

**AASHTO-RAC Value of Research Taskforce  
Conference Call Agenda  
March 8, 2017  
11:00-Noon CST**

**1. Welcome & Roll Call**

**Members:**

Bill Stone (Missouri DOT, Chair)  
Cindy Smith (Mississippi DOT, Secretary)  
Enid White (Wyoming DOT, Co-Chair of Performance Measures Working Group)  
Tim McDowell (Wyoming DOT)  
Flavia Pereira (Connecticut DOT)  
Dale Peabody (Maine DOT)  
Lisa Tarson (Pennsylvania DOT)  
Lynn Hanus (Wisconsin DOT)  
David Jared (Georgia DOT)  
LaKeda Huckabay (California DOT)  
David Sherman (Florida DOT)  
Linda Taylor (Minnesota DOT)  
Ryan Culton (Illinois DOT)

**Friends:**

Maina Tran (TRB)  
Pat Casey (CTC & Associates)

**2. Review & Approve November Meeting Minutes & Action Items**

Minutes from the November 9, 2016, conference call were approved (Smith/Tarson made and seconded motion, and there was no discussion and none opposed). Bill recapped that these minutes discussed TRB 2017 Annual Meeting poster sessions, which went very well. He would like more clarification on the rows of poster to show who we are and what the High-Value Supplemental/Sweet 16 project are. He will begin work on a banner to denote this for next year's Annual Meeting.

**3. High Value Research Update – Bill Stone**

o *2016 High Value Research Solicitation Process*

Renee McHenry checked the website, and only 8 projects have been submitted so far. This is not surprising as many agencies submit closer to the deadline. Bill will send reminder tomorrow. Because of the new website, we are a bit behind the bit typical time frame this year, but we are keeping the March 31 deadline. If that causes any issue, we can possibly extend this a couple of weeks.

CTC & Associates will compile the *Research Impacts* document via NCHRP 20-111 support. We want to get the document into more marketable format with more pictures. Keep this in mind when inputting. The input process was cumbersome before especially regarding attachments; hopefully it is more streamlined now. Pat recommended that images need to be high-resolution and as large as possible. Even if a project is not Sweet 16, each project is valuable state project worth marketing to other agencies, so a single attractive publication is step forward for RAC and VOR. Visually pleasing submissions might also help on the evaluation and voting as well.

Bill said that a state that is participating in a transportation pooled fund (TPF), but is not the lead state, requested that they be allowed to submit their activities regarding implementation of the pooled fund as a High-Value Research candidate. Current guidance allows for submission of a TPF only if state is lead on it, and excludes non-lead states. Tim recommended that we allow a non-lead-state to submit a TPF, if they can show value and return on investment (ROI). Linda shared that the Clear Roads TPF present many opportunities for implementation in various states and that HVR submission might in turn encourage participation in TPFs. Discussion followed, and the task force is amenable to allowing a non-lead-state to submit pooled fund implementations as HVR projects. Bill will update guidance to allow for this.

- *HVR Website Support-cut and paste from .pdf*

Dale had an issue with cutting and pasting from a PDF file. He figured out that the issue was caused by subscripted letters. Maina advised that the website only accepts text characters and recommended that we cut and paste into Notebook to cut out extraneous and unusual characters from the text. Bill mentioned that some versions of Adobe do not work well with SharePoint, which the HVR website is built upon.

- *Webinar for submittals-Maina Tran*

Bill/Maina want to have a how-to webinar on inputting into HVR system. Will put in reminder. During RAC leadership call, Maina had sat in on regional call. Maina can coordinate with regions on this. Maina has recorded webinar, will share in next few days. Maina came across issue, small webinars (how to submit HVR on-line, how to submit multiple projects using Excel template, importing feature).

