

AASHTO RESEARCH ADVISORY COMMITTEE OPERATING GUIDELINES

GENERAL

The Research Advisory Committee (RAC) to the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) Standing Committee on Research (SCOR) supports the Activities of SCOR and is committed to being a proactive committee promoting quality and excellence in research and in the application of research findings to improve state transportation systems.

The Operating Guidelines establishes policy for the conduct of the affairs of the AASHTO RAC. They are supplemental to and are intended to be fully consistent with the AASHTO Articles of Incorporation, By-laws, and the Board of Directors Operating Policy. In case of conflict, the AASHTO provisions shall prevail over the RAC Operating Guidelines. These guidelines supersede all previous RAC Bylaws or other operating procedures and are subject to review and revision as necessary to meet the needs of RAC.

Each Member Department shall be entitled to representation thereon. The President of AASHTO shall designate a Chair and Vice Chair for RAC.

PURPOSE

In creating RAC, AASHTO intended for RAC to facilitate the work of SCOR, in addition to identifying and addressing research issues affecting program and project management among the AASHTO Member Departments. RAC responsibilities specifically identified by SCOR include the following:

- (A) Work with the AASHTO Member Departments to facilitate the development of research problem statements for consideration by SCOR and incorporation into the National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP).
- (B) Participate in rating NCHRP problem statements each year and provide the results to SCOR for its annual selection procedure.
- (C) Undertake an organized program to identify ongoing and planned State controlled research being sponsored by Member Departments, including the following:
 - (1) List research projects and provide those listings to all Member Departments and SCOR to avoid duplication of research and to encourage more effective research on transportation issues.
 - (2) Determine which research projects have produced reports that can be shared with other Member Departments and establish a system for such sharing.

- (D) Provide advice and recommendations on transportation research matters to SCOR.
- (E) Serve as a resource to Member Department research managers regarding the conduct of research and technology transfer activities.
- (F) Be an advocate for transportation research by promoting the value of research, the implementation of research results, the transfer of new technologies, and the benefits of peer exchanges.

MEMBERSHIP

Each AASHTO Member Department may designate up to three persons to serve on RAC, although only one vote per Member Department may be cast on voting matters. Member Department Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) appoint their organization's RAC member(s). Only appointments signed by the CEO of the Member Department are considered official. When appointed, these are the only official members of RAC.

Associate membership on RAC is open to representatives from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the Transportation Research Board (TRB), the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Research and Technology (OST-R), and other U.S. transportation organizations or international transportation research representatives, as determined by the RAC Leadership Board that may be critical to the effective and efficient workings of RAC. Associate members are non-voting members of RAC for official business of RAC. Associate members may participate as “Friends” on RAC Task Forces.

ORGANIZATION, DUTIES, RESPONSIBILITIES

The President of AASHTO shall appoint a Chair and a Vice Chair for RAC.

The RAC shall be sub-divided into each of the AASHTO regions as defined by the AASHTO Standing Committee on Research. Regional Chairs and Vice Chairs will be elected within each region.

There shall be a RAC Leadership Board composed of the RAC Chair and Vice Chair, the Regional Chairs and Regional Vice Chairs, and Task Force Chairs. The Board will also include the RAC Secretary and AASHTO, OST-R, and FHWA liaisons.

RAC CHAIR

At a minimum the duties of the Chair shall include the following:

- (A) Serves as the Vice Chair for SCOR.
- (B) Convenes and presides at meetings of RAC and its Leadership Board, to provide guidance in carrying out the objectives of RAC and to conduct all business properly brought before the Association.

- (C) Approves the formation of each Task Force and appoints a Chair for each Task Force, with the recommendations of the RAC Leadership Board. Serves as an Ex Officio member on all Task Forces and provides direction.
- (D) Provides SCOR with progress and final reports on the activities of RAC and its Task Forces.
- (E) Informs RAC about significant transportation related matters, to include preparing and distributing analyses on federal legislation or AASHTO initiatives of interest to RAC.

RAC VICE CHAIR

The Vice Chair, appointed by the AASHTO President, shall preside at specific meetings and sessions and shall perform such duties as directed by the Chair. The Vice Chair assumes duties of the Chair in the event that the Chair is unable to carry out such responsibilities until such time as the AASHTO president appoints a new Chair. The Vice Chair serves as an Ex Officio member on all Task Forces.

RAC SECRETARY

The SCOR Secretary also serves as the Secretary for RAC. This position is filled by the Director of the Division of Cooperative Research Programs, TRB.

REGIONAL RAC OFFICERS

The Member Departments that compose each AASHTO Region shall elect a Regional Chair and a Regional Vice Chair. The method of election and terms of service of these officers shall be determined by each region.

RAC LEADERSHIP BOARD

A majority of the voting members of the RAC Leadership Board shall constitute a quorum for the RAC Leadership Board to transact business. The RAC Chair and RAC Vice Chair, Regional Chairs and Vice Chairs, and Task Force Chairs shall be voting members; and, the RAC Secretary and AASHTO, OST-R and FHWA liaisons shall serve as non-voting members. The RAC Leadership Board shall have the following minimum responsibilities:

- (A) Manages RAC business, including matters of policy.
- (B) Solicits feedback from RAC members on issues related to position papers and other changes in general management.
- (C) Considers and recommends applications for Associate Membership in accordance with AASHTO By-Laws Article III, 1.

