LTRC
2008 Peer Exchange

Final Report

LOUISIANA PEER EXCHANGE
May 13 – 15, 2008
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

INTRODUCTION

The Louisiana Transportation Research Center (LTRC) hosted a peer exchange on May 13 – 15, 2008, in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Representatives from five state DOTs joined representatives from LTRC and FHWA-Louisiana at LTRC's Transportation Training and Education Center to share experiences and best practices on various research program topics. Additional representatives from Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (LA DOTD), other state DOTs, and universities joined the peer exchange team for specific focus area topics either on-site or through video conferencing. The peer exchange sessions were also broadcast over the worldwide web and recorded for future viewing.

This report highlights the key observations and opportunities that were developed from information and discussions in the peer exchange sessions.

OBJECTIVES

Federal regulations (23 CFR 420 Subpart B) require that each state must agree to peer reviews of its Research, Development, and Technology Transfer management process to be eligible for managing State Planning and Research (SP&R) funds.

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) interpreted the peer meetings to be more of an exchange of information regarding the various practices used by states to manage their RD&T2 programs. The intent is to enhance research programs with a sharing of ideas. The peer exchange teams are composed of state research managers, FHWA, university or industry personnel.

The focus areas chosen by LTRC administration included University Relationships, Research Expansion, Regional Cooperation, Research Performance Measures, Value of Research, and LTRC Transportation Library. The agenda can be found in Appendix A. Peer exchange members from other state DOTs were specifically invited to attend because of their knowledge and expertise in one or more of these focus topics.

LOUISIANA PEER EXCHANGE TEAM

Visiting team members

Randy Battey	Mississippi Department of Transportation
Frank Darmiento	Arizona Department of Transportation
Dave Huft	South Dakota Department of Transportation
Richard Long	Florida Department of Transportation
Ann Pahnke	Wisconsin Department of Transportation

Louisiana Team Members

Chris Abadie	Louisiana Transportation Research Center
Glynn Cavin	Louisiana Transportation Research Center
Sam Cooper	Louisiana Transportation Research Center
V.J. Gopu	Louisiana Transportation Research Center
Mark Morvant	Louisiana Transportation Research Center
Harold Paul	Louisiana Transportation Research Center
Chester Wilmot	Louisiana Transportation Research Center
Zhongjie "Doc" Zhang	Louisiana Transportation Research Center
Genevieve Smith	Federal Highway Administration

PEER EXCHANGE FORMAT

The LTRC Peer exchange was conducted in an informal setting with participation encouraged of all team members and invited guests. Techniques used to gather information and enhance discussion included presentations of individual state practices, informal interviews with users of the RD&T[2] products and brainstorming sessions on the specific focus areas. Open ended questions were developed and provided to the team members prior to the meeting and used during the interview sessions to solicit the strengths and weaknesses of the program from the user's perspective.

FOCUS AREA SESSIONS

FOCUS AREA 1: UNIVERSITY RELATIONSHIPS

Session Facilitator: Frank Darmiento
LTRC Liaison: Vijay Gopu

Session Format: Team Members and Invited Guest Discussion

Session Objective: The objective of this session is to identify mechanisms for enhancing participation of faculty at various state universities in transportation related research efforts and technology transfer activities coordinated by LTRC and funded by external agencies -- federal, state and industry.

Additional On-site Participants:

Don Barbe'	University of New Orleans
Nicole Gasparini	Tulane University
Ken McManis	University of Louisiana Lafayette
Aziz Saber	Louisiana Tech University
George Voyajis	Louisiana State University

Presentations: Overview of LTRC's External Program, Vijay Gopu

Discussion Topics:
- Increase the number of faculty and graduate students involved in transportation related research coordinated by LTRC
- Increase the number of projects and the amount of research funding available to university faculty by enhancing the level of external funding at LTRC
- Increase the number of short-courses, seminars, and workshops offered by university faculty for training of transportation professionals in the state
- Develop multi-campus and multi-disciplinary clusters/teams to address complex research problems that address the future needs in the transportation area
- Make collaboration and interaction with LTRC rewarding and challenging
- Enhance the status of LTRC in the eyes of the university administration

Focus Area Questions:
- What methods/mechanisms do you use to encourage university faculty to seek funding from external (non-DOTD) sources such as NCHRP, FHWA, NSF, etc., to conduct transportation related research? How successful were these approaches?
- Do university faculty and university administrators in your state take the approach that the flow of external research funds through the Transportation Research Center is not in their best interest since the universities are not the primary awardees? If they do, what can be done to correct it?
- What incentives do you provide to university faculty to engage in transportation related continuing education activities? Are they adequate?
- Do you have any initiatives targeted to establishing multi-disciplinary/multi-campus teams to respond to external solicitations?
- What recommendations do you have for enhancing the stature of LTRC in the eyes of the university campuses, particularly LSU where it's located?

