

**AASHTO – RAC Value of Research Taskforce
RAC Summer Meeting - Wichita, Kansas
Meeting Minutes
Monday July 23, 2018
1:30 – 3:00 PM CDT**

Welcome – Introductions & Roll Call

Bill called the meeting at 1:49 pm CDT.

Attendees:

Sid Mohan	Ann Scholz	Patrick Casey
Amy Beise	Kevin Pete	Linda Taylor
Josh Beakley	Phillip Hempel	Biuh Bui
Flavia Pereira	Amanullah Mommandi	Dave Huft
Ian Anderson	Megan Swanson	Chris Hedges
Hafiz Munir	Bobbi deMontigny	Bill Stone
Enid White	Carol Aldrich	Wascem Fazal
Jarrood Stanley	Anne Freeman	Teresa Stephens
Michael Molina	J. Michelle Owens	Sam Cooper
Brian Hirt	Lynn Hanus	Carolyn Morehouse

Review & Approval of May Meeting Minutes & Action Items

Bill put the meeting minutes up on the screen to review.

Motion – Enid White – Approved Megan Swanson.

Southeastern Consortium presentation – 45 minutes

Presentation from Dr. Yoojung Yoon – West Virginia University

Presentation related to how state DOTs need to evaluate the results of the research projects – because of taxpayer’s money, cost effectiveness, etc. The research involved the following tasks:

- Literature review and discovery search – conducted two nationwide surveys – collect data to develop research categories and benefit categories and benefit measures. 27 & 19 responded to the DOTs.
- Development of research categories – research areas used by the state DOTs and federal research programs such as SHRP2 and EDC initiative.
- Development of Research Measures – benefit categories/subcategories, benefit of measures, etc. Developed 3 types of categories – to estimate the coverage rate. Development of research categories ABC – TAC members selected type A. Example in thematic analyses of Florida and Oregon DOT –see if there are any relationships between key words. Then developed research measures – captured in a matrices (mapping) table (table very small).
- Gap Analysis using the mapping table; identifying the research categories/subcategories which are complete, incomplete or undeveloped.
- Developed report for the agency.
- Develop measurement processes – went into significant z-table scores (progress toward target) Measurement processes to see completeness of project – benefit measures.

Dr. Yoon also discussed the statistics (methodology) behind his research:

- Developed Case 1 – 4
- C1: Historical data and target values
- C2: Historical data and no target values
- C3: No historical data and target values
- C4: No historical data and no target values
- 4 essential components - Mean value, standard deviation; target value or confidence interval
- Transformed scale of Z-score

Questions:

1. Chris Hedges (TRB) asked questions about the target values? Dr. Yoon stated if you have historical data you can develop your own target values.
2. Dianne Kresich (Arizona DOT) – assumptions being made that you have already collected data? Dr. Yoon – yes.
3. 2. Dianne Kresich (Arizona DOT) – what were you tasked to do – to develop a tool to help states? Dr. Yoon said no, that he was to develop methodology. He said the goal of the project was to make the measures quantitative.

Detailed discussion ensued on percentage percentiles and descriptions (exceptional, excellent, good, satisfactory, etc.). AASHTO Implementation Manager from TRB had several questions. Dr. Yoon stated it is to determine if a project is good or bad.

Dr. Tyson Rupnow provided the following explanation on the project. The original research need statement was to “determine how to quantify projects without having the ability to conduct a BCA. How do you quantify that benefit across the different states? Most DOTs are going to use qualitative BCA’s on their research programs and not with this process...this methodology will only be used to quantify a benefit on projects when a BCA cannot be used”.

High Value Research 2018 Feedback

There were 97 projects submitted during the Sweet Sixteen nomination process. Historically, throughout the years Region 3 had submitted the most HV projects, this has now been taken over by Region 2. At this time, Bill described for the group the Sweet Sixteen process.

Bill discussed the lack of projects being uploaded into RIP & TRID. There is a premise that all projects are uploaded to TRID. This is not true. There are reasons for this. Not every project gets into TRID. Most go into RIP. Timing issues are also a problem. Bill believes it comes down to the prescribed “Topic” areas. Some things need to change because assumptions are being made. States should look at the categories for submittals. The plan from the HVR Task Force is to require the states to denote which Subject Area(s) their submitted projects fall under for the 2019 HVR submittal process.

