

# National LTAP Association Annual Report to the Members July 2006-July 2007

Hello NLTAPA Members,

**W**e thought we'd try something new this year and create an Association annual report for the National LTAP Conference. Let us know what you think!

Here are some of the primary accomplishments of the Association in the last year.

**LTAP training needs assessment.** This effort was coordinated by NLTAPA's Training and Resources Work Group to identify top-priority training needs of the LTAP and TTAP Centers. We were interested in knowing what topics need better coverage and also which delivery method(s) would be most beneficial. The work group will now seek existing resources for the topics and see if they will serve the articulated needs. If not, funding opportunities will be investigated for product development. You will hear more about the results of this effort at the NLTAPA business meeting in Chicago.

**SWOT analysis last fall.** The Executive Committee (EC) conducted a SWOT analysis for the Association (identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats), at its Fall EC meeting. This resulted in a list of short and long term goals, many of which are addressed in the following accomplishments. The EC also identified outside entities with which LTAP could benefit from interacting. These included existing partners and other transportation related groups. The list was lengthy, and it quickly became apparent that NLTAPA will need to be strategic in pursuing activities with partners and other groups. The EC decided to keep the number of official partnerships small and consider ways to work with other organizations on a more limited basis, perhaps by providing information for Centers on the NLTAPA Web site.

**Small groups discussions.** Some of the best discussions in LTAP comes from smaller group discussions where topics can be fleshed out and conversation can be frank. We hosted two such discussions at our Winter 2007 meeting: one on the ATSSA work zone safety grant and one on how Centers are participating in SAFETEA-LU programs such as Safe Routes to School, High Risk Rural Roads, and state safety plan-

ning. NLTAPA's Internal Communications Work Group also sponsored a conference call roundtable on working with UTCs, and they have asked the Centers for suggestions for future topics. At the Summer LTAP Conference in Chicago, several small groups will meet on a variety of topics.

**National conference coordination.** This is the first year NLTAPA has coordinated the national LTAP conference. Patsy Anderson did a terrific job of putting together a conference planning team, including session chairs. We had more participation by Centers in shaping the agenda than in any other year. Region 5 is the host region, and in addition to arranging finances and logistics for the conference, they are developing systems that can be carried over from year to year. The agenda was set well ahead of time in response to requests from Centers that need to plan well in advance to travel to the conference. Congratulations and thanks to all for their hard work.

**NLTAPA Partnerships.** We focused on a few key activities this year, related to our four partnerships: **APWA education summit.** NLTAPA and FHWA-OPCD cooperated in funding 10 representatives from the LTAP/TTAP Centers to attend APWA's Education Summit in Denver, CO, this Spring. Dan Cady, who is NLTAPA's liaison to APWA will be working with Patricia Kutt of APWA to identify action items for LTAP resulting from this meeting. One item will address the need for communicating better with the chapters about what LTAP does. **NACE Action Guides.** As part of NLTAPA's partnership with NACE, Minnesota LTAP conducted a survey this Spring to help NACE identify priorities in updating their Action Guides. Results of this survey were presented to the NACE Board of Directors at their annual conference in Milwaukee. NLTAPA will likely be providing further assistance in this effort, either by helping update a few top priority guides or identifying existing training materials that might serve as updates for some outdated guides. **Nonlinear winter maintenance training.** The LTAP/Salt Institute Winter Maintenance Committee helped develop winter maintenance training modules that were demonstrated at this year's Summer LTAP Conference. They represent a

new idea in training delivery. Winter maintenance training has been identified as one of the top priorities in the LTAP needs assessment. **AASHTO activities.** Cheri Marti, MN LTAP, joined Joe Toole, OPCD, in representing LTAP before AASHTO's Standing Committee on Highways last October. The purpose was to provide the state engineers with information about LTAP and its customers. Doyt Bolling has been serving on AASHTO's Technology Implementation Group, and he and Ed Stellfox have been participating in the Transportation Curriculum Coordination Council, a pooled-fund project. Patsy Anderson represented LTAP at the recent TCCC meeting in Maine. Lisa Harris and Marie Walsh have been in contact with Keith Sinclair who is on assignment from FHWA at AASHTO and who coordinates AASHTO's Safety Subcommittee. The Executive Committee will be considering becoming a "friend" of that committee and sending a representative to their meetings.