FOCUS AREA 2: RESEARCH EXPANSION

Session Facilitator: Richard Long
LTRC Liaison: Chester Wilmot

Session Format: Member and Invited Guests Discussion

Session Objective: The objective of this session is to explore and gather information of new research areas that will potentially be interested by LA DOTD in the near future. The results of this effort will be used to modify existing research program and/or plan for future change in maintaining and allocation of research funding.

Additional On-site Attendees:

Tom Atkinson	Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development
Michael Bridges	Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development
Steve Glascock	Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development
Dan Magri	Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development
Mike Schiro	Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development

Presentations: Richard Long
Current Non-Infrastructure Research at LTRC, Chester Wilmot

Discussion Topics:
- Criteria used for the selection of new research areas
- Examples of potential areas for discussion could include congestion management/ITS lab, transportation safety, security, disaster response and relief, transit, etc.
- Potential benefits to LA DOTD and Louisiana in each area
- Possible performance indicators in each area
- Funding allocation issues, such as percentage in total budget
- Possible collaboration/cooperation with other agencies
- Other states experience and national trend

Focus Area Questions:
- What areas of non-infrastructure research should LTRC be involved in?
- What priority should be assigned to each area?
- How should funding be allocated between areas?
- What performance indicators could be used to assess success in each area?
- What opportunities are there for collaboration/cooperation with other agencies?

FOCUS AREA 3: REGIONAL COOPERATION

Session Facilitator: Randy Battey
LTRC Liaison: Chris Abadie

Session Format: Member, Invited Guests and Video Conference Discussion

Session Objective: LTRC's current program is based on Louisiana Transportation Community's "needs" as identified through the Research Problem Identification Process and through direct communication with the Department of Transportation. It is often observed that there are similar problems in our neighboring states, and LTRC would like to investigate, identify, and embrace every opportunity to work together for common solutions. Historically, this goal is seldom achieved, aside from the traditional technical exchange of research results through formal reports, presentations and workshops.

Additional On-site Participants:
Phil Arena	Federal Highway Administration
Luanna Cambas	Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development

Videoconference Participants:
Sandra Larson	Iowa Department of Transportation
Tom Scullion	Texas Transportation Institute

Teleconference Participants:
Tom Harmon	Federal Highway Administration

Presentations: Regional Cooperation: Review of LTRC Capabilities, Chris Abadie
Transportation Training and Education Center (TTEC) Strategy for
Regional Reach, Glynn Cavin

Discussion Topics:
- Identify Regional Needs of Interest
- Focus on LTRC strengths and facilities to attract regional partners
- Regional training opportunities through TTEC
- Regional research and training planning events
- Pooled fund opportunities
- Review successful regional consortiums

Focus Area Questions:
- How can the transportation research community improve the "efficiency" of research by working together?
- Do LTRC's current methods of developing its work program encourage regional participation and cooperation?
- Are other states interested in concurrent planning and brainstorming?

FOCUS AREAS 4: PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Session Facilitator: Dave Huft
LTRC Liaison: Mark Morvant

Session Format: Member and Video Conference Discussion

Session Objective: The objective of this session is to discuss ways to effectively develop, track, and report on research performance measures.

Videoconference Participants:

Paul Krugler	Texas Transportation Institute
Tim McDowell	Wyoming Department of Transportation
Tommy Nantung	Indiana Department of Transportation

Presentations: LTRC Research Performance Measures, Mark Morvant
Evaluation of WTDOT Research Center & Research Program, Tim McDowell

Discussion Topics:
- Current state's performance measurements
- NCHRP 20-63 RPM-Toolbox
- Development of meaningful measures (What does it tell us?)
- Benefits and limitation of performance measurements
- Program measures vs. project measures (i.e. number of reports vs. project cost benefits)
- How much is too much
- Tracking tools and software
- Reporting of performance

Focus Area Questions:
- What performance measures do you currently use for your research program?
- What tools do you use to track your performance measures?
- How do you plan to use the RPM Toolbox?

