


# DOT Today

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 DOT Ties America Together

## High Tech Highway Studies at the Turner-Fairbank Highway Research Center

by Sue Challis

When you think of research, images of men and women in white lab coats hunched over microscopes in a windowless room probably come to mind. But after a visit to the Human Factors Laboratory at Turner-Fairbank, research takes on a whole new meaning.

Before going into what they're doing over there in McLean, Va., it's important to understand how human factors researchers picture the driving situation. Various roadside "furniture" such as signs, pavement markings, and other information sources affect driving performance and safety. Much of the research in the Human Factors Labs focuses on how modifications to these elements affect performance. With rapidly evolving technologies being implemented, researchers must also consider the impacts of the "highway of the future." Impacts of the Intelligent Vehicle/Highway Systems (IVHS) must be investigated and is one major area of research at the center.

Two major IVHS studies currently underway include human factors assessments of the Advanced Traffic Management System (ATMS) and the Automated Highway System (AHS). These programs were stepped up in response to the mandate of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991. The ATMS study focuses on maximizing control center design for operator efficiency. Investigations into AHS will help determine how the driving task can be automated. Over the long run, the IVHS goals include reducing congestion on the roadways, eliminating accidents, and making driving a lot more pleasant.

### What About the Human Touch?

Traffic management centers will be extremely complex in the future, says Dr. Truman Mast, team leader of the Human Factors Team. "We'll need to train operators to run the special computers that will analyze data and send it out to those centers,"

Photos by Lance Strozier

he explains. "Part of my team's job is to figure out things like what those operators need to know, which computer interfaces they should use, how many hours they should work - decisions that involve human factors."

In the process of their research, they have examined "lessons learned" from the U.S. military, from other countries, even from air traffic control centers. A preliminary design for an advanced traffic management center is currently being developed in Boston. A traffic management center research simulator will also be built as part of continuing research at Georgia Tech.

What will the Automated Highway System do for driving? Won't letting the road drive the car take away the "cool" factor that every 16-year-old feels when he or she first gets a driver's license? The control and freedom you feel behind the wheel? Dr. Mast doesn't think so. "We think of the AHS as a natural evolution of comfort and convenience to be added to a vehicle," he says. Besides, vehicles will need to be specially equipped and certified before traveling on the AHS.

The AHS will make traffic move more efficiently and safely and the number of vehicles per lane can be significantly increased without increasing



Above: Research psychologists Joe Moyer (r) and Gary Golembiewski (l) explain the driving simulator  
Left: Dr. Mast, head of the Research Center's Human Factors Lab



risk. Speeds can be standardized and increased and the distance between cars decreased, to enable the roadway to carry more vehicles. And on the AHS all drivers will be safe drivers. This

should be pretty "cool" as well as mean more freedom of mobility for not only elderly drivers, but the less experienced teenage driver as well.

These highways are not planned for the middle of the desert, either. Initial designs are pushing the idea that AHS will be implemented only on certain lanes on high performance, high grade facilities. "One of the concerns is with transitioning from driving on regular roadways to the AHS," says Dr. Mast. "Also, a critical factor is how to handle breakdowns in the system."

So, while large-scale design of the roadway of the future goes on in labs around the country, FHWA's Human Factors Lab at Turner-Fairbank is ensuring that the human

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Adm. Kramek (r), the new commandant, with Adm. Kime (l), who is retiring after 37 years of service.



## Change of Command for the U.S. Coast Guard

On June 1 in Washington, D.C., Secretary Peña swore in Vice Admiral Robert E. Kramek as the 20th U.S. Coast Guard Commandant in ceremonies at Ft. McNair. Kramek relieves Adm. J. William Kime, who retired with 37 years of service.

At the time Kramek was nominated for the position, he was serving as Coast Guard Chief of Staff at headquarters. After his nomination by President Clinton, he was confirmed by the Senate. Since graduating with honors from the Coast Guard Academy in 1961, Kramek has held a variety of shore and at-sea commands, including that of coordinator of the war on drugs in the Caribbean. As commander of the Haitian Migration Task Force, he led the interdiction and rescue of 37,000 Haitians. A native of New York City, Kramek earned advanced degrees from the University of Michigan, Johns Hopkins University and the University of Alaska and graduated with highest distinction from the Naval War College.

Secretary Peña honored both the new and the former commandants at the ceremony. "The things I will remember most about Bill Kime," he said, "are his humanity, his sense of fairness and his love of the organization and the country he has served. Admiral Kramek's distinguished service well qualifies him to lend his own interpretation to the words 'Semper Paratus.'"

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# Turner-Fairbank Highway Research Center

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fits with the high tech design – and that the design serves the needs of the human.

## "Hands-On Research"

The Human Factors Lab is one of many research facilities at Turner-Fairbank. In the lab, psychologists are looking at driver capabilities and limitations, to assure that all elements of the highway system meet the needs of users.

## Interactive Driving Simulators

One way to measure driver behavior is in the Highway Driving Simulator (HYSIM), a fixed-base,



The VIDSIM is equipped with three widescreen projection TVs. A monitor (to the right) gives directions on screen.

interactive driving simulator that uses computer generated imagery for its visual display. Elizabeth

Alicandri, manager of the Human Factors Lab, explains, "Basically, HYSIM is a car cab that provides a realistic driving environment, a variety of computers to control the simulation, and two primary visual systems. A wide-screen projection system is used to display the roadway, the surrounding environment, and other vehicles. Four 35mm slide projectors with zoom lenses and mirrors add signs to the scenario. The capability of showing high resolution signs as part of the roadside scene is what continues to set HYSIM apart from other driving simulators."

The car cab is a modified Ford Fairmont that provides a realistic environment for the driver/subject. It has no engine or wheels, but the "driver" has full use of the controls, so the subjects' reactions to the simulated environment are extremely close to the real thing.

This device can show research psychologists like Joseph Moyer and Gary Golembiewski how drivers respond to everything from signs to sleep deprivation. By gathering data on how people drive, the researcher can understand driver responses in many

realistic situations – when the speed limit goes up or down, when a truck passes the vehicle, or when it's foggy or dark. During a study, the researcher monitors the driver from a control room using a closed circuit TV camera, and can provide directions or gather driver feedback through an intercom. A new and exciting study underway in the lab, in conjunction with the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research, is investigating the effects of sleep deprivation on driving performance. Subjects will drive in HYSIM after a full night's sleep, and under partial and full sleep deprivation conditions.