- (D) Approves the RAC biannual meeting agendas.
- (E) Establishes a schedule and method for monthly meetings and meet, as needed, during the RAC Annual and TRB Annual Meetings to conduct RAC business.
- (F) Recommends the formation and dissolution of Task Forces as necessary to the RAC Chair.

TASK FORCES

Task Forces are the principal working groups of RAC. They shall be established and approved by the RAC Chair upon the recommendation of the RAC Leadership Board. Task Forces will address their assigned subject matter and continue unless dissolved by the RAC Chair. Ad hoc Task Forces may be established by the RAC Chair for specific assignments and will be dissolved upon completion of their assignments.

Task Forces cannot obligate or commit RAC, SCOR or any other Agency or Organization to any official action. Task Forces do not function as an extension of the RAC Leadership Board.

Policies, resolutions and other recommendations of the RAC will be prepared by the appropriate Task Force or Ad hoc Task Force and submitted to the RAC Leadership Board in writing for consideration and action.

Each RAC Task Force should be composed of a minimum of one RAC member from each RAC Region. RAC members may delegate a member of their staff or Member Department to represent the RAC member in fulfilling Task Force duties. Every effort should be made for all regions to be represented. Within the regions, solicitations for volunteers and recommendations for membership on Task Forces should be distributed to provide opportunity for participation by as many RAC members as possible. Only the RAC members of Task Forces may vote on official business specific only to RAC.

Each Task Force shall provide due diligence in carrying out its tasks and in meeting its assigned responsibilities. Each Task Force has the responsibility to do the following:

- (A) Develop a Mission Statement and overall objective(s) specific to their assigned subject area, which are to be reviewed and updated as necessary. Mission statements shall be posted to the RAC web site.
- (B) Prepare a written report of Task Force activities. It is the responsibility of the Task Force Chair to present reports before each RAC meeting and to ensure they are posted on the RAC web site.
- (C) Recommend policy changes to the Leadership Board on matters related to their assigned subject area.

(D) Each Task Force shall be limited to the Scope of the subject area(s) for which it has been given responsibility.

(E) Task Force Chairs will participate in RAC Leadership Board meetings.

MEETINGS

RAC shall meet biannually. One meeting will be during the TRB annual meeting. In addition, a second meeting will typically be held in the summer, as determined by the RAC Leadership Board. The summer meeting shall be held on a rotating basis among the AASHTO regions.

RAC Leadership Board shall schedule periodic teleconferences to conduct RAC business.

Regional RACs may schedule periodic teleconferences to conduct regional RAC business.

RAC Task Forces shall schedule periodic teleconferences to conduct Task Force business.

VOTING

Any Member Department, the RAC or the RAC Leadership Board may offer a resolution, policy document, or amendment to the Operating Guidelines for consideration. Adoption of a resolution, policy document, or amendments to the Operating Guidelines shall require a two thirds affirmative vote by the RAC, with the exception that, minor editorial adjustments to the Operating Guidelines may be made by the RAC Chair in consultation with the RAC Leadership Board.

Proposed resolutions, policy documents, or amendments to the Operating Guidelines shall be submitted to a vote by the Member Departments by ballot. The vote shall be accomplished through the following AASHTO ballot process.

1. Each member department is limited to one vote.
2. Ballots are e-mailed to the Member Departments by the Chair or AASHTO headquarters within twenty (20) working days after the meeting at which the issue was submitted.
3. Ballots returned to the AASHTO liaison or designee within twenty (20) working days after such e-mailing shall be recorded and tabulated by the Chair, or AASHTO liaison who shall report the results of such ballot to all the Member Departments.
4. Upon a two-thirds affirmative vote of the Member Departments, all resolutions or policy documents shall be recommended to SCOR for action with notification sent to the AASHTO Board of Directors.

APPENDIX I

REVISIONS TO THE RAC OPERATING GUIDELINES

(This appendix will list all amendments/revisions with effective date and what was changed.)

2016:

The following revisions were approved by the RAC Leadership Board on June 9, 2016:

- Updated the acronym “RITA” to “OST-R.” - *Membership section, Organization, Duties, Responsibilities sections*
- Added Regional Vice Chairs and Task Force Chairs as voting members of the RAC Leadership Board - *Organization, Duties, Responsibilities section, RAC Leadership Board section*
- Deleted language that the RAC Chair appoints members of each Task Force – *RAC Chair section*
- Deleted language that the RAC Leadership Board considers and recommends all memberships on Task Forces – *RAC Leadership Board section*
- Deleted language related to RAC Chair approval of Task Force Membership and language referencing Associate Members – *Task Forces section*
- Added clarifying language that “only the RAC members of Task Forces may vote on official business specific only to RAC” – *Task Forces section*
- Deleted language related to Task Force voting – *Voting section*