FOCUS AREAS 5: VALUE OF RESEARCH

Session Facilitator: Dave Huft
LTRC Liaison: Mark Morvant

Session Format: Member and Video Conference Discussion

Session Objective: The objective of this session is to discuss ways to effectively monitor, assess, quantify, and disseminate the value of proposed, completed and implemented research. The results of this effort can be used as a performance measure for a research program and provide justification for maintaining and expanding future research funding.

Videoconference Participants:

Paul Krugler	Texas Transportation Institute
Tim McDowell	Wyoming Department of Transportation
Tommy Nantung	Indiana Department of Transportation

Presentations: Value of Research, Mark Morvant

Discussion Topics:
- NCHRP 20-63 RPM-Tools
- Accuracy of Analysis
- Standardized practices
- Quantitative vs. Qualitative measures
- Independent vs. internal evaluations
- Research Performance Measurement and Tracking
- Marketing of Research

Focus Area Questions:
- Do you determine high payoff potential prior to funding a research project?
- How do you report implementation of research?
- How do you determine if a project has produced a return on investment?
- Do you continue to track research after implementation?
- How do you market your successes?

FOCUS AREA 6: LTRC TRANSPORTATION LIBRARY

Session Facilitator: Ms. Ann Pahnke
LTRC Liaison: Glynn Cavin

Session Format: Member, Invited Guests and Video Conference Discussion

Session Objective: To explore ways to enhance the effectiveness of the newly established Louisiana Transportation Research Center Library, as a resource rich center of first choice for both public and private transportation agencies locally and regionally, as a result of its interconnectivity with other transportation libraries around the nation.

Additional On-site Participants:

Sandy Brady	Louisiana Transportation Research Center

Videoconference Participants:

Amanda Wilson	National Transportation Library
Ken Winter	Virginia Department of Transportation

Teleconference Participants:

Maggie Sacco	CTC & Associates, Wisconsin

Presentations: LTRC Transportation Library, Glynn Cavin

Discussion Topics:
- Discussion of how a library is essential to good research
- Discussion of the research benefits resulting from Library Interconnectivity Concept
- Discussion of aid available to researchers
    - Expertise and guidance of the librarian
        - How to frame the research question
        - How to explore and establish the research topology
        - The research resources available
    - Technology to search databases
- Status of the Pooled Fund Study
- The LTRC Library Strategic Plan
    - Mission
    - Vision
    - Measures of success
    - Long range goals and strategy to get there

Focus Area Questions:
- How does the Interconnectivity concept relate to knowledge management?
- How a library is essential to good research?
- What is the research benefits resulting from the Library Interconnectivity Concept?
- What expertise and guidance can the Librarian provide?
- What is the status of the Pooled Fund Study?

LTRC 2008 PEER EXCHANGE WEBCAST

The following chart provides locations of on-line viewing of the peer exchange from the webcast.

FOCUS AREA	TITLE	LIVE VIEWING	ON-DEMAND VIEWING
1	University Relationships	University of Kentucky	South Dakota State Government State of Missouri Wisconsin DOT
2	Expansion of Non-Infrastructure Research	University Of Oregon University of Kentucky (2) South Dakota State Government (4)	Wisconsin DOT
3	Regional Research Cooperation	Wisconsin DOT	Wisconsin DOT
4	Performance Measures	University of Kentucky (3)	South Dakota State Government Wisconsin DOT University of Kentucky
5	Value of Research	University of Kentucky	Minnesota
6	LTRC Transportation Library	State of Tennessee Wisconsin DOT	Wisconsin DOT South Dakota State Government

PEER EXCHANGE OUTCOMES

LTRC STRENGTHS

Focus Area 1: University Relationships
- LTRC has allocated significant resources to identify and respond to research funding opportunities from external sources (e.g. NSF, FHWA, NCHRP, Other State Agencies, Industry, etc.).
- LTRC sponsors effective proposal writing workshops for university faculty in the region.
- LTRC's support of faculty research proposals enhances their competitive position.
- LTRC Policy Committee provides an effective mechanism for the universities to provide input and guidance to the research program.
- LTRC's RPIC process engages university faculty and LADOTD staff in identifying research problems that address issues of importance to LADOTD.
- University researchers are effectively utilized in supporting the LTRC Research Program.