Graduate students from Virginia's George Mason University are performing research studies in the HYSIM and a second laboratory, called VIDSIM – a partially interactive driving simulator. VIDSIM is equipped with a simplified car cab and three widescreen projection TVs arranged to allow a 180-degree field of view. A monitor mounted on the dashboard is similar to those used in IVHS operational studies such as TravTek and Pathfinder – giving driving directions on screen or flashing messages. The students are looking at various ways of displaying information on this monitor so that the driver uses it more effectively and so there is less distraction.

Much of the work in the Human Factors Laboratory in the last few years has focused on assuring that all aspects of the highway system meet the needs of older drivers.

Improvements to the system to assist older people will increase the safety and convenience of the system for drivers of all ages. As Joe Moyer says, "We can't change people, but we can fit the technology to the people. In this lab, we're looking at ways to improve comfort, efficiency, and most of all, safety for the traveling public."

## Visibility Research

Dr. Carole Simmons, an engineering research psychologist, spends her time among the signs, lights and lamps seen along any highway. Only her signs are in the Photometric and Visibility Laboratory at Turner-Fairbank. Built in 1991, the lab is used for experiments using human observers, as well as for photometric and colorimetric studies of traffic control devices that include signs, signals and pavement markings. In this lab, the floors, walls and ceilings are painted flat black to minimize reflection. Overhead daylight fluorescent fixtures provide varying levels of light.

Much recent visibility research has been related to retroreflectivity. "Retroreflectivity of signs is what allows them to be seen at night under a car's headlights, so it is an important key to driving safety,"

says Simmons. In a recent study conducted in the lab, observers viewed traffic signs of different degrees of brightness, to help in determining the minimum levels of retroreflectivity drivers need to recognize various signs.

John Arens, manager of the Photometric and Visibility Lab, has been conducting a study of how roadside signs age, as far as their color and retroreflectivity. For this study, samples of 200 retroreflective sign materials were placed on outdoor racks. Over a six-year period, measurements of the retroreflectivity were recorded annually and compared against control samples. Precise measurement equipment is also being used to track any changes in the colors of the samples.

In addition to being able to accurately measure retroreflectivity in the lab, a recent project has developed a mobile, van-based system that can check the retroreflectivity of signs along the roadway. This new tool is being integrated with a PC-based sign inventory system developed at Turner-Fairbank, to help state

# History of the Turner-Fairbank Highway Research Center

At the turn of the century, as the automobile industry grew, so did the demand for an improved national highway system and for dedicated highway research. In 1938, Congress acquired land in McLean, Va., for a roadway research facility.

The first two structures at the site were nearing completion in 1941 when World War II broke out. After the war, funding was limited, so it was not until 1950 that the two buildings were finally ready for their occupants.

In 1950, the Bureau of Public Roads moved to the McLean site – named the Langley Research Station – and started limited research. In 1963, the Bureau renamed the site the Fairbank Highway Research Station, honoring Herbert S. Fairbank, former deputy commissioner of research for the Bureau of Public Roads from 1944 to 1955.

In 1980, construction began on a third building to meet the growing needs of what was now the Federal Highway Administration's research and development program. Completed in 1983, this building was dedicated to Francis C. Turner, FHWA's first administrator, and the entire site was renamed the Turner-Fairbank Highway Research Center (TFHRC for short).

Today, with approximately 138 federal employees, 95 contract employees and 45 graduate research fellows, the center houses more than 40 indoor and outdoor laboratories and support facilities. Although research and technology projects are carried on throughout FHWA, 50 to 60 percent of the research is done at TFHRC. Visiting professors and international researchers come and go throughout the year on various projects at this national laboratory.

TFHRC is a unique facility. While there are many laboratories around the country that are government owned but contract-run, Turner-Fairbank is owned by the federal government and run by government personnel – international experts who just happen to be public servants.

For more information on any aspect of a research project contact the director, Office of R&D Operations and Support (703) 285-2104.

highway departments keep track of which signs need to be replaced.

Other research projects are addressing ways to make sure that changeable message signs and symbolic traffic signs are easily visible to drivers, that roadway lighting is well designed for added safety at night, and that overhead guide signs are bright enough to be read easily.

Thanks to the Human Factors Lab and its staff, advanced technologies are being developed with people in mind. Through in-house research, by working with other national labs, with state, local and international highway communities, and by converting defense technology into highway use, each office at the Turner-Fairbank Highway Research Center has a contribution to make to the safety of the traveling public today and to the more complex and exciting ways we may travel in the future.



Above: Carol Simmons, psychologist

Left: The Photometric and Visibility Lab's floors, walls and ceilings are painted flat black so observers can view traffic signs with minimal reflection.



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The deadline for the August 1994 issue is July 20.

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## Employee Profile

# "Sign of the Times"

by Debra Myers, FAA

The FAA's Southwest Region already had 27 Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) counselors, so the appointment of one more should be routine -- right? Well, almost. Hal Buie recently became the first deaf EEO counselor in the agency's history. "Because clear communication and understanding are so vital in resolving EEO complaints, we had some concerns," explains Art Montoya, Civil Rights manager. "Such as possible legalities involved in documenting the oral interviews. But Hal has a 'can do' attitude and all of the characteristics we look for in an EEO counselor -- empathy, maturity, honesty in dealing with others, and most importantly, a deep personal commitment to the program. I had a gut feeling we could overcome any obstacles that might come up."

*"What we're seeing here is part of the natural evolution of the FAA's vision of workplace diversity. Part of that vision is to bring persons with disabilities on board and from there to ensure they have the fullest opportunity to achieve their potential within the workplace." Art Montoya, Civil Rights Manager*

Buie, who grew up in the El Paso, Texas area, experienced hearing problems at an early age. He says it began with a constant ringing in the ears and grew more noticeable as he entered high school. It wasn't until he was out in the working world in 1982 that his hearing started to deteriorate rapidly. He was earning a good income as a field equipment rep, but was forced to look for other employment as his hearing got worse. Buie moved to Florida and tried for another sales position, but the telephone communication problems were too

much for him. He returned to Texas and sought help from the state rehabilitation commission, which helped him return to school at a junior college. While there, he lost his hearing completely. He learned sign language, and was able to keep up with his studies. Then the challenge he faced was finding a job.

Buie noticed an item on the college bulletin board, which turned out to be an FAA program. In January 1990 he came on board as a student aide in the copy shop. After being detailed to the Human Resource Management Division, Buie

seized the opportunity when a position came available for an EEO counselor. He received his EEO counselor's appointment in February 1993.

