

# Office of Real Estate Services Newsletter



U.S. Department of Transportation  
Federal Highway Administration

FALL 2008



Welcome to VicRoads  
Members of the  
United States  
International SCAN Team  
19-21 September 2008

• Director's Message

• International Scans

• Transportation Partners

• Pilot Projects

• Research

• Conferences

• Awards

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## Message from the Director - Gerald Solomon



*Gerald Solomon*

It is a pleasure to be back in the office following an instructive yet exhaustive international scanning tour. From September 4 - September 19, I was among a team of ten right-of-way and right-of-way/utility engineering professionals representing the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), State Departments of Transportation (DOT), right-of-way engineering consultants, and academia participating in an international right-of-way (ROW) and utility scan.<sup>1</sup> As part of the scan, we met with transportation officials from four states in Australia and two provinces in Canada to discuss streamlining and integration of ROW and utility processes with Project Planning, Environment, Design, and Construction in order to improve the schedule and quality of project delivery.

In addition to myself, team members included Jeff “JayZ” Zaharewicz from the FHWA Office of Infrastructure, Dan “First Class” Mathis from FHWA-Washington Division, John “Tex Ugg” Campbell from the Texas DOT, Ray “The Rose” Lorello from the Ohio DOT, Gary “Wikipedia” Fawver from the Pennsylvania DOT, Bimla “The Bimlanator” Rhinehart from the California DOT, Nick “The Nickgotiator” Zembillas from the TBE Group, Ben “Talladega” Ward from PBS&J, and Cesar “Quirogadile Dundee” Quiroga from the Texas Transportation Institute. Leading this diverse group around the world was Jake “Papa Bear” Almborg from American Trade Initiatives, Inc.



*International scan team*

The scan focused on a series of predetermined objectives addressed through our hosts’ presentations and discussions that responded to our extensive amplifying questions covering a multitude of specific issues. Among issues addressed in the amplifying questions were:

(1) legal framework for ROW and utility processes; (2) transportation project delivery methods; (3) project development processes; (4) environmental impacts and mitigation strategies; (5) ROW acquisition processes; (6) utility coordination and conflict management; (7) real property management; and (8) capacity building including recruitment and training/development strategies.

Over the course of the scan, through eleven flights over the 15 day period, spanning close to 25,000 air miles, requiring stays in seven hotels, and countless visits to various Starbucks, we got to know each other fairly well. More importantly, however, we also learned a great deal about effective ROW and utility processes elsewhere that have potential to be implemented in the United States. We are now embarking on a process that will lead to a Final Scan Report within the next 6 months. Additionally, we will work with our implementation team of Zaharewicz, Rhinehart, and Zembillas, to expeditiously implement and test those practices that can be undertaken without lengthy legal or policy changes.



*Sydney, Australia*

More to come on this front as we anticipate presentations on the scan results at various regional and National meetings

<sup>1</sup> To avoid confusion, “scan” is spelled S-C-A-N and means to “examine something in detail” or “to subject something to a through examination” (see MSN dictionary @ <http://encarta.msn.com/encnet/refpages/search.aspx?q=scan>.)

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of professional right-of-way and utility organizations, including but not limited to the AASHTO ROW and Utility Subcommittee's Annual Meeting (Oklahoma - April 2009), the International ROW Association's Federal Agency Update (Nevada - January 2009) and Annual Conference (Indiana - June 2009), and the Transportation Research Board's Annual Meeting (Washington DC - January 2009).



*International scan team in Canada*

We are excited about the likely results and advancing practices in the Federal-aid Program. A prior international ROW and utility scan that took place in early 2000 led to implementation of ideas that have proven to be beneficial. Results from pilots and revised procedures implemented as a result of that scan included:

- New appraisal waiver limits and appraisal review modifications tested by the Florida DOT produced significant time savings, a high rate of settlement, and significant annual cost savings. Subsequently, in 2005 the FHWA increased its appraisal waiver limit.

- The Virginia DOT piloted relocation incentive payments to encourage timely tenant relocations on the Woodrow Wilson Bridge project which resulted in substantial construction-related savings. Following other successful pilots, the FHWA issued guidance in 2006 allowing use of acquisition and relocation incentive payments. A recent peer exchange confirmed that where utilized, incentive payments have proven cost effective in expediting delivery of ROW needed for project construction.
- After the Scan, from 2002-2008, realty and utility National experts participated in Accelerated Construction Technology Transfer workshops to market best practices in 14 States.

