ITS Virginia
Architecture Workshop Summary
August 25, 1995

Center for Innovative Technology
Herndon, VA

Doug Ham, President of ITS Virginia, welcomed everyone to the workshop and emphasized the importance of coordinating the needs of stakeholders with the ITS architecture. Bob Parsons served as the moderator of the workshop, lasting from 8:30 AM until 3:00 PM.

Dr. John Jerke from the Center for Innovative Technology (CIT), discussed his organization's new charter and its relevance to ITS. Economic development and partnerships are fundamental to CIT's mission, including matching resources and needs from universities and the private sector. Please contact Dr. Jerke with any questions about CIT's partnership opportunities (703 689-3015).

Then JR Robinson (Virginia DOT) expressed the State of Virginia's commitment to ITS, from Governor Allen's office down through the Department of Transportation. Virginia sees many safety and economic benefits associated with ITS.

JR also discussed the State's public/private partnership law, saying that there are a lot of practical questions about forming partnerships that remain unclear. Currently, There is little in the way of an ITS model for public/private partnerships. ITS Virginia may want to address this issue.

Consistent with this uncertainty, institutional issues appear to be the number one challenge to deploying ITS in the State. For example, planning public works type projects in Virginia is a very open process, involving about eight months of public allocation hearings. It is up to residents to express their interest and enthusiasm for ITS.

Next, Brian Smith (Virginia Transportation Research Council), discussed the State's ITS vision. This first step toward a tactical plan for ITS defines important ITS projects and applications from the State's perspective. Traveler information and route guidance for encouraging tourism and freight mobility (including safety) are top priorities. Fundamental to these goals is the need for better surveillance and communications capabilities.

Stakeholders asked specific questions about the State's perspective on public and private sector roles in ITS. JR said that in his opinion data packaging and delivery are almost exclusively private sector functions, while infrastructure deployment could be a good partnership effort. However, *partnerships* are not *contracts* - scarce public funds should primarily address traffic control and transportation system maintenance and management.

Doctors Rob Jaffe and Russ Taylor, from Loral, then described the emerging national architecture and its relationship to standards development. Both presenters emphasized the importance of defining a set of open interfaces to allow for interoperability at the communication and application levels. Open interfaces also help accommodate future expansion as ITS services and technologies evolve.

During both briefings stakeholders identified the relationship between data quality and user acceptance, especially the for traveling public. If the information is not timely and accurate, no one is going to pay for or participate in ITS.

Stakeholders also expressed their opinion that disseminating the *ITS* message more thoroughly throughout the public sector can help build the market that the private sector is seeking. Explaining ITS and its benefits to legislators, both state and national, is also very important. ITS Virginia needs to continue its efforts in this regard.

ITS Virginia is reflecting the same emphasis as CIT, stating a strong interest in fostering economic development. The group believes that the commonwealth has many technology-oriented companies, of all sizes, that can have a positive impact on ITS in the region and across the country.

Dennis A. Walker, a representative from the railroad industry, stated that goods movement should not be separate piece within the architecture. The architecture should identify a single information network for all transportation applications.

Dennis went on to say that pushing ahead with deployment prematurely can cause serious problems. For example, poor reliability rail card-readers (optical technology) set back deployment of the current tag system some ten years.

In addition, ITS is a "tough sell" to the freight community because information (business intelligence) and efficiency are a real competitiveness issues. The best rail companies, and other freight movers, are already deploying ITS-like systems with their own money. They do not want to encourage their competition to do the same.

Stakeholders at the workshop generally agreed that the architecture deliverables focusing on implementation are of most interest. ITS Virginia also suggested that the architecture development activity closely monitor the ITS Field Operational Tests (FOTs).

The group ultimately identified two aspects of the architecture that stakeholders in the State should understand. First, the architecture does not identify infrastructure control of automated vehicles (like the VRC link that Virginia Tech is developing). Second, the architecture requirements (user services) do not sufficiently describe freight movement and tracking.

Finally, US DOT left the open the possibility that architecture compliance could serve as an proposal-type requirement in the future.