ACRP

AIRPORT
COOPERATIVE
RESEARCH
PROGRAM

DISSEMINATION PLAN

A multifaceted approach to the distribution of ACRP research results, practitioner communication, and engagement throughout the airport industry.

February 2, 2017
http://www.trb.org/ACRP/

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2017 REVISED DISSEMINATION PLAN

BACKGROUND

The Airport Cooperative Research Program (ACRP) just completed its tenth year as an applied research program geared to develop near-term, practical solutions to problems faced by airport operators. Throughout the past decade, ACRP has earned and maintained a reputation for research excellence that is a trademark of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine–as well as all Transportation Research Board (TRB) and its cooperative research programs. This is best accomplished through constant engagement and volunteer participation of industry practitioners in the many aspects of the program. Often results are presented in a printed report but other formats are possible. Presently, there are over 400 ACRP research products. Several post-production communications and distribution methods are employed to ensure that useful research results are immediately available to appropriate practitioners. Many product distribution methods are also utilized to retain practitioner engagement. Often, additional dissemination and engagement techniques are necessary so that messages and results reach specific audiences. (Note that throughout this plan, the term "dissemination" refers to activities intended to raise awareness of ACRP products and processes.)

WHY FOCUS ON DISSEMINATION

Delivering an excellent product is only half of the equation. For any research product to truly benefit the industry, it must be responsive to the industry needs and able to reach the practitioners who can use it. Even the most valuable research product would have zero impact if it was irrelevant to practical airport-situations or sat unused on a shelf. That is why ACRP strategically divides its resources between producing excellent products, recruiting volunteer participation, and delivering results to the industry through the most cost-effective means available.

The original ACRP Dissemination Plan was created in 2010 and adopted in 2011. Since its adoption, ACRP has implemented many of its recommended activities. Some are ongoing and can now be considered mature, and some have been discontinued. Several years have passed since adoption of the original Dissemination Plan, and ACRP has gained valuable experience and insight by implementing the variety of dissemination activities over the last five years. Further, ACRP also introduced its new Strategic Plan in 2014, which includes Strategic Priority 3: Expand and Diversify Product Dissemination. Given these latest developments, in 2016 ACRP examined ongoing activities and promising new methods for delivering ACRP research to the industry, and distilled its revised approach in this new 2017 Dissemination Plan.

INDUSTRY LANDSCAPE

The airport industry has a unique makeup, with several industry associations representing different audiences—that is, specific subgroups of airport-practitioners. Some of the obvious categories include air-carrier airports, general aviation airports, airport executives, state aviation officials, aviation-academicians, and airport consultants.

For a detailed analysis and inventory of the intended audiences, see the Appendix: Audience Determination and Inventory.

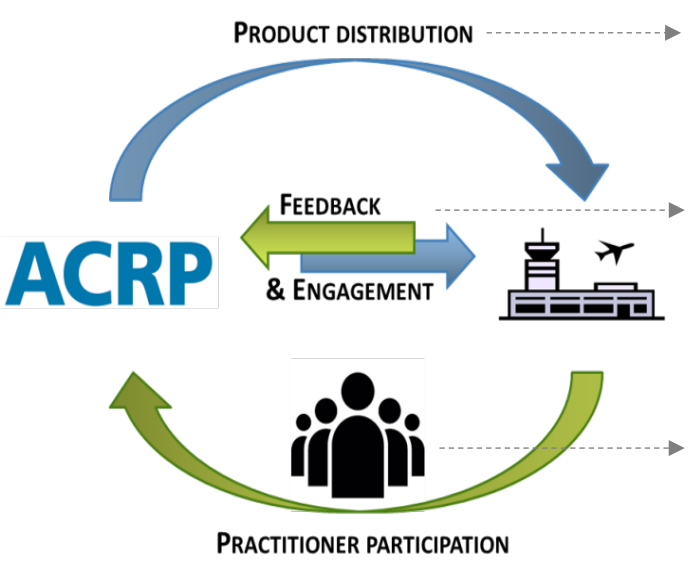
DISSEMINATION OBJECTIVES

ACRP is a complex program with many interrelated efforts underway. Implementation and impact tracking, quality assurance and evaluation, problem statement solicitation, and alternative product development all represent ancillary efforts that relate to and inform dissemination.

ACRP's 2015 Strategic Plan identifies four most critical strategic priorities for the program. Among those priorities is Strategic Priority 3: Expand and Diversify Product Dissemination. Strategic Priority 3 reflects that ultimately, ACRP resources and products are only valuable if they help the industry. And in order for that to happen, ACRP must reach the practitioners to discern what needs exist, recruit practitioners to develop relevant and valuable solutions, and distribute the results to the practitioners when they need them. The ultimate purpose of dissemination is to ensure that ACRP continues to develop valuable research products that reach their intended audiences.

