

The Maintenance Manager

A quarterly newsletter of the AASHTO Highway Subcommittee on Maintenance Volume 2, No. 4

Message from the Chair:

I hope that this edition of the Maintenance Manager finds you all well and busy making the roads that our public has entrusted to us safer, smoother, and more durable. I can tell you that in Utah it never feels like we can catch up, but we still keep our heads up and push ahead.

There are two items that I would like to share with the Subcommittee; an update on our 2008 annual meeting that will take place in Monterey California (<http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/maint/AASHTO/index.htm>) and the outcome from the AASHTO annual meeting that just finished up.

First, the 2008 annual meeting, as you may know we have been in discussions with the Standing Committee on Environment about a joint meeting, and that has been finalized. During those discussions the leadership of the subcommittee for Asset Management approached us and also asked to join us, so now we have an interesting challenge to figure out how to make three meetings work as one to give you the best learning opportunity possible. I will be asking our leadership team to help out with the details in the near future.

Secondly, the AASHTO annual meeting finished up the first week of October and there was a lot of support for all of the work that you have been doing. With the support of Steve Varnedoe (remember our former committee member) the Standing Committee on Highways and the Board of Directors approved our request to ask the states for continued funding of the Technical Services Program for pavement preservation and to support the creation of regional partnerships. The resolution also asked that we come back during the Spring Meeting with recommendations for bridge preservation. Additional information on bridge preservation and management was presented by Pete Weykamp, NY (the Chair of our Bridge Task Force). Pete, nice job on a great presentation.

Finally, you guys did such a great job with your 20-7 proposals I think that for the first time in my experience, Maintenance secured more money for critical research than any other subcommittee. The projects that were funded are: an Update of the AASHTO "Guide for Snow and Ice Control" (\$50k), "Development of a Pavement Preservation Chapter for the AASHTO Mechanistic-Empirical Pavement Design Guide" (\$70k), and a project submitted by the Bridge subcommittee that we supported, development of "Guidelines for Implementing Quality Control and Quality Assurance for Bridge Inspection" (\$75k).

Thanks to all of you for what you do both within your state and as an AASHTO volunteer with a special thanks to Jim and Celso for all that you do helping us do our jobs.

- Carlos

(Carlos Braceras, UDOT Deputy Director, is the current chairman of the Subcommittee on Maintenance)

Subcommittee Activities

Snow & Ice Task Force –

Members of the Snow and Ice Task Force partnered with FHWA, TRB, Clear Roads, Aurora and Pacific Northwest Snowfighters to conduct the first "National Winter Maintenance Peer Exchange" in Columbus, Ohio, August 28 and 29, 2007. Eighty-four people from the snow-belt states participated in the Peer Exchange. They generated 70 research statements to address gaps in current knowledge, materials and equipment that need to be filled in order to optimize operations and improve safety and mobility during winter weather. Western Transportation Institute conducted a survey of the attendees and found the majority of the attendees rated the Exchange as excellent for: 1) their ability to actively participate in discussions and have their research needs considered; 2) overall session quality; 3) relevance and value of content to their work; 4) conference registration and

logistics; 5) conference staff and; 6) meeting facilities and food. Ninety-four percent of the attendees said they would attend a future Peer Exchange. The Peer Exchange was held back-to-back with the Eastern Snow Expo, August 29-30. 700 people registered for the Snow Expo.

MDSS Update

Interest in decision support technologies for winter maintenance continues to be strong with several private sector companies offering or planning to integrate new *Maintenance Decision Support System* (MDSS) tools into their product lines. On September 18th and 19th, the FHWA held the 9th MDSS Stakeholder meeting in Kansas City where nearly 90 participants gathered to discuss the state of MDSS deployments, new sensor innovations and lessons learned from the last winter season. In total, there were maintenance personnel representing six countries and 28 states along with stakeholders from more than two dozen private sector companies and academic institutions. As the winter of 2007-2008 begins, 13 state transportation agencies have invested in developing a customized version of MDSS in a pooled-fund arrangement. An additional eight states are using or are developing other versions of MDSS.

FHWA's Road Weather Management Program, sponsor of the federal MDSS initiative, also announced the planned expansion of decision support capabilities to include year-round transportation maintenance and operations. The Maintenance & Operations Decision Support System (MODSS) will build upon the foundation that has been built by MDSS but expand its capabilities to maintenance operations beyond snow and ice control. This marriage of advanced weather forecasting capabilities with maintenance rules of practice will allow personnel to better plan activities throughout the year.

Presentations from the September MDSS meeting, technical documentation on the federal prototype and ordering information to obtain free copies of the MDSS Release 5.0 CD can be made from the National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR) MDSS website: http://www.rap.ucar.edu/projects/rdwx_mdss/. Specific questions about the federal MDSS effort can be directed to Paul Pisano, Team Leader of FHWA's Road Weather Management Program (Paul.Pisano@dot.gov).

