MEETING SUMMARY

Thursday, March 23, 2006
9:00 AM – 3:30 PM
Rock Room
Wisconsin Department of Transportation D1 Office
2101 Wright Street
Madison, Wisconsin 53704-2583

ATTENDANCE ROSTER

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MEETING DISCUSSION

1. Meeting Opening

Dr. Qin welcomed everyone to the first Traffic Safety Engineering Workgroup meeting of the year. The meeting was delayed half an hour due to some technical difficulties.

2. Review of FHWA Bypass Safety Audit Results

Mr. Bill Bremer from FHWA gave a quick review of the recently completed Wisconsin bypass safety audit headed by FHWA. Bypass safety becomes a hot topic after several fatal and severe injury crashes occurred shortly after several bypasses opened to the public. The safety conditions of bypasses raised the media's attention, as well as FHWA's. FHWA representatives in conjunction with WisDOT engineers visited several problematic bypass intersections. The safety review focused on some low-cost engineering safety improvements such as pavement marking, intersection signing, etc. Other improvements such as lighting and “pork chop” design were also mentioned in the report. The meeting attendees had a good discussion regarding specific engineering solutions and emphasized that consistent intersection design standard should be
adopted statewide. The follow-up actions will be addressed at several teleconferences by WisDOT BHO.

3. **Statewide Road Safety Audits Program Discussion**

The briefing was deferred to the next TSEWG meeting because of John Corbin’s conflict with another meeting. FHWA road safety review was proved to be an effective way to identify safety performance and crash potential of existing highway locations. However, many safety problems can be addressed early in the design even the planning stages. That is the concept of the road safety audits. John initiated a WisDOT Traffic Safety Engineering program where safety audits were proposed as a major proactive approach to improving highway safety. However, some technical challenges, and possible programmatic and resource impediments need to be discussed in full detail before being adopted by bureaus and regions.

4. **SHSP Traffic Safety Engineering Performance Measures**

DTSD is responsible for drafting and updating the WisDOT Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) traffic safety engineering issues. The document is mandated by FHWA and used to justify whether or not DOTs are eligible to spend the safety money proportioned by the SAFETEA-LU. Phil DeCabooter (DTSD) reported on recent updates of the performance measures for each of the four traffic safety engineering issues. Phil and Pat were primary contributors to the proposed performance measures. After some debates, it was agreed by the meeting attendees that the following performance measures will be adopted tentatively by the WisDOT SHSP.

Safety issue 2: intersection Safety:
- Reduce fatal and injury intersection crashes by 10% over 4 years.

Safety issue 6 & 9: Keep Vehicles on the Road and Minimize Consequences of Leaving the Roadway
- Reduce five-year-average head-on/opposing-direction lane departure crashes by 10% over four years.
- Reduce five-year-average run-off-the-road crashes by 10% over four years.
- Reduce severity of run-off-the-road crashes (injury outcomes) by 10% over four years.

Safety issue 7: work zone safety:
- Reduce five-year-average work zone fatalities and injuries by 25% in four years.

Safety issue 8: Reduce Head-On and Cross-Median Crashes
- Reduce cross-median fatal and incapacitating injury crashes by 10% over four years.

The revised SHSP safety engineering issues with added performance measures will be forwarded to the Traffic Safety Council by Phil for further review and approval.

5. **Crash Data Retrieval Updates**

Phil informed the group of the changes happened to the crash data retrieval process after Richard Lange’s retirement. The memo has been sent to the local municipalities. The request of scanned crash reports is expected to be delayed due to the shortage of the manpower. Other crash data request will be directed to the TOPS laboratory.
6. WisTransportal Crash Data Query Tools
In order to facilitate the internal crash data retrieval process and external data request, the TOPS laboratory created an online crash data query tool. The project manager, Dr. Steven Parker, gave an introduction and demonstrated the tool. The detail of the presentation will be posted at http://www.topslab.wisc.edu/workgroups/trafficsafety.htm

7. Intersection Safety Evaluation Tool (ISET) tutorial
The ISET tool has been placed on the WisDOT LAN and has been tested by several regional traffic engineers. The purpose of the tool is to help WisDOT to efficiently use existing intersection crash data for safety analysis. In the demonstration, Xiao showed that the tool compared crash rates and percentages at one or more intersections for combinations of

- 3 Intersection Characteristics (e.g., area type, traffic control device)
- 10 Crash Characteristics (e.g., Percent Left-Turn Crashes)
- 17 Geometric Codes

It also completed three levels of analysis - minimum, general or specific. The detail of the presentation will be posted at http://www.topslab.wisc.edu/workgroups/trafficsafety.htm

8. Peer Exchange and Information Sharing
The training course “New Approaches to Highway Safety Analysis “will be offered by the National Highway Institute from March 28 to 30 at Wisconsin Dells. No other specific topics were discussed and the meeting was adjourned at 2pm.

9. Next Meeting
The next TSEWG meeting is tentatively scheduled for June 8th 9am-3pm, Location, TBD.

Additional information on meetings and other safety engineering issues is located at the TSEWG website: http://www.topslab.wisc.edu/resources/trafficsafety.htm