DISSEMINATION ACTIVITIES

In order to achieve expanded and diversified dissemination, ACRP has developed a dissemination plan encompassing an extensive set of activities that address three overarching and interrelated dissemination priorities (also illustrated below):



Product Distribution: Directly promote ACRP results to the airport industry (includes performance metrics to measure the effectiveness of the activities implemented).

Feedback and Engagement: Cultivate open communications with the industry as a means of collecting feedback on research products, gathering research ideas and questions, and building the relationship between ACRP and industry practitioners.

Practitioner Participation: Leverage practitioner participation in representing ACRP at conferences, supporting ACRP research projects, submitting problem statements, or completing research projects. Practitioners can also serve as allies in distributing ACRP products.

Many, if not most, of the dissemination activities in this plan help advance all three priorities to varying degrees. The following pages present the intended activities for ACRP dissemination, including both existing mature activities as well new and emerging activities, and planned improvements to existing efforts.

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SUCCESSFUL, EXISTING ACTIVITIES

AMBASSADORS

Ambassadors are experienced airport practitioners who volunteer to represent ACRP within their organizations, as well as to the broader industry, by presenting and exhibiting at state, regional, and specialty airport industry conferences and meetings. Currently there are 15 active Ambassadors. In the last five years, Ambassadors have represented ACRP at more than 135 events, of which more than 60% were hosted or sponsored by state-level aviation associations or DOTs. Venues have included 40 states, eight FAA Regions, and several Canadian provinces. Specifically, Ambassadors:

Represent ACRP: Ambassadors attend events to share ACRP products and answer practitioner questions about ACRP and its activities. In order to ensure that Ambassadors are fully equipped with everything they need to be effective at conferences, ACRP is currently exploring ways to expand and improving the exhibit materials (see later section, Exhibit refresh).

Gather industry input: Ambassadors help ACRP gather industry input, such as research ideas, questions, and feedback on ACRP products. All input is truly invaluable to ACRP as the program seeks to evolve and remain relevant for practitioners working in the field.

Mentor Champions and Recruit More Ambassadors: Ambassadors are encouraged to participate in ACRP's Mentorship program, which pairs Ambassadors with young airport professionals in the Champions program (see later sections, Champions and Mentorship Program). This arrangement is a valuable way for Ambassadors to help young professionals acclimate to the airport industry. Ambassadors can also help recruit new Ambassadors.

Additionally, ACRP is always seeking new ways to improve the Ambassador program. Historically, recruitment has been successful but challenging. To increase enrollment and elevate the visibility of the program, ACRP is currently exploring several new possibilities, such as staffing an ACRP Ambassador recruitment booth at industry events, soliciting recommendations for new Ambassadors from active Ambassadors, hosting webinars about the Ambassador program and application process, creating a branded giveaway to serve as a reminder to apply, simplifying the application process, offering small ways applicants can get involved with ACRP while waiting to hear back about their application, and refreshing the Ambassador program web page.

Enhancing the value of participation and effectiveness of program design is another priority for ACRP. Tactics currently being considered include introducing collaborative projects among participants to cultivate a sense of community, inviting a high-profile spokesperson at TRB to address the Ambassadors directly, refining the feedback loop between ACRP and Ambassadors, restructuring the Ambassador term limits, allowing Ambassadors Emeritus to represent ACRP at events when Ambassadors are unavailable, and enhancing the Ambassador exhibition materials.

Ambassadors Emeritus

Ambassadors Emeritus are experienced airport practitioners and alumni of the Ambassadors program who volunteer to continue representing ACRP even after serving as an Ambassador. Currently there are 22 Ambassadors Emeritus. Specifically, Ambassadors Emeritus:

Represent ACRP: Some events and conferences have very limited attendance lists. Ambassadors Emeritus are advanced in their careers and respected in their fields, and potentially in a position to represent ACRP at conferences that are closed to Ambassadors.

ACRP is exploring the possibility of giving Ambassadors Emeritus special tasks, which would be short-term activities to gather input, problem statements, and feedback from small groups of practitioners.

Recruit Ambassadors and Mentor Champions: Ambassadors Emeritus are in an ideal position to relate their own experiences as an Ambassador and help recruit new Ambassadors. Like Ambassadors, Ambassadors Emeritus are also invited to participate in ACRP's Mentorship program, which pairs mentors with young professionals in the Champions program (see later sections, Champions and Mentorship Program). This arrangement is a valuable way for Ambassadors Emeritus to help young professionals acclimate to the airport industry.

Advise ACRP: Ambassadors Emeritus offer many years of accumulated knowledge and are excellent candidates for serving on an advisory board, or an Impacts on Practice (IoP) Action Team (see later section, Impacts on Practice).

