

TRB Technical Activities Council Selects 2015 Blue Ribbon Committees Award Winners

The TRB Technical Activities Council (TAC) Blue Ribbon Committees Program recognizes exemplary best practice standing committee activities and the volunteer efforts associated with those activities. The Blue Ribbon Committees serve as role models, with committee Chairs and members sharing their experiences with others.

The TRB Technical Activities Council is pleased to announce that the following TRB standing committees have been selected as 2015 Blue Ribbon Committees.

Category	Committee Name	Code	Group/Section	Project/Activities
1. Community Building & Mentoring	Committee on Traffic Flow Theory and Characteristics	AHB45	Operations & Preservation Group/Operation Section	Engaging young diverse participants through innovative and inclusive outreach; and collaboration in research, education and training
2. Advancing Research	Transportation Asset Management	ABC40	Policy & Organization Group/Management & Leadership Section	Turning research needs statements into NCHRP funded research projects
3. Contributing to TRB and the Transportation Community	Standing Committee on Roundabouts	ANB75	Safety & Systems Users Group/Safety Section	Facilitating implementation of roundabouts through innovative dissemination and outreach of research and best practices
	Joint Subcommittee on Active Traffic Management (Honorable Mention)	AHB20(5)	Operations & Preservation Group/Operation Section	Advancing advanced traffic management concept as innovative approach to improve safety and travel

The recognitions of TAC 2015 TAC Blue Ribbon Committees include the following:

- Presentation of certificate to the committee Chair at Deen Lecture & Awards Session at 2015 TRB Annual Meeting

- Name badge ribbons for committee members at 2015 Annual Meeting
- Recognition in TRB Chairman's Luncheon program and reserved seating for Blue Ribbon Committee Chairs
- Recognition in 2015 TRB Annual Meeting issue of *TR News*
- Use of 2015 TAC Blue Ribbon Committee logo by Committee on their website and materials
- Possible request(s) for Blue Ribbon Committees to help mentor other committees

TRB and the Technical Activities Council congratulate the Chairs and members of each of the four 2015 Blue Ribbon Committees for this well deserved recognition!

Additional background on the TAC Blue Ribbon Committees Award Program and the award winners is contained on the following pages.

TRB Technical Activities Council Blue Ribbon Committees Program

Background

The TRB Technical Activities Council (TAC) appreciates the critical role volunteers play in the success of standing committees and related activities. The TAC is committed to recognizing these voluntary contributions through numerous methods. At the same time, the TAC is committed to encouraging innovation in committee activities, promoting new approaches, incorporating new technologies, and sharing best practices. The TAC Blue Ribbon Committees Program addresses all of these elements.

Goal

The goal of the TAC Blue Ribbon Committees Program is to recognize exemplary best practice committee activities and the volunteer efforts associated with those activities. The Blue Ribbon Committees can serve as role models, with committee chairs and members sharing their experiences with others.

Recognition Categories

The TAC may recognize one Blue Ribbon Committee in each of the following four categories each year.

- Communications (websites, newsletters, e-newsletters, listserves, wikis, social media, etc.)
- Community Building and Mentoring (outreach to new members, young members, and international members; utilizing committee friends; outreach to other organizations and groups, involving new stakeholders; etc.)
- Advancing Research (developing research needs statements, maintaining research needs databases, preparing reports documenting committee-conducted or sponsored research, successfully linking research projects to sponsors, assisting with disseminating research results and technology transfer, etc.)
- Contributing to TRB and the Transportation Community (sponsoring or co-sponsoring conferences, workshops, webinars; developing theme issues and articles for *TR News*; sharing of best practices with other committees, etc.)

Selection Criteria

The TAC will use the following criteria in evaluating the Blue Ribbon Committee nominations:

- Innovation – using technologies, methods, or approaches in new and innovative ways;
- Results and Accomplishments – successful outcomes of the activity; and
- Transferability – ability of other committees to use the same technique or similar approach.