With the assistance of a sign language interpreter, he went through the same training and EEO sessions as the other counselors.

Although he does read lips, a sign language interpreter accompanies Buie on all his interviews, which alleviates any chance for misunderstanding. "The hardest part of being a counselor is not being deaf," says Buie. "The hardest part is not taking sides." So far, he hasn't had any complaints from those involved. "The parties in the complaints I've handled were comfortable with me in the counselor role," he explains. "No one minded having the interpreter involved or asked for me to be replaced." In fact, Hal feels being deaf may actually give him an edge in understanding because he has honed his "people watching" skills as a part of his everyday life. He feels he can remain more focused on the issues, and he says it cuts down on a lot of the "small talk" or rhetoric that sometimes impairs communication.

"Everyone here at the FAA has been so supportive," he says. "from my first position to all of my co-workers and managers in HRM. I can't say enough about FAA's diversity program -- except that it works."

In his spare time, Buie serves as a mentor for a hearing-impaired middle school student. His wife and both his sons know sign language, and Hal says one of his proudest moments as a parent was when his toddler signed the word "cookie." He gave him the whole box.



EEO Counselor Hal Buie (left) goes over a new complaint with Art Montoya, an FAA Civil Rights manager.

## Pilot Program to Begin in Alternative Dispute Resolution

The number of EEO complaints is at a record high, as are the costs for processing them. As a result, Antonio J. Califa, DOT's Director of Civil Rights, has announced that in July DOT will institute a pilot program in Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) -- with the goal of reducing the cost and time spent in Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) complaints. The pilot, which will focus on the Federal Aviation Administration's headquarters, will provide employees with the option of using mediation in all EEO disputes at the pre-complaint stage.

Over the years, traditional methods of resolving complaints have proven to be adversarial, time-consuming, costly, and often ineffective. The EEO Commission encourages the use of ADR during the counseling stage. Mediation is only one method of ADR and is the approach that will be used by the department in this pilot program. DOT selected mediation because of its effectiveness in resolving

many disputes promptly and to the parties' satisfaction.

Mediation is a problem-solving process that reduces obstacles to communication, allows the individuals to create and examine options for resolving their disputes and helps the individuals develop realistic and mutually satisfactory solutions. Mediation helps resolve issues in a private, confidential and timely manner. The process uses a neutral third party, called a mediator, to facilitate resolution of the dispute. The mediator works with all parties, either jointly or separately, to reach a voluntary agreement of their own. The mediator does not have the power to make binding decisions or force a decision upon the parties involved.

Applications for interested persons to serve as collateral duty employee mediators were solicited throughout the DOT headquarters area, and an overwhelming number were received. Following an initial screening, 32 were nominated to be inter-

viewed, and 15 were selected to be trained by the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service.

Here's how the pilot program will work: When an aggrieved party in FAA (headquarters) contacts a civil rights counselor regarding a complaint of discrimination, the aggrieved party will be offered the option of using mediation for resolving the dispute. If mediation is selected and the dispute is resolved, both parties will sign a settlement agreement and close the case. If mediation is unsuccessful, the aggrieved party can proceed with the EEO counselor and file a formal complaint of discrimination.

"We have high expectations for our ADR program," said Califa. "Hopefully, both managers and employees will see it as a program worth using."

Call Roosevelt Greer, OST at x65999 or Tina Stephens, FAA at x73253 for more information.



## Vice President Honors "Reinvention Heroes"

On April 12, Vice President Gore participated in the reopening of the Santa Monica Freeway in California. He also announced he will make a series of return visits to federal agencies to recognize "reinvention heroes" in our continuing efforts to reinvent government. In California, he highlighted the work of the "I-10 Team" -- the partnership of federal, state, city, and private sector employees whose work accomplished the opening of the freeway 74 days ahead of schedule. Jim Bednar, chief of district operations for the Federal Highway Administration, accepted the Vice President's "Silver Hammer Award" for federal employees on the team. The award is a shadow box frame containing a hammer decorated with red, white and blue ribbons and a note of thanks from the Vice President for "building a government that works better and costs less."

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## First TransTech Class Graduates

Federal Transit Administrator Gordon J. Linton addressed the first graduating class of Cardozo Senior High School's Transportation and Technology (TransTech) Academy Program on May 17. Linton, along with many D.C. public officials and other TransTech partners from the community, honored the 23 graduating seniors who completed this unique program. "I'm delighted to assist a program which goes beyond merely exhorting young people to finish high school," said Linton. "The academy introduces students to the impressive variety of jobs available in the transportation industry and fosters positive academic experiences through an interactive curriculum." Last September, FTA awarded \$75,000 to the Academy to support the development and expansion of the transportation curriculum. The department has participated in the program since it began in 1991.

# Operation Port

by Roy Jenkins, FRA

A full year of planning and interagency cooperation culminated recently in a well-organized and highly successful hazardous materials intermodal inspection task force at the Port of New Orleans.

Planning for this joint exercise began in 1993 under the coordinating efforts of Region 5 Headquarters of the Federal Railroad Administration. Several meetings and training sessions were held prior to the week's activities, spearheaded by Robert M. Centracco, Supervisory Specialist (Hazardous Materials), who acted as program coordinator.

Forces deployed for this operation included inspection and compliance enforcement personnel from six federal (including four DOT) and two state agencies working closely together as a fully-integrated intermodal inspection team. Represented in this unprecedented joint endeavor were participants from:

- Federal Railroad Administration (FRA),
- Federal Highway Administration (FHWA),
- Research and Special Programs Administration (RSPA),
- U.S. Coast Guard (USCG),
- United States Customs Service (USCS),
- Louisiana State Police (LASP), and
- New Orleans Harbor Police Department (PNOHPD),

with two inspectors from the Texas Railroad Commission joining the task force for some effective and worthwhile training.

More than 70 inspectors, agents, and supervisors were deployed in six groups, with at least one member of each agency represented on every team. These task force audit teams then jointly and cooperatively assessed the movement of intermodal hazardous materials shipments by truck and rail through various points at the Port of New Orleans.

Each agency lent its specific expertise to the operation. Activities surveyed during the week included arrival and transshipment operations; import and tariff collection procedures; and prepara-

tion of shipping papers and manifests. Team members also searched for evidence of illegal activities including smuggling, delivery of contraband, and shipping fraud, as well as ensuring general compliance with city, state, and federal laws which regulate the shipping, documentation and storage of hazardous materials.