CHAMPIONS

The ACRP Champions program engages early- to mid-career professionals employed at airports or working for entities serving the airport industry. ACRP Champions share ACRP news, information, and research products within their organizations and serve as internal ACRP resources to their peers. More than 50 Champions have enrolled in the first year, with the majority representing airport organizations. About 70% of Champions have completed at least one Mission, which demonstrates baseline knowledge of ACRP. Two Champions completed three Missions and earned an invitation to attend the 2017 TRB Annual Meeting as ACRP's guest. Specifically, Champions:

Represent ACRP and Promote ACRP Products: Champions are expected to familiarize themselves with ACRP offerings and then serve within their organizations as sources of information about ACRP and its research activities and attend events to spread the word and answer questions about ACRP research, products, and activities. In order to ensure that Ambassadors are fully equipped with everything they need to be effective at conferences, ACRP is currently exploring ways to expand and improve the exhibit materials (see later section, Exhibit materials). ACRP is also considering revised Champion activities to include staffing an ACRP booth at an event, and/or supporting an Ambassador by providing data collection support as a way to support the industry and gain experience.

Gather industry input: Champions can help ACRP gather industry input from conferences just like Ambassadors, but they also complete specific activities for doing so. For example, one of the Champion missions involves developing a problem statement, which is a valuable opportunity to channel organizational challenges into a research proposal that may become the topic of a new ACRP research project. It also provides valuable insight for ACRP into the challenges faced by a real airport industry organization.

One year into the operation of the Champions program, ACRP is considering several new initiatives for improving the program. Possibilities include developing a dedicated webinar training series for Champions, facilitating training events in collaboration with industry associations, hosting candid discussions about the challenges faced by young professionals, designating Champions to join an ACRP project panels, cultivating a sense of community among Champions, Ambassadors, and ACRP through informal in-person gatherings and online lunch-and-learn webinars, maintaining a private Facebook or LinkedIn group, profiling Champion successes in a regular newsletter to Champions, and inviting Champions to flag projects at their airports that apply ACRP research, and develop an Impact on Practice (IoP) factsheet. Lastly, after a year of operation it is prudent to review the basic structure of the program missions (i.e., the curriculum) and consider ways to improve it.

WEBINARS

ACRP's webinars have attracted thousands of airport practitioners over the years (nearly 4,000 attendees in 2015 alone). Subject matter experts explain research results and how they can be applied during a free, moderated 1.5-hour slide presentation and question/answer period. Most webinars feature more than one ACRP publication that shares a topic or theme. In 2015, the webinar series included 15 webinars and covered 28 different publications. The average webinar attracted 260 attendees, and the average satisfaction rating was approximately 88%. In 2016, so far, ACRP webinars are on pace to reach or exceed 2015 levels in terms of number of attendees, while satisfaction levels are higher and trending upward. ACRP is currently introducing a new webinar format for "Depth of Content webinars" that will each focus on one publication rather than an overview of several publications. ACRP will also investigate options for increasing the quality and value of webinars in terms of sound and video quality, and ease of use.

Promote ACRP Products: Webinars focus on the research findings, results, and products ACRP produces to help the industry improve and evolve successfully.

Involve Practitioners: Presenting a webinar is a way practitioners with expertise in their field can get involved in training and educating others in the aviation industry.

Solicit Feedback: ACRP may consider phasing out the surveys conducted with webinar presenters, and instead focus more on conducting surveys with attendees at the end of webinars, to garner input on ways they can be improved and to determine if/how these webinars are being used for continuing education hours. ACRP is exploring additional ways to improve its webinar offerings.

- **Content:** Possible content changes include:
  - Increasing the variety of the webinars offered, possibly of varied difficulty or knowledge level;
  - Focusing webinars on practical applications or key resources;
  - Assigning titles that feature a compelling call to action—for example, "Save energy and money at your airport" instead of "Energy efficiency measures in airports";
  - Featuring non-airport speakers who work in related fields (e.g., disease transmission, natural disaster response, etc.);
  - Segmenting webinars by target audience; and introducing human interest stories.
- **Format:** Increased variety of format may also add value and boost engagement—possible methods include:
  - Introducing a live-stream or fireside chat format,
  - On-stage facilitated panels with industry experts, and
  - Audio-only open and informal discussion between a host and a guest expert (a popular format on podcasts).
- **Promotion:** Promoting via marketing flyers, interviews, and a refreshed landing page on the ACRP website all offer possible ways to improve the visibility of recorded webinars.

Ultimately, any improvements will be directed and informed by audience research into motivations, priorities, and suggestions for improvement. Research methods may include focus groups with audiences of varying participation with ACRP webinars; views and downloads data; and webinar surveys.

EVENT CALENDAR

ACRP calendar: ACRP's online calendar [http://www.trb.org/acrp/acrpcalendar.aspx] lists major aviation industry events. It provides a one-stop view of ACRP event attendance and presentations, and is a unique resource for airport practitioner users, including ACRP Ambassadors. The calendar is

updated every four months. Only events that are sponsored or recommended by organizations represented on the ACRP Oversight Committee are included on this calendar. Suggestions for events to be included can be emailed to ACRP@nas.edu.