Process and Schedule

Nominations will be requested from Sections and Groups each year. Each Section/Group may nominate one or more of their committees in each of the four categories. Nominations are due to the TAC in September.

The description of the Committee's best practice activities shall be no longer than 500 words and must relate specifically to the category for which the committee is being nominated. Activities do not have to be limited to the current year, but should include recent activities up to and including the current year. Nominations of committees that won previous Blue Ribbon Committee Awards are acceptable providing that the nomination is based primarily on activities/programs other than those for which the committee won an earlier award.

A subcommittee of the TAC will review the nominations based on the selection criteria and recommend selection of a Blue Ribbon Committee in each of the four categories. The subcommittee may also recommend an honorable mention in each category. The recommendations will be considered by the full TAC during its fall conference call and final selections will be made.

Blue Ribbon Committee Recognition

The Blue Ribbon Committees will be recognized at the TRB Annual meeting in a number of different ways. The Blue Ribbon Committees will each be recognized at the Deen Lecture on Monday, along with the paper awards. The committees will also be recognized during the TRB Chairman's Luncheon program, with a special table reserved for Blue Ribbon Committee Chairs. The Blue Ribbon Committees will also be listed in the *TR News*. Blue Ribbon Committees retain the designation into the future with the date of the award, which can be featured on webpages and other committee materials along with the TAC Blue Ribbon Committee logo for that year. The committee Chair or other member may be asked to assist with Chair training sessions to highlight the best practice(s) for which the committee was recognized.

Previous Blue Ribbon Committee Award Winners

2014:

- Communications: **Travel Survey Methods** ABJ40 (Policy & Organization Group-Data & Information Systems Section) for ensuring that the travel survey community has access to the best and most up-to-date information, documentation, and details on survey methods
- Community Building & Mentoring: **Women's Issues in Transportation** ABE70 (Policy & Organization Group-Policy Section) for cooperatively pursuing activities with the Women's Transportation Seminar that enhance the professional development and career advancement of women in the industry
- Advancing Research: **Operational Effects of Geometrics & Geometric Design Committees** (joint effort) AHB65 & AFB10 (Operations & Preservation Group-Operations Section; Design & Construction Group-Design Section) for jointly developing a strategic geometric design research program in consultation with AASHTO Technical Committee on Geometric Design

- Contributing to the Transportation Community (tie): **Conduct of Research** ABG10 (Policy & Organization Group-Research & Education Section) for championing and leading a variety of TRB activities, special initiatives and ongoing partnerships contributing to TRB and the transportation research community
- Contributing to the Transportation Community (tie): **Urban Transportation Data and Information Systems** ABJ30 (Policy & Organization Group-Data & Information Systems Section) for expanding the depth of research on urban transportation data through a number of joint subcommittees devoted to emerging transportation data issues

2013:

- Communications: **Public Involvement in Transportation** ADA60 (Planning & Environment Group. Transportation System Policy, Planning and Process Section) for “Communicating Concepts with John and Jane Q. Public”
- Community Building & Mentoring: **Railroad Operation Safety** AR070 (Rail Group) for “Young Members Scholarship Program”
- Advancing Research: **Highway Safety Performance** ANB25 (Systems Users Group; Safety Section) for “Highway Safety Manual”
- Contributing to TRB and the Transportation Community: **Transportation Network Modeling** ADB30 (Planning & Environment Group; Travel Analysis Methods Section) for “Improving Connections with Practitioners”

2015 BLUE RIBBON COMMITTEE

Community Building & Mentoring

Committee on Traffic Flow Theory and Characteristics (AHB45)