Focus Area 2: Research Expansion
- Inclusion of this topic demonstrates that LTRC is trying to break out of the typical "reactionary" DOT philosophy to be more proactive with non-traditional research initiatives.
- LTRC has a core research program performing non-infrastructure research.
- LTRC has a well established research problem identification process.
- LTRC currently has a feasibility study to mine existing ITS data.

Focus Area 3: Regional Cooperation
- LTRC has comprehensive and extensive materials, pavements and geotechnical laboratories with capabilities that can be a regional resource to other agencies.
- TTEC provides a wide range of training for the state and region. It can provide excellent collaborative training and technology transfer opportunities for regional cooperation.
- DOTD has historically provided research with funding above minimal Federal requirements.
- Louisiana recognizes that there is a strategic link between Research and Training and that training needs are dynamic and must address the training needs of adults with changing demographics.

Focus Areas 4/5: Research Performance Measures & Value of Research
- LADOTD leadership is proactive with respect to Performance Measures thus providing an environment for LTRC to develop and implement additional Performance Measures.
- LTRC has tied its research Performance Measures to the DOTD's strategic vision, goals and objectives and has specifically staffed and established accountability for Performance Measures.
- LTRC has successfully demonstrated return on investment of research dollars through cost benefit analysis of several high value research projects.
- The "Implementation Update" report is an excellent way to market the value of completed LTRC research projects.
- LTRC has an Implementation Engineer who produces an annual Implementation Report for presentation to Chief Engineer.

Focus Area 6: LTRC Transportation Library
- LTRC recently hired a professional librarian, who possesses expertise in research, knowledge management, and the ability to facilitate access to information now available through various electronic sources.
- LTRC/TTEC has a dedicated library facility, which provides traditional library services and the technology to allow access to worldwide information sources such as the LSU Libraries databases, Online Computer Library Center (OCLC) & Transportation Libraries Catalog (TLCat).
- The LTRC Library participates in national library activities, such as the National Transportation Library, the Transportation Library Interconnectivity Pooled Fund Study, and the Eastern Transportation Knowledge Network (ETKN).
- The LTRC Library has adopted a "strategic approach" in developing its policies and procedures for access, utilization, methodologies, and systems.

LTRC OPPORTUNITIES

Focus Area 1: University Relationships
- LTRC should make research opportunities better known by posting problem statements and RFP schedules on the website and communicating directly with faculty.
- Hold periodic Town Hall meetings at various campuses within the state to educate faculty about LTRC programs, research opportunities, etc.; LTRC should provide additional

opportunities for greater interaction between faculty and LADOTD staff to identify research needs by holding focus groups, workshops, and seminars.
- LTRC should meet with university administrators to discuss our support for higher education including funding opportunities for researchers.
- LTRC should pursue seed funding from additional sources such as MPO's, FEMA, etc.
- Consider adopting a student employment program similar to Mississippi DOT's program.

Focus Area 2: Research Expansion
- Non-infrastructure research opportunities were presented with the most telling comment "we are a department of transportation, not a department of highways." This may require that we advertise RFP's outside the Louisiana University system in order to find expertise.
- Ten specific potential strategic research areas such as finance, freight, asset management and intermodal were provided by our invited DOTD administrators.
- LTRC should consider proactive research that will look at tomorrow's problems today (20+ year outlook).
- LTRC should facilitate meetings of university faculty and DOTD staff to develop needs and opportunities in non-traditional areas.
- LTRC should pursue revenue diversification to support non-traditional areas of research.
- LTRC should look at the rating system to determine if rating on the "likelihood" of implementation is hindering the selection of non-infrastructure research.
- Inventorying nation centers for leading edge technologies (e.g., nanotechnology) helps avoid unnecessary duplication.
- LTRC should look at Vehicle Infrastructure Interaction (VII)/government interaction.
- LTRC should review its use of bottom up problem statements which may not lend to long term research needs.