Generally, access to the calendar has been restricted to those who have registered their name and contact information in MyACRP. In response to feedback, ACRP will examine ways to maintain the utility of required registration, while making the calendar easier to access and view (e.g., display some simple event details publically to nonregistrants, and reveal full details only once the user registers).

TRB calendar: TRB also provides a separate calendar [http://www.trb.org/Calendar/Calendar.aspx] that lists webinars and events held by any of its subset of research programs. There are fewer events and this calendar does not provide aviation events held by external organizations. In order to minimize confusion of practitioners looking for the ACRP- and aviation-centric calendar, ACRP will add a link on the TRB calendar page that directs users to the MyACRP calendar if they're looking for greater detail and an aviation focus.

Increase Practitioner Engagement: The calendar is an effective means to connect practitioners with events that interest them. Practitioners engaged with ACRP can be effective messengers for the program, whether attending an event as an Ambassador, a Champion, or simply an invested stakeholder.

Product Summary Cards

ACRP produces Product Summary Cards that contain an overview of the project – relevant administrative information, notable tools or apps developed, and a textual summary – for all new reports, digests, web only documents, syntheses, and CDs. They are significantly more efficient to produce and carry than full reports, which can be resource-intensive and difficult to carry in bulk to conferences. These summary cards are used at conferences and exhibitions in place of printed reports. The use of Product Summary Cards allows ACRP to display more publications in a more concise and digestible manner.

Promoting ACRP Products: Product Summary Cards essentially serve as a soft pitch, engaging airport practitioners and enticing them to download the full report. ACRP is exploring ways to make this an even more valuable and effective resource, such as introducing high-resolution visuals, diagrams, and content that grabs the reader; introducing simple icons to designate the topic area, audience, and functional interest of each resource, to make it easy for Ambassadors to grab the right cards for a given event; and revisiting the format to ensure that the size and layout are ideal for their intended purpose.

Engage Practitioners: Many Ambassadors and Champions can use Product Summary Cards as an easy way to share ACRP products without investing the time into reading all products in-depth (which would be virtually impossible). As such, it makes participation a less daunting task for prospective Ambassadors and Champions.

Impacts on Practice

Impacts on Practice (IoPs) are flyers featuring case studies on the use of ACRP products by airport practitioners. Each IOP highlights the use of one or more ACRP products at one or more airports.

Promote ACRP Products: IoPs are an effective means of broadcasting the usefulness of ACRP products and encouraging practitioners to explore and select a product that can help their own operations.

Invite Practitioner Participation: IoPs are developed in coordination with practitioners who have a story to tell about the utility of an ACRP product at their airport. Practitioners provide content and information about results and the process.

Collect Feedback: IoPs offer a valuable glimpse of a product's effectiveness in the real world. The case study can expose any weaknesses or points of confusion that the airport or practitioner encountered, and any issues that future research may need to address.

PI Symposium

The objective of the Symposium on ACRP Research in Progress is to help ACRP improve its research by developing a library of best practices to ensure that ACRP continues to be recognized as the focal point for the development of research products that address current and emerging issues in the airport industry.

Promote ACRP Products: The Symposium helps ensure that ACRP products maintain visibility in the industry, and a reputation for quality and excellence.

Engage Practitioners: The Symposium offers a way for practitioners, especially researchers involved with ACRP, to get engaged in promoting the success of the program.

Collect Feedback: The Symposium is an effective forum for gathering feedback, ideas, and practitioner insight into how to improve the program and ACRP products.

Evaluation and Reporting

Quarterly Dissemination Updates

Quarterly dissemination updates help ACRP track the ongoing progress of all dissemination activities to ensure success and effectiveness of all activities. ACRP uses quantitative metrics where possible to compare progress against an initial benchmark, and to measure results and impacts.

Dissemination Activity Assessments

ACRP issues surveys to determine the effectiveness of dissemination activities. Regular surveys are issued for Ambassador program members, webinar presenters, webinar audience members, and Champion program members. ACRP is considering the possibility of implementing a standard annual dissemination survey to track specific metrics over time—taking care to coordinate that effort with other surveys to avoid survey fatigue.

Annual Report

The ACRP Annual Report highlights program accomplishments and key activities, and showcases the value of ACRP products and impact in the industry. Appendices list all ACRP publications and a summary of project status. ACRP has been and will continue exploring new content and formats to improve the Annual Report and build upon its utility for the aviation community. Ideas currently under consideration for improving readership include sharing results via social media, issuing previews prior to distribution, and others.

NEW AND EMERGING ACTIVITIES

In addition to the well-established, robust activities and activities detailed above – the Ambassador and Champion programs, the webinar series, and product summary cards, event calendar, and others – ACRP is also exploring and testing interesting new initiatives for improving dissemination. These new exploratory activities are outlined below.