The ensuing combination of forces resulted in a far more comprehensive one-week sampling of hazardous materials than any one agency would have been able to achieve alone - resulting in a compilation of data on all hazardous materials passing through the port during the week of the audit, which will be invaluable for reference in future operations for all the agencies involved.

Perhaps more important than the physical results were the lasting effects in terms of training, experience and the mutual understanding that the level of interagency cooperation provided to team members. There were ample opportunities for inspection personnel to share insights on their agency with project associates, along with specific skills, concerns, and areas of vital importance from the perspective of their own organization. Interagency training opportunities, which had been shared during the planning stage, continued throughout the survey.

Results of the week's activities are still being tabulated and examined, but each agency was unanimous in its praise of this joint exercise. According to Leon Sapp, FRA Deputy Regional



Above: FRA Hazardous Materials Inspector, assisted by U.S. Customs Agent, inspects an intermodal tank car.



Left: Inspection personnel from several agencies inspect hazardous materials transportation documents for an intermodal tank car received at the Port of New Orleans.

Director for Region 5, "This comprehensive coordinated exercise provided all of us with a better sampling of what moves through the port and a better feel

for the sources, types, and levels of hazardous materials shipped, as well as potential destinations. It also gave us a lot of data concerning the types of problems occurring within the current inspection and enforcement system, to which we can now focus our attention to finding solutions."

Sapp went on to explain, "The preliminary coordination and outstanding cooperation between the organizations involved gave all members of the task force a clearer understanding of other agencies' concerns. We can now work more closely together, and be alert to safety concerns and potential violations which involve responsibilities which fall under sister agencies. Before operations of this type, many of us weren't even aware of the focus of other inspection agencies."

The exercise at New Orleans is already being called a rousing success. Based on initial findings, supervisors at each agency involved have already begun targeting other locations for similar visits of what may prove to be a regular recurring task force approach to hazardous materials intermodal inspection, as well as a model for interagency cooperation.

## ★ 113th Coast Guard Academy Commencement ★

On May 18, 217 Coast Guard Academy cadets were commissioned as ensigns in New London, Conn. The new ensigns will depart for a well earned furlough and then travel to their shipboard assignments around the world.

### A Long Way From Home

Story and photos by PA1 David Santos

4th Class Cadet Kirill Goussev works on the computer in his Chase Hall dorm room at the Coast Guard Academy. On the desk are textbooks, photographs, and the hat he wore as a cadet at the Russian Naval Academy. Last year, when the United States offered his country an appointment to the Academy, he applied for the position and was accepted. He traveled thousands of miles from his home in St. Petersburg and became the first Russian to attend a U.S. military academy.

At the Russian Naval Academy, Goussev was a straight "A" student. But speaking and writing in a second language, as well as coping with cultural differences, can be challenging. He says getting through his first semester was "the hardest thing I've ever done. I thought my English was good, but when I came here, I found it wasn't good enough."

Since 1971, students from the Philippines, Malaysia, Poland and other countries have attended the Academy. According to Gerrard Yoes, director of the International Affairs Branch at Coast Guard Headquarters, this program does more than train cadets from other nations. "As foreign students graduate and return home," he says, "there are more people around the world who are now familiar with Coast Guard operations and committed to the same principles."

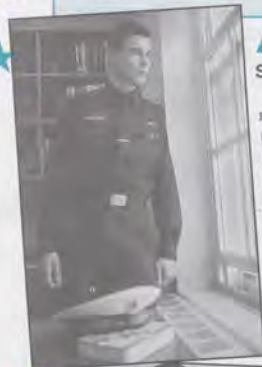
For international students, the first two weeks at the academy are designed as a period of adjustment. Helping those students chart their courses is Professor Michael McKaughan's job. He helped Goussev get into a course of English as a second language at a nearby college. After successfully completing the course, Goussev says, "I feel better this semester. My English is better and I've made a lot of friends here."

Students live with an American host family during the first week and spend time getting used to things, says McKaughan. "We talk about a lot of things, even gender equality, which is an issue that may be new for someone from another country." At the Russian Academy, Goussev had no female classmates, since women are not admitted. As a member of the class of '97, he is part of the most diverse class ever to attend the academy - 22 percent of his classmates are minorities and 27 percent are women.

Back in his room, Goussev stares at a photo of himself and his father, who, like his father before him, was a graduate of the Russian Naval Academy. Near the photo is a letter from his father to the Coast Guard Academy: "Kirill was born 20 years ago when I served on an atomic submarine," he wrote. "I spent most of my time in the sea, underwater. I saw the boy mostly at night already sleeping. Since childhood he wanted to become a sailor...We would like to express our sincere gratitude to everybody who tried to make our son's

life easier (in the U.S.) and helped him feel at home."

Capt. Robert Thorne, director of admissions at the Academy, says the international student program is an important element in U.S. foreign policy. "It's also important to note that these students are not taking the place of an American student while they're here," he says. "When these students graduate, they often rise to levels of prominence in their own militaries. They return with a significant appreciation for democratic principles and many friendships that will last a lifetime."



Goussev holds a photograph he had taken with his father in Russia.



## Bureau of Transportation Statistics

U.S. Department of Transportation

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# Customer Service: An Essential Element of BTS

The Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA) established the Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS) within the Department of Transportation. The BTS was created in response to long-standing recommendations for a more effective, department-wide statistical program. As DOT's newest operating administration, the BTS has a unique opportunity to test concepts for improving customer service, and, in fact, has been customer-driven and entrepreneurial from its inception. The Bureau believes customers are more than existing data users and clients. Serving customers includes seeking markets, determining specific needs through experimental products, and creating products to meet customers' needs.

The ISTEA mandate for the BTS was implemented on December 16, 1992. The Bureau's first product, the Transportation Data Sampler on CD-ROM, was designed and delivered to the Transportation Research Board's annual meeting 26 days later. The CD-ROM was an introduction to the variety of information resources available in the department and allied agencies, and was a test of this technology for the dissemination of data products. The first data sampler contained data bases and reports in a variety of spreadsheet, data base, and word processing formats. In 1993, the second Data Sampler was completed in just four days.

Congress gave the BTS \$90 million in venture capital and six years to develop a customer base. One and one half years into this challenge, the BTS has made tremendous strides. There is a toll-free hotline to answer public inquiries relating to transportation. The hotline specializes in providing transportation statistics, including operational, financial and physical characteristics of the industry, responds to inquiries of a more general nature and provides referrals as needed. In March 1994, the hotline received 116 calls, including BTS's first call from the United Nations. A total of 348 calls were received during the first four months of this year. Requests for information have included questions such as: How many jobs have been created in the trucking industry since deregulation? or What is the average per mile cost to construct a superhighway?