If I could summarize the scan in one word, that one word would be "relationships." Development and maintenance of relationships was important in all of the activities we evaluated with utility companies to coordinate activities related to installation and relocations; with landowners to acquire property required for construction purposes; with abutters to preserve future transportation corridors and maintain appropriate access to existing corridors while supporting suitable adjacent development; and with applicants and employees to recruit, develop, and retain professionals to support succession planning and maintain corporate capacity.

However, among the most important relationships evident throughout the scan was that developed among

team members. This was apparent not only by the extremely focused and productive working meetings, but also by the fact that what limited non-working time that existed was primarily spent together—whether shopping for gifts for loved ones; dining in restaurants, conference rooms, or airport terminals; waiting for transportation to hotels, airports, or meetings; or celebrating events occurring during the course of our travels (Happy Birthday Bimlanator and Papa Bear).



*International scan team in Australia*

Our team got together again in December to consider how to present our conclusions and develop strategies to work with our ROW and utility stakeholders and partners to pilot ideas developed from the information obtained during the meetings and through written materials provided by our hosts.

I hope to have an update on our efforts in the next issue of this *Newsletter*. Please stay tuned as we will need your assistance and we welcome your input. Until then,

G'day, mates!  
[gerald.solomon@dot.gov](mailto:gerald.solomon@dot.gov)

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## International Scans



Jeff "Jay Z" Zaharewicz in Sunny Sydney.

I was fortunate enough to join Gerry Solomon and others as I represented the FHWA's Office of Program Administration on the International Scan Team. The processes involved in organizing a scan begins long before the actual trip and concludes long after the team returns. We first convened in Washington this past April with the goal of drafting the amplifying questions that would focus our meetings and identifying the countries and transportation organizations the team could benefit by visiting. After countless emails and teleconferences, the group did not meet face-to-face again until landing at the airport in Los Angeles before the marathon flight to Sydney. Quickly thereafter, the ten professionals from ten different offices forged a determined and tightly knit team.

That leads to my one word summary of what we witnessed on the scan — “teamwork”— which related to Gerry’s thoughts on the relationships (see previous article – “Message from the Director”). The most

successful integration of the ROW and utility-related activities into project delivery involved including the specialists in these areas, and not as entities who provide consultation. The integration should be as full-fledged members of the project team, with an important share of the success of the project under their control. Accordingly, the ROW and utility professionals were able to enjoy the incentives of successful project delivery and also accept the appropriate level of risk when things went less according to plan. What was in the best interests of the project was what mattered, and not what was in the best interests of an individual organization. I’m not sure teamwork can be described in any better way.

In other examples, we heard stories of road authorities and utility companies with historical relationships that

could be charitably classified as less than ideal. However, by each interest identifying individuals at various organizational levels with strong team-building skills and a commitment to work together, these two parties crafted agreements that fostered a team environment which over a period of years has not only led to better relationships between the organizations but has led to this diverse team identifying and completing initiatives that benefit both organizations and the project development processes as well.

As mentioned earlier, the scan process continues for months or longer when the travel is concluded and teamwork becomes even more vital. The Scan Team must reconvene to strategize the best methods to implement the many successful practices observed and identified. We must then expand the team to include those in the field who can make those implementation plans a reality. We hope that as you read this you are willing to accept this challenge!

Both Gerry and I look forward to describing in greater detail our scan findings not only in this *Newsletter* but through other venues and media.

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## Transportation Partners

### PHASE I OF THE CONGESTION MITIGATION AIR QUALITY (CMAQ) IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM-EVALUATION AND ASSESMENT REPORT AVAILABLE

In SAFETEA-LU Section 1808, Congress required the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), in consultation with the Environmental Protection Agency, to evaluate and assess the direct and indirect impacts of CMAQ-funded projects on air quality and congestion levels. This study responds to that request by analyzing 67 CMAQ-funded projects, using data supplied by States and metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) in the FHWA - CMAQ database. From this information, the study team examined the estimated impacts of these projects on emissions of transportation-related pollutants, as well as on traffic congestion and mobility. The report also includes an analysis of the selected set of CMAQ-funded projects to estimate the cost-effectiveness at reducing the emissions of each pollutant.