PRACTITIONER ACTIVITIES & TRACKING

Mentorship program

Many young professionals in the airport industry can benefit from mentorship. ACRP is testing a new mentorship program that pairs Champions with Ambassadors who can share their career experience and industry knowledge. ACRP makes the initial introductions and offers guidelines for effective mentoring. But as with any mentoring relationship, the logistics are left to the Ambassador and Champion to determine, such as frequency and method of communicating.

Engage Practitioners: Mentorship is a powerful way that experienced practitioners can get involved with ACRP. It's also an opportunity for ACRP to engage new and mid-level practitioners.

Merit Badges

ACRP is considering the value and logistics of awarding Merit Badges to practitioners who become subject matter experts through a detailed curriculum of study and pass a rigorous knowledge assessment in one of ACRP's research areas. This offering may be available to senior practitioners, or to mid- or lower-level employees of aviation organizations. Merit Badges may prove to be a valuable resume builder and elevate not only the visibility of ACRP and also the Merit Badge holder. The program may also offer continuing education credits (CEUs) for added value. The logistics for this program are being reviewed but it may be operated in coordination with a university or industry association partner.

Engage Practitioners: Merit Badges could offer practitioners a whole new way to engage with the program.

Share ACRP resources: Whenever a challenge comes up, the Merit Badge holder could help resolve it based on industry knowledge and best practices prescribed by ACRP.

Provide feedback: Merit Badge holders would gain a bird's eye view of all ACRP products in a given area, and as a practitioner may be able to identify any gaps in research.

Practitioner/Airport Tracking Database

ACRP is considering establishing an ACRP participation database to track the engagement of all airports and practitioners in order to aid future PI's and to recruit new airport and practitioner engagement.

Collect Feedback: Tracking practitioner and airport activity would be an effective way to assess the impact of dissemination and the ways practitioners and the industry as a whole are engaging with the program.

Engage Practitioners: The results and findings from this tracking effort could help inform improvements to future practitioner engagement activities.

INDUSTRY COORDINATION

Partnering with Associations and Trade Groups

Influential industry associations and trade groups have large memberships in the airport industry, and also bear an obligation to deliver information and content that is timely and relevant for their members. ACRP is exploring the possibility of partnering more closely with associations and trade groups in order to help them meet their obligations to their members, while leveraging their access to practitioners to broaden dissemination and gather industry insight.

In short, industry associations can:

Promote ACRP products: ACRP could provide plug-and-play content like summaries and thumbnails that can fit into communications materials, and also request Ambassador speaking opportunities at association events and meetings.

Recruit Champions: Certain associations that operate groups for young professionals may be positioned to help recruit new Champions.

Provide insight: Industry associations and other groups have special insight into what their members need, what challenges they face, and what qualities they value in research products—all valuable information for ACRP.

If pursued, this method would begin with establishing contacts and building relationships with leaders at influential associations. One way to achieve this would be by assigning an ACRP delegate or liaison to each desired partner organization. In very specific cases, ACRP could choose to tailor its products to align with industry group goals—for example, a training program that industry groups can use as a revenue stream. Challenges to be expected include differences between ACRP and association goals, and a lack of prioritization among all their other activities. ACRP may introduce a memorandum of understanding (MOU) for all partners, outlining the agreed upon actions (e.g., publicizing ACRP reports on main website), or it may offer a list of desired actions as a less formal agreement.

Strengthening the Relationship with FAA Regions

Building a stronger relationship between FAA regions and ACRP would not only provide ACRP with a large network to distribute its products, but would also heighten the validity of ACRP products in the eyes of industry practitioners. A strong, collaborative relationship with FAA could help:

Promote ACRP Products: ACRP may consider working with FAA website editors to ensure that ACRP's publication database is referenced and linked to FAA's website. ACRP could also provide ACRP summary sheets for distribution by FAA certification inspectors during airport inspections.

Institutionalize ACRP Findings: Airport practitioners communicate with FAA regions on a frequent and regular basis. As ACRP products are increasingly included in these conversations, practitioners are more likely to adopt industry best practices identified in the products, and provide feedback based on their experiences to contribute to future updates of products or future research areas.

Collaboration with Universities (Students and Educators)

Students and educators at universities involved in aviation have the potential to shape the industry for many years to come. ACRP is considering the possibility of conducting outreach to and collaborating with this key segment, which would offer the following benefits:

Share ACRP Resources with Students: ***Integrate ACRP research into college curricula:*** Professors involved in curriculum development at aviation schools or programs can be encouraged to introduce ACRP and its research. ***Make ACRP products readily accessible:*** ACRP may consider developing a kiosk, bulletin board, or other information center about ACRP research to appear in university libraries. ***Integrate ACRP research into training programs:*** Any aviation training courses held at universities could include findings from ACRP research.

Collect research ideas: Students and professors involved in aviation research could be a source of problem statements for ACRP.

Recruit Champions: ACRP could potentially dedicate part of its Champion recruitment efforts towards students about to complete their studies, so they can become Champions once they graduate and begin working in the industry.