#### **4. *Marketing the Value of Research Working Group -Megan Swanson***

- *Supplemental Brochures Selection Process*

Megan was unable to attend today's call, so Bill gave an update. The group is working to update the supplemental brochure selection process. They propose to do the safety brochure as in past years, then identify the most common topic area from the HVR website, targeting 8 projects. Megan has created a draft of the new process. They would like to work with regional chairs to identify each region's top two safety projects after the Sweet 16

rankings. The task force will share the second supplemental topic area with region chairs, then the regions will send their top two non-Sweet-16 projects to the task force. Linda believes this is a good approach. The working group will provide guidance to the regions and make sure they have enough projects in a topic area to include in the supplemental brochure. Last year, one region didn't have two in a particular topic area. This new process will help us have all the selection done before the summer meeting.

## **5. Performance Measure & Quantifying the Value of Research Working Group –Ann Scholz and Enid White**

- *Status Update*
  - *NCHRP Synthesis Problem Statement Submission*

This working group has submitted the updated problem statement as part of the NCHRP ballots on 2/17/17. Competition for synthesis studies is high, and few are selected. Bill presented at the Conduct of Research (COR) Committee during the TRB Annual Meeting and receive lots of formal support from both COR and Montana DOT.

Enid gave some background information: Back in 2001, NCHRP Synthesis 300 (*Performance Measures for Research, Development, and Technology Programs, available at this link: [http://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/nchrp/nchrp\\_syn\\_300.pdf](http://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/nchrp/nchrp_syn_300.pdf)*) was published. Since then, there has been a lot of work on performance measures (PMs). The major goal of the submitted RNS is to identify, document, and assemble PMs, their implementations, gaps, and lessons learned from various research programs, so that agencies can learn from each other. Literature will be reviewed and surveys will be conducted, not only from state agencies, but also from academia and the private sector. We hope to learn about and document best practices, as well as show how use of PMs has resulted in increased program value and accountability. This new project, if approved, will build on NCHRP 300 and the AASHTO survey done in 2014. Also included in the literature search will be the Southeast Transportation Consortium's (STC) report.

There was some discussion about the potential for the proposed study duplicating STC's work. David Jared emphasized there is no conflict with STC's study as the proposed synthesis is more over-arching than STC's study. He will back the RNS at the May 8-9 NCHRP 20-05 meeting. Enid will send him more information on the proposal so that he can clarify if asked questions. The long time frame between the original synthesis 300 and now (16 years) will be a compelling argument to vote for the proposal. Bill asked if the list of funded projects will be finalized by the summer RAC meeting, and David said that yes, the list should be final a month or so after the May 20-05 meeting, which is plenty of time for the July RAC meeting.

If you have any comments or other feedback, please send Enid an email. If you want to give David more ideas for SCOR support, please contact him.

## **6. Misc. Topics**

- *Value of Research Task Force – Strategic Survey*

Bill began a conversation of where we need to go next with VOR. We want to continue marketing, best practices, and sharing information. He asked everyone to think about what

other things do we need to do more or less of. Send Bill your thoughts on the following:

1. Where we need to go strategically, and
2. Items/topics suggested for summer meeting.

Dale mentioned that with the AASHTO committee reorganization and SCOR becoming Research & Innovation, there might be some new strategic direction from AASHTO. RAC will be the much the same under the new structure, but we do not yet know the time frame. HVR and PMs should stay at the forefront of the task force's work.

**Action Items:**

1. Bill will update guidance on allowing non-lead-state agencies to submit pooled fund implementations for high-value research projects.
2. Bill will send High-Value Research submission reminder tomorrow.
3. Maina will coordinate with regions on webinars and HVR input.
4. Marketing Group will provide guidance for regional leadership in the new supplemental voting process.
5. Let Enid know if you have any more thoughts on the update to NCHRP Synthesis 300.
6. Once we know about the call-in information for the next meeting, Cindy will send out invitations. Linda cancelled the previous ones as they contained the MinnDOT call-in information which no longer applies. Bill is working with Keith Platte of AASHTO to provide the call-in mechanism.
7. Send Bill any thoughts on strategic direction of the task force and summer meeting items.
8. Bill is still looking for co-chair. Cindy will be stepping down as task force secretary soon since she will be chairing Region 2 as of the summer meeting in July. If anyone is interested in either position, please let Bill know.

**Next Conference Call: May 10, 2017, 11:00 am to Noon Central Time**