Please contact Victoria Martinez [victoria.martinez@dot.gov](mailto:victoria.martinez@dot.gov) or go on-line to download a copy of the report at <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/cmaqpgs/safetealu1808/index.htm>.

### TRANSPORTATION PROFESSIONAL CAPACITY BUILDING WEB SITE

Two new peer exchange reports have been added to the Transportation Professional Capacity Building website (<http://planning.dot.gov>).

The first report summarizes the proceedings of a 1.5 day Peer Exchange on "Best Practices in Long-Range Project Prioritization" supported by the Transportation Planning Capacity Building (TPCB) Program, which is jointly sponsored by the FHWA and Federal Transit Administration (FTA).

The Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) organized this exchange and hosted the event at its offices in downtown Atlanta. The goals of this Peer Exchange were two-fold: To provide an opportunity for MPOs facing similar growth patterns and demographic challenges in an increasingly constrained Federal funding framework to discuss their project prioritization strategies for the Long-Range Transportation Plan (rather than the TIP); and to solicit comment and review from peer MPOs on the project prioritization methodology newly developed and implemented by ARC in their 2030 long-range plan, Envision 6.

The second report summarizes the presentations and discussions at a Peer Exchange held through the FHWA/FTA TPCB Program. Staff from the Connecticut Department of Transportation (ConnDOT) requested the peer exchange to learn

about North Carolina Department of Transportation's (NCDOT) asset management program. ConnDOT, with support from staff of the FHWA Connecticut Division Office, has recently created the Division of Asset Management and Performance Measures within its Bureau of Policy and Planning. The Department, with support of the FHWA Connecticut Division Office, requested an asset management peer exchange with a State DOT that has an established asset management program to investigate how other agencies have incorporated asset management into their planning, programming, and daily operations. The intent of the peer exchange was for ConnDOT to learn about the successes, challenges, and operations of a different State DOT's asset management program.

### BYWAYS

#### Rails-to-Trails Conservancy (RTC) *Active Transportation for America* Report

The [Rails-to-Trails Conservancy](#), with support from [Bikes Belong](#), issued its "*Active Transportation for America*" report. The report quantifies the benefits the Nation would realize with increased investment in walking and bicycling. RTC has additional information at [www.railstotrails.org/whatwedo/trailadvocacy/2010Campaign.html](http://www.railstotrails.org/whatwedo/trailadvocacy/2010Campaign.html).

#### AASHTO National Bicycle Route Network

The AASHTO approved a National

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Corridor Plan laying out the framework and guidelines for the development of a National Bicycle Route Network. See details on the Adventure Cycling Association Web site at [www.adventurecycling.org/routes/nbrn/usbikewaysystem.cfm](http://www.adventurecycling.org/routes/nbrn/usbikewaysystem.cfm).

## American Trails *Trail Tracks* e-Newsletter

*Trail Tracks*, the [e-newsletter](#) from American Trails, reports on news and issues in the trails world, as well as information on training, education, and new resources on the American Trails Web site. The [October 2008](#) edition has articles on the National Trails System's 40th Anniversary, accessibility, public health and recreation related to trails, and training and education.

## Pro Walk/Pro Bike Presentations Now Available On-Line

Good news for those who missed Pro Walk/Pro Bike: the National Center for Bicycling and Walking (NCBW) has posted some workshop presentations on its conference website. Not all are there, but you may find one you hoped to see. See [www.bikewalk.org/2008conference/vconference/schedulefull.html](http://www.bikewalk.org/2008conference/vconference/schedulefull.html) and look for live links in red.

## FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION (FTA) – FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION (FHWA) EXPERIENCE

When my son, Eric, was a youngster, one of his pet expressions was: "Did you ever wonder?" Now, whenever we heard that, my wife and I knew that a very interesting question was

about to follow—one that, very often, caused us to wonder ourselves, "where did *that* come from?" (For example: "Did you ever wonder—what happens if you get a pea stuck up your nose?" As strange as that might sound, our son asked my wife that question right after getting a pea stuck up his nose!)

Our son is now 31 years old, and we never hear his "Did you ever wonder?" anymore (and, fortunately, he's gotten no more peas stuck up his nose). So, maybe it's because I miss hearing him ask that question that I am now going to ask you: "Did you ever wonder?"

Did you ever wonder whether FTA and FHWA differ on right-of-way (ROW) issues? Hmmmm—let's stop and think about that a moment. Do FTA and FHWA differ on ROW issues?