WEBSITE UPDATES

Content Mapping/Classification

Over the past 10 years, ACRP has produced a large quantity of information. Practitioners have expressed that there are now so many products, it can be difficult to sift through them the find the right one. In order to practically organize all of this information, ACRP is investigating the possibility of establishing an underlying content mapping or classification system. Having an electronic publications database built to match the way practitioners use it when looking for guidance would allow airport practitioners to navigate through the information in a streamlined and effective way. Whether the categories reflect the formal ACRP research areas, relation to airport function, or some other coding mechanism, having a content mapping or classification system could help:

Improve Product Accessibility: ACRP may explore the value of creating a kiosk with ACRP's publications that could be used in airport or consultant libraries, which would allow users to browse publications and drill down into different subject areas. The publications could also be represented in an interactive infographic of an airport, with each publication pertaining to one or more functional areas of the airport.

Engage Practitioners in Classifying Products: Practitioners can share the ways they have used the publications so that ACRP can classify them accurately. This could lead to an organization system that allows practitioners to indicate what they would like to do and find the right resource.

Identify Gaps in Knowledge: Having all ACRP products clearly categorized would theoretically reveal weaker areas where there are still opportunities to conduct additional research.

Improved Navigation and Searching

ACRP's website is the main gateway many airport practitioners use to access ACRP products. ACRP is investigating ways to make the website easier to find through better search engine optimization (SEO) as well as more intuitive to navigate and search, which would help practitioners find the information they need to resolve challenges at their airports. This could be achieved by: having a preformatted search findings page organized by topic or airport size; making certain key documents more easily accessible, such as the ACRP project lifecycle overview, or having the ACRP Annual Report Appendix B as a standalone downloadable document with each report name hyperlinked to the download page; reducing extraneous content; offering a clear direction and pathway to find a document; and having search functionality upfront. Improving accessibility and enhancing the user experience regarding ACRP's website would help:

Increase Download Rates: Making publications easier to find on its website would increase the chances that airport practitioners find and download the information they are searching for. It would also make it easy to create a simple directory of all available ACRP products, which Ambassadors can carry to events and reference when attendees ask about a specific topic.

Reach New Practitioners: Practitioners who are unfamiliar with ACRP but who find it through their search results are one step closer to taking an opportunity to get engaged with ACRP as an Ambassador or Champion.

Track Engagement: By tracking what users are searching for on the website, download rates of publications, and which pages are visited most often, ACRP could get a sense of the type of information that is most in demand.

Solicit Problem Statements: Having the website easier to navigate would make it more clear for airport practitioners what information is already out there and what areas research is still

needed in. In addition, ACRP could maintain a list of emerging issues on its website, so other organizations could look at this when developing problem statements.

Product Ratings

User ratings are part of our modern culture—people use them to find good restaurants, products, and service providers. ACRP is tentatively investigating the value and logistics of introducing a product rating system for ACRP products. Practitioners looking for a high-value product to address a specific need may benefit from seeing quality and relevance ratings applied by other practitioners who have used and/or applied the product.

Promote Products: Practitioners looking for a specific product would be able to quickly find and evaluate ACRP products that meet their needs. This added emphasis on quality and relevance would incent project teams to produce exceptional products in order to earn high ratings and boost their odds of future contracts with ACRP.

Engage Practitioners in the Program: Practitioners who leave feedback, even if they haven't engaged with ACRP in other ways, would feel a little more connected with the program.

Collect Feedback: Product ratings would be an effective way to get direct feedback on product quality and relevance in a way that is streamlined and automatically recorded.

Exhibit Refresh

ACRP sends representatives to airport industry conferences all around the country. These representatives, typically members of the Ambassador or Champion program, set up exhibitor booths at the event and work to spread awareness of ACRP and its research. ACRP is evaluating several possible ways to increase engagement at these events and industry usage of ACRP products as a result.

Promote ACRP Products: The exhibit has the important job of catching the attention of passersby who are interested in industry research and may be receptive to ACRP products. Ambassadors representing ACRP at a conference can keep stock of inventory carried to a conference to track what was distributed. Possible improvements to the exhibit format include a portable wall of Summary Cards and corresponding research products, which can be on display at the main ACRP or TRB office when not in use at a conference. ACRP may also introduce sign-up functionality, perhaps via a mobile app, which would allow immediate access to electronic publications, and a signup allowing visitors to opt in to program updates about new research products.

Engage new Practitioners: A mobile app display could also allow people to browse through engagement opportunities (Ambassadors, Champions, etc.) and even sign up on the spot to participate or just receive program updates.

Collect Industry Input: ACRP may introduce a whiteboard (or virtual whiteboard via the iPad) that Ambassadors can use to facilitate discussions with practitioner attendees, and gather ideas for future research. Ambassadors can also report back to the program regarding attendee feedback on research products and ideas for future program offerings.

General Communications

Tailored Electronic Marketing

As in the above examples, the following activities are simply initial ideas to explore and examples of the world of possibilities available to ACRP for improving dissemination.

