

**Privileged Information** – Minutes of all TRB meetings are regarded as privileged and not for public release without prior approval of the Executive Director.

### **Minutes of Committee Meeting**

Statistical Methodology and Statistical Computer Software in Transportation Research,  
ABJ80 (formerly A5011)

Marriott Wardman Hotel, Washington B4  
Washington, D.C.  
January 11, 2005  
8:00 AM – 11:00 AM

#### **1. Introductions**

The Chairman, Michael Griffith, called the meeting to order at 8:05 AM. Agendas were distributed (agenda attached). The chair opened the meeting by welcoming committee members and friends, which was followed by self-introductions of attendees. The chair circulated an attendance roster and membership list for validation (see attached).

#### **2. Minutes of 2004 Annual Meeting**

Jennifer Ogle distributed minutes of the previous meeting from January 2004. Committee members noted minor corrections. Linda Boyle made a motion to pass the minutes, Bob Scopatz seconded, and the committee approved the minutes by a unanimous vote (minutes attached).

#### **3. 2005 Conference Sessions**

- Session 329, Meta-Analysis and Alternatives to Meta-Analysis, Monday, January 10, 2005, 3:45-5:30, Marriott, Cotillion North
- Session 551, Presentations from the Bureau of Transportation Statistics Research Grants Program, Tuesday, January, 11, 2005, 3:45-5:30, Hilton, Lincoln East
- Session 570, Risk Analysis in Transportation, Tuesday, January, 11, 2005, 7:30-9:30, Marriott, Virginia B
- Session 517 (Poster Session), Papers from Statistical Methodology and Statistical Computer Software in Transportation Research Committee, Tuesday, January 11, 2005, 2:30-5:00, Marriott, Exhibit Hall A

#### **4. Paper Reviews**

Mohammad Qureshi chaired the paper reviews again this year. For the 2005 Annual Meeting of TRB, the committee received 26 papers overall, 24 were accepted for presentation, 2 were initially recommended for publication, and 5 for re-review.

Next year, paper review process will include an extra step. As reviewers are surveying papers, they will also be asked more explicitly to note in the review whether the paper should receive a paper award either from our committee or TRB.

The committee received two requests from other committees to review papers.

Gary Davis noted that the number of papers continues to increase and the size of the committee stays the same. Michael Griffith noted that TRB sets the number of members a TRB committee can have, but friends are welcomed to help with the paper review process and they have. Our committee is in a TRB section with other data and information committees. These data committees seem to be very interested in having us assist with paper reviews, which will generate more reviews.

A suggestion was made to find out how many total papers our members and friends reviewed especially those papers involving a review of statistical methodologies and techniques.

## **5. Paper Award Process**

Dominique has received a couple of suggestions for papers for the award process. In the near future, reviewers for these papers will be sought. Criteria include Contribution to Transportation, 40%, Breadth of Applicability, 15%, Logic and Methods, 30%, and Readability, 15%. These same criteria are used by TRB for major awards.

Mehdi suggested that the guidelines be distributed with the paper reviewers. Mohommad said that he couldn't put anything in the automated email; additional information must go out in a separate email.

Dominique suggested that the award guidelines be posted on committee web site.

## **6. TRB Data Section Research Subcommittee**

TRB coordinated a conference call on December 9, 2005 by members of data section committees. In all, 6 committees participated in the call. A secondary meeting was scheduled for Wednesday morning during the annual meeting. The topic of discussion is the current practices of committees in generating research problem statements. Committees have not shown a lot of initiative in writing them. Some of the problem statements generated by a committee may be relative to other committees and be crosscutting. TRB questioned how committees might be able to work together on these submissions. There are noted issues with idea ownership – where researchers put ideas out and someone else is contracted to do the research. A web-based problem statement management system was suggested. This system would require the appropriate pieces of information to be entered in the correct format.

Bob Scopatz asked whether Safety Data committee was involved. Bob has coordinated the development of a research problem statement circular for the Safety Data, Analysis and Evaluation Committee. Bob noted that when people do submit ideas, the format and required elements were not always provided.

Michael Griffith has two goals for the committee over the next two years: 1) Develop a set of problem statements to be published as a circular, and 2) Continue the activities of the Outreach committee by establishing partnerships with select committees within TRB's Data and Information Systems section. The committee should aim to have draft problem statements prepared for the mid-year meeting to be held in Boston. Bob Scopatz and Promod Chandhok volunteered to provide support to John Ivan.

Glenn Roberts mentioned that typically committees cannot put NCHRP problem statements forth, rather states submit the ideas. Mike Griffith indicated that the problem statements do get circulated to other funding agencies.