Focus Area 3: Regional Cooperation
- LTRC should consider setting up pool fund for regional research activities and administration that provide funds for the purpose of brainstorming ideas for regional cooperation from industry and other state agencies.
- LTRC should evaluate recently completed and ongoing research for potential regional cooperation. Accelerated Load Facility (ALF), regional or cross-state materials testing, structural analysis using Falling Weight Deflectometer (FWD), and regional training capabilities could be considered.
- LTRC should make "regional cooperation ideas" a standard agenda item during the bi-monthly RAC Region 2 conference calls.

Focus Area 4/5: Research Performance Measures & Value of Research
- LTRC should continue development and implementation of its new "all in one" web based tracking system for Performance Measures.
- LTRC should consider expanding its research Implementation Update Report to include projected savings in addition to the actual savings from implemented projects which will dramatically increase their ability to report the benefits of research.

- LTRC should explore the use of Research Performance Measure Tool Box to evaluate and report prospective, potential and actual benefits of research.
- LTRC should include Customer Satisfaction as a component of Performance Measurement.
- LTRC should explore techniques and expertise for estimating economic, safety and social benefits of research.
- LTRC should consider reviewing Florida DOT Research Deployment Plan for improvements to LTRC's implementation process.

Focus Area 6: LTRC Transportation Library
- LTRC should use Best Practices from the National Transportation Library (NTL) and the Transportation Knowledge Network member libraries to establish the LTRC Library policies, procedures, and the business plan.
- LTRC should join the Online Computer Library Center (OCLC) to provide worldwide access and allow Inter-Library borrowing of print and other media.
- LTRC should acquire information management software to permit interface with the Louisiana consortium of libraries.
- LTRC should continue to develop and nurture professional connections through the various professional organizations such as the Special Libraries Association.
- LTRC should continue to develop the collection in the library, specifically seeking professional Journals and Monographs.
- LTRC should facilitate DOTD in the capture and preservation of vital corporate knowledge by establishing communities of practice and performing network analyses.
- LTRC should aggressively market the capabilities of the library to all of our transportation community customers.

LTRC IMPLEMENTATION GOALS

- LTRC should hold periodic Town Hall meetings at various campuses within the state to educate faculty about LTRC programs, research opportunities, etc.; LTRC should provide additional opportunities for greater interaction between faculty and LADOTD staff to identify research needs by holding focus groups, workshops, and seminars.
- LTRC should consider adopting a student employment program similar to Mississippi DOT's program.
- LTRC should take action on specific potential strategic research areas such as finance, freight, asset management and intermodal as provided by our invited DOTD administrators.
- LTRC should look at the rating system to determine if rating on the "likelihood" of implementation is hindering the selection of non-infrastructure research.
- LTRC should consider setting up a pool fund for regional research activities and administration that provide funds for the purpose of brainstorming ideas for regional cooperation from industry and other state agencies.
- LTRC should continue development and implementation of its new "all in one" web based tracking system for Performance Measures.

- LTRC should explore the use of Research Performance Measure Tool Box to evaluate and report prospective, potential and actual benefits of research.
- LTRC should include Customer Satisfaction as a component of Performance Measurement.
- LTRC should use Best Practices from the NTL and the Transportation Knowledge Network member libraries to establish the LTRC Library policies, procedures, and the business plan.
- LTRC should aggressively market the capabilities of the library to all of our transportation community customers.

PEER EXCHANGE TAKEAWAYS

What have you learned from participating in this peer exchange that will help you improve your research program and its management process?

Randy Battey:
- TIRE program appears to be an effective way of getting new professors involved in LTRC's program and something similar within MDOT's program would be helpful.
- Look at the results of the Florida "futurist" workshop to examine the potential of hosting a similar event for MDOT.
- Contact potential partners on RAC Region 2 conference calls and other forums to line up potential partners for research.
- Add to proposal form to request "potential" performance measures to track success of project from submitter of proposal.
- Examine the feasibility of producing a similar implementation report on successful MDOT research projects.

Frank Darmiento:
- It is important to continue networking with universities to take advantage of their research capabilities.
- Performance measures should focus on quantifiable results. Subjective benefits must still be presented in narrative form.