Workforce Development Focus Group

The *Transportation Curriculum Coordination Council* (TCCC) has set up a subcommittee to look closely at e-learning and the benefits it presents by allowing employees to go on line and take a course at their own pace and when it is convenient to their schedule. TCCC is looking for any maintenance related courses that have been developed in an e-format and are generic enough that can be placed on a website for all to use. A pilot project is being planned with a vendor to house the courses and track those that log on and access the courses, as well as keep track of the grades they received on any certification tests. TCCC hopes to have a site with applicable courses that states can use to deliver e-learning to their employees.

Jim Fedaj, SCDOT, current Chair of the Workforce Development Focus Group, would welcome any courses on CD that you would be willing to share and if there are any particular courses/training material that would be of particular interest to the maintenance community. For more information, please contact Jim at (803) 737-1290, e-mail fedajj@scdot.org.

Maintenance Leadership Academy Update

The contract for the development of the long-awaited *Maintenance Leadership Academy* was awarded recently. Course development will be led by PerformTech, joined with subject matter experts Applied Pavement Technologies, National Center for Pavement Preservation, Michael Baker Corporation, Institute for Transportation Research and Education, and Dr. Theresa Adams. The contract is for the development of a 4-week National Highway Institute training course for new maintenance supervisors. The training course will employ a combination of web-based training, classroom instruction, and independent study. The technical panel members, mostly active members of the AASHTO Subcommittee on Maintenance, should be recognized for their hard work and dedication that led to the establishment of a scope of work that would determine the right content and approach for a project this size.

The kickoff meeting for course development was held October 18-19, 2007 in Arlington, Virginia.

TSP² Update

Work is currently underway to perform a reorganization of the TSP² website to better incorporate and present bridge preservation information. This work is being performed in response to positive feedback which has been received by SHA bridge practitioners on the usefulness of the website, and a desire to see more content oriented towards bridge structure preservation. Additionally, the Pavement Preservation Expert Task Group (ETG) has provided comments and suggestions for improvements to the website, which will be incorporated during the upcoming fourth quarter.

A recent vote among AASHTO member agencies resulted in overwhelming support to continue the TSP² Help Desk and website. Through your continued support, the TSP² continues to provide a vital resource to pavement and bridge preservation practitioners nationwide. States or other member agencies not currently participating in the TSP² program are encouraged to contribute by contacting Ken Kobetsky at AASHTO at 202-624-5254 or by emailing kenk@aaashto.org. To access the TSP² Help Desk or to order copies of "At the Crossroads" or any other NCPP publication; contact the NCPP at (517) 432-8220; or visit the TSP² website at <http://www.tsp2.org>.

Performance Measures Focus Group

Preparations for the 2nd National MQA Peer Exchange scheduled for September 23-24, 2008 in Raleigh, NC are now on the fast track. Jennifer Brandenburg, NCDOT, and members of the planning group have been conducting telephone conferences during the past few weeks working on the agenda and the makeup of the event. As in 2004, this event will focus on the lessons learned from other states sharing MQA practices. Some of the goals for this peer exchange are to develop a glossary of commonly used terms used on data collection and analyses, to identify some consistently used measures throughout the maintenance community and to begin discussions on how the data gathered is used to make maintenance decisions.

Both the Peer Exchange event and the MQA website are supported by the Transportation Asset Management Pooled Fund (TPF-5(036)). States recently received a letter asking for contributions

to the pooled fund. This fund will support the travel of up to two state representatives to the Peer Exchange as well as to update the existing MQA document library which can be found at www.mrutc.org/outreach/mqa. For more information about the Peer Exchange or the Pooled Fund, please contact Jennifer Brandenburg at jbrandenburg@dot.state.nc.us.

National Workshop on Highway Data Collection Expo

The plans for the *National Workshop on Highway Asset Inventory and Data Collection* scheduled for September 24-26, 2008 are moving forward. The four technical areas of bridges, pavements, geotechnical and drainage, and roadside appurtenances are doing outreach efforts to ensure that national needs are being addressed in the workshop. A website with updates and additional information is planned to be released in November. If you want more information on the conference call Terry Canales with NCDOT at 919-733-2210.

Calendar of Events

- **7th National Conference on Transportation Asset Management** – November 6-8, 2007, New Orleans, LA; contact Lacy Love – NC, (919) 733-2330; David Floyd – TRB, (202) 334-2966 or Francine Shaw-Whitson – FHWA, (202) 366-8028
- **2nd National MQA Peer Exchange** – September 23-24, 2008, Raleigh, NC. Contact Jennifer Brandenburg, NC (919) 733-3725
- **National Workshop on Highway Data Collection Expo** – September 24-26, 2008, Raleigh, NC. Contact Terry Canales, NC (919)-733-2210

Please e-mail any news articles/events that you want to share with the Subcommittee to Celso Gatchalian: celso.gatchalian@dot.gov

Also make sure to visit our Subcommittee website: <http://maintenance.transportation.org/?siteid=76>