

Minutes of the Committee on Transportation Demand Forecasting (ADB40) Meeting

Wednesday, January 24, 2007, 10:15 AM – 12:00 PM

86th Annual Meeting of the Transportation Research Board
Hilton Washington Hotel and Towers, Caucus Room
Washington, D.C.

1. Introductions

The meeting was called to order by Dr. Chandra Bhat. More than fifty were in attendance. Introductions were made around the room, and a sign-in sheet was distributed.

2. Tribute to Gordon Shultz

Various members of the audience commented on Gordon Schultz' many contributions to the transportation field and shared personal stories exemplifying the impact Gordon had on his colleagues. In honor of Gordon, the Gordon W. Schultz Fellowship will be awarded on an annual basis to a graduate student in travel demand modeling and analysis at the Georgia Institute of Technology.

3. Staff Report (Kim Fisher)

Kim discussed the newly implemented research needs database. The committee must appoint one to two people to enter research needs statements into the database. The information will be useful for students, state departments of transportation, and the like. The database is a work in progress, but the initial round of information is due on June 1, 2007.

Next, Kim provided summary statistics for the 2007 conference. This year's conference broke 11,000 in attendance, which is a new TRB record. Paper submissions were up by 8% with 3,200 submitted. Since so many (upwards of 2,000) were submitted to the website within the final 24 hours of the deadline, the server failed. To avoid this situation in the future, TRB is considering staggering deadlines by topic area. However, Kim advised the group to avoid waiting until the last minute to submit papers.

Next year's conference will be January 13th through 17th, and the theme is Partnerships for Progress in Transportation. Given budgetary constraints (a 50% loss in operating budget over the past year), there will be commercial exhibits at next year's conference. Interested parties should give information to a TRB staff member.

In an effort to make it easier to cite works found in the Transportation Research Record, authors will have electronic, full text, fully searchable access to all Transportation Research Records from 1996 to 2006 when submitting a paper to TRB. Kim was asked why this tool is (1) not open to the public, and (2) not free. She responded that TRB cannot afford these options. The back of the program provides information on subscribing. Rates are consistent with other

industry publications. Another attendee requested that TRB make sure that Google Scholar™ is able to “find” the website.

Kim’s final topic was a mention of the laminated committee trading cards that were distributed at the welcome session.

4. Committee Scope/Structure

Chandra provided a quick recap of the reasons for considering the change in scope and title a few years ago. The reasons were to:

- Include dissemination activities explicitly within the purview of the committee,
- Expand the scope to include freight forecasting methods,
- Emphasize the integrated context of transportation demand, land-use, demographics, and technological environment,
- Underscore the strong linkage between activity participation and travel patterns, and
- Identify the tasks involved in the forecasting process.

The scientific scope of the Transportation Demand Forecasting Committee is stated below.

The focus of this committee includes the development, application, and dissemination of improved demand forecasting techniques, within the integrated context of the interaction of transportation demand with the land-use form, demographic composition, and technological state of the activity-travel environment. All aspects related to theory, data estimation, and application are of direct interest to the committee, with an emphasis on research developments that have the potential to be implemented in the near future.

Chandra noted that at the time of the change in scope, the committee’s structure was also reviewed, and four research subcommittees were instituted. Each subcommittee has a clear charge, and the new structure has worked well in terms of the level and intensity of activity.

5. Committee Membership (Agenda Item 6)

a) Emeritus Membership

Keith Lawton was added to the distinguished list of emeritus members of the committee. Keith joins Frank Koppelman, the first emeritus committee member.

b) Introduction of New Regular Members

Committee rotation took place this past year. There are 18 continuing members, and 11 new members. Chandra noted that there is quite a long waiting list for membership. In adding new members, a conscious effort was made to include individuals from state/DOT agencies. The 11 new members are:

- 1) Shlomo Bekhor, Technion-Israel Inst. of Technology,
- 2) Larry Blain, Puget Sound Regional Council,

- 3) William Charlton, San Francisco County Transp. Authority,
- 4) Elisabetta Cherchi, Univ. of Cagliari,
- 5) Gregory Giaimo, Ohio DOT,
- 6) Jessica Guo, Univ. of Wisconsin-Madison,
- 7) Ysela Llort, Florida DOT,
- 8) Erik Sabina, Denver Regional Council of Govts,
- 9) Paul Waddell, Univ. of Washington,
- 10) Travis Waller, Univ. of Texas at Austin, and
- 11) Edward Weiner, US DOT.

c) Introduction of New Young Members

There are two young committee members: one continuing and one new. Greg Erhardt of PB is joining the committee as its newest young member.

d) Geographical Distribution

In addition to the 29 North American members that represent all four quadrants of the continental U.S., there are four international members.

e) Professional Category Distribution

The professional distribution of members is also diverse. There are 15 university members, and 10 private consultants. There are 2 members each from federal and state agencies, and 4 city/county representatives.

f) Expectations

The responsibilities of committee members were discussed. Members are expected to:

- Attend the ADB40 TRB business meeting,
- Serve on subcommittees as called on and meet subcommittee reporting requirements/expectations,
- If appointed as a liaison representative, attend the TRB meetings of the committee assigned,
- Review 5-6 papers within about 5 weeks in August-September, and
- Be proactive in contributing to committee scope, events, and interests.