If, by any chance, you may have wondered this very thing—or, if you think you might wonder about it someday—then read on, because the answer follows.

As you might guess, the answer to the question is "Yes," FTA and FHWA do have some differences when it comes to ROW. There are not a lot of them, and they mostly affect the way the program is administered, not Uniform Act requirements. But, a couple of them are significant—especially if, like me, you have a chance to work with FTA someday and you are responsible for carrying out some of these administrative differences.

Our (FHWA's) administrative requirements for ROW are set out in 23 CFR Part 710. FTA's ROW administrative requirements are set out in FTA Circular 5010.1C.

Chapter II of the Circular addresses "Management of Real Property," and section 2 of this Chapter deals specifically with appraisal, acquisition, relocation, property management, and contaminated properties. The two key differences between how FTA administers their ROW program and how we do it at FHWA can be found in subsection 2.4, "FTA Oversight of Property Acquisition."

In accordance with the requirements in Circular 5010.1C II.2.4, grantees must obtain prior concurrence from FTA on appraisals of \$250,000 or more, and on administrative settlements that are \$50,000 or more above the fair market value offer. What this means, in effect, is that the grantee (usually a transit agency, and often a small agency) must submit the \$250,000+ appraisal to FTA HQ Realty staff and receive concurrence from them before an offer can be made to the property owner. Similarly, if they are considering a settlement of \$50,000 or more above the Fair Market Value offer, again they must submit the documentation to FTA for prior concurrence.

If you consider some of the major highway projects that State DOTs have done with Federal funds, it can be pretty daunting to think about the impact on our time and resources if we had the same requirement as FTA regarding prior concurrence on appraisals and administrative settlements, even with the thresholds. So, why do they [FTA] require that, and why don't we [FHWA]?

The answer pretty well boils down to "time," "size," and "experience." FHWA has the good fortune to work with State DOTs on Federal-aid projects. State DOTs, in turn, have long had experienced and generally well-staffed ROW offices. Of course, many of those staffs have

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shrunk over time, and as ROW staffs age the challenge is to attract and train new personnel. But, for the most part, State DOT ROW staffs have traditionally had the in-house experience and been adequately staffed to provide appropriate oversight of their programs, including the quality of appraisals and administrative settlements.

By contrast, the majority of transit agencies are small in terms of number of staff (as compared with State DOTs), and they typically don't acquire property under the Uniform Act as frequently or in as large numbers as do State DOTs. Consequently, they may not have the long-term experience with the Uniform Act and are at a greater risk with regard to appraisals and administrative settlements. The requirement in FTA Circular 5010.1C II.2.4 thus provides an administrative mechanism for lessening a transit agency's risk.

So, for those of you who ever wondered, you now know why there is a key difference between FHWA and FTA on appraisals and administrative settlements.

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## Pilot Projects

### **RIGHT-OF-WAY (ROW) RESOURCE SHARING PILOT PROJECT**

As time has indicated, costs for services are expansively increasing and resources are dwindling. We have seen in the recent past unprecedented fluctuations in commodities and tremendous reductions in funds to the Highway Trust Account. In addition, a large number of the human resources for the Federal Highway Administration will be eligible for retirement within the next 5 years; thus, creating the possibility of a large reduction in institutional knowledge of the workforce. The ROW function is not exempt from this trend. Therefore, to assist in maintaining the needs of the ROW professional, the concept of sharing resources has been evolving. There are currently two ongoing pilot projects to evaluate this concept; one comprising seven Northeastern States (Northeast ROW Cluster) and the other comprising five Western States (West ROW Resource Sharing Pilot Project).

The West ROW Resource Sharing Pilot Project involves the use of a three person team (devoting 2.3 FTE's) to meet the ROW needs of a group of five States over a period of 18 months. The States selected for this pilot project include Arizona, Idaho, New Mexico, Nevada, and Utah. The Divisions/States have been divided into two categories;

Home States/Divisions (have a residing ROW person) and Non-Home (ROW conducted remotely). The team members are responsible for their respective ROW programs and for simplicity we elected to establish the point of contact method for the Non-Homes States/Divisions.

During the stage of team development, a Memorandum of Understanding(MOU) was adopted which was followed by the establishment of a work plan. The MOU outlines the understanding among the Division Offices and the work plan identifies the process reviews and anticipated activities to meet the needs of the Non-Home States/Divisions over the course of the Pilot term. Observations to this point include a difference in application of some regulations and lack of available funding for adequate site visits. A baseline survey was conducted at the beginning of the Pilot and upon conclusion of the Pilot, a subsequent survey and evaluation will be conducted.