As a companion to the toll-free number, the BTS also created the first

Telephone Contacts for Users of Federal Transportation Statistics. This document lists the names and telephone numbers of transportation specialists cross-referenced by their area of expertise. These individuals are points of contact for customers requiring detailed knowledge of transportation information.

The Directory of Transportation Data Sources, another customer-oriented product, provides users of transportation statistics with a comprehensive inventory of 285 transportation data sources, which includes any computerized data base developed within the federal government for internal or external use as well as regularly scheduled papers or hard copy statistical reports. Sources are listed by agency and cross-referenced alphabetically and by mode. Future plans are to include private data sources in the directory and to serve as a centralized repository for persons seeking transportation data sources. To meet a broad range of user requirements, both the Telephone Contacts List and the Directory of Transportation Data Sources are available on diskette as well as on CD-ROM.

The 1994 Transportation Statistics Annual Report is another example of customer oriented summary information. The Annual Report provides a synopsis of the state of the transportation system and its consequences, the quality of statistics used to characterize the transportation system, and planned efforts by BTS to improve the quality of transportation statistics. This report will be published annually and features timely information such as the impact of the 1993 floods on the transportation network throughout the midwest.

The Bureau makes these sources as widely available as possible free of charge. In the near future, the BTS will also have information available on-line through bulletin boards and on the Internet. The BTS recognizes the need for customer feedback to receive information about BTS and its services and products. A user comment card is provided in each product seeking user comments and soliciting suggestions for new products. The Bureau believes customer comments are essential in planning and improving future editions of data products. The Bureau has a state-of-the-art customer data base and tracking system, which enables it to respond quickly and accurately to data needs. Postcards announcing new products are mailed to customers across the nation. Announcements are also made in professional publications to inform the media, public affairs offices, libraries and others of new transportation data products.

## YOUTH CORPS PROGRAM ANNOUNCED

Federal Highway Administrator Rodney Slater and Baltimore Mayor Kurt Schmoke recently announced a new transportation-oriented Urban Youth Corps pilot project in Baltimore's Sandtown-Winchester neighborhood.

FHWA will provide \$250,000 for the program under President Clinton's National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993, which seeks to revitalize public service in communities across the country.

In the Baltimore program, Corps members will be paired with skilled journeymen and laborers and

receive job training in street maintenance, road and sidewalk construction, demolition, landscaping, and other skills. The program will provide participants with marketable skills, assist them with their education, assist them in advancing their career goals, and provide valuable work experience. The one-year pilot project will provide hands-on experience for disadvantaged youth and young adults ages 16-25 in rehabilitating transportation facilities in the Sandtown-Winchester area.

"We are very excited about the opportunity to provide the young people in this area with a chance

to receive on-the-job training while serving their community," said Slater. "This pilot program is a good example of governments working together to make a difference, and I believe that supporting our youth is one of the most sound investments we can make. This project will serve as a model for communities nationwide."

The pilot was developed as a joint effort by FHWA, the Maryland State Highway Administration, the Baltimore City Department of Public Works, and Community Building in Partnership.



John Fegan parks his bicycle at a subway station locker, then takes the train.

## Bicycling and Walking Study Delivered to Congress

As part of Earth Day ceremonies held at headquarters in late April, Secretary Peña presented the "National Bicycling and Walking Study Report" to Congress. The study presents two national goals for increasing the use and safety of bicycling and walking:

1. to double the percentage of all transportation trips made by bicycling and walking
2. to reduce by 10 percent the number of injuries and fatalities in transportation crashes involving bicyclists and pedestrians.

The report lays out action plans to achieve these goals at the state, local and federal levels. On behalf of the Secretary, FHWA Administrator Rodney Slater and Acting NHTSA Administrator Christopher Hart walked the report from the DOT headquarters building to the U.S. Capitol a few blocks away. They were accompanied by DOT employees and escorted by police bicycle squads from the District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia. Earlier in the day, Secretary Peña and Hart addressed bicyclists at Freedom Plaza, where many had gathered for the annual "Bike to Work Day."

"More people bicycling and walking will help accomplish two critical goals," said the Secretary. "Reducing traffic congestion and improving air quality in our metropolitan area. It also will lead to healthier, more active lifestyles, an important component of the President's health care initiative."

The action plan delivered to Congress calls for the federal government to fully integrate consideration of bicycling and pedestrian needs into planning and policies, and provide funding for infrastructure to support those needs. It also includes promoting education to increase the safety level in bicycling and walking.

To assist in implementing the recommendations, DOT will establish an Interagency Bicycle/Pedestrian Task Force with other cabinet-level departments. The Secretary also announced that John Fegan, a career employee with more than 20 years of experience in bicycle and pedestrian safety, has been named the national bicycle and pedestrian program manager, and will coordinate bicycle and pedestrian programs within and outside DOT.

## Merchant Marine Academy Midshipman Earns Medal

Midshipman Nathan Hodges didn't hesitate for a moment in risking his life to save the lives of his shipmates during the ill-fated voyage of the SEA-LAND SPIRIT. Now, 20 months later, he has been awarded DOT's Distinguished Service Medal for his heroism.

Hodges, who will enter his senior year at the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy this August, was assigned to the Sea-Land cargo vessel two years ago for practical shipboard training. The SPIRIT was cruising in the Pacific, nine days out of Yokohama, Japan, enroute to Oakland, Calif. Suddenly, there was an alarm. Carbon dioxide had been discharged into the engine room, trapping four men below deck.

"All the doors automatically closed because the CO<sub>2</sub> was released," said Hodges. "We called the bridge and they had no idea what was going on." The chief engineer opened the engine room door, entered, but soon collapsed and had to be pulled out. There was a call for volunteers to don an oxygen suit. Hodges came forward, then two other crew members. With Hodges leading the way, they descended into the contaminated area, found one man and pulled him to safety. Then two others were found and rescued. The men had to be pulled up four ladders to safety. On the fourth descent into the area, he located the last crew member, but it was too late.



DOT's Maritime Administrator, Albert J. Herberger, presented the Distinguished Service Medal to Midshipman Nathan Hodges in front of the Academy's entire regiment of midshipmen.



photo by Lance Strozzer

At the June 13 press conference to announce the proposed legislation are Amtrak president Tom Downs, FHWA Administrator Rodney Slater, FRA Administrator Jolene Molitoris, Bob Pentland, a locomotive engineer for Conrail, Secretary Peña, Edwin L. Harper, CEO, Association of American Railroads, and Rep. Norman Mineta (D-Calif.).

to use 100 percent federal funding to close crossings; and increased funding for public education programs like Operation Lifesaver.