## **7. Activities of Outreach Subcommittee**

Mehdi Nassirpour updated the committee on the activities of the outreach subcommittee. This subcommittee is tasked with finding ways to expand and enhance our services to other committees. The general consensus of the subcommittee was to reach out and understand how we can provide technical assistance. Del Stewart chaired the committee and led a survey effort. Results of the survey are attached. Seven committees of the TRB Data and Information Systems Section responded to the survey. The majority of committees surveyed were interested in working with our committee, and having representatives of our committee visit their committees. Open-ended responses show that there is concern about statistical techniques used in research as well as need for assistance in reviewing papers.

Mike Griffith and Linda Boyle will be meeting with the data committees tomorrow to get more information on what assistance our committee can provide. At the Boston meeting, we will be on their agenda at the mid-year meeting. We will present the scope of our committee, what we have done in the past, and discuss potential partnerships.

Craig Roberts mentioned that he received a paper last year from another committee that was unacceptable. The committee is not a data committee, and Craig asked whether outreach activities were planned for other committees. Mike Griffith mentioned that we did not formally plan to go beyond the data committees presently, due to the potential to over committing the committee.

## **8. Mid-year meeting 2005**

The mid-year meeting of the statistics committee will be held in conjunction with the TRB's Joint Mid-year meeting in Boston, July 10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>. Hotel registration is now open for the summer meeting. Michael Griffith noted that the committee would be switching

from the ASA Joint Statistical Meetings this year in order to work with the data committees.

The ASA Joint Statistical Meeting will occur on August 7-11, with a meeting of the Transportation Interest Group. Signatures are still being solicited for general committee status. There will be a session on driving issues and statistics as well as a session with several presentations from BTS.

Mike Griffith passed around circulars from TRB on Census and Commodity Flow Meetings also occurring this summer.

All meeting circulars are attached.

## **9. Future Activities**

Linda Boyle distributed a handout compiling all of the ideas from previous meetings. These are mainly suggestions for future activities. Boldface items were considered high priorities last year – Linda questioned whether these should still be on the list.

Linda Boyle suggested a session entitled “What happens if you use the wrong methods?” Linda Boyle would be interested in helping with this session, Bob Scopatz (inappropriate methods), Mike Griffith (misuse of statistics), and Gary Davis (causal inferences) volunteered. Mike will go back and look at what the committee presented at the first “misuse of statistics” session when Olga Pendleton was chair. Lies, Darn Lies, and Statistics – Mohammad Qureshi suggested title. Methods of Madness – Jennifer Ogle suggested this title. Shaw-Pin Miaou and Cliff Spiegelman warned against using language in the title and presentations that would be construed as negative to the audience.

Mohammad Qureshi suggested a session/workshop on Bayesian methods given the number of papers we have received as a committee. The 2004 workshop “After the Crashes are Counted” was sponsored by our committee and covered Bayesian techniques. This session would provide more detail on how to use Bayesian methods. Dominique Lord, Shaw-Pin Miaou, Simon Washington, Bhagwant Persaud are all working on NCHRP 17-29 project which will cover these issues. A suggestion was made to include who would benefit from session in the description.

Ezra Hauer is finishing a 100-page paper titled “Cause and effect in observational cross-section studies in road safety. The committee may co-sponsor a workshop with Safety Data Committee on Ezra’s paper.

Promod Chandhok suggested a session of statistical issues in Travel and Freight Surveys, jointly with TRB travel and freight data committee.

Jennifer Ogle suggested reviving the PBS Series on Statistics – Video Theatre. There was great interest in getting information on the series. Mike will send information to the committee.

Tim Coburn suggested via e-mail a session on predicting the cost of fuels and effects on consumer response.

## **10. Rotation of Members**

This year, the committee must rotate 1/3 of the members off the committee. Mike asked for suggestions for new members, especially state and local practitioners. Jennifer Ogle will be resigning, as secretary and Mike Griffith will be looking for a replacement.

## **11. Open Discussion**

The chair announced that TRB is seeking comments on the 2002 Critical Issues in Transportation (14 issues) document. TRB wants committees to review the issues to ensure these are still the right and the most important issues to focus on.

Promod Chandhok made an announcement regarding the ASA Joint Statistical meetings. The government statistics and survey methods groups are interested in sponsoring a session with transportation group. The transportation statistics group is looking for interested parties. Promod will coordinate the transportation presentations at the Joint Statistical Meetings.

Bob Scopatz announced dates for Traffic Records Forum - Sunday, July 31 through August 4 in Buffalo. More information can be obtained in exhibit hall and at [www.atsip.org](http://www.atsip.org).

Rick Pain was not able to attend.

Dates for TRB will change to January 22-26<sup>th</sup> in 2006. Will return back to normal week in 2008.

The chair adjourned meeting at 10:52.