Emails

ACRP is evaluating its use of email as a communication tool to find opportunities for better leveraging its potential. Email is an effective and efficient tool for boosting dissemination and cultivating engagement with the program. It is a channel for providing in-depth and high-level information without being particularly constrained to a certain length or character count (versus social media). It also offers high versatility and can include embedded files, videos, images, hyperlinks, and almost anything that can exist on a website.

Promote ACRP Products: With an aviation list of 15,000 contacts, quarterly email blasts could have significant impact. Through targeted and timely emails to stakeholders based on their particular research interests, ACRP could place its content directly in front of the audience. Implementing smart mail merge tactics in conjunction with tapping ever-growing data sources would also help ACRP grow readership. ACRP would also align any future effort with best practices, such as leading with a simple ask (e.g., "Check out the latest research findings.")

Encourage Practitioner Engagement: Other calls to action could encourage readers to get involved by attending a conference, becoming an Ambassador or Champion, submitting a problem statement, or giving feedback on resources based on individual reading history. These would be positioned using simple calls to action (e.g., "Tell us about your research idea!").

Solicit Feedback: ACRP may also use email to solicit feedback on products, recent events, research ideas, and other program offerings.

Social media

By leveraging its presence on social media, ACRP already drives web traffic to the site and increase awareness of its research, resources, tools, and trainings. ACRP operates on three social media platforms: LinkedIn, Facebook, and the ACRP Ambassador Twitter. ACRP is weighing the benefits of more regular posting on social media. ACRP is also exploring the possibility of paid, targeted advertising, and refining its social media presence in conjunction with new product offerings (e.g., videos, Product Summary Cards, etc.). To optimize visibility, engagement, and clicks, ACRP may implement and adhere to the following best practices:

- **Develop content with mobile users in mind.** Keep posts short and personable, and include a call to action.
- **Join the conversation:** Use hashtags on Twitter to help target your audience and a specific topic. Include hashtags such as #Airports, #Aviation, and #Avgeek.
- **Think big picture:** Posts that include images receive a 37% higher engagement rate.
- **Check your watch:** Generally, aim to post mid-week later in the day. The best timing for social posts depends on the platform, the target region, your goals (e.g., clicks vs. shares), and your audience behaviors. To learn more about your followers, view the Facebook Insights and Twitter Analytics.

Promote ACRP products: Social media is an easy way to showcase new research findings and products to a specific audience.

Engage Practitioners: An active presence on social media communicates that the ACRP program is not just a top-down authority. It is a community of practitioners from all backgrounds. Practitioners who happen across ACRP's presence on social media can be encouraged to get involved by volunteering or simply by sharing a post that may interest their own networks.

Invite Feedback: Social media is a perfect way to solicit feedback and industry preferences via polls, short form surveys, "share your experience" posts, and more. Use of these formats is under consideration.

Op-ed Articles

ACRP is considering the value and logistics of implementing a new strategic ongoing effort to get articles about ACRP reports and initiatives published in industry publications. Op-ed articles (short for "opposite the editorial page") are devoted to commentary and opinions by a named author, typically a trusted authority in a given field. Op-ed articles would be an effective way to reach broad new audiences already invested in aviation or other industry news, but may not be familiar with ACRP.

Promote ACRP Products: Op-ed articles could address topics of interest to the target audience in a general sense, in order to maximize viewership, but can also direct users to specific products that speak to those interests.

Co-Author with Practitioners: To reduce the appearance of bias and leverage industry trust in active practitioners, ACRP may consider co-authoring an article with practitioners who are active in the field and the subject matter discussed in the article.

Gather Feedback: Most online and print publications have some mechanism for feedback—from number of views to written commentary from readers—so publishing an article would serve as a source of feedback on program offerings as well as insight into industry concerns.

Podcast

One innovative dissemination method ACRP may consider using is a podcast. Podcasts are a powerful tool for reaching beyond written text to connect verbally with listeners. They can be relatively low-budget because they don't require video production or preparation of visuals, and they require considerably less preparation in many cases, as long as the participants have insights and knowledge they can share on the spot, in a relatable way.

Promote ACRP Products: Podcasts could promote products by featuring a new one every week, perhaps in the format of an interview with the lead researcher.

Engage Practitioners: Presenting research results on a podcast can be an impactful way for practitioners to share knowledge and explain research challenges candidly to help other researchers learn from their experiences.

Invite Feedback: Many podcasts include segments for listener feedback or questions—this would be a great opportunity to collect feedback on featured research and on general program offerings.

Blog

An active and up-to-date blog would help communicate to website visitors that ACRP is a thriving program with diverse voices contributing to its mission. ACRP may consider hiring a social content developer to work with research leads (Principal Investigators) craft insightful stories in a blog format, covering research findings, progress updates on high-visibility research projects, profiles of active practitioners, opinion pieces on industry news with references to relevant ACRP products, and industry events where ACRP is represented throughout the year.

