

PM&Q Task Force
Quarterly Conference Call
September 19, 2013

ATTENDANCE

- Members: Mike Bonini (Co-Chair), David Jared (Co-Chair), Tommy Nantung, Linda Taylor, Clint Adler, Robert Shannon Crum (Secretary), Robert McCoy
- Friends: Barbara Harder, Juan Pava

INTRODUCTION

- David introduced the meeting structure for the new members: general business, updates from four subgroups, discussion on new initiatives, and other business.
- This call included a discussion about the upcoming TRB annual meeting (January 2014).

SUBGROUP REPORTS

NCHRP Implementation (Mike)

- CTC and Associates, under contract with TRB (Crawford Jencks, lead) has been conducting interviews on NCHRP implementation results (40 to-date). Also surveyed state research directors and received about 20 responses. Will be conducting follow-up meetings with a small group of states that already track NCHRP implementation activities; work should be completed before the December SCOR meeting.
- PM&Q may wish to invite Chris Hedges (TRB) to apprise us of future activities that relate to this subgroup. Although similar surveys have been done in the past for individual projects, this effort is a more strategic, global review of NCHRP implementation. Only certain projects were investigated, based on subjective evaluation of state participation and likely impact.
- This topic might be a good discussion item at the RAC meeting at TRB. PM&Q should discuss on 12/12 conference call. David may have more information after the AASHTO-SCOR meeting (Dec. 3-4) to help plan any TRB discussions, since an update on this project is on the SCOR agenda.

Website Development (Tommy)

- TRB has provided funding (\$18K) to extend the support contract for the RPM site two more years.
- RAC leadership needs to decide who will maintain the site thereafter. Perhaps this could be discussed at TRB.
- Only two states are using the RPM website for more than submittal of high-value research nominations, so it might be difficult to argue for moving the full site to AASHTO server; however, some states may be waiting for FHWA to identify performance measures under MAP-21 before using RPM site.

- Per Sue Sillick (Montana DOT), RPPM site developed in collaboration with RITA (USDOT) will be hosted on the AASHTO-RAC website.
- Suggestions on the TPF website were sent to Leslie Wright (FHWA-TFHRC) on the TPF website (<http://www.pooledfund.org>), but no response has been received.
- Sue also did a webinar a few years back presenting tools like RPM, RPPM, etc. David asked her about revisiting that to create a single place for new members to learn about these tools. This can be a discussion item for the next PM&Q call.
- David suggested an introductory document/presentation to explain the tools to new members but also be a resource for RAC membership at-large. It could also be part of the RAC 101 training and posting on the RPPM site.

Intellectual Property (David)

- PM&Q is standing by to help with review of the draft final version of the NCHRP 20-89 report. Skip Paul and Dave Huff advised that the panel is submitting their comments, and after the researchers make revisions the report may be available for additional review. If anyone is interested in reviewing it before publication, let David know.
- Barbara advised that the TRB Conduct of Research (CoR) committee is interested in a session for the 2014 TRB meeting but has received a recommendation that the study findings may not be ready for presentation in January 2014. She/CoR would be willing to review the report as well.
- David told Skip that even a limited review period by PM&Q and Friend(s) is fine, since we do not want to delay publication.

Research Problem Identification Practices (David, for Martin Pietrucha)

- This subgroup surveyed state DOT's on practices for identifying research problems.
- The survey is complete and summarized. Subgroup will now survey academia, merge the responses, and produce a white paper.
- Delivery timeframe uncertain, but TRB may be possible.

National Activities (pending; David)

- Another subgroup might deal with **national activities**, including some FHWA initiatives but not be limited to them, e.g. the "Ahead of the Curve" (AOTC) training program.
- Mike and Barbara provided an update on AOTC. The committee developing it has broken into four subgroups to look at the curriculum and how to market the program for research program managers at state DOT's and universities. An AOTC workshop will be held on Thursday of TRB week (8-noon), and it's open to anyone who wants to participate. Barbara said that the committee would like a variety of people to attend, and RAC/ PM&Q will be specifically invited. Feedback from the workshop will be important in moving forward. The workshop is not just for state DOT research managers but also for R&I managers from all sectors (private, non-profit, academic, and government).
- David advised that Leslie Wright has been keeping us updated on the development of the SP&R (Part 2) Guide that has been completed but not yet released, pending

resolution of MAP-21 related issues. He may enquire about RAC being able to review a draft and thinks that FHWA is planning outreach to explain any changes that have been made. Tommy added that FHWA promised to have the rules by May 2014, but the latest email from the TRB Performance Measures committee says “later”.

- David proposed a subtask on peer exchange review and successes. He is not aware of any FHWA efforts to disseminate successes or best practices from peer exchanges. Tommy added that he and Barney Jones (former Oregon DOT research manager) had worked on a RAC “Peer Exchange” task force, but it was dissolved, so a white paper is a good idea. Barbara added that little has been done along these lines for a while, and it’s time to revisit this and review products and best practices. David added that GDOT held its last peer exchange in 2010 and documented products for management, periodically, following the exchange, even beyond FHWA reporting requirements.
- Since consensus seems to be that good products are coming out of research peer exchanges around the country, this topic should be kept on the table for now.

POSSIBLE NEW INITIATIVES (DAVID)

Successful Research Program Spotlight

- A session was held on this at the summer meeting in Baton Rouge, with Jimmy White (VDOT), Peggy Knight (Iowa DOT), and Linda Taylor (MnDOT) speaking and Joe Crabtree from Kentucky Transportation Center as moderator.
- This topic could be perpetuated, but (1) do we want to continue to have sessions like that in the summer meeting; and (2) how do we broadcast successes in our programs?
- This is a topic on successful programmatic elements vs. high-value research, e.g. VDOT’s formal implementation process. At the 2014 summer meeting there may be a session focusing on successful smaller-scope programs;

OTHER BUSINESS (DAVID)

RAC meeting at TRB (Sunday evening)

- RAC leadership decided to look at the format of the meeting and make some changes.
- Administration TF sent out a survey on the format, and the majority of respondents said they think it should be changed.
- The meeting will likely be shortened and changed to more of a business-type meeting.
- RAC leadership and the Administration TF are discussing the changes that need to be made. Options being considered include: (1) time for TF meetings; (2) options for regions about when/how/if to hold breakout sessions.

NEXT CALL

- Scheduled for Dec. 12 (11 - noon EST). Agenda includes plans for TRB annual meeting.