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## **SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT of TRANSPORTATION (SCDOT) OUTDOOR ADVERTISING NONCONFORMING SIGN PILOT PROJECT**

The SCDOT Outdoor Advertising Nonconforming Sign "Pilot Project" was approved to proceed to public hearing by Gloria M. Shepherd, FHWA, Associate Administrator for Planning, Environment, and Realty on November 6, 2008. No date has been set for the public hearing.

The pending 3-year pilot proposal is written as a voluntary program that would allow the upgrading of certain nonconforming signs along Interstate 95 and Interstate 26 to a monopole structure with a maximum size of 672 square feet. Upgraded signs cannot be moved from their current location and in exchange for permitting the upgrading of a nonconforming sign, two to four sign structures must be permanently removed. The number of structures to be removed is based on the original size to be upgraded as well as the size of those to be removed.

The SCDOT pilot project proposal is being made available to stakeholders and interested parties for comments and may be found at <http://www.scdot.org/doing/ODAS.shtml>. Additional information may be obtained by contacting Keith Melvin, Director, Outdoor Advertising, SCDOT, at 803 737-1339 or [melvinkc@scdot.org](mailto:melvinkc@scdot.org).

[Memo: Guidance on South Carolina Department of Transportation \(SCDOT\) Outdoor Advertising Nonconforming Sign](#) - Posted Friday, November 21, 2008

[catherine.o'hara@dot.gov](mailto:catherine.o'hara@dot.gov)

## Research

### **TURBO RELOCATION™ SOFTWARE DEVELOPMENT TO START SOON**

*Turbo Relocation™ software will address the emerging need to automate the determination and calculation of relocation assistance in accordance with the Uniform Act.*

In the Spring 2008 edition of the *Newsletter*, we reported on the desire of AASHTO members and FHWA to pursue the development of a software product that would assist Federal, State and local agencies with computing relocation payments and providing necessary services more accurately and efficiently. Because there is a growing need to provide consistency in the calculation process, assist with on-the-job training of relocation staff, and provide an accurate reporting format, it was determined that AASHTO had the expertise through its' AASHTOWare® program to manage the development process.

A Turbo Relocation™ Steering Committee was formed to identify the requirements and specific elements of a potential software product. Through their efforts, a solicitation went out to AASHTO members seeking at least twelve States to participate in the

software development. Thirteen commitments were received and AASHTO appointed a nine member Turbo Relocation™ Task Force (TRTF) from applications received from the participating States. The TRTF is working with an AASHTO Project Manager, a member of the AASHTO Technical T&AA Task Force, and an FHWA representative on the draft of a Request for Proposals was published in early December. It is hoped that a developer will be selected in the first quarter of 2009 with development activities starting soon thereafter.

The Task Force looks forward to providing an update on their progress at the April, 2009 AASHTO/FHWA/ROW and Utilities Conference in Oklahoma City.

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### **THE SAFETY EFFECTS OF ELECTRONIC ADVERTISING SIGNS ON DRIVER ATTENTION AND DISTRACTION**

A research project has been undertaken by the FHWA to study possible effects of Commercial

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Electronic Variable Message Signs (CEVMS) used for outdoor advertising on driver attention and distraction. The Phase I technical report has been completed.

Phase II of the project has just begun. A preliminary experimental design has been developed under which FHWA researchers and their contractors will conduct an experiment at a study site yet to be selected. According to this preliminary research design, that site will have a number of CEVMS displays, together with standard vinyl billboards and other objects of visual interest, along a single driving route of an hour or less in duration. A number of research participants will be recruited at the study site. Each research participant will drive in an FHWA instrumented test vehicle. Each participant will return for multiple drives under differing conditions, for example, day vs. night, heavy traffic vs. light traffic, freeways vs. arterials, etc. The instrumentation in the test vehicle will allow for measurements of the eye glances of the participant drivers, as well as of certain vehicle performance parameters. The eye-glance data will permit the researchers to measure the percentage of the time that the participant drivers looked at the roadway ahead, and the percentage of time that the drivers looked at the CEVMS advertising displays, at standard vinyl billboards, and at selected other objects. This experimental design is still in its preliminary stages, and the actual experiment which is being conducted could be substantially different. However, the above summary provides insight into the present research approach.

