

TRANSPORTATION RESEARCH BOARD
The National Academies

Executive Committee Meeting
January 14-15, 2009
Palladian Room, Omni Shoreham Hotel
Washington, DC

MINUTES

PRIVILEGED INFORMATION

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TRANSPORTATION RESEARCH BOARD
Executive Committee Meeting and Policy Session Discussion Minutes
January 14-15, 2009
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Table of Contents

TABLE OF CONTENTS	2
ATTENDANCE	3
JANUARY 14, 2009	4
WELCOME	4
BIAS/CONFLICT-OF-INTEREST DISCUSSION	4
PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES	4
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT	4
SUBCOMMITTEE FOR NRC OVERSIGHT	5
SUBCOMMITTEE ON PLANNING AND POLICY REVIEW	5
TECHNICAL ACTIVITIES DIVISION	5
<i>Report of Technical Activities Division and Council Report</i>	5
<i>Conference, Workshop, and Project Approvals</i>	5
BRIEFING BY NATIONAL ACADEMIES’ DIRECTOR OF CONGRESSIONAL AND GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS	6
STUDIES AND SPECIAL PROGRAMS DIVISION	6
KEY ISSUES IN TRANSPORTATION AND CLIMATE CHANGE (PART 1 OF 2)	6
<i>Mitigation Research Programs and Funding on Greenhouse Gases and Energy for the Transportation Sector</i>	7
<i>Discerning the Pathway to Implementation of a National Mileage-Based Charging System</i>	7
BREAK FOR EVENING	7
JANUARY 15, 2009	8
KEY ISSUES IN TRANSPORTATION AND CLIMATE CHANGE (PART 2 OF 2)	8
<i>Adaptation Research Programs and Funding</i>	8
DOT TRANSITION, INFRASTRUCTURE STIMULUS, AND REAUTHORIZATION	8
FUTURE POLICY SESSION TOPICS	9
STRATEGIC HIGHWAY RESEARCH PROGRAM 2	9
ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE DIVISION	9
COOPERATIVE RESEARCH PROGRAMS DIVISION	9
INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES	10
NEW BUSINESS.....	10
NEXT MEETING AND ADJOURNMENT	10

**TRB Executive Committee Meeting Attendance
January 14-15, 2009
Washington, DC
Attendance**

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Linda Watson	Chair
Barry Barker	
Allen Biehler	
Rebecca Brewster	Ex Officio
Larry Brown	
Paul Brubaker	Ex Officio
Deborah Butler	
William Clark	
David Ekern	
Nicholas Garber	
John Horsley	Ex Officio
Edward Helme	
Adib Kanafani	
Thomas Madison	Ex Officio
Susan Martinovich	
Michael Meyer	
William Millar	Ex Officio
Debra Miller	
Michael Morris	
Neil Pedersen	
Sandra Rosenbloom	
Tracy Rosser	
Gerry Schwartz	
C. Michael Walton	
Steve Williams	

MARINE BOARD CHAIR

Malcolm MacKinnon

TECHNICAL ACTIVITIES COUNCIL

Robert Johns	Chair
Paul Bingham	
Karla Karash	
Leanna Depue	
Robert Dorer	

TRB STAFF

Cindy Baker
Ann Brach
Stephen Godwin
Neil Hawks
Russell Houston
Christopher Jenks
Michael LaPlante
Mark Norman
Suzanne Schneider
Robert Skinner

GUESTS

Ken Adler	EPA
Thomas Bolle	RITA
Cynthia Burbank	PB Americas
Lisa Colbert	FTA
Sarah Dunham	EPA
Clifford Eby	FRA
John Gray	AAR
Arthur Guzzetti	APTA
Randy Iwasaki	Caltrans
Timothy Klein	RITA
Kelly Leone	RITA
Sue McNeil	University of Delaware
Jeffrey Paniati	FHWA
Nan Shellabarger	FAA
Michael Trentacoste	FHWA
Vincent Valdes	FAA
Martin Walker	FMCSA
RDML James Watson	USCG
James Whitty	Oregon DOT

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Executive Committee Meeting and Policy Session Minutes
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Highlighted areas indicate Executive Committee action.

