

## 1995 MIDWESTERN STATES EQUIPMENT MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE

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### SUMMARY

The 7th Midwestern States Equipment Conference was hosted June 5-7, 1995 in Lincoln, Nebraska by the Nebraska Department of Roads. Participating states were Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, South Dakota, North Dakota, Missouri, Wisconsin and Nebraska. The following is a brief summary of discussion topics and information reported during the meeting.

- *Salt Storage and Purchase*—Wisconsin presented the results of a study on the enlargement of existing and the construction of new salt storage sites. The comprehensive plan included the capability of salt delivery by a minimum of two of three delivery alternatives: truck, barge or rail. It included the criteria for determining the facility size, location and other construction parameters, and measures established for the emergency distribution of salt to other locations.

- *RF Low Band Interference* - Illinois outlined the problems resulting from RF interference in the low-band communication system resulting from the 1992 thru 1994 Allison World Transmission. The resulting emissions from the microprocessor reduced the effective operating range of the two-way radio by as much as 60% by locking the radio's receiver until a stronger signal overrode the noise. The testing procedures were outlined and the filter used to suppress the noise were discussed.

- *Snowplows* - Minnesota discussed the use and their success using the Frink Reverse-a-cast plow. Iowa and Nebraska have purchased these and expect to purchase more. Iowa distributed information on the snowshield that is inexpensive and easily fitted on existing plows and aids in operator visibility by redirecting the snow coming over the moldboard shield.

- *MUTCD Regulations* - Kansas questioned the compliance to MUTCD regulations with respect to using TMA's on slow moving operations on two-lane roadways. No one in attendance had heard of any regulation mandating this use.

- *Equipment Management Systems* - This topic could be the sole agenda for an entire meeting! The state of Nebraska asked questions pertaining to the parameters used in other midwestern states in the design of their systems. The best systems seemed to come from states

that designed and built their systems in-house. The other common expression was to design for future expansion and ensure all the needs of the users could be met.

- *Communications* - Several states reported the use of cellular phones in select positions in their maintenance operations. All commented favorably on their effectiveness during emergency operations. Columbia County Wisconsin is using a ground speed spreader control with a global positioning device in an experimental study.

- *Cooperative Procurement* - Minnesota presented their state program that allows other governmental entities to purchase from state contracts. Their system also allows input into the specification of the product. The practice saves money and improves the quality of the equipment purchased.

- *Off-Shore Equipment* - Mr. Heedum gave a slide presentation of equipment and recycling efforts used in Japan. These included rubber recycling, computerized communication center, wind tunnel plow and spreader testing, remote brine spreading on bridge decks, and rubber mounted moldboards on snowplows to reduce shock.

### HOST STATE FACILITY AND EQUIPMENT TOUR

A portion of the meeting was spent touring the Nebraska Tractor Testing facilities at the University of Nebraska. Tractors are evaluated for pulling and PTO horsepower, and tractive effort. They also measure engine noise and cab noise levels. These findings are published and have become the standards several states use as a part of their tractor specifications. We visited the central garage and receiving location for the Nebraska Department of Roads. There we saw equipment ranging from large bridge inspection cranes, snow route tandems, sign installation trucks, light-duty trucks, mowing equipment and alternative alcohol fueled vehicles.

### FUTURE MEETINGS AND PLANS

Ohio agreed pending upper management approval to host the meeting in 1996. The meeting will be held in August

to prevent conflict with other national meetings. Tentative future plans include: Indiana in 1997, North Dakota in 1998, and South Dakota in 1999. These

meetings will be held the first week in June each year and are dependent on the host state management concurrence.