**Increased emphasis on safety.** With the emphasis on safety in the last transportation bill, and some new programs targeted toward local roads, the Executive Committee has been stepping up efforts to become more engaged in safety efforts. The goal is to help LTAP Centers become more involved in safety programs that benefit local governments. Some key activities in this area were: **Safety Partners Venture.** This year, NLTAPA was invited to represent LTAP Centers and the needs of local road departments at meetings held by FHWA's Office of Safety to discuss current and future safety needs. The Safety Partners Venture includes senior level representatives from major transportation associations and groups, including AASHTO, ATSSA, APWA, NACE, NHTSA, the Governors Highway Safety Association, law enforcement officials, and more. Lisa Harris and Marie Walsh have been participating in these meetings.

**SAFETEA-LU survey.** An action item from the small group discussion at TRB about SAFETEA-LU was to conduct a survey of the Centers to see who is participating in HSIP programs. Marie Walsh, LA LTAP and Stuart Thompson, UT LTAP, prepared and conducted the survey, and results have been sent to the LTAP Centers. They will also be shared with AASHTO.

**Meeting with ATSSA.** Marie Walsh and Mike Burk, OPCD, recently met with ATSSA about their work zone safety grant to get more information about how the grant affects local government customers. Marie recently sent a report on that meeting to the Centers and encouraged them to become familiar with the grant says. **Increased communication with the Office of Safety.** Lisa Harris and Marie Walsh have had

meetings with senior staff in FHWA's Office of Safety in recent months to educate about LTAP and to learn more about programs in the Office of Safety. We desire a closer relationship with this office, and have been talking with OPCD about setting up regular communication about programs and initiatives of mutual interest.

**New officer structure; new bylaws.** NLTAPA members approved a new officer structure a year ago, to create a 3-year officer track separate from the regional representation structure. The purpose was to create better leadership continuity and to not continue to require officers to take on leadership duties in addition to being regional representatives. This year the members will be asked to approve bylaws changes to codify the new officer structure. Other sections of the bylaws were also modified for better clarity and to address some other administrative issues, like how to respond when regions want to merge or a Center wants to move to a different region. Special thanks to Linda Howe-Steiger, CA-LTAP, and John McCarthy, AL-LTAP for helping the Executive Committee draft these changes.

**Coordination with FHWA-OPCD.** While FHWA and NLTAPA have different roles in the LTAP/TTAP Program, we have opportunities to cooperate and support each other's efforts that make the best use of our very limited resources--time, money, and expertise. This last year, NLTAPA has had a close working relationship with FHWA-OPCD that has created better communication about each other's efforts--and collaboration on some important efforts. FHWA has funded travel for EC members to Washington for efforts that benefit the overall Program. The above safety partners meetings are a good example. The LTAP Clearinghouse has provided minutes for some of our meetings, and they maintain the NLTAPA Web site. NLTAPA advises FHWA-OPCD on many of their activities, and EC representatives serve on FHWA committees concerned with strategic planning, Clearinghouse operation, and roles and responsibilities. Close and frequent communication with FHWA-OPCD has been particularly important over the last year with so much change in the LTAP Program in FHWA, with most of the staff being relatively new or brand new, and having a new Clearinghouse contractor, as well.

**Next year.** Pending member approval of bylaws changes, we will have a new office structure in place, and per the elections results, Marie Walsh, Kevin

Burke, and Donna Shea will be our new president, president-elect, and vice-president. Three focus areas for the Association next year will be: 1) being a primary advocate for safety at the local level; 2) continuing this year's effort to identify training products and resources Centers really need and can use; and 3) advocacy and education in advance of the next reauthorization of the federal transportation bill.

We also hope to have increased administrative support for minutes and assistance with two of our workgroups--partnerships and training and resources--through a new position FHWA is creating at the Clearinghouse. Because NLTAPA is a volunteer organization with no staff, this assistance is much needed and will be very much appreciated.

**Regional meetings.** Over the years, regional meetings have been a great way for Centers to share information and best practices. In recent years they have also provided an opportunity to communicate with the Centers about national LTAP efforts initiated by NLTAPA or FHWA and to get Center input on those efforts.

