

TRB POLICY AND ORGANIZATION GROUP

2009 Guidelines for Committee Strategic Planning and Evaluation

(Triennial Strategic Plan (TSP) Process)

Strategic planning is an integral part of effective committee operations. The strategic plan sets the committee's direction over the previous 3-year period. Annual reports show a committee's progress toward its strategic goals. This strategic planning and evaluation process is generally described in the *Technical Activities Division Leadership Guide*, <http://onlinepubs.trb.org/Onlinepubs/dva/DivAGuide.pdf>,

Each Group has its own methods for committees to follow in carrying out the planning and evaluation process generally described in the *Leadership Guide*. This document provides guidelines and processes for committees in the Policy and Organization Group (POG). All the POG committees carry out their reviews for the same time period, the one ending April 15, 2009. Each committee is responsible to produce an annual report of activities, and a strategic review of committee goals and plans as part of that evaluation.

Committee Strategic Planning

Committee strategic planning efforts provide a process for committees to define their purpose, plan for future activities, and assess their performance. Strategic planning also provides the chair a basis for creating subcommittees and assigning task leaders, and it produces important information that can help orient new members and friends.

The results of strategic planning vary by committee, but it is important to include in the plan activities that will generate information needed for the evaluation process described below. Two important references that provide strategic information for committees are the *TRB Strategic Plan* (http://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/general/trb_strategic_plan.pdf) and the *Technical Activities Division Leadership Guide* (<http://onlinepubs.trb.org/Onlinepubs/dva/DivAGuide.pdf>).

Guidelines for potential elements that can result from committee strategic planning efforts are as follows:

Mission. The mission of the committee can be based on the mission of TRB and on the committee roles found in the references noted above, e.g. "Promote innovations and progress in . . ."

Scope. The committee scope describes the focus of the committee. The scope should be reviewed for relevance during strategic planning sessions. The scope statement is extremely important and because it sets the stage for topics to be addressed through various committee activities. Section and Groups use scope statements to ensure that

committees are distinct from each other. The scope should be reviewed frequently by the committee to make sure it reflects current issues.

Goals. Goals for the committee can be drawn from the references noted above, e.g. “To continuously foster and contribute to research, development, and implementation . . . “ and “To contribute significantly to improved communication and dissemination of research in . . . “

Strategies. Strategies could include the major roles of a TRB committee: defining research needs, soliciting papers, developing paper and conference sessions, disseminating information, sponsoring workshops, etc.

Action or Activity Plan. An action or activity plan, often organized by strategy, can be used to list the recurring annual activities conducted by the committee and the special activities planned for each year. The products of these activities feed directly into the reporting required for the committee evaluation described below.

This is a comprehensive list of elements that may not be needed for each committee, since items such as mission, goals, and strategies are related to information in other documents. A different strategic framework could also be used. But a thorough effort to develop and explicitly document these elements, at least every three years during the committee’s evaluation process, has many benefits. An example of a committee strategic plan is available in Appendix G of the Technical Activities Leadership Guide (see PDF file under Leadership Resources at <http://onlinepubs.trb.org/Onlinepubs/dva/DivAGuide.pdf>).

Committee Evaluation Process

Each committee is required to critically re-evaluate itself every three years, using the Triennial Strategic Plan (TSP) process. The benefit of this process is that the committee chair and members can identify areas they may want to strengthen in the future. This effort assists the committee in making plans for developing future research problem statements, conference and paper sessions, workshops, communication tools, and other activities. In addition, the evaluation process provides the Group and Section Chairs with concise information on the relative health and relevancy of committees within the Group/Section, and it helps identify opportunities and gaps that call for action on critical and cross-cutting issues.

Committees in the Policy and Organization Group should use the POG Annual Report and TSP templates. TRB staff will provide a preliminary Committee Annual Report using data from the TRB database. The committee chair then should provide any additional information and submit the completed Annual report to the Section Chair by April 15 of each year. Committee chairs can use this information to track progress toward meeting strategic goals. Section chairs should review these annual updates and provide feedback to the committee as needed. This annual collection of information from TRB databases reduces the amount of work previously required for the TSP.

The committee should prepare and submit the TSP and its attachments to the Section Chair by April 15, 2009. After any changes have been made in response to Section Chair feedback, the Group Executive Board will review the TSP. It will provide feedback to the committee and submit a summary report to Technical Activities Council as needed. The objective of the review is to take a broad look at how the committee relates to other TRB committees and organizations, and the relative importance of the committee's scope of activities in addressing current and future transportation needs. This process also provides an opportunity for the Group and Sections to identify opportunities and gaps that call for additional action on critical and cross-cutting issues. TSP results are discussed as needed at Group Executive Board and Technical Activities Council meetings.

Schedules

All committees in the Policy and Organization Group will conduct their TSP's in the same year. Since many committee activities for a year occur before and after January 1, given the timing of the Annual Meeting, the Group Executive Board defined its year to be from April 15 to April 15. T

Staff will provide Annual Reports for April 15, 2006-April 15, 2007 and for April 15, 2007-April 15, 2008. Preliminary annual Reports for the third year—April 15, 2008 to April 15, 2009—will be given to committees on November 1, 2008 as noted in the schedule below.

The following schedules show the steps and timing needed for Committee Annual Reports (CAP) and TSPs.

Schedule for Annual Reports

Date	Unit Responsible	Action
November 1, 2008	TRB Staff	Send preliminary Annual Report from database to Committee and Section Chairs for period beginning April 15.
December 1, 2008	Committee Chair	Edit preliminary Annual Report for use at Annual Meeting as needed.
March 1, 2009	TRB Staff	Update Annual Report as needed with data from Annual Meeting and send to Committee and Section Chairs
April 15, 2009	Committee Chair	Add final information to the Annual Report including data on papers received, presented and published. Submit to Section chair and TRB staff.
May 15, 2009	Section Chair	Provide feedback as needed to committee chairs on Annual reports and be a resource for helping address cross-cutting issues.
May 15, 2009	TRB Staff	File committee Annual Report with collection of its other Annual Reports for the three-year period, to be used for TSP.

Schedule for Triennial Strategic Plans (TSP)

The Year before TSPs are Due		
Date	Unit Responsible	Action
May 1, 2008.	TRB Staff	Provide last two years of Annual Reports and TSP template to committee and section chairs.
June – August, 2008	Committee Chair	Discuss process for completing TSP at mid-year committee meeting
December 1, 2008	Committee Chair (or sub- committee)	Submit draft TSP with Annual Reports attached (including preliminary Annual Report for third year) to Committee members for review
Year TSPs are Due		
January, 2009	Committee	Discuss and Revise draft TSP.
April 15, 2009	Committee	Complete TSP report with attached Annual reports and submit to Section Chair and staff, who forward to Group subcommittee
May 15, 2009	Group Subcommittee	Review TSP reports, interact with Section Chair, identify opportunities and gaps that call for action on critical and cross-cutting issues.
June 1, 2009	Group Subcommittee	Provide summary report of TSP key issues to Group, recommending actions related to committees and actions related to critical and cross-cutting issues identified in TSP reviews.
June-July, 2009	Group Chair	Discussion with Group Executive Board at Midyear Group Meeting and decide on on opportunities and modifications to the Group strategic and action plans .
September, 2009	Group Chair	Provide summary report of TSPs to Technical Activities Council Chair and TRB staff as needed
January, 2010	Technical Activities Council	Review and take action as needed.

All Policy and Organization Group committees are asked to complete TSPs by April 15, 2009.