The action plan was developed by four DOT operating administrations: Federal Railroad Administration, Federal Highway Administration, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, and Federal Transit Administration. The plan relies on cooperative partnerships between local, state and federal transportation agencies, as well as local law enforcement, railroads, and educational groups such as Operation Lifesaver.

The plan includes 55 recommendations and initiatives designed to intensify enforcement, enhance rail corridor reviews and improvements, increase safety at private crossings and improve data and research efforts.

"I consider this one of the most important safety initiatives of the Department," the Secretary said. "...there are thousands of American lives in the balance, and it is up to us to act to save them."

## Grade Crossing Legislation

Last year, there were 626 grade crossing deaths at the nation's rail-highway grade crossings—an 8.1 percent increase over 1992. In addition, 523 people were killed last year while trespassing on rail rights-of-way.

"Perhaps the greatest tragedy is that the vast majority of these accidents are preventable," said Secretary Peña.

On June 13, joined by congressional representatives and industry leaders, Secretary Peña unveiled a proposed legislation and a comprehensive, multi-modal action plan to reduce the tragic number of deaths and injuries. "Ours is the most comprehensive plan the

Department of Transportation has ever developed on this subject," said the Secretary. The Rail-Highway Grade Crossing Safety Act of 1994 would give states more options to deal with the dangers of grade crossings. Key provisions include cash incentives to local governments that close dangerous crossings; permitting states

### Operation Lifesaver Spreads Safety Message

by John F. Fitzpatrick, FRA

The twisted wreckage of the car was wedged under the front of the locomotive. The scene was eerily quiet except for the hissing steam rising from the car's bent hood. As the engineer jumped from the cab to see what had happened, he was startled by the high-pitched screams of the high school girls trapped inside the car. He ran to help them, then spotted another girl lying a few feet away. He knew in an instant that she was dead.

Where did this tragedy take place? Thankfully it didn't happen at all. It was a demonstration set up by Operation Lifesaver, Inc. (OLI), a nationwide, non-profit public information and education program dedicated to reducing crashes, injuries and deaths at highway-rail grade crossings and along railroad rights-of-way.

The "crash" occurred May 18 in Springfield, Va., as part of National Operation Lifesaver Awareness Day, one of many mock crash scenes staged across the country. The "crash train" was donated by Norfolk Southern and the young women portraying the victims were students from nearby Lee High School. Nearly a hundred of their classmates sat in reviewing stands to watch the crash and learn about safety at the crossings. The message was simple and clear: "Look, Listen and Live. If you understand and obey all highway laws at crossings, you won't become victims."

Federal Railroad Administrator Jolene Molitoris, and Federal Highway Administrator Rodney Slater both spoke to the students about their responsibilities as motorists. Molitoris told them there were more than 5,000 vehicle/train collisions last year, resulting in more than 600 deaths. She urged the students to get involved and to "become ambassadors of safety." Slater told the students that he hoped the mock crash served as a reminder of what could happen "if you let your guard down for even an instant when approaching a highway-rail crossing."

Other officials addressed the students, but perhaps the most dramatic and heartfelt presentation was by locomotive engineer Billy Parker. On March 17, 1993, Parker was the Amtrak engineer involved in a highway-rail grade crossing crash with a tanker truck in Fort Lauderdale, Fla. The tanker, loaded with gasoline, derailed the passenger train and shot a ball of fire 250 feet into the air. The driver of the truck and five motorists waiting to cross the tracks were killed. Miraculously, Parker was not physically injured. He told the students: "With the exception of the days when my parents died, the day of the crash was the worst in my life."

If you would like to get involved or learn more about Operation Lifesaver, call 1-800-537-6224.

## Modernization of Computer Center at Headquarters

The Transportation Computer Center (TCC) has just completed several major modernization efforts at DOT headquarters. TCC's aim throughout the project has been to transform the computer facility into a full service, customer-oriented support center.

### Renovation

The renovation of the computer room facilities on the Plaza level of the Nassif Building has created an open area that is accessible to customers, and includes customer work areas and space for consultations. When you visit, a receptionist will greet you and arrange a tour or a meeting with staff members. TCC encourages its customers to visit anytime during business hours to see what TCC has to offer.

### Upgrading of the Mainframe Hardware

TCC has upgraded the mainframe system hardware to improve quality and responsiveness. With the installation of a third automated tape cartridge library, or silo, TCC has expanded media storage significantly and greatly

improved response time for tape requests. TCC is also in the process of converting all tapes to 36-track cartridges, doubling capacity from the 18-track cartridges and increasing rewind speed.

A secondary power grid installed by Potomac Electric Power Company provides an uninterrupted power source to the mainframe computer system in the event the primary power grid experiences a power outage.

### Upgrading of Mainframe Communications Network

A network upgrade project is underway that will bring TCC's mainframe access to the leading edge. The network equipment is being upgraded to enable more efficient and reliable mainframe connectivity, providing customers with improved performance and reduced data transmission errors. Finally, TCC is installing a mainframe network management system to enable faster problem identification and resolution.

For more information on TCC, call the customer information and assistance facility help desk at (202) 366-9938.

## Safety Belt Campaign to Feature NBA Star

Last December, Bobby Hurley, a top National Basketball Association (NBA) draft pick of the Sacramento Kings, was involved in a serious auto crash. He is currently recovering from his injuries, which included collapsed lungs, fractured left shoulder, multiple rib fractures and an injury to his right knee. Hurley was not wearing a safety belt.

Recently, the NBA and Hurley joined the Department of Transportation in producing public service messages to encourage safety belt use. The TV message made its debut on an NBC-TV broadcast during one of the NBA playoff games, and was also shown throughout the finals. Hurley has also recorded a radio spot and will appear in a print ad that will be in NBA and traffic safety publications.

"Bobby Hurley brings special conviction to the safety belt message because of his personal experience in a crash," said Secretary Peña.

"We're counting on him to help us meet our goal of 75 percent belt usage by 1997. We are grateful to the NBA for joining us in this important public service effort."



"If I Could Live My Life Over,  
I'd Change One Thing--  
On The Night Of December 12,  
I'd Buckle My Seatbelt."