This year NLTAPA sought member input on two main topics: LTAP Center needs for training courses and resources, and information on how Centers interact with partners at the state and local level. The former effort will help guide the use of national funds in developing courses and materials that meet the top needs of the greatest number of Centers. The latter information will help us assess how well we are partnering at the state and local levels and ways we can suggest to improve those relationships.

**Thanks!** I'd like to thank the elected representatives who comprise the Executive Committee for their dedication and extraordinary efforts over the last year on behalf of the Centers. They are:

Region 1--Janet Leli, NJ

Region 2--Bernie Alkire, MI TTAP

Region 3--Ed Stellfox, MD

Region 4--Patsy Anderson, KY

Region 5--Jim Grothaus, MN

Region 6--Marie Walsh, LA

Region 7--Lisa Harris, KS

Region 8--George Huntington, WY

Region 9--Bruce Drewes ID, then Stuart Thompson, UT

Special thanks to our partnership liaisons:

APWA: Patricia Kutt, APWA, and Dan Cady, NE LTAP

NACE: Mike Sheehan, NACE, and Ken Skorseth, SD LTAP

Salt Institute: Dick Hanneman, Salt Institute, and Kathy Schaefer, MN LTAP

AASHTO: Mike McGough, AASHTO, and Doyt Bolling, UT LTAP

I would also like to thank FHWA-OPCD and the LTAP Clearinghouse for working closely with the Association and for their cooperation in helping us meet our goals.

Joe Toole

Clark Martin

Mike Burk

Cameron Ishaq

Roger Dean

Alison Black

Lisa McClusky

Sarah Crane

Final thanks go to all the LTAP/TTAP Centers who have responded to NLTAPA requests for information and appeals for help. The Association exists for you, and we need your support and input to be relevant and productive. Let us know how we can help you.

Sincerely,

Lisa Harris, Kansas LTAP

NLTAPA President, 2006-2007

## LTAP Regional Highlights 2007

These highlights were either prepared by the regional representatives or compiled from notes from regional meetings. Thanks to Janet Leli, NJ LTAP, and Lisa McClusky of the LTAP Clearinghouse for their help with this.

### Region 1 .....

This year, Region 1 underwent several personnel changes. Donna Shea has returned as Director of the Connecticut Center and Hank Lambert retired from the Vermont Center; Sally Collopy is the new LTAP Center Director.

The Connecticut LTAP has a new customized flagger training program for municipalities. The Maine LTAP program has been working with traffic engineers to conduct site visits in their five geographical regions. New Hampshire has added bridge maintenance and pavement management systems workshops to their training portfolio. In New York, the LTAP Center has produced a product services guide to inform their customers of available services. The New Jersey Center has worked with the state DOT to revise the crash records form and develop an online training program for its use. In Massachusetts, the Center has produced a new Sand/Salt Calibration video. The Rhode Island Center has been appointed the Clearinghouse for the National Construction Career Day Program.

Region 1 LTAP centers are continually building on their partnering relationships at the local level, from APWA chapters to government councils and highway associations. All of the centers are involved with one or more of the following activities beyond traditional training workshops: technology transfer and public works expositions, Construction Career Day, and Summer Transportation Institute programs. Similarly, the centers often called upon by their state DOT to address specific training needs and administer customized programs.

### Region 2 .....

Ron Hall will be going to Dallas in July to talk about emerging issues in the TTAP program and has invited the TTAPs to submit summaries of their needs. Cheryl Cloud will be serving a one year term on the

National RTAP Review Board as a TTAP representative. Capacity building is a hot topic for the TTAPs and they are looking for resources in this area.

During the needs assessment portion of the regional meeting, the TTAPs discussed how their customer's needs can be different from those of LTAP Centers, and were concerned that their top priorities may be lost when aggregated with the other Centers' priorities. A top priority for the TTAPs is program management skills for road departments.



