New Committee Chair Orientation Webinar
July 12, 2018
Overview

• TRB and the National Academies
• TRB Mission and Organizational Structure
• TRB Standing Committees
• Committee Responsibilities and Activities
• Committee Chair Survival Guide
• Resources
National Academies Mission

The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine are private, nonprofit institutions that provide expert advice on some of the most pressing challenges facing the nation and the world. Our work helps shape sound policies, inform public opinion, and advance the pursuit of science, engineering, and medicine.
TRB Mission

The Transportation Research Board provides leadership in transportation innovation and progress through research and information exchange, conducted within a setting that is objective, interdisciplinary, and multimodal.
## TRB Organizational Structure

| Technical Activities | • 220 Committees  
|                     | • Annual Meeting  
|                     | • TRR  

| Cooperative Research Programs | • NCHRP  
|                               | • TCRP  
|                               | • ACRP  

| Studies and Special Programs | • Requested Studies  
|                             | • IDEA  
|                             | • Synthesis Studies  

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*The National Academies of Sciences · Engineering · Medicine*
TRB Standing Committees

Provide a forum for information exchange among volunteer professionals in the transportation community on a given topic:

- Identify research needs and priorities
- Stimulate needed research
- Identify best professional practices, and
- Facilitate adoption of research into practice
TRB Standing Committees

- TRB committees are combined into groups and sections
- Based on the committee topic and scope
- Sections and groups provide opportunities to collaborate on cross-cutting topics and activities
Committee Membership

- Committee Chair - a recognized professional and active committee participant
  - Selected by TRB Staff in consultation with existing chair, group/section chairs, TRB leadership
  - 3-year term (with optional second 3-year term)

- Committee limit is 25 members, with some exceptions
  - 5 International Members (non-US)
  - 4 Young Members (35 years or younger)
  - 2 State DOT employees
  - 3 “Active” Emeritus Members
  - Unlimited number of “friends”
  - Diversity!!!
Committee Membership

• Members may serve up to 3, 3-year terms.
• Rotations of 1/3 members every 3 years
• Diversity and Inclusion in membership is a major emphasis
  – Race, ethnicity, age, geographic representation, gender, organizational affiliation
Principle Committee Activities

- Paper Review Process
  - Review research papers for presentation and publication in the Transportation Research Record

- Annual Meeting Planning
  - Develop the program for the annual meeting in January of each year.
Paper Review Process

- Committee Calls for papers posted May/June timeframe to solicit specific topics of interest to the committee.
- Papers due to TRB August 1st. Paper reviews extend through March of the following year.
- Chair or coordinator selects paper reviewers
  - 3 reviewers per paper (at the very least)
  - Reviewer’s names kept confidential
- Chair or coordinator notifies author of reviewers results
- Review Results: Accepted for present and/or publication; Edits and Re-review; Reject
- Paper review webinars are held each year to help you navigate the system.
TRB Annual Meeting

• 13,300 attendees
• Over 220 technical committees, 330 subcommittees, 18 task force meetings
• The meeting program covers all transportation modes, with more than 5,000 presentations in over 800 sessions and workshops
Annual Meeting Planning

- TRB staff work with committee chairs and members to schedule
  - Interactive Workshops
  - Paper or Presentation sessions *(approximately two per committee)*
  - Poster sessions
  - Cross cutting sessions
  - Committee and Subcommittee Business meetings
- October 1st - deadline for details
- Session Planning webinars are held each year and recorded
Midyear Meetings

- Not all committees hold midyear meetings
- Often several committees meet together
- Some individual committees hold meetings with local sponsors
- TRB staff coordinate with chairs to schedule business meetings, plenary sessions, and joint committee workshops
But, what do TRB committees *Do*?

- Advance Research
- Contribute to TRB and the Transportation Community
- Facilitate Communications Within the Industry
- Community Building and Mentoring
Advancing Research

- Develop (and help to advance) research needs statements and calls for papers.
- Maintain research needs databases
- Document committee-conducted or sponsored research in reports, white papers, online resources
- Link research projects to opportunities for practical applications
- Assist with disseminating research results and technology transfer
Contributing to TRB and the Transportation Community

- Sponsoring or co-sponsoring conferences
- Workshops
- Webinars
- Developing theme issues and articles for TR News
- Sharing best practices with other committees
Communications

- Websites
- Webinars
- Newsletters
- E-newsletters
- Listserves
- Wikis
- Social media
- Etc.
Community Building & Mentoring

- Engage new members, young members, and international members
- Engage committee friends
- Engage members of other committees
- Reach out to other organizations and groups, involving new stakeholders
Limits on Advocacy

- TRB Standing Committees may NOT develop specific advice or recommendations on public policy, legislation, funding or regulations.

- Examples of overstepping committee bounds:
  - A TRB Chair once wrote a letter to the editor of *The Washington Post* about Transportation Legislation, signed “John Doe, TRB Chair”
  - A TRB Committee recommended that the Federal Highway Administration fund a specific research project.

- TRB standing committees may propose that an NRC-appointed committee be established to generate advice on a given topic.

- If there is any level of discomfort over whether advice is being proposed to individuals/organizations outside of TRB contact your Staff Officer.
Committee Chair Survival Guide

- Be selective in choosing members
- Encourage participation
  - Play to the strengths of your members
- Delegate, delegate, delegate
  - Develop focused subcommittees to take on tasks
- Communicate early and often
- Run organized meetings
- Anticipate deadlines to stay on schedule
- Maintain a sense of humor!
Selecting Committee Members

- Be selective!!!
- Don’t accept every applicant
- Include members that bring different expertise or connections to other communities. DIVERSITY!!!
- Contact leaders in the field and follow up on their suggestions
- Tell prospective members what you expect and make sure they can make the necessary commitment
Encouraging Participation

- Establish well-defined, challenging and reasonable tasks
- Set deadlines and follow up
- Recognize accomplishments in private and public
- Make sure each member is contributing
- Establish relationships with each member, particularly new ones
Delegating Responsibility

- The more independent subcommittees or work groups the better!
- Activity generates more activity
- Do not need to be personally involved in every task
- Monitor, Guide, Cheerlead
- Stay connected to ensure committee needs are met
- Broaden the leadership base - Vice-Chair, Secretary, Research Coordinator, Communications Coordinator, Event Planners, Paper Review Coordinator, etc.
Involving Friends, New and Young Members in Committee Activities

- Provide opportunities for involvement in session planning/moderating, paper reviews, etc.
- Provide a “Young Members” agenda item for committee meetings.
- Appoint a New or Young Member as the CCC or Secretary for your committee.
- Consider organizing a mentoring program for new committee members.
- Highlight New and Young Member research in committee meetings or sessions.
- Encourage participation in or establishment of Group-Level Young Member Subcommittees.
Triennial Strategic Plan

- **Mission** - Why does the committee exist?
- **Scope** - Why does the committee exist?
- **Goals** - What does the committee want to achieve?
- **Strategies** - How will the goals be achieved?
- **Action Plan** - What is planned for the next three years to accomplish goals & strategies?
  - Update every 3 years—coordinate with incoming chair if rotating within triennial period
  - Use as an activity to engage committee members
Remember the Resources

- “Being a Chair” Web Page: http://www.trb.org/AboutTRB/BeingaChair.aspx

and .... Don’t forget your staff officer!
Questions?