"That's the night I was thrown from my car in a crash. I ended up face down in a ditch struggling to breathe. Had it not been for my seatbelt, I probably wouldn't be here today. The experts say that I'm lucky, because most people who are thrown from their cars in a crash never get over their injuries. A lot of them die. That's why I'm asking you not to push your luck. Use your seatbelt."

Buckle up every time.

# SEA-KEEPERS

The groups you and your friends belong to and the schools your children attend can benefit from a new Coast Guard/Department of Defense program being carried out this summer by the USCG Reserve.

The Sea-Keepers program provides speakers to groups interested in learning more about how to protect the marine environment. Specific topics include: how groups and individuals can take action to protect the marine environment; how marine environmental protection laws and regulations apply to various marine users; and effects of oil, hazardous chemicals, waste, and debris on the marine environment.

It is one of 22 pilot programs in the Department of Defense Civil Military Cooperative Action Program, which authorizes reservists from the armed forces to support critical public needs. The goal is to use the military reservists to address the domestic needs of the

country in the areas of health care, education, job training, and rebuilding the nation's infrastructure -- without affecting unit readiness. Presentations are tailored for students at all levels (elementary, high school and college), recreational boaters, private groups, environmental organizations, and the maritime industry. The presentations are available free of charge. Contact the nearest CG Marine Safety Office or the Coast Guard Public Affairs office in your district for more information.



## FHWA 100-Year Time Capsule Buried



FHWA Executive Director Dean Carlson, FHWA Administrator Rodney Slater, Deputy Administrator Jane Garvey, and Frank Turner, FHWA's first administrator, cover the time capsule with dirt.

On June 14, present and past FHWA officials and employees gathered at the Turner-Fairbank Highway Research Center for an unusual ceremony. A time capsule containing everything from scientific items such as a solar calculator/metric converter to a baseball cap and T-shirt were assembled in a stainless steel container and buried four feet down in the earth -- hopefully to be opened in the year 2093 by the FHWA staff of the future.

The idea for the time capsule started last year at the picnic in honor of FHWA's 100th birthday. Organizers in the Office of Information and Management Services solicited ideas and items for inclusion in the capsule, and they turned to conservators and chemists from the National Archives, Library of Congress and other institutions and museums for guidance

on how to package and preserve the items.

One of the problems with time capsules in the past has been that their location is either lost or forgotten. This one should be a little easier. It is in front of the main TFHRC building, with a large rock over it and a cast bronze plaque to serve as a marker.

The term "time capsule" was not coined until 1938 when the Westinghouse Electric Corporation used it to describe a metal cylinder buried at the site of the New York World's Fair. Some say the earliest time capsules were actually created by the Egyptians and Babylonians who sealed special inscriptions and statues in the foundations of temples. The newest time capsule is the Space Arc Project, which on July 28 will be launched aboard a satellite into space where it should remain in orbit for 50 million years. The capsule, sponsored by NASA, Hughes Communications and Voice of America, along with nine other partners, contains messages from school children scanned onto optical tape.

### Federal Withholding Tax Rate Increase on Supplemental Wages

Many employees don't realize that effective January 1, 1994, the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act increased the optional federal withholding rate from 20 to 28 percent. The increase affects only supplemental wages such as employee awards and the taxable portion of a permanent change of station reimbursement.

This does not mean that the percentage on which your annual tax liability is calculated has increased. That percentage is still determined by your annual taxable income, i.e., gross income minus deductions.

### DOT Family-Friendly Programs Recognized by OPM

Congratulations DOT! The Office of Personnel Management recently recognized four Department of Transportation programs as finalists in the 1994 OPM Director's Award for Outstanding Work and Family Programs -- flexible work options to help federal employees balance work and family responsibilities.

The four programs selected for honorable mention citations at this year's award program are: the Research and Special Programs Administration's Volpe National Transportation Systems Center in Cambridge, Mass.; the Federal Aviation Administration; the U.S. Coast Guard Air Station in Cape Cod, Mass.; and the Federal Railroad Administration.

Winners and honorable mentions were selected from federal agencies nationwide. Nominations were submitted to OPM for review by a Blue Ribbon Advisory Panel. A number of factors were considered, but programs that demonstrate a commitment to flexible scheduled ranked high on the list. Programs recognized included alternative work scheduling, maxi flex, part-time, job sharing, liberal leave policy and credit hour programs for employees. On-site child care services, comprehensive wellness programs and employee-centered services and seminars complete the ranking criteria.

## National Air Traffic Command Center Dedicated

On May 19, FAA Administrator David Hinson dedicated a state-of-the-art national air traffic management center in Herndon, Va. The new, expanded Air Traffic Control System Command Center replaces a cramped, outdated facility that was recently relocated from FAA headquarters. The center, a facility that tracks, monitors and manages the flow of more than 150,000 flights a day, is staffed around the clock and will greatly improve the FAA's ability to manage international and domestic flight operations into the next century. The command center provides controllers with a near real-time picture of traffic in the U.S. system -- more than 4,000 aircraft at the busiest travel times. "The extra margin of safety the center provides to the 150,000 daily operations it serves is the envy of the world," said Hinson. "Ultimately, we envision a worldwide linkup of all air traffic flow management systems for realtime sharing of demand and capacity information." The center uses national and international flight tracking data from 22 FAA enroute center computers and ground radar installations to determine if projected traffic demands exceed previously determined capacity limits. When this occurs, traffic managers hold aircraft on the ground at departing airports or divert aircraft in flight to other airports. This means saving fuel and improving service to travelers by eliminating air traffic bottlenecks. Delays are minimized by safely balancing air traffic demand with runway and airspace capacity.

FAA is leasing the building, equipment and computer services from Electronic Data Systems (EDS) of Plano, Texas. This gives the agency the capability to adopt new technologies without making new purchases. Leasing the building will save taxpayers more than \$15 million over the life of the lease, compared to new construction and maintenance of the same 29,000-square foot facility.

"This new center demonstrates how government and industry partnerships can assist the aviation industry in its return to profitability," said Hinson.



# Through the Eyes and Ears of the Learning Disabled

Earlier this year, about 150 DOT headquarters employees turned out to hear a presentation by Dale Brown of the President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities. Her topic was on-the-job help that employers can give people with learning disabilities.

Brown, who overcame a learning disability, is one of the leaders of the self-help movement for learning disabled people. She has written a book and hundred of articles, mostly emphasizing employment. Her book, "Steps to Independence for People With Learning Disabilities," helps individuals live independently from their parents, learn self-reliance, and find work. Last year, Brown received the Arthur S. Fleming Award, given to 10 outstanding federal employees. She also received the TOYA Award from the International Jaycees for her advocacy achievements.