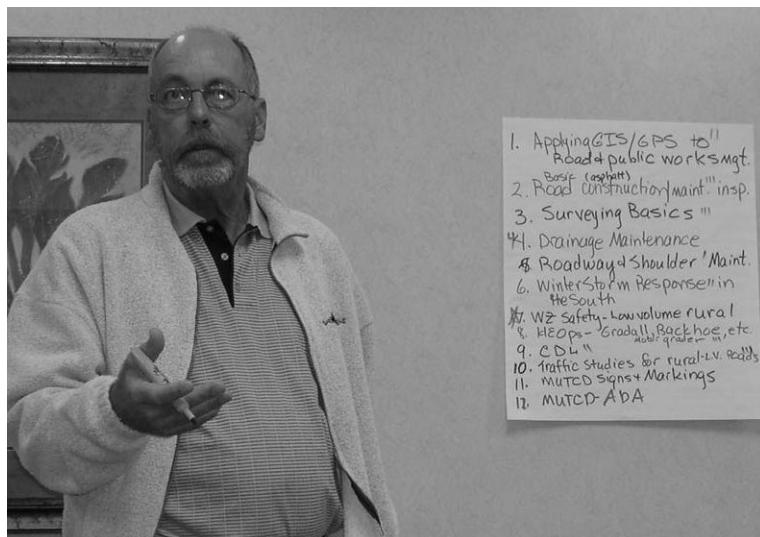
### Region 3 .....

Pennsylvania conducted a successful Construction Career Day this year. A large focus of PennDOT is bridges – Pennsylvania has 54,000+ bridges and 40% are in a state of disrepair. Maryland charges for most courses, but does not have a competitor in the state that offers the same training. In Delaware, FHWA is combining its DE and MD divisions – the new region is DelMar; the University of Delaware is a new customer; it maintains a number of sidewalks, parking lots, bike paths, etc. West Virginia LTAP has begun to work with West Virginia University; they recently offered two flagging certification courses. West Virginia recently created a fantastic new brochure for the program. Virginia has a lot of instructors to draw upon and has just begun to offer four very popular courses; their center has expanded the geographic reach of its training.

### Region 4 .....

Strengthening existing partnerships and forming new ones have been foci for Region Four centers over the

past year as they looked for ways to meet the ever-increasing demands of local agencies. Florida has moved toward team-based management techniques and sharing resources with other University departments to cut costs. The South Carolina T3 Center is seeking broader collaboration with its DOT; Tennessee is interacting with its University Transportation Center (UTC) to transfer technology and also to review proposals for new technologies. Mississippi works with its local APWA and NACE



chapters to market its training and to gain insight into local agency needs. North Carolina's Roads Scholar Program continues to grow and flourish. New initiatives include Kentucky and South Carolina LTAP involvement with state programs to qualify construction site inspectors to ensure compliance with state and federal water quality requirements. Puerto Rico has the unique language challenge that is a barrier to using materials from other Centers, which results in more costly training for the Puerto Rico Center. The Puerto Rico Center is moving into work force development by involving engineering students in K - 12 classrooms to keep students interested in engineering and transportation as careers.

Hot topics for training are pavement maintenance, drainage, equipment operation and maintenance, and safety courses. Alabama continues to offer locals CEUs for technical subjects such as Standards of Practice for Surveying in Alabama, with emphasis on changes related to Global Positioning Systems.

A great loss to Region Four was the tragic death of Georgia director, Dennis Rice, on June 15, 2007. His final tribute to us was Georgia's development of an LTAP promotional video, which he showcased at the May 7-9, 2007 Region 4 Meeting in Gainesville, Florida.

Region 5 ..... Michigan has several new clerical staff and that one staff member attended an African conference. Minnesota now has 8-10 staff members and 3.5 FTE. The Road Scholar program has grown this year. In Ohio, they were scheduling outreach sessions at the County/Township meetings. They have visited 65 out of 88 counties since 2004. The Road Scholar program was reinstated in '04 and they have had 56 participants at level I and 18 at level II. Indiana LTAP is having a good year, although some training programs have been cancelled due to low enrollment. The Illinois LTAP is now featured in the DOT general brochure. They have restructured recently. One of their main goals is to reduce traffic deaths. Wisconsin recently participated at the NACE conference. They have about 5,000 people on their newsletter list. Wisconsin is working with Illinois LTAP on the NLTAPA annual conference registration and financials.