Chair: Robert Bertini

Website: <http://tft.ceng.calpoly.edu/>

Operations & Preservation Group – Operations Section

The Committee on Traffic Flow Theory and Characteristics, one of the largest and most active committees, makes a remarkable impact on community building and mentoring of diverse younger transportation colleagues. The past three committee chairs (serving 1992-2015) were accepted and adopted as students, with continuous support and mentorship became full members and leaders in the field. This culture and tradition continues: friends participate as students, become young members, full members, and committee and community leaders. We warmly welcome diverse participants to our activities; openly collaborate with other committees and international organizations, in research, education and training. We combine 50 years of well-tested and innovative approaches, which can easily be transferred to other committees:

- Membership diversity: geography (15 international + 23 US); gender/race (17 women/minorities); and organization (32 university + 1 lab + 3 agency + 2 private), 4 representatives from state DOTs and FHWA;
- Strong network of >675 friends: active with subcommittees, later become members;
- Stimulating/collegial environment, especially toward younger colleagues; first committee to start a Doctoral Student Workshop;
- Greenshields Prize: now sought-after award and young researcher award;
- Nine subcommittees and one joint subcommittee where friends and young members are encouraged to serve/lead:
- Joint Subcommittee on Transportation Simulation (co-sponsored by seven committees):
- Newsletter/Annual Report
- Website
- Annual Transportation Simulation Workshop
- Webinars (with Institute of Transportation Engineers' SimCap)
 - Outreach and Diversity subcommittee encouraging non-traditional participants
 - Publication of papers, and other high-impact documents, including:
 - TR Circular E-C149, 75 Years of the Fundamental Diagram for Traffic Flow Theory;
 - Traffic Flow Theory Monographs and Millennium Paper, important for students and new entrants to field;
 - Technology transfer/outreach
 - Social media: Facebook with nearly 500 followers, Google+, YouTube, Flickr, committee website,
 - Monthly Newsletters
 - Traffic Flow Webinars: 43 monthly since 2010, average 30 participants.
 - Google Scholar page listing impact of 520 papers contributed to 60 issues of the Transportation Research Record with more than 10,000 citations.

We strategically collaborate with international organizations INFORMS, ITSA, ISTTT, ISTS, NEARCTIS, MULTITUDE, TRISTAN and the physics community, bringing together young and seasoned professionals. Midyear meetings in even numbered years alternate between U.S. and international venues, including joint meeting with European MULTITUDE project, and Committee on Highway Capacity and Quality of Service (AHB40). In odd numbered years we collaborate with ISTTT for our midyear event.

Our commitment to community building and mentoring is firmly cemented in our Triennial Strategic Plan, emphasizing:

- Significant presentations and publications through the Annual Meeting.
- Increased interactions with state DOTs and practitioners.
- Growing the expertise level of the transportation simulation community through SimSub.
- Development of materials for teaching fundamentals of Traffic Flow Theory.
- Encouragement and mentoring of graduate students and young professionals, particularly to convey the history of traffic flow theory research so that future research can successfully build on the past efforts of the best scholars.

2015 BLUE RIBBON COMMITTEE

Advancing Research

Transportation Asset Management (ABC40)

Chair: Kathryn Zimmerman

Website: <https://sites.google.com/site/trbcommitteeabc40>

Policy & Organization Group – Management & Leadership Section

One of the primary roles of a TRB committee is to identify and develop research needs to advance the state of the practice. Other roles involve sharing information about on-going research activities with TRB participants and disseminating research results through workshops, conferences, and other methods.

The Transportation Asset Management (TAM) Committee (ABC40) has experienced phenomenal success over the last several years in turning research needs statements into funded research projects through the National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP). In the past few years alone, the following Committee Research Needs have been funded:

- NCHRP 08-36, Task 114: TAM for Ancillary Structures
- NCHRP 08-36, Task 116, Development of Transportation Asset Management Plan Templates.
- NCHRP 08-36, Task 125, TAM Knowledge Portal.
- NCHRP 08-69, Supplement to the AASHTO Transportation Asset Management Guide: Volume 2 – A Focus on Implementation.
- NCHRP 08-87, Successful Practices in GIS-Based Asset Management.
- NCHRP 08-90, TAM Gap Analysis Tool.
- NCHRP 08-91, Cross-Asset Resource Allocation and the Impact on System Performance.
- NCHRP 08-93, Managing Risk Across the Enterprise: A Guidebook for State Departments of Transportation.
- NCHRP Project 20-05, Topic 43-01, Use of TAM Principles in State Highway Agencies.
- NCHRP 20-07/Task 315, TAM for Ancillary Structures.

