

1 INTRODUCTION

The National RAC/TRB State Representatives Annual Meeting is a combined meeting of two groups: the AASHTO Research Advisory Committee (RAC) and the TRB State Representatives. The meetings have been combined since 2009 because the same individual(s) serves in both roles in many states. A brief introduction to AASHTO RAC and the TRB State Representatives is provided below:

The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan association representing highway and transportation departments in the 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. It represents all five transportation modes: air, highways, public transportation, rail and water. Its primary goal is to foster the development, operation and maintenance of an integrated national transportation system. Much of AASHTO's work is done by committees comprised of member department personnel who serve voluntarily. The Association provides a forum for consideration of transportation issues, and is frequently called upon by Congress to conduct surveys, provide data and testify on transportation legislation.

The Research Advisory Committee (RAC) provides overall transportation advice to the Special Committee on Research and Innovation (R&I) and the AASHTO executive and policy Committees. RAC helps R&I accomplish its goals by providing assistance in identifying research needs, defining research emphasis areas, utilizing research findings, maintaining an overview of State-related research activities and funding, and employing the National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP) effectively.

The Transportation Research Board (TRB) is one of six major divisions of the National Research Council—a private, nonprofit institution that is the principal operating agency of the National Academies in providing services to the government, the public, and the scientific and engineering communities. TRB's varied activities annually engage more than 7,000 engineers, scientists, and other transportation researchers and practitioners from the public and private sectors and academia, all of whom contribute their expertise in the public interest by participating on TRB committees, panels, and task forces. The program is supported by state transportation departments, federal agencies including the component administrations of the U.S. Department of Transportation, and other organizations and individuals interested in the development of transportation.

The TRB State Representatives are the principal link between the state highway or transportation departments (DOTs) and TRB. Each representative is appointed by TRB upon the recommendation of the DOT Chief Executive Officer. It is through this link that the state is kept informed of TRB activities and/or research in progress elsewhere. Equally, it is this link by which TRB is kept informed of issues and problems facing the state DOT and of the state's research activities.

The National RAC and TRB State Representatives Annual Meetings provide an opportunity to conduct an annual business meeting and to network with others interested in transportation research. The meeting attendees are typically comprised of transportation professionals from state DOTs, federal highway agencies, research institutes, and universities.

2 GET STARTED

2.1 PLANNING RESPONSIBILITIES AT-A-GLANCE

The best way to get started is with a clear understanding of the responsibilities of everyone involved in the planning process. A general list of responsibilities is provided below for quick reference. Details on how to fulfill these responsibilities are provided in the subsequent sections of these guidelines.

RAC Leadership

- Provide Guidance to **Host Region** and **Host State**
- Include Host State and Program Committee representatives in monthly leadership call
- Review proposed registration fee developed by the **AASHTO Conference Planner**

AASHTO Liaison to RAC

- Coordinates the assignment of a **AASHTO Conference Planner**

TRB Liaison to RAC

- Review proposed registration fee developed by the **AASHTO Conference Planner**
- Coordinates TRB sponsored sessions with the **Program Committee**

FHWA Liaison to RAC (See RAC Roster)

- Coordinates the attendance of FHWA employees with **the Program Committee, Session Planners** and **Session Moderators**

Host Region

- Identify **Host State**
- Select meeting city in the region in coordination with the **AASHTO Conference Planner** and ensure support from the **Host State**
- Track progress on schedule
- Provide updates to **RAC Leadership** via the monthly RAC Leadership Call
- Establish **Program Committee**

Host State

- Coordinates site selection with **AASHTO Conference Planner**
- Coordinates site food/refreshments/socials selection with **AASHTO Conference Planner**
- Coordinate logistic needs with **Program Committee** and the **AASHTO Conference Planner**
- Identify transportation options from and to the airport
- Typically acts as master of ceremonies
- Recruit and train meeting staff/volunteers in coordination with **AASHTO Conference Planner**
- Provide information on restaurant options for regional dinners