In addition to reviewing the current membership, Chandra presented two certificates of appreciation. The first went to Joe Castiglione for his efforts in creating and maintaining the committee website (www.trb-forecasting.org). The second certificate was presented to Rick Donnelly for his role as activities coordinator, which included organizing the Sunday workshops, the mid-year meeting, and the 2006 Innovations in Travel Demand Modeling conference in Austin.

6. State of the Committee Report (Agenda Item 5)

The success of the scope change and the four research subcommittees was discussed, particularly the committee's contribution to the exchange of knowledge and implementation of activity-based models over the past four to five years. Members have been involved more intensively in

activities beyond paper reviews including Sunday workshops, mid-year meetings, and the Austin conference.

The committee chair position alternates between members of academia and practitioners. Chandra's term is expiring, so the new chair, Tom Rossi, will take over in April 2007. Kim thanked Chandra for his efforts and presented him with a certificate of appreciation.

7. Committee Report

a) 2007 TRB Review Process

The committee received 65 papers, not including papers received by the Transportation and Land Use Subcommittee. Leadership papers are also not included in this total. Chandra thanked Chuck Purvis for taking the lead on the paper review process as well as the entire group for the reviews.

b) 2007 TRB Paper Review Results

Of the 65 papers reviewed by the committee, 47 were submitted for both presentation and publication. 17 were submitted for presentation only, and just one was submitted for only publication. On average, there were 4.2 reviews per paper. Committee members averaged 3 reviews per person, while friends of the committee (71 were used in the review process) averaged 1.5 reviews per person. The committee accepted 28 papers for presentation, and there are 12 papers being considered for publication. The paper review results are summarized in more detail below.

- ADB40: 9 papers submitted for presentation only, 33 papers submitted for presentation and publication, 1 paper submitted for publication only. 17 papers accepted for presentation (acceptance rate 40%), 9 papers being considered for publication.
- ADB40(B) - integrated demand and supply modeling: 2 papers submitted for presentation only, 3 papers submitted for presentation and publication, 0 papers submitted for publication only. 2 papers accepted for presentation (acceptance rate 40%), 1 paper being considered for publication.
- ADB40(D) - advanced statistical techniques: 5 papers submitted for presentation only, 5 papers submitted for presentation and publication, 0 papers submitted for publication only. 4 papers accepted for presentation (acceptance rate 40%), 0 papers being considered for publication.
- ADA10(2) - statewide travel demand forecasting: 1 paper submitted for presentation only, 6 papers submitted for presentation and publication, 0 papers submitted for publication only. 5 papers accepted for presentation (acceptance rate 71%), 2 papers being considered for publication.

c) 2007 TRB workshops/sessions

The committee sponsored or co-sponsored four workshops, held three presentation sessions using the new 5-minute teaser/poster-preview format, 1 poster session, and 14 paper sessions

(the official paper session limit is 2.2 per committee; however, co-sponsorship allows for more sessions).

The committee discussed the new format of the 5-minute presentation sessions. Reactions to the new format were mixed. The general comments received on these sessions are summarized below.

- Comment 1: Sessions were excellent teasers for the interactive sessions; however, presentation standards still need work (i.e., guidance on font size).
- Comment 2: The 5-minute teaser is asking too much of the authors since they are now responsible for both a poster and a presentation.
- Comment 3: Is this the best use of session slots? One of these teaser sessions was not very well-attended, although the presentations were quite good.
- Comment 4: Has any thought been given to having long and short presentations, perhaps without having the poster session? *Response: This is being considered. In fact, 5-minute presentations are being considered; the use of them this year to screen posters was a way of testing these shorter presentations.*
- Comment 5: There was some disconnect between the 5-minute presentations and the poster sessions. Perhaps the presentation should be made during the poster session. *Response: This was attempted this year, but we haven't received feedback yet on how it went. In the ballrooms, it is difficult to get a congregation of people, and it can be quite loud.*

Finally, the committee discussed the conference format. Chuck Purvis posed a few questions to the group regarding the organization of sessions.

Question 1: This year, there were four sessions related to forecasting on Thursday morning. What are the committee's thoughts about having those sessions on Sunday?

- Response 1: There would be too many competing sessions in parallel on Sunday.
- Response 2: We should stick with Thursday. The more papers presented, the more likely attendants are to stay through Thursday.

Question 2: What about having more plenary sessions on Thursday morning?

- Response 1: Something must be done to anchor Thursday such as having this committee meeting on Thursday.
- Response 2: This seems to be more of an issue for US attendees. Maybe TRB should make the conference even longer?
- Response 3: The format as is works very well. The Sunday workshops are good, forward-looking, interactive, and generate good discussion (in fact, the Austin conference was spurred by a Sunday workshop). The Thursday morning sessions tend to be more relaxed, so participants can absorb more information.
- Response 4: Why were there four forecasting sessions scheduled all in one day? *Kim responded that there was not a slot where there wasn't a travel behavior or travel demand forecasting session, which is why subcommittee meetings were held at such odd*

hours. It's difficult to schedule these sessions and really know which sessions will compete with each other.

