

MAP-21 FACT SHEET V2

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SUBJECT: Performance Goals in MAP-21

PROBLEM STATEMENT:

MAP-21 requires the establishment of national performance measures in the areas of safety, infrastructure condition, congestion reduction, system reliability, freight movement and economic vitality, environmental sustainability, and reduced project delivery delays. Developing a common set of performance measures that are appropriate for all states is challenging due to wide differences among states in base conditions, environment, state resources and economic conditions.

RECOMMENDATION:

Focus on trends and a balanced management approach instead of short-term target setting.

Provide broad federal vision and policy goals.

Develop performance measures that are SMART:

S = Specific. Measures must be clear and focused to avoid misinterpretation. They must include measurement assumptions and definitions, and be interpreted easily and consistently.

M = Measurable. Measures must be quantifiable and comparable to other data. They must allow for meaningful statistical analysis.

A = Attainable. Measures must be achievable, reasonable, and credible.

R = Realistic. Measures must fit into the organization's budgetary constraints and be cost-effective.

T = Timely. Measures must be do-able within a given time frame.

Quality should be emphasized over quantity.

Definitions must be consistent and data must be collected and reported over the same time periods.

Inform States on how the performance measures will be utilized.

Provide funding stream for data collection.

Special attention must be given in developing and comparing performance measures:

1. Understand outcome information. Before drawing conclusions about performance, users must obtain explanations, especially for particularly high or low performance levels.
2. Develop a management review process so there is effective decision making based on data.
3. Understand definitions and data collection procedures. This can be a reason for differences between states.
4. Understand factors outside the agency's control. For example, traffic fatality rates can also be affected by the distribution of rural versus urban roadways, average age of drivers and adverse weather conditions.
5. Consider the synergy among transportation projects. Measures should be system-wide and realize that the overall goals of safety, congestion reduction, system reliability and environmental sustainability require highway can be achieved by combinations of highway, transit, pedestrian, freight, and other projects.

When interpreting performance measures:

1. Understand that metrics do not include all possible outcomes that can be important for the service. For example if traffic fatalities are selected as a performance measure, other data, such as injury rates, collisions, congestion and travel time increases might not be compared. State reports should focus on a small number of indicators for which reasonably accurate data are available and important to state agencies and the public.
2. Do not base judgments as to whether particular states or particular state agencies are performing well or poorly solely on the data shown in charts. Instead, they must seek reasons for unusually good or poor results.
3. Consider the values for a state's performance metrics and the amount of difference with those of other states. The differences in value may be small and may not be of much practical significance.
4. Trends in performance are important. Progress in improving performance is a desired outcome.

BACKGROUND:

Performance measures were initiated by the Department over a decade ago as part of the development of the California Transportation Plan. Performance measures were developed through partnerships and consensus with the public, stakeholders, and decision makers to establish a solid basis in developing transportation plans, investment strategies, and programs.

More recently in 2004, an effort was initiated as a result of Business, Transportation, and Housing Performance Improvement Initiative. In response to the Initiative's call for improved effectiveness and efficiency of transportation decision-making, transportation stakeholders reached consensus on nine performance outcome/measure areas. The stakeholders represented public and private sector interests and included representation from the Federal Highway Administration, California Transportation Commission, metropolitan planning organizations, regional agencies, cities, counties, rural agencies, transit agencies and the port authorities.

As a result of the Department's efforts, performance measures are incorporated in many of the transportation plans and documents including but not limited to the Strategic Plan, Smart Mobility Framework, Regional Transportation Plans, State Transportation Improvement Plan (including the Regional Transportation Improvement Plan and the Interregional Transportation Improvement Plan), Corridor System Management Plan, and State Highway Safety Plan.

Challenges in the past have included a lack of resources, lack of management commitment, unclear linkage to real world decisions, and technology development/deployment.

Many states now have experience with performance measurement, particularly in transportation. While the costs of establishing performance measurement systems can be high, costs can be managed by focusing on a few, key national policy goals and metrics. Quality should be emphasized over quantity.

It is sometimes more important that a trend be established than an arbitrary target be met. Therefore, the focus should be on trends instead of short term targets. Performance measurement is just one decision tool in the program management, policy development and funding processes.

Use performance measurement as a process improvement management tool and possibly as a method to provide incentives rather than disincentives. Performance measurement reporting could become a requirement for funding

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and help to build a national transportation database. Performance comparisons can be used to reshape programs, identify issues for national attention, and identify best practices for sharing.

National measures must be broad to address national vision and policy. Measures can then be described in more detail by states and regions to address local conditions. A collaborative performance management processes among federal, state and regional agencies is necessary to develop SMART performance measures and to avoid building more bureaucratic silos. There should be synergy among programs aimed at benefitting transportation, energy, the environment, access to health care, housing, employment and other areas of federal funding and policy. Developing performance measures that will work in harmony with these other program areas is essential to success. Congress, the Administration, states and regions must address a variety of issues and determine what needs to be accomplished, not just by agency, particularly in areas where there are cross-cutting management problems across government.

In addition, MAP-21 requires states to develop and use a risk and performance based asset management system. The assets to be included in the initial plan are bridge and pavement on the National Highway System. The definition of the National Highway System is being expanded to include bridges and roads that are not owned or operated by the state. This will require the cooperation of local partners.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Participate in dialogue and advocate for adoption of performance measures that are similar to those that we use now.

Pro: After the performance measures are established, states will be required to set targets and report progress in meeting those targets. Participating in the dialogue offers a potential long term reduction in reporting requirements.

Con: More up-front cost now.

2. Do nothing.

Pro: saves time and resources now.

Cons: We could be faced with the adoption of performance measures that are totally new and costly to track and manage.

PROPOSED IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE:

To be determined

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Attachment(s) None yet

<Map-21 Citation, US Code Citation, and CA Statute Affected >