Minutes of the AASHTO Task Force for Roadside Safety Meeting  
September 20-22, 2000  
Jackson, Wyoming

The AASHTO Task Force for Roadside Safety (TFRS) convened as scheduled at 8 am on September 20th. All members were present with the exceptions of Ken Hurst (KS), Charles Goessel (NJ), Arthur Perkins (NY), Mark Marek (TX), and the newly-appointed member from Connecticut, Daniel Gladowski. A current Task Force roster is attached. (NOTE: Dave, I will need a copy of the updated roster) Other attendees included Nick Artimovich, Martha Kapitanov, Charlie McDevitt, and Len Metczkowski from FHWA in Washington, and Roland Stanger from the Federal Highway Administration’s South Dakota office; Hussain Ghera (LA DOT), Jim Beatty and Kevin Sylvester (HNTB), Tim Hess (TRB), and Jim McDonnell and Linda Graves from AASHTO. Michael Radbill, an engineer from Trauner Consulting Services in Philadelphia, PA was present for the second day of the meeting.

After brief self-introductions by those present, the final draft minutes of the previous years’ meeting were approved as submitted.

Since several of the TFRS members were present for the Task Force 13 meeting which took place on Monday and Tuesday, Tim Hess gave only a short summary of the on-going NCHRP Projects whose results may be incorporated into the NEXT edition of the AASHTO Roadside Design Guide. A somewhat expanded summary had been done the previous day to the joint TF-13/TFRS meeting, as reported in the attached minutes prepared by TF-13 Secretary, Nick Artimovich. Note that detailed project descriptions and status can be found on NCHRP’s web site as noted in the TF-13 minutes.

One project of immediate concern, however, is NCHRP Project 22-09, “Improved Procedures for the Cost Effectiveness Evaluation of Roadside Safety Features.” This effort resulted in the development of a computer program called RSAP (Roadside Safety Analysis Program) intended to replace ROADSIDE in the forthcoming revision of the Roadside Design Guide. The project panel has only recently agreed to release this project because there had been disagreement over the accuracy of some of the input variables, notably encroachment rates. NCHRP will contract with the principle investigator to prepare an executive summary that will replace the current Appendix A in the RDG. A decision will be made at a later date whether or not a computer disc containing the RSAP program itself will be included with the updated RDG or if it will be made available separately.

NCHRP Project 17-20 was initiated to provide technical support to the TFRS. To this end, Tim Hess provided the task force members with copies of an RFP developed to provide editing and technical assistance to prepare the draft RDG update for publication. The firm Trauner Consulting Services has been selected for this task, and was represented at the meeting by Michael Radbill. Tasks and schedules established to complete this work will be discussed below.

Additional tasks under Project 17-20 were then discussed. Three proposed projects emerged from the discussion: the first was an effort to have the RDG reviewed to identify and reference
the specific research that was used as a basis for specific recommendations contained in the Guide. A second task proposed under this effort would be the compilation of an overall database identifying all pertinent roadside safety research by category. However, after some deliberation, the Task Force members decided to postpone the second task. Cota and Hattaway agreed to draft the RFP for this effort which is expected to cost approximately $50,000.

A second project identified for Project 17-20 was an evaluation of the flare rates recommended in the RDG for permanent barrier installations. It was expected this analysis could be done using the RSAP program and would cost about $50,000. Ayton and Seitz will draft the RFP for this effort.

The last item identified for Project 17-20 was an evaluation of the crashworthiness of heavier mailboxes (vandal-proof/secure designs), an effort slated to cost $25,000. Christiansen and Taylor will develop the RFP for this project.

Some discussion on the status of the AASHTO Guide for Protective Screening of Overpass Structures concluded that most of the information in this document was included in the AASHTO Bridge Specifications or LRFD Specifications and that the Guide should be assigned to the Bridge Subcommittee and probably archived. The RDG should only reference this topic.

Two new research proposals were recommended by the Task Force. The first was an updated analysis of vehicle trajectories on slopes and ditches. Current recommendations in the RDG are based on limited research conducted over 25 years ago with passenger cars only. These recommendations need to be revised to include the current vehicle fleet which contains a large percentage of vans, minivans, and sport utility and 4-wheel drive vehicles. Walker drafted a project statement and subsequently circulated it via e-mail to all Task Force members for review and comment prior to its submission to NCHRP.

The second proposal was for a state-of-the-practice synthesis of aesthetic roadside and median treatments in urban/suburban areas with an emphasis on identifying designs that provide the desired aesthetics without seriously effecting the safety aspects of the roadside. Albin drafted a project statement for this topic and sent an electronic copy to all Task Force members for review and comments.

The remainder of the meeting was spent discussing the format, scheduling, and content of the RDG update. Because the progress of this effort had slipped, a consultant has been contracted by NCHRP to do a final edit to prepare the draft RDG for balloting by AASHTO and for final publication. As noted above, Michael Radbill of Trauner Consulting Services, will do this work.

Because of impending retirements of Goessel and Perkins, some chapters were reassigned lead authors. Lead authors are now as follows: Chapters 1-3 - Ayton; chapters 4 and 7 - Walker; chapter 5 - Cota; chapters 6 and 8 - Seitz; chapters 9 and 11 - Taylor; chapter 10 and the Glossary - Buchan. Task Force members were requested to provide chapter authors with all comments that were discussed at the meeting for their respective chapters by September 30 if possible. Chapter authors were requested to provide their revised chapters to Chairman Little by the end of October so the draft can then be formatted by the consultant for submission of a ballot.
draft to AASHTO by the end of November.

Task Force members were also requested to e-mail the consultant directly a list of terms suggested for inclusion in an index, which previous editions of the RDG did not have. His e-mail address is mike.radbill@traunerconsulting.com.