To date, the initial progress on Phase II of the project has been

the development of a preliminary experimental design, the investigation of alternative eye-tracking technologies for outfitting the FHWA test vehicle, and the preparation of a draft set of requirements for an adequate study site.

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## FHWA RESEARCH LIBRARY

*FHWA Research Library Mission:*

*In support of the RD&T mission to investigate new highway technologies and transfer those research results to the transportation community, the library will provide collections, electronic resources, and services in support of the research needs of FHWA staff; and collect and maintain all research reports done by or for FHWA.*

### Why do we need an FHWA Research Library?

#### Information overload

The amount of information being produced is increasing rapidly, causing people to feel overwhelmed by the sheer volume and variety of publications and materials. The explosion of electronic information through the Internet has provided more information and opportunities than most people can effectively process, and is made worse by the proliferation of low quality

information because of easy publication. Some Internet and publishing statistics support this observation of information overload:

Latest figures estimate the number of indexed (surface) web pages to be at least 23.79 billion pages or more as of November 13, 2008. <http://www.WorldWideWebSize.com>

According to a 2001 study, there were more than 550 billion documents on the Web unreachable by search engines. The deep web or invisible web is estimated to be 400-550 times larger than surface web. [Deep Web: Surfacing Hidden Value](#)

#### Value of Libraries and Information Professionals

Libraries play a unique role in gathering, organizing and coordinating access to best available information sources for an organization, regardless of format (print or electronic).

Librarians are trained and skilled in identifying and locating (quality) relevant information. They are adept in assisting individuals in narrowing or focusing their information searches to the most essential or key documents in a field of study.

“Information on the Web is fragmented...Few institutions outside of libraries have the ability to put the pieces of the puzzle back together or build the trails for navigation...”

[The 2003 OCLC Environmental Scan: Pattern Recognition, January 2004](#)

“Libraries are seen as more trustworthy/credible and as providing more accurate information than search engines.” “Respondents who have used a librarian for assistance agree that the librarian adds value to the search process.” [Perceptions of Libraries and Information Resources, OCLC, 2005](#)

## **FHWA Research Library — Background**

The FHWA Turner-Fairbank Highway Research Center (TFHRC) began an effort several years ago to transform its Technical Reference Center from a repository of Agency-published or Agency-sponsored research reports into a fully functioning library with expanded services.

Several months after having information professionals (librarians) on-site, an evaluation form was sent to employees who had used reference and interlibrary borrowing services.

Employees surveyed reported 100 percent excellent customer satisfaction with library services.

During the last reauthorization, the decision was made to expand library services to serve all FHWA employees, not just those located at TFHRC.

## **FHWA Research Library – Services**

The FHWA Research Library exists to serve the information needs of Agency employees, regardless of office location. In addition to a circulating collection of books, reports, technical standards, and periodicals, the FHWA Research Library provides reference and research services and interlibrary borrowing services to FHWA employees.

Library staff can help employees find information on a topic and perform comprehensive literature reviews by searching online free and fee-based databases, Internet directories and portals, gray literature, and physical library collections.

Comments from the recent FHWA Research Library Employee Needs Assessment Survey support this value: *“This service is very valuable to the researchers at TFHRC. . . I have had extremely good experiences with literature searches/surveys conducted on my behalf by the research librarians.”*

If the FHWA library collection does not contain the materials employees need, library staff can obtain materials, such as journal articles, conference proceedings, and technical reports through other libraries and document delivery vendors.

These library services will be addressed in more depth in future editions of the *Office of Real Estate Services Newsletter*.

In the interim, for additional information about the library, please visit our Web site:

FHWA employees (Intranet)  
<http://intra.fhwa.dot.gov/library>

Public (Internet)  
<http://www.tfsrc.gov/library/>

[FHWALibrary@fhwa.dot.gov](mailto:FHWALibrary@fhwa.dot.gov)

202-493-3071

[jennifer.boteler@fhwa.dot.gov](mailto:jennifer.boteler@fhwa.dot.gov)

## **Conferences**

### **2008 NATIONAL REST AREA CONFERENCE--SEATTLE, WA**

The 2008 National (International) Safety Rest Area Conference was held in Seattle, WA on October 1-3, 2008. Dave Leighow of the Office of Real Estate Services participated and gave a presentation on Statutes and Regulations. The theme of this year’s conference was “More With Less—Balancing Safety, Technology, and Sustainability.” The conference was truly International as it included speakers and participants from British Columbia, Quebec, and the Roads and Traffic Authority