David Huft:
University Relationships
- Evaluate the applicability of LTRC's course entitled "How to Develop a Competitive Proposal" to South Dakota DOT and universities.
- Meet with Research vice Presidents and Business Managers at SD universities to identify opportunities to streamline administrative processes.

Research Expansion Topics
- At SDDOT's next Research Opportunities Meeting (which engages SDDOT, academe, and industry), preface topical workshops with presentations on strategic issues and in merging trends to stimulate broader, long-range thinking.
- Request information on LTRC's Statewide Traffic Safety Study and Pavement Marking Retroreflectivity Study.

Regional Cooperation
- Discuss the link between Research and Training (which LTRC exemplifies) with SDDOT's Deputy Secretary.
- Consider the use of multi-state video conferencing for pooled fund study panel meetings.

Research Performance Measures and Value of Research
- Adapt LTRC's Implementation Report format to SDDOT research projects.
- Review LTRC's research database design to refine the design for an updated SDDOT research database.

Transportation Library
- Re-evaluate value of TKN for assisting SDDOT Library (which already participates fully in OCLC, etc.).
- Meet with SD State Library management to confirm and enhance collaboration between SDDOT and SDSL.
- Develop formal collection and circulation policies and marketing strategy for SDDOT Library.

Richard Long:
- Confirmation that FDOT research is moving in the right direction. That large or small, in-house or consultant produced research, there is a commonality among all states that needs to be discussed and improved.

Anne Pahnke:
- There were great ideas to improve on our implementation and performance measure activities.
- Liked having ready to go power point presentations and papers for executive offices.

Mark Morvant:
- Market research capabilities and benefits to DOTD non-infrastructure sections to encourage more research collaboration
- Add additional committees to the RPIC process so as not to dilute the importance of non-infrastructure research
- Create more opportunities for DOTD staff to meet with university professors to understand transportation needs and research capabilities
- Develop research update publications as soon as approved by DOTD for implementation using potential future benefits
- Pursue more regional cooperation for pooled fund activities
- Implement customer satisfaction surveys for Project Review Committees at completion of study – survey should include value of research and implementation potential of results

Sam Cooper:
- I learned that LTRC is doing a lot of the same things other states are doing.

- I like the idea of establishing a Deployment Plan, which could be used in the management process.
- That performance measures should be quantifiable and measurable.
- Networking with subject matter experts is a good way to get new and fresh ideas.

V.J. Gopu:
- Gained a good understanding of the practices of other state research programs and was able to identify those practices that can be emulated at LTRC.
- It was very beneficial to know the strengths as perceived by the visiting team and learn about the opportunities that exist to advance the external program.
- Recognized the benefit of interacting with research program managers from other states and seeking their input and counsel.

Chris Abadie:
- In the area of "Regional Cooperation": The knowledge gained about the system and organization of existing pooled fund projects was enlightening. I hope to review our work program and post an idea on the FHWA website to attract pooled fund participation or work with regional states towards a common goal.
- I also gained perspective on the importance of establishing a tangible "value" to our research.
- LTRC's strengths of Pavements, Geotechnical, Asphalt Concrete and Structures were well described. This meeting brought more awareness of our other transportation research needs; Safety, Environmental, Planning, Traffic, etc.

Doc Zhang:
- Make a decision on pool-fund study participation by considering

    - The benefit to the department
    - The option of participating or doing your own study
    - The monitoring process of pool-fund study
    - The implementation plan of results generated by pool-fund study

- Facilitate pre-meetings before the regular LTRC RPIC meeting for under-represented groups or research areas
- Increase the transparency of LTRC research program by posting future research needs like problem statements on the web
- Create more opportunities to allow university researchers to meet with DOTD's practitioners or vice versa

Chester Wilmot:
- Involve DOTD officials and university researchers in identifying appropriate areas of research and use this to indicate areas of research to target in the solicitation of problem statements.
- Widen scope of research to include all aspects of transportation.

Genevieve Smith:
- Need better understanding of university potential and better communication of DOTD problems.
- Ask questions, doing the right research, doing the researching right.
- Workforce is changing, need to gear training appropriately for adult learners.
- Toolboxes are good, require a lot of "good" data and good data is hard to get after research is complete. Take advantage of universities to assist with toolbox.
- Important to review/illustrate the value of research. Obtain new funding and customers/partners.
- Libraries and librarians are a valuable resource because not everything is online.