AASHTO Conference Planner

- Coordinate with **Host State**
- Issue RFP for property selection and create property matrix based on responses to RFP for property evaluation
- Conduct site visit(s) to hotel and all offsite venues and coordinate with **Host State**
- Advise **Host State** and **Host Region** on the selection of the meeting city and the meeting venue/hotel
- Arrange transportation to events that are included in the registration fee
- Negotiate and sign contracts with hotel and vendors/suppliers
- In consultation with **Host State**, select food/refreshments/socials
- Advise Program Committee on the master room layout requirements and limitations for meetings/sessions
- Advise Program Committee on AV and IT requirements and limitations for all for all meetings/sessions
- Set up meeting registration website that is capable of collecting registration fees
- Process all attendee registrations, collect fees, and pay meeting bills
- Set exhibitor levels of participation in coordination with the **Program Committee**
- Coordinate all arrangements with exhibitors and communicate all rules and regulations pertaining to exhibitors
- In coordination with the **Host State** and **Host Region** provide registration packets & promotional items
- Coordinate up-to-date head count for food with hotel and offsite venue suppliers In coordination with **Host State and Program Committee**, create master room layout for meetings/sessions
- Coordinate on-site logistics during the meetings

Program Committee

- Develop a meeting theme
- Schedule monthly conference calls; ensure updates are ready for monthly RAC officers' calls
- Develop session topics
- Create master AV and IT list for all for all meetings/sessions; coordination with **Host State / AASHTO Conference Planner**
- Create invitation lists (attendees, speakers, exhibitors)
- Secure and coordinate **session planners and moderators**
- Confirm speakers
- Identify vendors (if appropriate)
- Set agenda
- Coordinate handouts
- Solicit meeting feedback (e.g., evaluation forms & surveys)
- Collect and summarize meeting feedback

Session Planner / Session Moderator

- Secure session speakers who are knowledgeable and engaging presenters
- Review presentations to ensure quality, continuity and eliminate duplication of remarks
- Confirm date/time/location with speakers and provide information for registration
- Establish session format (panel, town hall, individual speakers, etc.)
- Provide instructions to speakers and the session moderator regarding topic, length of presentation, format, etc.
- Collect all session planning forms from speakers and submit to the **Program Committee**
- Obtain speaker & moderator bios for introductions
- Coordinate the attendance of FHWA employees with **FHWA RAC Liaison**

3 CONFERENCE PLANNING CYCLE

Each region takes turns hosting the national meeting, which is generally held in July, but can be adjusted due to hotel availability and other established meeting dates that might draw a large portion of the expected attendees.

Initial Scheduling

The **Host Region** should consider identifying the Host State 2 years prior to the meeting. **Host State** and **AASHTO Conference Planner** should identify the meeting city and hotel approximately 18 months in advance and allow at least 12 months to organize the meeting.

January-June (18 to 13 Months Prior to Meeting)

- **Host State** and **Host Region** work through the **AASHTO Liaison to RAC** to assign a **AASHTO Conference Planner**
- **Host State** and **AASHTO Conference Planner** initiate final city selection and site selection
- **Host State** and **AASHTO Conference Planner** conduct site visit(s) and select proposed meeting venue/hotel and dates
- **AASHTO Conference Planner** proposes conference budget and conference fees
- **The Host State** presents the proposed conference budget and conference fees to the **RAC Leadership**
- The **RAC Leadership** in consultation with the **TRB Liaison to RAC** will approve the conference budget and conference fees
- After **RAC Leadership** budget approval, the **Host State** and **AASHTO Conference Planner** will finalize the conference dates
- After **RAC Leadership** budget approval, the **AASHTO Conference Planner** will negotiate and sign contracts with hotel and vendors/suppliers

July (12 Months Prior to Meeting)

- **Host State** invitation presented to RAC
- **Host State** prints and distributes “save the dates” flyers. (Alternately they may send an electronic calendar invitation)

August (11 Months Prior to Meeting)