A key to ABC40's success in advancing research efforts has been the partnership that has been established with the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials' (AASHTO) Subcommittee on Asset Management. This partnership, which has been in place since ABC40 first became a standing committee, includes the following:

- Participation in monthly phone calls with the leadership of the AASHTO Subcommittee, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and ABC40. During the calls, the AASHTO representative often identifies opportunities for research needs statements to be submitted in support of various NCHRP programs. As these opportunities are identified, the Chair of ABC40 either submits a research problem statement already developed by the Committee or reaches out to Committee members for help in developing a problem statement on a topic suggested by the AASHTO Subcommittee or FHWA.
- Opportunities for the Chair of ABC40 to discuss research needs at each AASHTO Subcommittee meeting so that the feedback from Subcommittee members can be incorporated into the research problem statements prepared by the ABC40 Committee

members. At one of the AASHTO Subcommittee meetings each year, the ABC40 Chair presents the research needs statements that have been developed by the TRB Committee and asks the AASHTO Subcommittee members to prioritize the topics. A committee is then formed to finalize the problem statements for the top 3 to 5 research topics. The committee is comprised of members of both ABC40 and the AASHTO Subcommittee on Asset Management.

- Joint meetings with the AASHTO Subcommittee each year at the TRB Annual Meetings to discuss common research needs. The partnership that has been established has benefited AASHTO, FHWA, and TRB. Not only has it led to the identification of research statements that address the needs of practitioners, it has also fostered stronger involvement by state practitioners in TRB activities and has contributed to advancing the state of the practice.

2015 BLUE RIBBON COMMITTEE

Contributing to TRB and the Transportation Community **Standing Committee on Roundabouts (ANB75)**

Chair: Eugene Russell
Safety & Systems Users Group – Safety Section

The Standing Committee on Roundabouts has consistently taken a leadership position as it pursued its scope to “serve as a forum for discussions about roundabout research, projects, policy, and practices for all interested stakeholders,” continually taking advantage of all available mediums to “facilitate the exchange of research knowledge.” The leadership manifests itself in an array of activities within TRB and serving the broader national and international transportation community. Past and present Committee members have contributed to roundabout informational guides published by FHWA (2000) and NCHRP (2010) and have influenced the practices of many state departments of transportation.

Interest has continually grown for the Committee-sponsored triennial International Conference on Roundabouts, including successful conferences in Vail, CO (2005), Kansas City, KA (2008), Carmel, IN (2011), and Seattle, WA (2014). The 2014 conference call led to over 350 participants and over 120 presentations on a range of topics including design, implementation, and operation of roundabouts, both in the United States and worldwide. Post-conference evaluations reveal high participant satisfaction, with respondents pointing to the content, networking, and personal growth they get out of the gathering. A sample of comments includes:

- “I can’t say enough of how impressed I was with the total experience of the conference.”
- “It gave me a lot to think about with roundabout design.” -“There was an excellent variety of topics.”
- “Overall, it was one of the best conferences I've attended.”

In the last year and a half, the Committee has conducted six TRB webinars, with another proposed for early 2015. All have had high attendance, with several reaching over 1,000 participants. All have received excellent ratings, along with comments such as, “excellent information, top-notch speakers.”

The Committee listserv has over 400 participants, which include many well-known experts worldwide as well as novices looking to learn. The listserv stimulates discussion concerning roundabouts on a daily basis, recently averaging four to five posts per day.