PEER EXCHANGE EVALUATIONS

What are your overall impressions of how this research peer exchange was conducted? Are you comfortable with this format (Agenda, Video Conferencing, Participation, and Webinar)? Are there some specific elements of your program which may not be adequately covered with this format that you wish to be added?

Randy Battey:
- I thought the format was a refreshing change. Hearing different session chairs for each topic rather than one overall peer exchange chair worked well and enabled the team to more efficiently finish the task at hand.
- The video conferencing worked well and allowed for additional participation that otherwise would not have been possible.

Frank Darmiento:
- The Peer Exchange covered a broad range of topics and was very efficiently run. The trade-off is that there was less exposure to DOTD personnel. However, this is a reasonable choice to vary the mix for Peer Exchanges.
- The video conferencing format worked well. I'm not sure the web cast was of much interest (unless it was recorded and would be available for later viewing).

David Huft:
- The format and preparation of this exchange were excellent. Even though a lot of topics were addressed, the discussions were enthusiastic, enlightening, and productive. The video conferencing enabled several other states to participate beneficially. I found the exchange to be more relaxed than many I've participated in, which is a testament to the excellent planning and preparation.
- One minor point is that the format did not include a lot of time for sharing from other participating states. This was not a major problem, because the time was well used anyway. It worked well. The video conferencing brought in valuable contributions from remote participants.

Richard Long:
- This has been the best exchange that I have attended. Well organized, challenging and based upon timely, interesting topics.

Anne Pahnke:
- It was exceptionally well run. Good amount of time allotted for activities. Format worked very well.
- Video conferencing allowed valuable access to expertise.

Mark Morvant:
- The format with the video conferencing worked well and allowed for participation from many knowledgeable sources which added to a more broad view of the topics.
- Using multiple facilitators for different topics provided more opportunity for the invited state members to participate in the exchange and feel ownership of the outcomes. All of the session facilitators did outstanding jobs of keeping the team and guests focused and engaged in the discussion
- There may have been too many focus areas to try to fit into the time frame of the exchange which made some sessions run long and end discussions early.
- It is hard to judge whether the webcast of the exchange provided any meaningful benefit.

Sam Cooper:
- I think the format was excellent. I was comfortable with this format. The use of subject matter experts to chair the Focus Area of their expertise was a good idea.
- I liked the format. It was beneficial to have SME's that were unable to attend in person but could participate via video conferencing. I am unsure of the level of participation in regards to web casting or its specific need.

V.J. Gopu:
- The overall program was very effective in that it provided adequate time to discuss the various focus area issues. Participants didn't feel rushed.
- A minimum of 90 minutes should be allocated to develop the final list of strengths and opportunities in the breakout sessions. This is an important task and needs adequate time.
- Video conferencing worked without a glitch. Both voice and video were clear.

Chris Abadie:
- The format was good. If I would try to improve my focus area of regional cooperation, I would have asked for a short slide presentation from my video participants. However, the presentations were very good.
- Perhaps the meeting schedule was a bit aggressive, although much was accomplished. Some items could have had more time, such as providing time to summarize the day as a group at each day's end.

Doc Zhang:

- The format was excellent.

Chester Wilmot:
- Yes, format was good but I believe the visitors should be given more opportunity to contribute to the proceedings, i.e. less emphasis on what we do and more on what we could do.
- Worked well. Audio a bit soft.

Genevieve Smith:
- Great use of video conferencing and engaging all participants. Everything very comfortable.
- Excited to see non-traditional research partners engaged and looking forward to LTRC's assistance to get them acclimated to produce appropriate problem statements.

PEER EXCHANGE FORMAT ASSESSMENT FROM VIDEO CONFERENCING PARTICIPANTS.

How was the video conferencing quality?

Amanda Wilson:
Great, as a qualifier, this was my first experience using video conferencing.
Ken Winter:
Quality was good…for video conferencing. There was a slight time delay, but that is to be expected… Also, at times it was hard to see all participants, but again, this happens with a large group.
Paul Krugler:
Good overall. We were having electrical storms in College Station at the time, which may have been the cause for several disconnections early on.
Sandra Larson:
Very good.
Tim McDowell:
For the most part the video was of great quality. Some issues in showing presentations came about, but I felt the participants got the best of what was going on.
Tommy Nantung:
Good.