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of New South Wales, Australia, as well as participants from across the United States. The first day included presentations on Travel Information Technology, Tourism, Accessibility, and Safety at Public Use Facilities, and was highlighted by the Australian presentation on two successful safety initiatives in New South Wales. The second day consisted of a bus tour of several rest areas in Washington, and the third day included presentations on art in building design, truck parking and idling, and sustainability. Several key themes highlighted the conference—design and operations of rest areas; safety and security; and, commercialization. Many State DOTs are under pressure from politicians and others to use their right-of-way assets to generate more revenue for highway projects. There is continuing interest by many States to seek FHWA approval to allow fast food restaurants, fuel stations, and related “motorist services” in safety rest areas. For more information about this conference, please feel free to contact Dave Leighow at:

[david.leighow@fhwa.dot.gov](mailto:david.leighow@fhwa.dot.gov)

## NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF HIGHWAY BEAUTIFICATION AGENCIES

The National Alliance of Highway Beautification Agencies (NAHBA) coordinated and hosted the 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Outdoor Advertising Education Conference in Kalispell, Montana, from August 10-13, 2008. Approximately 70 attendees from (25) states focused on current issues of the Highway Beautification Act (HBA), 23 United States Code 131. The conference created a forum where innovative ideas concerning outdoor advertising control (OAC) were discussed

through open dialogue and networking with StateDOTs, FHWA, political subdivisions, scenic organizations, and the Outdoor Advertising industry representatives.

The conference not only provided participants with multiple opportunities to share knowledge and experiences regarding OAC, it provided leadership perspectives on current FHWA research and the current status and future direction of FHWA. In addition to FHWA Headquarters staff and two Division offices, participants represented multiple disciplines including OAC administrators, researchers, and representatives from the Outdoor Advertising Association of America, Scenic America, and local groups. Topics included new digital technology; public awareness of the HBA; non-traditional signs, nonconforming signs, and vegetation issues; pilot projects; and OAC legal analysis.

Barbara M. Wessinger, Assistant Chief Counsel, South Carolina DOT, was elected the 2009 Chair of NAHBA. Next year’s conference will be held in Branson, Missouri, August 9-12, 2009. Additional details on the 2009 conference are provided on the NABHA Web site, <http://www.nahba.org/>

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## Awards



*John Rohlf (DA), Ken Erlenbusch (Realty Officer), and Todd Jorgensen (ADA)*

**Ken Erlenbusch**, Realty Officer in the South Dakota Division Office was honored with the 2008 Office of Real Estate Services Realty Award. Ken received this award for his service to the Realty group by building and maintaining the Realty email group for over 10 years. His dedication to keeping the lines of communication flowing has greatly improved the service we provide to our customers. We all appreciate the work he has done to keep it up-to-date and useful.



*Cecil Vick receiving award from Andrew Hughes, Division Administrator in Jackson, Mississippi.*

**Cecil Vick**, Team Leader in the Mississippi Division Office, is the recipient of the 2008 Office of Real

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Estate Services Life Time Achievement Award. This award was given in recognition of Cecil's demonstrated excellence in the field of real estate and outdoor advertising control program delivery and his exemplary effort to integrate the right-of-way, environment, and planning processes. He has volunteered many times to assist this office, including giving presentations at National conferences and contributing to our *HEPR Newsletter!* We are appreciative of his efforts.

## **OUTDOOR ADVERTISING CONTROL AWARD**

The Office of Real Estate Services presented an Excellence in Outdoor Advertising Control award to Kenneth "Woody" Woodruff and Colleen Smith, Indiana FHWA Division. The award is in recognition of their outstanding contribution to the management of the FHWA outdoor advertising control program. Woody and Colleen completed a 2 year outdoor advertising control review of 764 outdoor advertising structures along 577 miles of Indiana control routes. The June 2008 written report included findings and an "action plan" with a timeline to address the issues identified.

The award was presented by Gerry Solomon, Director of the Office of Real Estate Services at the National Alliance of Highway Beautification Agencies conference in Kalispell, Montana on August 11, 2008.

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## **Calendar**

Please visit this link for all the latest information regarding up and coming events.

<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/hep/calendar.cfm>