

**AASHTO RAC Region 4 Monthly Teleconference
March 17, 2016**

Participants:

Present	Name	Organization
	Carolyn Morehouse	Alaska DOT
Yes	Jean Nehme	Arizona DOT
Yes	Alicia Urban	Arizona DOT
	Anne Ellis	Arizona DOT
	Coco Briseno	California DOT
	Pete Zaniewski	California DOT
Yes	Joe Horton – Vice Chair	California DOT
	Aziz Khan	Colorado DOT
	Amanullah Mommandi	Colorado DOT
	Wayne Kawahara	Hawaii DOT
	Ned Parrish	Idaho TD
Yes	Sue Sillick	Montana DOT
	Mostafa Jamshidi	Nebraska DOR
Yes	Ken Chambers - Secretary	Nevada DOT
	Randall Soderquist	New Mexico DOT
	Amy Estelle	New Mexico DOT
	Ron Horner	North Dakota DOT
	Gary Hook	Oklahoma DOT
Yes	Teresa Stephens	Oklahoma DOT
	Bryan Cooper	Oklahoma DOT
	Michael Bufalino	Oregon DOT
Yes	Dave Huft	South Dakota DOT
	Dana Glover	Texas DOT
	Rocio Perez	Texas DOT
Yes	Wade Odell	Texas DOT
	Cameron Kergaye - Chair	Utah DOT
Yes	David Stevens	Utah DOT
	Leni Oman	Washington DOT
	Rhonda Brooks	Washington DOT
	Tim M ^c Dowell	Wyoming DOT

Others in attendance were: Maina Tran, TRB; Jim Appleton, Caltrans; Maribel Wong and Katherine Malusky, AASHTO NTPEP.

Welcome and New Introductions - Joe Horton introduced Jim Appleton, new director of Research at Caltrans. Mr. Appleton will be at RAC meeting in July. Joe also reminded us the minutes from the February meeting at TRB are posted on the AASHTO SCOR/RAC web page at: <http://research.transportation.org/Pages/Region-4-Meeting-Notes.aspx>. Joe Horton and Wade Odell volunteered to review the minutes before distribution.

State DOT Research Fact Sheets – Maina Tran asked each member to review your state’s fact sheet, and if you have an updated copy please send that to Maina at mtran@trb.org

NTPEP and RAC – Maribel Wong and Katherine Malusky pointed out that Anne Ellis of Arizona is the NTPEP (National Transportation Product Evaluation Program) RAC liaison. NTPEP is one of 15 technical service programs offered by AASHTO, and you can find more at www.ntpep.org. Last year, 47 states participated in NTPEP, which is primarily a materials-oriented program. Many states provide evaluations of products, but acceptance criteria is left to individual states. Road and bridge product testing and evaluations are distributed nationally; they have a contractor working to provide information to users. Like other technical service programs, a technical committee oversees a work plan agreed upon by DOTs and industry. If RAC has research or materials information needs, we can reach out to them and vice versa. NTPEP differs from AASHTO’s Product Evaluation Listing (APEL) in that APEL is for products that are proprietary, or for which no AASHTO or American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) standards exist.

Sweet 16 Submission History – Joe Horton – High Value Research submissions are due Thursday, March 31st. Guidance has been sent, and it’s an opportunity for each state to participate. The top 16 will be shared in Providence at the RAC summer meeting. There has been some concern that some states may have issues with the submission system due to staff turnover. If anyone needs help, please contact Joe or Cameron and you’ll be paired with another state with experience. Last year, 10 of the 18 states in Region 4 submitted. Also, Bill Stone has announced second round of supplemental awards to pavement and roadside safety entries.

Vermont Peer Exchange – David Huft – February 10-11, 2016. The Vermont DOT has essentially lost its research program, incrementally over the last few years, then quickly in recent months, due to attrition. The group evaluated the current status and provided guidance on how to move forward. There were representatives from NM, NJ, NH, MN, FHWA, and the Vermont UTC. Cambridge Systematics, facilitated the exchange. The exchange addressed a number of elements with a variety of findings:

- Developed an outline for a strategic plan
- Started Strength/Weakness/Opportunity/Threat analysis, but redirected
- Developing VTrans work/business plan
- Re-establishing and integrating an executive-level decision-making body
- Collaboration – Northeastern Transportation Consortium with U. of Vermont
- Outlined a process for implementation of research results by engaging the executive research board; require implementation plans for complex or expensive projects; propose second selection process for implementation projects
- Conducted identification of human/technical resources development discussions
- Addressed technical panel development
- Discussed the research director job description

Cambridge Systematics has already circulated the second draft of the report; the final report is expected very soon.

Q: Was any good existing guidance provided (research manual, other documents)?

A: No focus at the manual level; looking at Section 420 requirements governed. NH and SD, NC provided elements, but nothing transferred explicitly.

Continued: Problem ID, Development and Prioritization – Sue Sillick reminded us that we had previously talked about best practices. Last month we talked about Montana; this month round robin? Volunteers discussed elements of their programs:

- Ken Chambers presented Nevada’s list of expert task groups.
- Teresa Stephens shared Oklahoma’s process, particularly how problem statements, about 30 annually, are reviewed through their library, a UTC partner. Feedback is provided on problem statements, then proposal solicitation is conducted.
- Wade Odell discussed Texas’ approach, with 4 functional areas; 182 problem statements this cycle, down from 208 last August. Problem statements are submitted from within the department and grouped by functional areas – rated on-line first, then in person. Problem statements are reviewed with a day set aside for each of the four topics. High-ranking problem statements are forwarded to the executive committee for RFP approval. Texas imposes no fiscal constraints by functional area.

Sue will follow up with the group to see if further discussion on this topic is warranted, or if we will move to the next point at the April meeting.

RAC Leadership Call Highlights – Joe Horton participated on March 10.

- Jim McDonnell of AASHTO presented a review of standing committees and they are currently looking at structure. There was discussion about changing AASHTO RAC. The research committee could be expanded to include technology, and may include all states. No discussion about NCHRP connection has happened yet. RACT? This could affect SCOR/NCHRP. Possibly a subgroup could be formed to administer NCHRP.
- Vacancy on SCOR from RAC Region 4 – deputy-level, preferably freight background. Joe has heard from a few states, but please let him know if you have a nomination.
- TRB provided encouragement for participation by new groups to various activities and meetings: minorities, women, new employees are particularly encouraged to attend.
- John Moulden pointed out that more grant opportunities are opening under the FAST Act
- Committees:
 - Leni Oman may be leaving the Transportation Knowledge Network committee, and they may be in need of a chair.
 - Value of Research: high-value research submittals due March 31st.
 - Admin asked about making sure fact sheets are current - presentation today.
 - Program Management and Quality chair: Joe Horton will be replacing David Jared.
- There will be more effort in tracking which states are having peer exchanges.
- There will be a session about *Your Role in RAC* at the summer meeting in Providence.
- David Jared: in order to help states conduct better peer exchanges, there will be a panel formed to document best practices and deliverables and provide guidance for better peer exchanges in the future. Joe or Cameron can forward your nominations to PMQ.
- Scores for top NCHRP problem statements have been shared with SCOR to represent region 4.
- The next leadership call will be on April 14th.

Round Table - Open Discussion

The pooled-fund RAC4 consortium status was asked about. In the interests of time, that will be added to the agenda for next month.

Our next conference call is scheduled for **Thursday, April 21st** (10:00 Hawaii Time, 11:00 Alaska Time, 12:00 Pacific Time, 1:00 Mountain Time, and 2:00 Central Time).

Please e-mail potential agenda items to Cameron at ckergaye@utah.gov .