Promote ACRP Products: An active blog could showcase recent new publications in light of current industry news, and cultivate an image of continuous evolution and insight on the cutting edge of industry research.

Engage Practitioners: Authoring a post on the ACRP blog would be an easy and cost-effective way for practitioners to engage with the program and showcase their own skills and expertise while contributing to general awareness of ACRP and its work.

Invite Feedback: Most contemporary blog platforms offer commenting functionality and can be an easy way to collect feedback from practitioners on research findings, ideas, and more.

90-second Videos

ACRP may consider the production of short videos to introduce new products and research findings. Video production is resource-intensive, but videos don't have to be long to be effective. In fact, after the 60-second mark, videos become increasingly less likely to be viewed at all, and more likely to be stopped before the end[1]. A 90-second video is a good balance between brevity and utility.

Promote ACRP Products: Short videos would be a great way to introduce a new resource and hit a few of the key highlights, so the viewer can decide if it is relevant to their needs and interests.

Engage Practitioners: Hosting a short video would be a low-investment way that a research lead or other practitioner can be involved in promoting ACRP while gaining visibility for their own research.

[1] http://thenextweb.com/socialmedia/2014/05/02/optimal-length-video-marketing-content-short-possible/

APPENDIX: AUDIENCE DETERMINATION AND INVENTORY

Airports make up the audience for ACRP research products. So to identify the size of its audience, ACRP has referenced the National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems (NPIAS). This is also the resource consulted by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) in order to identify airports eligible to receive Airport Improvement Program (AIP) funding.

There are 3,345 existing and proposed NPIAS airports. The top 25% of NPIAS airports each employ dozens or even hundreds of practitioners. The remaining 75% of these airports may have as few as only one or two practitioners. So we conclude that there are tens of thousands of practitioners in the airport-employee audience. To engage this group, we must understand their typical circumstances and functional interests.

ACRP classifies all audience members along three profile dimensions:

1. **Type of organization represented** (e.g., airport, airline, government, public safety, etc.)
2. **Level within organization** (executive, management, etc.); and
3. **Publication topics of interest** (e.g., environment, legal, engineering, policy, human resources, etc.).

The following analysis of audience segments is intended to inform the allocation of limited resources to dissemination activities that reach these varied stakeholders.

Primary Audiences (listed in order of priority): The primary audiences are the specific groups ACRP seeks to engage through its research products, dissemination efforts, and assessment activities.

1. **Airport employees/staff** at general aviation airports, commercial air service airports, and air cargo airports.
2. **Consultants and private entities** that provide essential planning, development, management, maintenance, and operational services to airports.
3. **Academicians that educate and train** current and future airport-practitioners on subjects that are addressed by ACRP research.

Secondary Audiences (listed in alphabetical order): The secondary audiences may or may not be airport practitioners, but they sometimes exert significant influence on the primary audiences (listed above) and therefore may also be included in the intended audience for a specific ACRP product, distribution, outreach, or assessment effort.

4. Airline representatives
5. Airport neighbors
6. Airport sponsor or policy board members
7. City/county administrators
8. Construction contractors
9. Elected officials
10. Federal/state government employees
11. General public
12. Industry association staff representatives
13. Local government employees (non- airport) and non-elected representatives
14. Metropolitan planning organization representatives
15. Other regulatory agency employees
16. Pilots or other tenants
17. Public safety (non-airport police/fire/security) professionals
18. Research institution staff representatives
19. Suppliers (manufacturer) representatives
20. Trade media representatives

Identifying the several thousands of practitioners not directly employed by airports requires a coordinated approach. Additional data sources—including association membership lists, airport staff directories, conference attendee lists, web opt-in lists and reader surveys—can assist with identifying these practitioners. This population is diverse, so identification of their interests will understandably be less precise. ACRP attempts to identify the degree of experience in the airport industry by asking the level in the organization.

Organizational hierarchy.

1. Executive (final decision-maker)
2. Management/supervisor (decision-influencer)
3. Technical/professional (implementer) including CPA, PE, AICP, JD, SHRM, etc.
4. Learner/trainee (new to the industry)

Taken together, employees at NPIAS airports and non-airport-employee practitioners represent the vast majority of airport-practitioners and serve as the cornerstone for ACRP distribution and outreach efforts, as well as the basis for assessing the value and utility of research results. As ACRP matures, more specific practitioner data—including contact information and demographic profiles for individual practitioners—can be categorized into specific functional interests to better inform distribution, outreach, and assessment strategy.

Functional interest.

1. Administration/Human Resources
2. Business (Economic) Development/Properties
3. Engineering / Design/Construction
4. Environment (Noise/Air/Water/Sustainability)
5. Facility & Infrastructure Maintenance
6. Finance & Budget
7. Information Technology
8. Legal
9. Marketing (including services)/Public Relations
10. Operations (Airside/Landside)
11. Policy/Long-term Planning & Development
12. Public Safety (Police/Fire/Security)