

Meeting Notes

RAC Task Force on Administration

October 30, 2018

1:30 – 2:30 PM

In attendance: Allison Hardt (Chair), Deirdre Nash, Terry Swygert, Brian Worrel

Decision and action items are underscored.

1. Meeting Agenda – Allison

2. Previous Meeting Notes

Given the low call attendance the approval of the September minutes was postponed until the November call.

3. Existing Business Updates

A. Website Working Group

The Regional Chair Checklist was posted to the Regional RAC page. Allison emailed the Regional Chairs and Vice Chairs on October 12th to make them aware. The next step is to update the language on this page.

TRB will include a line item in the NCHRP budget for the four RAC websites rather than going through the problem statement process. Natassja is currently developing a budget request for the websites, which will include the cost of support and maintenance as well as the cost for the proposed enhancements to the RPPM site. Natassja is also planning to budget a small amount of money to make minor enhancements or changes to the websites within a given year to handle things as they come up. Natassja hopes to develop that by the end of November to give Dale and the Task Force Chairs an opportunity to provide feedback.

The WWG is working on updating the categories for RAC surveys. Renee McHenry is assisting with this effort. Renée created a very helpful crosswalk between the RAC Survey Categories and the proposed TRB Subject Categories. The next step is to think about these categories and decide how to treat the surveys that are in categories we are proposed for deletion (i.e. reassign them to another category).

The WWG has decided to meet on the 4th Monday of each month at 1:30PM EST in 2019.

B. **Guidance Document for Hosting National RAC Meetings** – Michael

Cindy Smith and Rick Kreider volunteered to review the draft document for final edits on the September call. Michael was unable to join the call. This will be on the November agenda for discussion.

C. RAC Onboarding Webinars

A survey was sent to RAC on September 28th to determine which topics member would like to discuss. The highest ranked topic was “Research Program Administration for Smaller States.” Research Manual Development and Upkeep” came in a close second with “Peer Exchanges,” “RPPM Website,” and “NCHRP Balloting Process” coming in 3rd, 4th, and 5th respectively.

Brian will target early December for the “Research Program Administration for Smaller States” topic. Allison will bring this up on the November 1st Region 1 call to see if there is a date that will work well since many of the smaller research programs are in Region 1. Additional topics will be scheduled in 2019.

D. RAC Winter Meeting Agenda

A survey was sent to RAC on October 24th to get input on the agenda. Region 1 will be discussing the results during its call on November 1st. Based the responses over 20 RAC members plan to attend with several still not sure if they will be attending TRB. Over 50% of respondents would like to see the following topics on the agenda:

- 2018 Peer Exchange Reports
- NCHRP 885: Guide to Creating and Sustaining a Culture of Innovation for DOTs – How states are implementing this guide
- NCHRP 20-108 – Examples of projects that have been funded through the Implementation program and their status.
- Update on FAST Act Reauthorization and R&I White Paper
- Update on the R&I Task Forces

The Task Force suggested that the focus be on a few topics rather than 5-6 to keep the agenda focused and to allow more time for Q&A and discussion. Allison will provide that feedback to Region 1 on their November 1st call.

E. [RAC 101](#) Annual Review/Update

Cindy, Rick, and Allison are updating the presentation with the goal of having it completed by the end of November.

F. NCHRP Research Management Related Projects:

- **NCHRP 20-111** “Support for RAC Task Forces in Response to the SCOR Strategic Plan” tasks:
 - i. 2 CFR 200 Compliance – Successful Practices for State Research Managers (Allison)- Contractor selected, NCHRP is going through the contracting process.

4. **New Business**

A. **RAC Annual Meeting Survey**

In recent years the annual meeting survey has been the responsibility of the Region that would host the meeting the following year (ex: R4 was responsible for the 2018 meeting survey since the 2019 meeting will be in Santa Fe, NM. The idea was the feedback would be most useful to that region since they would be responsible for the next meeting program. However, in recent years it seems like the regions have struggled to get the survey out soon after the meeting and the format and questions vary year-to-year. Allison suggested that it might be better for Admin. to take the lead on the survey. This would allow for a consistent survey tool and hopefully help with having it sent out immediately after the meeting so that the content is still fresh in attendees' minds. The group agreed that this could be useful. Allison will discuss this on the November 8th leadership call.

5. **Items for RAC Leadership** (next call November 8th)

- Check about using AASHTO Television for marketing research or for research communication.
- Discuss Winter Meeting Survey Results
- Discuss RAC Onboarding Webinar Survey Results

6. **Next Meeting** – November 27, 2018

Parking Lot Items:

- **Research One-Pager** (Brian Ness' Suggestion) – With CEOs changing often, this could be given to new CEOs to highlight the importance of research to the agency and the return-on-investment. Perhaps a template could be developed and states could plug in their specific facts and figures – Needs to be discussed with Value of Research.
- **Social Media 101 for Research Managers** (David Ooten's suggestion) – TRB's new communication effort may result in a resource that could be useful for this purpose. Will monitor what they are doing to see if it will assist. AASHTO Television might also be a way to market research.