In addition to sponsoring the standard two lectern sessions and poster sessions for the TRB Annual Meeting, the Roundabout Committee has sponsored three Human Factors Workshops (2000, 2008, and 2013), and several free Sunday workshops. Also, for the past five TRB Annual Meetings, and again planned for 2015, the Committee has conducted a day long, walk-in video theatre reaching close to 100 attendees to roundabout benefits and issues.

Most recently, with a commitment to engaging more than just formal members, the Roundabout Committee conducted an experimental webinar-based midyear meeting in August 2014. Using a new platform (GoToWebinar) allowing for higher capacity, the two-hour meeting had about 50 participants and proved to be a successful first venture with this medium. The committee is committed to conducting similar meetings in the future having received such

positive feedback as, “Great meeting format, makes the midyear meeting achievable for those of us who can't get travel approval”, and “Let’s do this again!”

The Committee has been energetic, innovative and strongly connected to the profession.

2015 BLUE RIBBON COMMITTEE

Contributing to TRB and the Transportation Community (Honorable Mention)

Joint Subcommittee on Active Traffic Management (AHB20(5))

Chair: Beverly Kuhn

Operations & Preservation Group – Operations Section

The Joint Subcommittee on Active Traffic Management has played a pivotal role in advancing the Advanced Traffic Management (ATM) concept as an innovative approach to improve safety and travel on congested freeways, in addition to fostering the establishment of an ATM community within TRB and globally within the transportation profession. This advancement has been a direct result of the Subcommittee working collaboratively with the primary sponsoring committee, the Freeway Operations Committee (AHB20), and the eight other co-sponsoring TRB Committees: User Information Systems (AND20), Managed Lanes (AHB35), Traffic Control Devices (AHB35), Traffic Signal Systems (AHB25), Intelligent Transportation Systems (AHB15), Operational Effects of Geometrics (AHB65), Regional Transportation System Management and Operations (AHB0), and Traffic Flow Theory and Characteristics (AHB45).

The concept of ATM emerged out of a 2006 international scan which participated in AHB20's 1st International Freeway and Tolling Operations Conference in Athens, Greece. The Subcommittee was formed in 2009 to bring together a diverse representation of TRB committees to focus on research, best practices, and multi-disciplinary collaboration on a wide range of ATM activities and issues. Since its inception, the Subcommittee has built a membership base of over 160 international professionals—many of whom are new to the TRB community—and fostered an ongoing dialog on ATM as part of an overall operations discussion. It has hosted meetings at the TRB Annual Meeting since 2010 and mid-year meetings since 2011.

The Subcommittee, in partnership with sponsoring Committees, incorporated ATM into the program for the 2nd International FTOC in 2009, numerous workshops and panel sessions at TRB Annual and Mid-year Meetings, and the development of a successful research problem statement funded as part of the 2013 NCHRP research program on planning and evaluating ATM strategies (NCHRP Project 03-114), to develop a guide to planning and evaluating ATM for recurrent and nonrecurrent conditions. Through its ongoing efforts, ATM will be included in the pending update of the Freeway Management and Operations Handbook (FMOH), will be one of seven areas identified as priorities for research in the Freeway Operations Research Circular being developed by AHB20, and is a component of pending and future research project statements being developed by the committee.

The Subcommittee is also actively involved in the planning for the 3rd International Symposium on Freeway and Tollway Operations that will be held jointly with the 7th International Symposium on Highway Capacity and Quality of Service in Berlin, Germany in 2016. Through the work of the Subcommittee's volunteers, it is supporting the update of the ATM chapter in the next edition of the Highway Capacity Manual, the FMOH update, an FHWA project developing an ATM Feasibility Guide, and NCHRP Project 03-114 on planning and evaluating ATM.

As a result of the Subcommittee's leadership, an ATM community of collaboration and engagement has evolved that has firmly established ATM in the forefront of emerging innovative

practice across the U.S. and will continue to be a key topic of discourse with transportation professionals for years to come.