January 14, 2009

Welcome

Transportation Research Board Executive Committee Chair Deb Miller called the meeting to order at approximately 8:30 a.m. Chairman Miller welcomed everyone in attendance. Self-introductions were made.

Bias/Conflict-of-Interest Discussion

A bias/conflict-of-interest discussion was held, in which members of the Executive Committee were given the opportunity to disclose potential biases or conflicts of interest they could have related to areas that might be discussed at this or future Executive Committee meetings. No members reported any conflicts of interest related to the Executive Committee's duties.

Previous Meeting Minutes

The minutes of the June 13-14, 2008, meeting of the Executive Committee were approved.

Executive Director's Report

Robert Skinner provided a report on a number of items concerning TRB as detailed in the Executive Director's Report (Tab 2 of the agenda book). During his presentation, Skinner highlighted the following:

- The 2007-2009 triennium budget is in the final year and is in a strong position. The U.S. Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has modified its cooperative agreement with TRB so that it will return to annual contribution levels expected at the outset of the FY 2008-2009 triennium.
- While the country's financial situation makes the future uncertain, a finance committee will be convened to plan a budget strategy for the remainder of the triennium.
- During the course of 2008, TRB's reserve and policy funds declined by 17 percent due to NAS investment fund losses. The loss is expected to be offset by transfers to the reserve as the triennium closes out. We also anticipate the possibility of drawing down the reserve during the next triennium.
- The TRB Annual meeting is tracking at about four percent below last year's totals. *(Subsequent to the meeting it was announced that attendance was approximately 10,000, about 500 below last year's total.)*
- A new cooperative agreement was executed in September 2008, between the National Academies, FHWA, and the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) that allows for continued support of the National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP).
- Several TRB programs may be affected by the reauthorization of federal aviation and surface programs this year and TRB will be watching the situation closely.
- The 2009 budget forecast for the National Academies looks strong; however, the 2010 budget could be affected by the economic downturn.

Subcommittee for NRC Oversight

Michael Walton described the role and background of the SNO and some of its oversight activities, including its efforts to support the broadening of the representation of minorities and women on TRB committees and panels as detailed in the SNO report (Tab 3A of the agenda book). Walton described the biennial program review process conducted by the Governing Board of the National Research Council and directed members' attention to the TRB Biennial Program Report included in the agenda book. The Executive Committee approved the report.

Subcommittee on Planning and Policy Review

Michael Meyer, chair of the Subcommittee on Planning and Policy Review (SPPR), described the role of the SPPR (Tab 3b of the agenda book) as the group essentially charged with providing guidance and input to TRB between meetings of the Executive Committee. Meyer highlighted the review of the Marine Board, which had taken place at the October 2008 SPPR meeting, and expressed his pleasure over efforts to enhance the Executive Committee's understanding of the Marine Board.

Technical Activities Division

Report of Technical Activities Division and Council Report

Robert Johns and Mark Norman reported on activities of the Technical Activities Council (TAC) and Technical Activities Division (TAD) as detailed in their report (Tab 4A of the agenda book). Their presentations highlighted the following:

- The TAC is using responses to a survey of committee members to identify the high-priority action items it will be addressing over the next year.
- More than 60 sessions and workshops were developed under the Annual Meeting's (AM's) spotlight theme of "Transportation, Energy, and Climate Change." A record number of papers were submitted for inclusion in the AM's program, a workshop at this year's meeting was sponsored by the Executive Committee, and several enhancements have been made to the program based on attendee suggestions.
- The AM is expected to continue to be held at the three Connecticut Avenue Collection hotels for the foreseeable future.
- TRB is taking additional steps to make information available to those who cannot attend TRB events and taking steps to minimize the potential financial impacts to TRB of reduced attendance at the AM and other specialty conferences.
- After a one-year hiatus, Thomson Reuters Science has released the citation impact factor for the *Transportation Research Record: Journal of the Transportation Research Board*. The 2007 impact factor is 0.206. The 2005 impact factor was 0.145 and the 2004 impact factor was 0.072.
- TRB is looking into new requirements of some states and organizations for more formal approval of providers of certified professional development hours.
- The "Funding Sources for Transportation Research: Competitive Programs" website has been launched. It was a joint project of the TRB Committee on the Conduct of Research and AASHTO's Research Advisory Committee.

