

AASHTO RESEARCH ADVISORY COMMITTEE (RAC)
RESEARCH COORDINATION AND COLLABORATION TASK GROUP
MEETING NOTES
7/3/07

1. Introductions/Housekeeping

a. Roll Call

Task Group members present: Steve Albert, Nelda Bravo, Nancy Chinlund, Georgene Geary, Crawford Jencks, Leni Oman, Calvin Roberts, Sue Sillick, and Dawn Tucker.

b. Volunteer for meeting notes?

Sue Sillick volunteered to take meeting notes☺

c. Changes/additions to agenda?

None.

d. Committee Members – Revised (attached)

Dawn Tucker was introduced as the new member representing RITA.

e. Corrections to 6/12/2007 meeting notes? (attached)

None were given at the meeting. However, Sue Sillick believes that Sue Lodahl has some changes and will discuss possible meeting note changes with her.

2. Report on Action Items from last meeting

a. Sue will set up a meeting prior to the 8/8/07 RAC meeting.

Done.

b. Sue will reformat the purpose statement for this group using bullets and will distribute to the group.

Done.

c. Sue will suggest leadership group discuss potential gap in task groups on the topic of implementation.

Done.

d. Sue will ask the funding group about addressing match sources for UTC funds.

Done.

- e. Leni will send Sue the list of ongoing and completed environmental research and the SCOE fishbone chart; Sue will send this information to the rest of the committee.

The fishbone chart was distributed. Leni will distribute the research listing when it is completed.

- f. Nancy will send Sue information on CALTRANS roadmaps; Sue will send this information to the rest of the committee.

Done.

- g. Crawford will check into the possibility of search unfunded NCHRP topics by keyword across years; Crawford will also check to see if contacts can be added for each problem statement.

Not completed. In addition, discussion arose as to whether a combined search could be created outside of TRB. Leni requested Mike at Washington DOT check into the possibilities.

- h. Sue will send the Washington DOT bubble charts to the group.

Done.

3. Resources/Coordination-Collaboration Efforts

- a. Please share efforts of which you are aware. What entities are conducting, funding, coordinating, or collaborating in transportation?
 - i. FHWA-UTC meetings (Safety Summit – 11-12/2006, Infrastructure Workshop – 3/2007, Mobility?) – Nelda Bravo and Steve Albert

There have been three FHWA-UTC meetings: Mobility (6/2006), Safety Summit (11-12/2006), and Infrastructure Workshop (3/2007). Nelda indicated that the purpose of these workshops was to share information regarding on-going research and research needs and to obtain feedback. She said that AASHTO and TRB were also represented for a more national perspective. There was dialog regarding expertise and focus of the various UTC's. Nelda felt on the researcher-to-researcher level, the discussion was very productive. However, at the administrative level, more discussion needs to occur regarding next steps, process, and how to move forward. Steve Albert felt a challenge to collaboration is that FHWA doesn't know the capabilities of the UTC's. These discussions can help eliminate this challenge. Also, Steve Albert felt that more coordination needs to occur between FHWA Divisions and Headquarters. There wasn't much state participation probably due to travel restrictions and a short lead time between getting the word out and the workshops. It was mentioned that there is a TRB/RITA sponsored UTC-oriented conference on Research Issues in Freight Transportation: Congestion and System Performance. It will be held in DC on 10/22-23/2007. This is the second in a series. The first was on Research opportunities in Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) Transportation Applications (<http://www.trb.org/Conferences/RFID/>). For more information on the upcoming conference see <http://guest.event.com/EVENTS/Info/Summary.aspx?e=b5f9c548-be72-46c9-88f4-64754f9c5a7c>. Sue will send information regarding this conference to RAC. There doesn't appear to be any information on the third conference (2008) in the series.

ii. CUTC – Steve Albert

Steve Albert said that CUTC meets twice a year: once at the TRB annual meeting and once at their annual summer meeting. The national centers are working on identifying common areas and picking 2-3 for collaboration efforts. Also, a lab assessment will be developed so that others know what UTC labs are available and their capabilities. The goal is to expand beyond the national centers to all UTC's. Finally, a gap analysis will be performed to determine where research needs exist and where UTC's can assist in addressing these needs. Steve has developed a listing of UTC's by theme area. As soon as this document is approved it will be distributed to this group and RAC. Steve asked for comments on the CUTC Coordination and Collaboration Work Plan.

Steve asked as funding becomes equalized in projects co-funded by UTC's and State DOT's, who takes the lead in scope development? Should it not be a collaborative effort? Leni said that as long as it is a true collaboration, it might be possible. DOT's are trying to meet the needs of their organizations. It might be a hard sell. It's maybe not that the funding is being equalized, but that DOT's are becoming a smaller part of the UTC program, yet maybe the best bet in town.

iii. What else? – Please share information on other efforts of which you are aware.

Leni will talk about the collaboration efforts among DOT's and UTC's in the northwest (Alaska, Washington, Idaho, and Oregon) at a later meeting. They are working to improve collaboration among their organizations where interests/needs are similar, building on a database of expertise, and trying to institute a regional pooled-fund study to assist with collaboration.

Leni also said a topic for a future meeting is the development of a Western Transportation Knowledge Network.

Sue S will talk about coordination/collaboration efforts of the TRB Conduct of Research Committee at a future meeting.

