

**Research and Technology Advisory Panel (RTAP)
Executive Committee Meeting Minutes**

Monday, March 12, 2007, 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Caltrans Headquarters, Director's Conference Room (1121), 1120 N St., Sacramento

Attendees

RTAP Executive Committee: Genevieve Giuliano, (Chair); Maged Dessouky, Susan Handy, Samer Madanat, Steve Ritchie, Dan Sperling, Brian Taylor, and Pravin Varaiya

Ex-officio Members: Barry Sedlik, Business Transportation and Housing Agency (BTH); John Barna, California Transportation Commission (CTC); Will Kempton.

Caltrans Staff: Gail Ogawa, Larry Orcutt; Joan Sollenberger, Tom West, Fred Dial, Jeffrey Ingles, Richard Nordahl, Horacio Paras, Agustin Rosales, Nathan Smith, Virginia Tomasian, Christine Azevedo, Nancy Chinlund, Dave Clark, Tori Kanzler, Greg Larson, Joe Palen, and George Smith

Minutes: Minutes of the 11/28/06 meeting were approved, with no changes.

Role and Priorities of RTAP Ex-officio Members

- Ex-officio members serve as advisors to the committee and liaison to their organizations.
- As initial comments Barry Sedlick said BTH endorses RTAP help in vetting the incorporation of technology into decision making. BTH would like RTAP to focus on near-term decisions more than longer-term implementation
- John Barna noted that the CTC is interested in the role of technology in Demand Management and in performance measures that focus on benefits, rather than projects.
- Director Kempton arrived during the discussion and thanked the Committee for coming to the meeting today

Format for RTAP Executive Committee Input

- The RTAP can provide one-on-one discussions, email, white papers, short presentations, and so forth.
- Caltrans supports whatever is easiest for the RTAP. Can this process be more adaptable?
- The CTC would like RTAP help in educating the public, including white papers, research, etc., for the public forum and discussions with public constituents.
- The RTAP cannot give definitive information, but we can offer some guidance. For many questions key people need to know the "California" perspective on an issue.
- (***Staff Note:** The committee seemed to favor short white papers and e-mail-based quick responses, rather than research reports. An Ex-officio member can request information from a researcher on the committee, but any requests should come through Gen, as the RTAP Chair, and any response would represent the committee.*)

ACTION ITEM: By the end of the month (March 2007), the Ex-Officio members will consider the broader committee areas and provide the RTAP Executive Committee with guidance.

RTAP Committee Discussions

Each Committee chair discussed key questions that should be addressed by the Committee and presented ideas about the Committee membership. (Presentation handouts from each Chair are available on the website.)

The following notes reflect some of the discussion following each presentation.

Pravin Varaiya – Advanced Research and Technology

- BTH recommends that RTAP not exclude system expansion. Decisions about infrastructure we build today should allow us to take advantage of advances in technology later.
- CTC suggests that the Committee could review guidelines for the Corridor Management Plans. We're talking about reviewing the *guidelines* for the plans, not the plans themselves.
- The CTC would like comments on AB32 implementation, as well.
- Caltrans would like discussion of how to implement good ideas and sort out those that may not work as well.
- The Committees may be more useful and effective at "critique," rather than "recommendations."

Maged Dessouky – Goods Movement

- BTH wants to know what's deployable, not what's ready. What can integrate with the existing system?
- The RTAP committees can help frame questions and analyses for studies, so when Caltrans invests in a study, you get something useful.
- Will Kempton commented that goods movement is one subject requiring immediate attention. Don't limit your look at goods movement to a short-term timeframe.

Brian Taylor – Finance/Pricing:

- The existing literature about finance and pricing offers extensive guidance to the Committee on these issues.
- Two of the most urgent issues, according to Will Kempton, are congestion pricing and goods movement. Transportation finance has a political side and the RTAP should focus on pricing issues and the collection and operational mechanisms, including who pays and how they pay.

Samer Madanat - Asset Management

- For Caltrans a new pavement Management System and the SHOPP are key topics. We are making investment decisions about maintaining infrastructure, but we don't have information we need. Prioritizing safety and operations investments versus infrastructure investment is a critical issue.
- The RTAP committee wants to know what questions are important to Caltrans. The committee can help identify issues that Caltrans isn't yet thinking about. They could

look at assets related to transportation, including right of way, buildings, and workforce technical capacity.

Steve Ritchie - Operations Committee

- This is another issue of “leap-frog” technology. A systematic decision making process makes it harder for people to make bad decisions. The committee could look at creating or stimulating the creation of these processes.
- Caltrans staff noted that vehicles are a rich source of operations data on traffic, weather, incidents, etc. We could move from in-road detection to vehicle-based detection.

Dan Sperling - Energy and Climate (Changed from “Energy Committee”)

- Larry Orcutt noted that energy and climate are pertinent short-term and long-term issues.

Committee Logistics

- Committee membership will depend on the questions asked.
- In the TRB executive model, experts rely on experts, but at the end of the day, it is the Chair’s option.
- Discussion about Committees having quarterly meetings on different topics.
- There are several ways to communicate: White paper are more in-depth; Email offers quick response; In-person allows exchange of presentation and Q&A.
- No final conclusion was reached about Committee structure. The Committees can stay informal. At the next meeting we’ll decide what questions we’ll address.
- Tom West commented from Caltrans’ perspective regarding “conflict of interest” that the RTAP Committee Chairs need to be aware of whom you invite to participate.
- Gen Giuliano noted that there’s no consensus on whether the RTAP Executive Committee needs to sanction the committee membership, so that issue is tabled.

Next Steps

1. Future meetings will be held in three months and six months. Staff will send out a calendar.
2. Feedback from the Ex-officio members will be received by the end of March.
3. Decisions about formality of committee structure will be addressed at the next meeting.