Region 6 ..... Talk about responsiveness to environmental disasters... Oklahoma responded to severe seasonal wildfires several years ago by developing and implementing, over a several week time span, training for public works heavy equipment operators who were working to build temporary roads into fire areas. Working in collaboration with the state Fire Marshall and other groups, LTAP trained hundreds of workers to work more safely and efficiently in live fire areas. Louisiana provided special chain saw training to workers called to clear roads after hurricanes and other storms and provided other safety training to work crews who respond to multi-hazard situations after storms. Collaboration with other agencies made these programs successful in both Oklahoma and Louisiana.

Oklahoma implemented a flagger class using simulated field situations on a precision driving track. Arkansas primarily responds to individual requests for training by its numerous rural jurisdictions and provides a wide variety of heavy equipment operator and equipment safety training through the University of Arkansas system. Arkansas collects no registration or course fees for any of the training provided to local agencies. Oklahoma and New Mexico also provide heavy equipment operator training. New Mexico partners with local colleges and universities to make wider range of programs available. Texas LTAP concentrates on work zone safety, and road and bridge maintenance and has been translating materials into Spanish. Examples of new products available in

Spanish include a new flagger video, and their new Spanish-language Reference Guide to Work Zone Traffic Control will soon be published. Louisiana's new Local Road Safety Program coordinates new training and funding of \$3-5 million annually for safety improvements on local roads.

From road safety programs to reduce crashes and fatalities to safety for road workers facing extreme environmental conditions to routine maintenance of low volume gravel and paved roads to bilingual materials the activities of the Region 6 Centers reflect the commitment of these programs to respond to their customers immediate and long term needs.

#### Region 7 .....

The Iowa Center is developing a workshop on beginning construction. In 2006 they continued their safety workshops, with one on intersections with good participation. In 2007, the topic will be local road safety. Other highlights: developed procedures for safety mobility rule with IDOT, working on Safety Corridor Establishment, researching rumble strips for county roads. In Kansas, the Road Scholar Program, one of major successes this year, has been expanded to both county and city and APWA is now a partner for the program, along with the Kansas County Highway Association. The Center's Web site has been upgraded to better track for this program. New programs being added include Basic Surveying, Basic Math and Road Safety Assessments. Next year is 25th anniversary of LTAP Center and special events are planned. The Nebraska Center works very closely with DOT and they are offering more help to them during downsizing. Nebraska is working to develop a local agency right of way manual and training session, and has been working on training for environmental issues. Missouri has a new Director, Heath Pickerill. They have developed good relationships with other organizations, such as APWA, MODOT Blueprint Safety Coalition. They are also partnering to do road safety audits and train emergency responders, and hosting a summer transportation institute for high school students.



#### Region 8 .....

South Dakota's Arlie Long passed away last year and is greatly missed. Don Hosek, former Charles Mix County Highway Superintendent, has assumed Arlie's position. Merle Swenson recently retired from the South Dakota LTAP. He has been replaced by Ron Marshall, a former FHWA employee. There is new staff at the North Dakota LTAP Center, Gary Berreth and Dave Levi. The LTAP Center in North Dakota is now housed at the Upper Great Plains

Transportation Institute (UGPTI). Among other things, UGPTI is helping the FHWA's LTAP/TTAP Clearinghouse develop their website. The rearrangement of the North Dakota Center brings a whole new set of experiences and skills to LTAP.

Things have been a bit more routine in Montana, Colorado and Wyoming. They continue to work with their state DOTs on safety programs, asset management, and the usual training activities.

Two large conferences are coming up in the next year: the Local Roads Conference will be held October 17 & 18 in Rapid City, South Dakota; and the LTAP national conference will be in Breckenridge, Colorado in July 2008.

#### Region 9 .....

Matthew Enders and Bob Brooks are both fairly new to the Washington LTAP Center. Linda Howe-Steiger has retired and is no longer director of the California LTAP, but she will be working for the Center part-time.

Road Scholar programs are a current hot topic

in Region 9. The discussion about road scholar programs revealed that some Centers have a strong program with other Centers interested in starting one. The issue is having the content and the instructors to teach the courses. So it was suggested that Region 9 look at developing a core list of courses that would fit within the framework of a road scholar program and then develop an instructor list that would be able to teach this core list of courses. Discussion turned to the desire to standardize Roads Scholar Programs with surrounding states or the nation. While some people think it would make sense, others believe national standards would be restrictive.

Thanks to the LTAP regions for all your efforts!