Georgene asked about the private side. Steve Albert said there are some good examples of UTC's partnering with the private sector; he mentioned Marshall University and Iowa State University. He said that this topic will make a good newsletter article. Dawn will follow up on this topic.

Dawn Tucker said that RITA's role is to facilitate and coordinate USDOT's research effort. There is a RD&T planning team that meets monthly to ensure coordination and collaboration.

4. AASHTO Standing Committee on Research (SCOR) Strategic Planning (general, free-flowing discussion summary of possible coordination and collaboration items with comments is attached)
 - a. Which items fit into our mission? What items do we want to address as a group? Do some items belong more to other task groups?

For the most part, the items listed in this document are big picture items, such as setting a national research, balancing long and short-term needs, meeting critical and/or strategic needs,

importance of research, and linkages between groups. It was decided that this group would discuss objectives (see below) with which to move forward then take a look back at this document to see if any of the items are addressed.

5. Develop Statement of Objectives (SMART - Specific, Measurable, Agreed Upon, Realistic, and Time-Bound)
 - a. What are some easy wins (low hanging fruit)?
 - b. Need to prioritize.

Prior to developing objectives, some preliminary information gathering action items were discussed. These include:

- What are the best methods to pull together the information that is already freely available in a “one-stop shop” searching tool, with the capability of searching the categories listed below, as well as any combination of the categories. Indexing categories will need to be determined.
 - ❖ Research needs pulling from the TRB, pooled-fund study (TPF), TERI, and unfunded NCHRP problem statement databases/websites.
 - ❖ Research in progress pulling from RIP and TPF databases. Participation in RIP also could be expanded, while continuing to work on 100% data entry for those organizations that do enter into RIP. UTC’s are required to enter research in progress into RIP; however, some the UTC records don’t seem to be complete. Steve will ask UTC’s to try to enter complete records. Dawn will find out if anyone is checking to ensure UTC’s are entering their records into RIP. Steve asked if there is training for entering into RIP to ensure complete records and suggested this training be given at a CUTC meeting. Sue indicated that Barbara Post comes to every RAC meeting to provide training on data entry and searching RIP and TRIS and suggested Barbara might be able to attend a CUTC meeting to do the same. Nelda suggested putting together a workshop on this topic, working together with NHI and the TRB LIST committee. Nelda will follow up on this topic.
 - ❖ Completed research pulling from TRIS, TLCAT, and TPF databases.

Nelda mentioned that NTL already has a TRIS Online and NTL integrated search tool. Leni will ask Mike Wendt to work with Barbara Post/TRB and Amanda Wilson/NTL to determine the best tool and tool limitations to accomplish this “one-stop shop”.

- Develop a resources website. Leni suggested a WIKI’s would be a useful tool; she mentioned the pavement tools WIKI as an example. Sue will contact Chris Hedges at TRB to determine limitations (firewall issues, etc) to what we can do on the SCOR/RAC website. Steve said that a UTC would probably be willing to help with RAC administrative functions, such as taking meeting notes and hosting a website for this group. Leni indicated it would be difficult to obtain funding for such an effort. The TRB Conduct of Research Committee has a website with various resources maintained by a UTC, but it is sometimes hard to keep it updated as, at times, funded work seems to take priority over unfunded work. Steve thought that a UTC might be willing to take this on without additional funding as it is a show of goodwill and also shows that UTC's are helping to meet research needs. Steve and Sue will discuss further offline. Leni also mentioned that the Center for Environmental Excellence is trying to do something similar.

- Outreach to others. Leni mentioned that RAC and SCOR are reaching out to AASHTO Committees to facilitate partnering. What are their needs and challenges? It is an educational process. Crawford indicated that TRB is reaching out to TRB committees and subcommittees and developing plans to help these committees. The emphasis here is on the National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP). We should consider conducting a survey to gather information or trying to get on the agenda of AASHTO committees and possibly others to discuss this topic. This would occur after some of the web tools mentioned above are available.
- 6. Next Meeting – RAC Summer Meeting, 8/8/07, 10:00 am – 12:00 pm (Pacific), conference call option will be available for those not able to attend the meeting
 - a. Do we want to set up a regular meeting time/day? If so, what works for you?

ACTION ITEMS:

- Sue S. will finalize the June meeting notes and post them to the SCOR/RAC website.
- Sue S. will post the updated committee membership the SCOR/RAC website.
- Sue S. will send information on the Research Issues in Freight Transportation: Congestion and System Performance conference to RAC.
- Steve will send the UTC listing by theme area to Sue S. when it is approved and Sue S. will distribute to committee and RAC.
- All Committee members were asked to review the CUTC Coordination and Collaboration Work Plan and to send comments to Steve Albert.
- Dawn will follow up on a private sector partnering article for the next CUTC newsletter.
- Dawn will find out if anyone is ensuring that UTC's are entering records into RIP.
- Steve will request UTC's enter complete RIP records.
- Leni and Mike Wendt will determine the best method for search a number of web sites at a time.
- Nelda will follow up on a RIP training workshop.
- Sue S. Will talk to Chris hedges/TRB about the possibility of adding WIKI's to the SCOR/RAC website.
- Sue s. will talk to Steve about helping out with a website and administrative functions for the group.
- All committee members will consider how often this group should meet and a regular meeting day/time. This will be decided at the 8/8/07 meeting.