Conference, Workshop, and Project Approvals

The Executive Committee approved TRB sponsorship or co-sponsorship of the following conferences:

- 19th Biennial Visibility Symposium (sponsor)
- Transportation Hazards and Security Summit 2009: Progress Through Partnership (sponsor)
- Safety Information for Transportation Asset Management (sponsor)
- Truck and Bus Driver Health and Wellness (sponsor)
- Design-Build in Transportation Conference

- 26th International Bridge Conference (IBC) (cosponsor)
- Earthquake Engineering in a Multihazard Environment (cosponsor)
- 14th Conference on Cold Regions Engineering (cosponsor)
- First International Conference on Pavement Preservation (cosponsor)
- International Conference on the Safety and Mobility of Vulnerable Road Users: Pedestrians, Motorcyclists, and Bicyclists (cosponsor)
- IABMAS 2010: Fifth International Conference on Bridge Maintenance, Safety and Management (cosponsor)
- 5th New York City Bridge Conference (sponsor)

Briefing by National Academies' Director of Congressional and Government Affairs

Jim Jensen, the National Academies' Director of Congressional and Government Affairs, told members of the Executive Committee that six members of the National Academy of Sciences have been appointed to the Obama Administration and that it is now time for the scientific community to perform. Jensen said that in the economic recovery bill Congress will probably require mechanisms to measure the bill's effectiveness. The economic recovery bill may take some immediate pressure off the funding situations within agencies and at the state level, but it will not be a fix to the long-term funding needs that must be addressed by Congressional authorizers over the coming year.

Studies and Special Programs Division

Stephen Godwin noted that the Studies and Special Programs Division report (Tab 4B of the agenda book) provides an overview of pending studies, potential studies, policy studies under way, and reports completed in 2008. Highlights of Godwin's presentation include the following:

- As part of the "big issues" studies series, TRB is proposing studies (a) to assess the quality of vehicle travel data at the federal, state, and local level and make recommendations for an affordable and sustainable system of estimating personal and freight travel, and (b) to inform the regulatory process for surface transportation program performance measures that are expected to be part of the next authorization. Upon learning from Jeff Paniati, Executive Director of FHWA, that FHWA had work underway in both these areas, Godwin indicated that he would coordinate with FHWA as the prospectuses for these projects continue to be fleshed-out and would report back to the Subcommittee on Planning and Policy Review.
- The Executive Committee approved the Cook Inlet: Design of a Comprehensive Risk Assessment project. The Cook Inlet project will be built upon the model used to develop the report on *Risk of Vessel Accidents and Spills in the Aleutian Islands: Designing a Comprehensive Risk Assessment*, but will be tailored to the unique circumstances of Cook Inlet.
- The Executive Committee approved the Naval Engineering in the 21st Century: Phase 1 Workshop study to review current activities within the major universities that have both undergraduate and graduate programs in naval engineering to understand the focus, content, and structure of the various approaches employed.

Key Issues in Transportation and Climate Change (Part 1 of 2)

The policy session included the presentation of three papers were commissioned as part of a TRB study to recommend a series of transportation research programs to Congress for consideration in the next reauthorization of federal surface transportation programs. The research recommendations will address climate change, energy conservation, and the transition to a new transportation funding mechanism to replace or supplement the motor fuel tax.

Since the papers that were presented will be modified based on the comments from the Executive Committee, these minutes highlight the subject of the papers, but focus more on the types of comments provided by members of the Executive Committee.

Mitigation Research Programs and Funding on Greenhouse Gases and Energy for the Transportation Sector

The goal of this paper is to identify knowledge gaps and areas of uncertainty about transportation strategies to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions and reduce energy consumption and to recommend a program of research that would give policy makers better information for decisions about policies and programs. The paper identifies needed research, estimates the cost of a program, and comments on the most effective way of carrying out the research. The paper's author is Cindy Burbank, National Planning and Environment Practice Leader, Parsons Brinckerhoff, Inc. (PB) Americas.