- **Host State and Program Committee** identify potential sponsors and provide list to **AASHTO Conference Planner**
- **Program Committee** provides **AASHTO Conference Planner** with basic-level agenda with meals, activities, etc.
- **Host State and Program Committee** identify content for website, including theme, host city, and other notices

September (10 Months Prior to Meeting)

- **AASHTO Conference Planner** will set up the conference website (basic “save the date” page and notices will go live)

October (9 Months Prior to Meeting)

- **Host State and Program Committee** identify potential keynote speakers for the general sessions
- **AASHTO Conference Planner** will develop detailed website content (Registration, Hotel, and Travel Information)

November (8 Months Prior to Meeting)

- The **Program Committee** should consult with the **RAC Leadership** (specifically the task force chairs regarding the expectations for regularly scheduled program items (e.g. RAC 101, and HVR awards)
- The **Program Committee** should consult with the **TRB Liaison to RAC** regarding the expectations for the TRB State Representatives sessions

December (7 Months Prior to Meeting)

- **Host State** contacts host city visitors bureau (graphics, photos, maps, trinkets)
- Create invitation lists
- **Host State and AASHTO Conference Planner** work together to secure a venue for the Monday Welcome Reception and any off-site event or dinner
- The **AASHTO Conference Planner** will update Website with options for local restaurants, attractions, description of large group dinner, link to host city map and transportation information

January (6 Months Prior to Meeting)

- **Host State and Host Region** provide a brief update to RAC members at the RAC Winter Meeting held during TRB Annual Meeting in January.

February (5 Months Prior to Meeting)

- The **AASHTO Conference Planner** will publish the meeting agenda (provided by **Program Committee**) to the website

March (4 Months Prior to Meeting)

- **Program Committee** and **AASHTO Conference Planner** work together coordinate all arrangements with exhibitors and communicate all rules and regulations pertaining to exhibitors (if appropriate)

- **Host State** will identify and distribute to RAC Regions locations/options for Regional Breakout dinners

April (3 Months Prior to Meeting)

- **Program Committee** and **AASHTO Conference Planner** work together to Arrange A/V
- **Host State** and **AASHTO Conference Planner** work together to coordinate transportation for any offsite events. that are included in the registration fee

May (2 Months Prior to Meeting)

- **Host State** and **AASHTO Conference Planner** work together to Recruit and train meeting staff/volunteers
- **Program Committee** along with **session planners and moderators** confirm all presentations

June (1 Month Prior to Meeting)

- Create session summary pages for moderators and speakers
- Review presentations to ensure quality, continuity and eliminate duplication of remarks
- **Program Committee** along with **session planners and moderators** confirm speaker names for the final agenda
- **AASHTO Conference Planner** Publish final agenda with speaker names

July (Meeting)

- **AASHTO Conference Planner** Print meeting signage (2 weeks out)
- **AASHTO Conference Planner** Publish final copy of all promotional literature for the meeting to website
- **AASHTO Conference Planner** Track prepaid and on-site registrations
- **AASHTO Conference Planner** Print list of participants
- **AASHTO Conference Planner** Print nametags and speaker name tents
- **Host State** and **Host Region** Provide registration packets & promotional items (if appropriate)
- **AASHTO Conference Planner** Provide hotel and other function areas with up-to-date head count for food
- **AASHTO Conference Planner** Provide tickets for meals & other outings (if appropriate)
- **AASHTO Conference Planner** Process all attendee registrations, collect fees, and pay meeting bills
- **AASHTO Conference Planner** Provide a spouse/guest program (if appropriate)
- **Program Committee** along with **session planners and moderators** Confirm date/time/location with speakers and provide information for registration
- **Program Committee** along with **session planners and moderators** Review presentations to ensure quality, continuity and eliminate duplication of remarks

August – Post Conference Review

- **Admin Taskforce** Solicit meeting feedback (e.g. evaluation forms & surveys)
- Collect and summarize meeting feedback
- **Program Committee** Send Thank You notes to speakers and moderators