.) for various sections/ groups is also an idea that is being discussed.

National Household Transportation Survey (NHTS) Funding

A meeting was hosted by the American Automobile Association (AAA) on November 29 to discuss the status of the NHTS and its timing and funding issues. Approximately \$17 million in potential state supplementary support was being obstructed by a lack of about half (\$2.6 million) of the needed funds for the federal portion. The 20 attendees included ITE, ULI, IBTTA, ARTBA, AARP, AASHTO, among others. The group identified several short-term strategies for raising the awareness of the need for additional NHTS funding.