Guiding Principles of Research – Enid White

Brief presentation was made by Enid White. A discussion ensued on the RPPM and guidelines to this site. The group was asked to please look at their documents. There are broken links.

Enid has reviewed the guiding principles and they look like goals instead.

There are research guiding principles which should be used (not goals). **Value must come from the research and must benefit the agency and the nation at large.**

- ❖ WE need to look into scientifically based research, i.e. scientific validity to a project.
- ❖ Fair project selection process - DOTs should be incorporating into their research programs the use of TAC’s and RFPs;
- ❖ As a group we should be looking to Risk Benefit Ratio. ROI should be kept in mind.
- ❖ Research should be ethical;
- ❖ Research should have infinite reviews – no bias; safety should be your concern with the conducted research;
- ❖ Literature reviews should be conducted to minimize duplicity of efforts and a waste of funds;
- ❖ Potential conflicts of interest should be looked into;

- ❖ DOTs should follow all federal, state, and local regulations;
- ❖ Data management should be kept in mind.

Topic Areas – Compendium by Topic Areas – Bill

We are now looking for a new submission for a problem statement this fall. Brochures have been well received. We are looking at different ways to market the research. Currently, the task force is discussing the requirement of a field designating topic area of the project. We are going to use the existing lists right now, however, in the future we may change the process but that would incur cost. The HVR Task Force will work with Natassja Linzau and the website contractor on this issue.

We haven't reached the next step of a web based page. We are going to recommend sticking with the VoR website. Bill presented a screen shot of topic areas and what we recommend going forward to the HVR website. Most likely this will involve combining a few items. Maybe 8 – 10 topic areas; There is some concern that potential research will be lost because a topic area is not defined and searchable. There is no current mechanism in place.

Dave Huft (South Dakota DOT) had some suggestions/remarks on how to proceed on the Topic area. Bill says what he was asking is about querying the words and currently we don't have anything in place right now.

Ann Scholz (New Hampshire DOT)– would you be looking to the HVR site? Retrievable information is hard.

Brian Hirt from CTC – Key words are the way to get around this problem.

Good discussion between Enid, Ann, Dave Huft, Brian Hirt, Bill – this problem comes down to defining the topic areas. Having this step in place will save an additional step of searching.

Brian CTC - Compendium is now sorted by state and it is not useful. If the states were identified to develop the topics it would be more helpful. Index the compendium might be a good idea.

Megan Swanson – being able to label them as multiple topics is so helpful; it is not fair for Bill or Renee to tell them they have to categorize our HVR or sweet sixteen projects.

Enid – we might want to identify all topic areas within a project or the DOT can signify the topic area of primary research title;

Chris – discussion of the effectiveness and ways to use the database; gave some suggestions of asking peer groups assigned to classify these projects a certain way.

Bill – we talked about a survey for asking the DOTs;

Bill – starting with a survey might be the best way for comments;

Brian – the question should be “should the topic areas be incorporated into the HVR web site”.

Task Force Strategic Planning – Final DRAFT version – Ann Scholz

Ann Scholz presented the Value of Research Task Force Strategic Plan (version 4).

- ❖ Contributors to the plan were Linda Taylor, Enid White and Ann Scholz;
- ❖ Considered marketing and performance measures;
- ❖ Established and set goals for work groups and actions

Some additional ideas and discussion for incorporation into the VoR Strategic Plan:

- A continual loop PowerPoint slide show of past “Sweet Sixteen” VoR winners;
- Brochures as a resource to Region Chairs – on how to manage the submittals;
- Handout to be developed to assist state DOTs;
- Tracking of high value research on listserv
- Reporting of VoR to AASHTO committee members
- HVR check boxes (?)
- Other committees could share the continual loop PowerPoint slideshow to their website.

End Goal – The Strategic Plan as a finalized version. – then link to an action item.

It was suggested that we send the Plan out for review to the VoR members for comments.

Miscellaneous

Wrap Up & Closing –North Carolina DOT will present at next task force meeting.

Conference Calls are bi-monthly on the second Wednesday at 11 am to noon CST. The remaining conference calls in 2018 are to be held on September 12, 2018 and November 14, 2018.