How was the video conferencing audio quality?

Amanda Wilson:
Great.
Ken Winter:

Quality was good…again, slight lag time.

Paul Krugler:

Good.

Sandra Larson:

Fine.

Tim McDowell:

The audio at times was a little light (i.e., when a speaker was further away from the microphone the speaker was hard to understand).

Tommy Nantung:

The first half was fair but the second half was good.

How was the overall experience with the video conferencing format?

Amanda Wilson:

I felt I was able to fully participate in the session and it was nice to see everyone else (including the other video conferencing participants). The person on site did a great job focusing the camera on the person in the room who was speaking at the time. It was a very smooth, seamless event.

Ken Winter:

I enjoyed it. Thanks and good job!

Paul Krugler:

Good except we missed all of the introductions because of a disconnection, and so I knew who was speaking only if I personally recognized them or if a name was used during the discussion.

Sandra Larson:

Good, the only problem was a technical one on our end – which we were able to get resolved.

Tim McDowell:

I have done a peer exchange by video conferencing years before, and this was much better. The technology was up to date and we were able to capitalize on it. For point specific subject matter it can be very effective. However, there will still be the need for face to face on some issues. With travel costs going way up, this type of conferencing should be looked into more.

Tommy Nantung:

Good experience, very interactive.

Would you recommend the video conferencing format for future Peer Exchange Meetings?

Amanda Wilson:

Definitely! It's a great option to bring peers in for specific, targeted sessions.

Ken Winter:

I think it is a useful supplement. For the foreseeable future, however, I feel it would be a mistake to replace in person meetings of this type with video conferencing.

Paul Krugler:

Yes, to bring in people only for selected discussion, just as you used it.

Sandra Larson:

Absolutely.

Tim McDowell:

I would recommend this format for certain subject matters when you need to get more data from other sources, but not for the whole meeting. I.e., the portion I participated in worked well. But sitting in for the rest of the meeting, the dynamics of human interplay would not be captured as well over video**.**

Tommy Nantung:

For me, for the core peer exchange members, it is better not to have video conferencing. For additional members, it is okay.

Appendix A

2008 LTRC Peer Exchange
May 12-15, 2008

Agenda

Monday, May 12, 2008

6:30 – 9:00   Ice breaker
                    (Skip Paul's Home)

Tuesday, May 13, 2008

7:30 – 8:00   Breakfast

8:00 –8:15   Welcome
                    (Skip Paul)

8:15 – 8:30   Panel Introductions

8:30 – 9:30   LTRC Presentations
                    (Mark Morvant - Sam Cooper)

9:30 – 10:00   Break

10:00 – 11:30   **Focus Area 1:** University Relationships
                    Session Leader: Frank Darmiento

11:30 – 1:00   Lunch

1:00 – 2:30   **Focus Area 2**: Expansion of Non-Infrastructure Research
                    Session Leader: Richard Long

2:30 – 3:00   Break

3:00 – 4:30   **Focus Area 3:** Regional Research Cooperation
                    Session Leader: Randy Battey
                    (Video Conference Session)

                    Dinner on Your Own

<u>Wednesday, May 14, 2008</u>

7:30 – 8:00	Breakfast

8:00 – 9:30   **Focus Area 4:** Performance Measures
Session Leader: Dave Huft
(Video Conference Session)

9:30 – 10:00   Break

10:00 – 11:30   **Focus Area 5:** Value of Research
Session Leader: Dave Huft
(Video Conference Session)

11:30 – 1:00   Lunch

1:00 – 2:30   **Focus Area 6:** LTRC Transportation Library
Session Leader: Ann Pahnke
(Video Conference Session)

2:30 – 3:00   Break

3:00 – 4:30   Break-out Groups:
Focus Areas: Reporting & Implementation

7:00   Team Dinner
(*Boutin's Restaurant)*

<u>Thursday, May 15, 2008</u>

7:30 – 8:00   Breakfast

8:00 – 9:30   Summary of Findings and Recommendations
(*Panel Discussion including feedback and takeaways)*

9:30 – 10:00   Break

10:00 – 11:30   Closeout with DOTD Secretary and Chief Engineer

11:30   Lunch