General Themes from Executive Committee Comments

- The paper should be broadened to consider:
 - the contribution of transit and other transportation alternatives, such as ridesharing, van pools, and car pools
 - the experiences of other modes such as rail in terms of implementing broad new technology across an entire sector or trucking, which has worked with its customers to reduce the weight of products,
 - the appropriate roles for different players, such as academia, in the effort;
 - the role of waterways and barriers to mode switching, and
 - issues associated with the management of research on a topic this immense.
- Position the role and value of research in terms of mitigation and implementation, and explore the existing knowledge base before starting any activity.
- Identify the most cost-effective strategies, examine how they might complement other strategies, and explore potential unintended consequences or tradeoffs.
- Include reviewers with a broader range of perspectives before the paper is finalized.

Discerning the Pathway to Implementation of a National Mileage-Based Charging System

The goal of this paper is to identify a research, development, and demonstration strategy that will allow for a transition to a new means of charging users of roads and highways. The paper focuses on key decisions that need to be made at the technical, administrative, and policy levels to implement mileage-based charging and recommend RD&T strategies to inform those decisions. The paper's author is James Whitty, Office of Innovative Partnerships and Alternative Funding Manager, Oregon Department of Transportation.

General Themes from Executive Committee Comments

- Explore the influence of the federal reauthorization cycle on the potential implementation of studies, experimentation, and acceptance of a mileage-based charging system.
- Examine the potential links between a national mileage-based charging system and the vehicle infrastructure integration (VII) effort with particular attention to the VII's work in the area of privacy.
- Examine an implementation process that gives stakeholders the ability to steer the process and help develop consensus on the proposals.
- Begin to explore the issue of public and political acceptance of the concept. What would the public's expectations be and how can those expectations be shaped and addressed across different socio-economic and political groups? Most importantly, how long will it take to get acceptance.
- Include environmental groups in the process of developing these ideas.

Break for Evening

Miller called a recess to the meeting at 5:30 p.m.

January 15, 2009

Miller called the Executive Committee back in session at 8:30 a.m.

Key Issues in Transportation and Climate Change (Part 2 of 2)

Adaptation Research Programs and Funding

The goal of this paper is to develop research programs that will help the transportation sector begin to adapt to the increases in sea level, flooding, and temperature that will accompany climate change. The paper will identify needed research, estimate the cost of a program, and comment on the most effective ways of carrying out the research. The paper's author is Sue McNeil, Professor, University of Delaware.

General Themes from Executive Committee Comments

- Add more detail to the research plan that considers how adaptation will vary across regions and the states.
- Explore the issue of unintended consequences.
- Broaden the group that would have input into the effort to include members of the climate change community.
- Don't move forward until after reviewing the existing knowledge base on climate change.
- Consider the role of adaptation in terms of other regular maintenance or construction activities undertaken already.
- Don't forget that adaptation will need to take place at sea as well as on land.
- Identify policies that may prevent adaptation and work with stakeholders to address the inconsistencies.

DOT Transition, Infrastructure Stimulus, and Reauthorization

Jeff Morales, Mort Downey, and Jack Basso, members of (*then*) President-Elect Obama's transportation transition team, briefed the Executive Committee on the status of the transition process. They report that the handoff between the current and incoming administrations has been very smooth. It could be June or July until many of the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) positions are filled. Reauthorization will likely be affected by the benefits perceived from transportation investments made in the economic recovery package. Urban issues are expected to receive more attention by the Obama administration. The recession is expected to last about two years. Obama's economists consider investments in infrastructure to be an effective tool to stimulate the economy, but people should not expect research to be a big part of the economic recovery package.

John Horsley, Executive Director, AASHTO, suggested that those that believe that transportation investments will help stimulate the economy are pushing for \$50 billion for transportation in the economic recovery bill, while those not as convinced of the benefit of such investments are backing \$25 billion. He also noted that the expected \$5 to 6 billion shortfall in the Highway Trust Fund for 2010 would drop the program from about \$45 billion per year to \$21 billion, due to a cash flow issue. He suggested that some corrective action must be taken before then.

Future Policy Session Topics

Russell Houston provided an overview of the SPPR's suggested topics for the January 2010 policy session (Tab 6B of the agenda book).

- The Executive Committee approved a session for the June 2010 meeting that will examine water transportation. The session will explore the current status of ocean, coastal, and inland shipping and how the operation of the system is enhanced or constrained by federal policies; the decentralized, multi-agency federal approach to the marine transportation system; and the federal posture toward port development.