The audience at the event was able to enter the world of people with disabilities. Brown used special equipment that made some sounds almost indistinguishable to those with normal hearing; let them feel the frustration of hearing "17" instead of "70," of hearing an angry voice instead of a joking tone, and hearing "treats" instead of "streets." On the visual side, participants got a look at how a dyslexic person sees - "94" instead of "49" and "xob" instead of "box."

Brown stressed that people with learning disabilities are "People First" who can do a job well. But since they process information differently, employers can help them in many ways: provide clear written or verbal instructions; if employees have trouble managing time and meeting deadlines, teach them to use daily calendars and alarm features on their computers; and help employees prioritize tasks.

The presentation was taped and is available through placement coordinators. For information, contact Charlene Wilder, FTA at 202-366-6737.



Dale Brown with OST's Deputy Director of Personnel, Carlos Esparza.

## For Your Information:

### New ATM Services

Effective May 16, the department improved its travel process by offering the convenience of ATM cash withdrawals for travel advances through American Express, the government travel charge card contractor. The ATM cash withdrawal feature offers official government travelers a readily available source of cash charged directly to their individual government charge card to pay for travel expenses that cannot be paid for with the card itself. The money obtained from the ATM will replace travel advances usually obtained in the form of a Treasury-issued check or an imprest fund transaction. Contact your servicing finance office for more information.

### An Invitation

Federal Toastmasters Club #1037 Invites You to Attend Their Weekly Meetings

U. S. Department of Transportation  
Nassif Building, 400 7th Street SW  
(L'Enfant Metro station)

Noon to 1 p.m. on:

July 6	room 4236
July 13	room 4236
July 20	room 4236
July 27	room 4432A
Aug. 3	room 4432A
Aug. 10	room 4436-38

Reduce your fear of public speaking by joining our positive and supportive club. Learn to organize, write and present your speech at your own pace. Each speech is constructively evaluated. (note: Annual leave is not required since the meetings are considered training) Call 202-366-2026 for information.

### Bloodmobile

July 27-28, 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.,  
Nassif Building, Room 8234

The need for blood is more acute in the summer - accidents are up and many regular donors are on vacation.

Together we can save lives!

Make an appointment with your blood donor coordinator before July 25:

OST: Gabrielle Valdivieso x69409; OIG: Karen Muller x62677; FHWA: Susan Wheelock x61188; FRA: Neatha Sanders x60582; NHTSA: LaVonia Shirley x62129; FRA: Steve Lesiak x62483; SLSDC: Kathy Gavin x60118; MARAD: Brenda Bell x68797; RSPA: Rhonda Malloy x65608.

### Use Farecards for Local Travel

Are you tired of using your own money to pay for local travel by car or cab? Are you tired of completing the paperwork required to get your reimbursement, then carrying it to the Imprest Fund, only to be greeted with a line of people running out the door?

Well, DOT is actively encouraging all offices around the country to purchase and hold mass transit farecards for use by employees on local travel as part of their official duties. And the Finance Office reminds you: please don't use a multi-copy purchase order to get those farecards. The small purchase credit card is much easier to use and is widely accepted. For more information, contact Michael Bazemore (202) 366-6762 or Kevin Mooney at (202) 366-4975.

## Federal Women's Program Committee Recognizes FAA Managers

The FAA Federal Women's Program Committee (FWPG) recognized managers and honored the recipient of the Sue Silverman Award for FY 1993 at a recent luncheon. Special attention was directed toward the managers' accomplishments in supporting the program and its activities. The Sue Silverman Award was established by the committee to recognize an FAA manager for his or her achievements in directly assisting the women of the Federal Aviation Administration to develop and utilize their skills to their fullest potential.

At the "Salute to Managers" luncheon, Joaquin "Archie" Archilla, associate administrator for Airways Facilities, was honored with the seventh annual Sue Silverman Award.

Archilla was single out for his dedication, commitment and involvement in the promotion and career advancement of women within the FAA. He actively promotes cultural diversity throughout the agency, and works closely with labor/management officials in eliminating barriers to a culturally diverse work force. He sponsors a full time task force and a group of diverse employees to help develop cultural changes within the organization. Archilla has also been a mentor to several women within Airways Facilities, and has participated in several panels designed to assist women in their career development.

In accepting the award, Archilla said, "I am honored to be the recipient and pledge to support, promote and assist women in this organization for the remainder of my career."

## The Intermodal Data Network (IDN)

by Jim Bussey

Gateways, bridges, routers, servers, hubs, modem pools, concentrators...sound intimidating? These are some of many components of the Intermodal Data Network, or IDN for short. Connected together by miles of fiber optic cable inside the Nassif Building, this equipment becomes part of an elaborate networking scheme that connects all the Local Area Networks from each operating administration in the three Washington, D.C., headquarters buildings.

Managed by the Office of Information Resource Management, OST (M-30), in cooperation with each of DOT's operating administrations, the IDN has become headquarters' information infrastructure, a sort of information mini-highway that will allow DOT to merge with the developing National Information Infrastructure (or Information Superhighway), designed to:

- Improve access to government information
- Upgrade the infrastructure for the delivery of government information
- Enhance citizen access to government information
- Strengthen inter-agency coordination through the use of electronic mail

- Reform the federal procurement process to make government a leading-edge technology user

In 1992, the fiber optic cabling of the Nassif Building became the first step in the implementation of the IDN. Presently, all operating administrations are connected, and by mid 1995, all OST offices will be part of the IDN as well.

By far the most used service offered on the IDN is Electronic Mail, or E-Mail. The number one challenge facing IDN program management is connecting the different E-Mail packages within the department. With some offices using CCMail, others using WordPerfect Office, and still others using MS Mail, this has not been without its challenges. Most problems have been resolved through the cooperation of the different administrations and their representatives with the IDN E-Mail Users Group, which meets at least monthly.

One of the most important features of the IDN is access to Internet. The Internet is not actually a network, and is not controlled by any one agency or organization. Rather, it is a collection of networks joined together to form a larger network. Presently use of the Internet is the way most people in DOT send E-Mail to other government agencies. Internet is also the electronic forum through which most government agencies share information with the public and with each other through huge data repositories called "gophers" (see article in next month's issue). By mid-autumn, DOT plans to have its own gopher server accessible via the Internet. Call your senior LAN administrator to find out more!