- Response 5: The Sunday workshops are a tremendous success. However, we should try harder to not have sessions in parallel. If need be, push sessions to Thursday, but do not consider going to Saturday.
- Response 6: We cannot compress the schedule, so let's do things on Thursday, taking into account the fatigue factor. *Kim responded that there is the possibility of having workshops on Thursday.*

d) Partnership with Transportation, Kluwer Journal (Martin Richards)

The publication is coming out in the fall of this year. It will not compete with Transportation Research Record.

8. Subcommittee Reports

a) Emerging Methods, Joan Walker and Laurie Garrow

The subcommittee's goal is to foster methodological innovations. Last year's initiative was demand and network integration. This topic was well covered this year with sessions at INFORMS, at the Sunday workshops, and the paper session. There will also be a session at WCTR. This year, there was no overarching theme. The group narrowed the discussion to social networks and travel behavior, beyond individual and intra-household interactions to focus on inter-household interactions. There will be a paper call on this topic, and a workshop will be coordinated for Amsterdam (announcement coming shortly, will be late September).

b) Integrated Transportation and Land Use, Eric Miller and Doug Hunt

The subcommittee sponsored one session this year. Last year, there was discussion of becoming a full committee, but this issue hasn't surfaced this year. People seem to be happy remaining a subcommittee. The subcommittee has several initiatives it would like to pursue:

- 1) The group would like to sponsor a workshop next year, since it hasn't had had one for two years. The workshop would emphasize applications and success stories to show that these models work and are in practice. The workshop might also highlight international experience as well. Finally, there would be an emphasis on reaching out to decision makers (e.g., managers and directors) to show policy relevance, with an emphasis on performance measures.
- 2) The subcommittee will put out a call for papers focusing on three main areas: demographics, firmographics, and data fusion/stitching.
- 3) Finally, the subcommittee would like to construct a website.

Rick Donnelly provided a brief summary for the three subcommittees listed below.

c) Research Agenda Development

The research subcommittee worked a great deal on this year's sessions and on WCTR. Additionally, the group will coordinate the committee's call for papers.

d) Web Development

The web development subcommittee and the committee website are definite successes. Two suggestions for additions to the site include: 1) adding a compendium of transportation and land use models, and 2) adding all slide presentations to the site. Finally, there is an opening on the subcommittee; the group nominated new member Billy Charlton to join.

e) Activities Coordination

The activities subcommittee has primarily been involved with the Austin conference. There will likely be a 2008 Innovations in Travel Demand Modeling Conference. The announcement should be ready next month, but there is still a question of funding. During the subcommittee meeting, Sunday workshops were discussed. Some feel there should be a maximum of two workshops on Sunday. Additionally, the group considered how the workshops will be summarized and made into a permanent record.

f) Data Information

David Levinson reported that the data subcommittee actually met in Zurich last week. David also distributed a copy of metropolitan summary statistics and referred the group to surveyarchive.org.

9. Funding Opportunity (Fred Ducca)

Fred discussed the outcome of two solicitations for further transit work. Louisiana State University was awarded funds for an evacuation study in New Orleans, and Resource Systems Group was awarded funds for a study in Burlington, Vermont. Fred outlined the funding requirements, pointing out cost sharing opportunities under SAFETEA-LU guidelines, and he let the group know that there will be a broad agency announcement. Fred also provided an update on TRANSIMS. It is now completely open source code, available in Windows, and is running on a single processor, so it's much faster than it used to be. He directed attendees to the web for more information. Finally, Fred mentioned that there is funding for research on methods development. The amount is targeted to support one student for one year plus half time for a faculty advisor.

10. Slideshow of Gordon Schultz

11. Additional Input to the Updated TRB Strategic Plan Objectives and Action Plan (Agenda Item 10) and Proposed 2008 TRB Activities – Workshops, Calls for Papers, Special Sessions, etc (Agenda Items 11)

Both items were previously discussed.

12. Reports/Announcements of Conferences, Meetings, Papers, Books, etc.

The following conferences were noted:

- a) 11th World Conference on Transport Research, June 24-28, 2007, Berkeley, California

- b) 11th TRB National Transportation Planning Applications Conference, May 6-10, 2007, Daytona Beach, Florida
- c) Innovations in Travel Demand Modeling Conference in Austin, May 2006
- d) IATBR Conference in Kyoto, August 2006

13. Research in Progress and Late Breaking News – Short Descriptions from the Floor

Keith Killough provided postcards for the Planning Applications conference and announced that the Planning Applications Committee is looking to partner for ½ a session next year.

Dick Pratt gave a status report on TCRP report 95 and noted that chapters are being individually published.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:57 AM.

Minutes prepared by: Rachel Gossen.