



**Compass Advisory Team Meeting
April 12, 2007, Wisconsin Rapids
Meeting Notes**

Participants: Bob Hanifl, John Kinar, Dennis Newton, Mike Ostrenga, Doug Passineau, Ken Pesch, Mark Woltmann, Jack Yates and Scott Bush.

Other Attendees: Dr. Teresa Adams and Emil Juni, Midwest Regional University Transportation Center.

1. Scott Schnacky has retired and Mark Woltmann is the new Chief of the Program Management Section in the WisDOT Bureau of Highway Operations. Mark was introduced and will be replacing Scott Schnacky on the team.

Scott Bush mentioned that Adam Boardman will also be joining the Advisory Team. Adam recently replaced Joe Nestler as the Chief of the Program Development and Analysis Section in the WisDOT Bureau of State Highway Programs.

2. The team reviewed and accepted the draft October 26, 2006 meeting notes.

3. Scott, Teresa and Emil presented the draft 2006 Compass Report. Scott went over the main changes to the format of the report, including:

- Providing a "report card" on feature grades by contribution category in the Executive Overview section of the report.
- The time-trend analysis on condition data has been expanded to include four years of information.
- Expenditure data has been expanded to include both nominal and real 2006 dollars to illustrate the effect of inflation on the maintenance budget. Cost information has also been factored by lane mile data to highlight the effect of system growth on maintenance expenditures.
- Pavement data is now presented to reflect the biennial data collection cycle. The 2006 report provides pavement condition information for the half of the state where information is collected during the even-numbered years.

- To improve readability, separate maps have been created for the Winter Severity Index, Salt Use and Cost per Lane Mile.
- The sign condition data has been illustrated using the new 12-year useful life for high intensity signs (up from a previous 10-year standard). A new table has been added to the report to identify the types of signs located around the state. This information will be used to monitor progress on transitioning from engineering grade face material to high intensity signs.
- The appendix has been expanded to provide a more stand-alone document. A section has been added to recognize county and state staff that contribute to the program. A matrix has been included in the appendix to identify the feature grade ranges and thresholds. The memo and spreadsheet on summer maintenance targets has been added to the appendix. And lastly the Rating Sheet has been included at the back of the report.

There was discussion about the dramatic increase in longitudinal cracking and transverse cracking of asphalt pavements. Scott will review the data at the training sessions and ask the County Patrol Superintendents and Region Maintenance Coordinators why they think this is happening.

Ken asked about the use of double arrows in the condition table to identify large annual changes. The report currently uses double arrows to identify changes of 8% or more in one year. Ken thought that a 5% change in one year was significant and wondered if the criteria for using double arrows should be modified along these lines.

Ken also asked if the segment selection process is factored by lane miles. Scott said that 240 segments are randomly selected for each region. So counties with more state trunk highway mileage are more likely to have segments selected in their county than other counties in the region that have less mileage on the state trunk network. Ken asked Scott to send the team a table identifying the amount of state trunk lane mileage per WisDOT region.

Scott will email the full 2006 Annual Report to the team after the meeting. Advisory Team members are requested to submit comments to Scott by April 30th.

4. Teresa discussed the handout describing the "Estimating Cost per Mile for Routine Highway Operations and Maintenance" project, to be developed by MRUTC. In addition to average daily traffic and vehicle miles of travel, the team suggested that truck volumes should be analyzed as a contributing factor for maintenance costs.

5. Scott discussed the handout on the maintenance "Price Tags" project. Dennis recommended that Scott contact Matt Rauch to see if there is an annual estimate

for the number of signs statewide that are replaced through the improvement program. Ken mentioned that at least three of the seven counties in the Southeast Region use an improved cost accounting system that could help identify unit prices.

6. Scott discussed the handout on the feature "contribution" categories. The team recommended the following changes be made to the program beginning with the 2007 Annual Report:

- change *Flushing* from "Stewardship" to "Critical Safety"
- change *Unpaved Shoulder Drop-off* from "Ride/Comfort" to "Critical Safety"
- change *Walls and Barriers* from "Stewardship" to "Safety/Mobility"
- change *Other Signs/Emergency Repair* from "Safety/Mobility" to "Ride/Comfort"

Compass currently reviews the presence/absence of paint for centerlines and edgelines, and does not analyze the retro-reflectivity of these long lines. It was suggested that the age of the long lines may be an alternate way to determine the condition of these pavement markings.

7. Scott discussed the handout on other WisDOT data systems and data sources. If there is adequate data coverage and updating cycles, these alternate data systems could potentially replace some of the field collection process for the Compass program. Scott will monitor the development of these databases and provide information to the team in the future.

8. Scott mentioned that WisDOT will be reviewing their existing performance measures for winter operations and may start to use additional measures to evaluate winter operations. There is an NCHRP study that is synthesizing winter performance measures currently used by state departments of transportation. The study has been delayed, but WisDOT will be monitoring progress and could use the findings to start their evaluation process. Scott also noted that Tom Martinelli, a long-time WisDOT engineer who works on winter operations, will be retiring in June.

9. Scott discussed the handout describing the 2007 training effort. The handout identifies the schedule, training team members and curriculum.

10. Scott reviewed the current reasons why region/county rating teams can reject a segment and rate an alternative ("spare") segment. Currently there are six reasons why segments can be rejected, including:

- a piece or all of the segment falls on a bridge
- it would be unsafe to rate the segment
- a piece or all of the segment is scheduled for improvement in the next year

- an organization other than WisDOT is responsible for the maintenance of the segment
- a piece or all of the segment is currently under construction
- the segment cannot be located

Scott recommended that the reason "a piece or all of the segment is scheduled for improvement in the next year" be eliminated from the program. He mentioned that the rating process should be a snapshot in time, evaluating roads regardless of whether they were programmed for improvement in the short term. Eliminating these segments could artificially inflate the condition of the system. He also said that with budget limitations, more projects are delayed and rejecting these segments could be inappropriate if improvement projects were delayed by more than a year. The team recommended that this rejection reason be eliminated from the program starting with the 2007 field rating season.

11. The next Advisory Team meeting was scheduled for Thursday October 11, 2007 in Wisconsin Rapids.

12. Other items were discussed, including:

- Starting with the August 2007 let, WisDOT will be using a new tape product for construction specifications in lieu of raised pavement markers. The maintenance of raised pavement markers (RPMS) has also been a low priority given limited funding and other priorities. The team recommended that RPMS be eliminated from the Compass program. Based on some reported fatalities in other states, Scott indicated that he will stress at training that even though RPMS won't be rated for the Compass program, there still is a need to monitor the condition of RPM castings to ensure that they don't become dislodged and create a safety hazard.
- Tom Walther sent an email to Scott indicating that Eau Claire County has developed a Compass-like system for evaluating a random portion of their county trunk highways.
- Scott indicated that the WisDOT Maintenance Supervisors will recommend 2008 summer maintenance targets in the June/July timeframe and that the WisDOT Operations Managers will approve the final targets in July or August. The targets will provide input into the annual work plans and will be distributed with the Routine Maintenance Agreement information.