Strategic Highway Research Program 2

Neil Hawks directed members of the Executive Committee to the Strategic Highway Research Program 2 (SHRP 2) report (Tab 4E of the agenda book).

- Hawks noted that SHRP 2 has 35 research projects under way and 3 others have been completed. In addition, 12 contracts are in negotiation and another 4 projects are midway through a multistep proposal process. More than \$86 million has been obligated to 64 projects.
- Hawks highlighted Project S07, which is the main data collection project for the in-vehicle naturalistic driving behavior study. Each study site will be administered under a different contract. Two rounds of requests for qualifications yielded 13 combinations of contractors and proposed study sites meeting the study design criteria. RFPs will be issued to the "qualified" contractors in 2009. The total number of sites to be selected is still uncertain and will be determined by the responses to the RFP.

Administration and Finance Division

Michael LaPlante summarized the Administration and Finance Division report (Tab 4C of the agenda book). During his presentation he reported that:

- Total expenditures for TRB program activities are estimated at \$87 million for calendar year 2008 and are projected to be nearly \$100 million for calendar year 2009. The growth is a result of a \$12.5 million increase in activity for SHRP 2. This funding will level off next year and begin to decrease in 2012 and 2013 as SHRP 2 nears completion. However, growth in the various Cooperative Research Programs – particularly an increase in the ACRP from \$10M to \$15M – will likely keep TRB-wide expenditures above the \$100M mark for the foreseeable future.
- Development of the next triennium budget has been delayed because of the economy and its impact on the budgets of the state departments of transportation. The 2010 budget will be level with the 2009 figures established in the current triennium budget.

Cooperative Research Programs Division

Christopher Jenks provided a status report on the National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP), Transit Cooperative Research Program (TCRP), Airport Cooperative Research Program (ACRP), National Freight Cooperative Research Program (NFCRP), and Hazardous Materials Cooperative Research Program (HMCRP), as detailed in the Cooperative Research Programs report (Tab 4D of the agenda book). In addition, he highlighted the following items:

- During 2008, approximately 125 publications were issued from the various cooperative research programs (approximately 10 publications per month).
- Legislation that authorizes Amtrak includes a cooperative research program to examine commuter, intercity, and freight rail issues. The program is authorized at \$5 million annually, beginning in FY

2010. If the program is eventually funded, TRB could be asked to manage it. TRB staff is seeking further information from the Federal Railroad Administration.

- TRB and FHWA recently executed a cooperative agreement that implemented a new mechanism for governing the administration of the NCHRP. Funding for NCHRP in FY09 is expected to be \$36.7 million.
- Funding for TCRP in FY09 will be \$10 million. Project panels for the FY2009 program are being formed and will begin to meet in March to develop the RFPs for their projects.
- The ACRP program will be funded at an estimated \$10 million for FY2009. The FY2010 program problem statement solicitations will be issued in February with a due date of April 10, 2009. (*NOTE: The FY2009 omnibus appropriations bill approved shortly after the TRB Executive Committee meeting subsequently increased ACRP FY2009 funding from \$10 million to \$15 million.*)
- The NCFRP is expected to be funded at \$3.39 million for FY2009. Projects are in the pipeline and reports are expected to begin being released later this year.
- Funding for the HMCRP is expected to be \$1.13 million for FY09. The program is expected to begin releasing its first reports this year and will average production of about 2 reports per year at its current funding level.

International Activities

Michael Meyer provided a report to the Executive Committee as the Committee's International Secretary (Tab 3C of the agenda book). Highlights from his presentation included the following:

- Since July TRB has served as a cosponsor of 12 international conferences held on four continents.
- At the Annual Meeting the International Activities Committee cosponsored a three-session series on international approaches to climate change. There were 29 sessions at the Annual Meeting related to international issues.
- There has been a significant amount of international activities and outreach taking place through the SHRP 2 program and there are 11 international firms working as subcontractors on SHRP 2 research projects.
- Professor Sandra Rosenbloom of the University of Arizona will be taking over as the International Secretary on the Executive Committee from Michael Meyer.

New Business

There was no new business.

Next Meeting and Adjournment

The next meeting of the Executive Committee will take place June 12-13, 2009 (Friday and Saturday), at the Woods Hole Study Center in Woods Hole, Massachusetts. Miller adjourned the meeting at 11:45 a.m.