



## PIARC TC 1.1 – Performance of Road and Transport Administrations Virtual Meeting, 7 to 11 June 2021

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### Executive Summary

The third meeting of the Technical Committee was a virtual meeting held over the period 7 to 11 June 2021. Alan Colegate, from Main Roads Western Australia, participated in the meetings in his role as English Speaking secretary and as one of three Working Group Leaders. The numbers of participants varied over the five days however, at its peak during the plenary sessions we had 32 participants from 21 countries.

In this cycle, the Technical Committee is addressing three specific issues:

1. Understanding how Road and Transport Administrations are measuring the efficiency and effectiveness of Customer Experience and Public Value Creation.
2. The role of transport agencies in shaping disruptive technology and service models
3. Organisation of staff and human resources

A summary of the activities undertaken during the week are included in the work program section of this report. The main activities of the meetings were to progress the work being undertaken within each of the work programs, share findings and source input from across the workstreams.

Overall, the meeting was very successful, once again we took the opportunity to refine and update the work plans and deliverables for each stream including reviewing the impacts of COVID 19 on our programs. Emphasis was once again placed on ensuring the practical inclusion of, and ensuring that input is explicitly addressing the needs of Lower and Middle Income Countries as part of our meetings and final outputs.

The meeting concluded with a presentation from the Commissioner of the Alaska Department of Transport, Amanda Holland, sharing the findings from the TRB on Leading Practices in Strategic Workforce Management by Transportation Agencies. The research project examined innovative strategic workforce management strategies that USA transport agencies are implementing, particularly those activities that can be quickly adopted and implemented to recruit, develop, and retain the workforce agencies need today and for the future. This is particularly useful in the context of the activities being done in Working Group 3 around the organisation of staff and human resources.

A program was outlined for future meetings however, everyone accepted that the reality is there is unlikely to be any significant change within the next 12 months and that the situation would continue to be monitored. As has occurred in the past the use of virtual meetings is an effective extension of tools that we have all used previously. However, this is going to at some point significantly impact on the effectiveness of the work being undertaken.

## Background

Given this approach worked quite well for the last meeting it was agreed that days 1 and 5 would be plenary sessions with the other days set for each Working Group to meet individually to conduct their own work programs. Included in the meeting was updates from Miguel Caso Florez on behalf of our Strategic Theme Coordinator Ernesto Barrera Gajardo.

## Work Program

The Technical Committee on Performance of Road and Transport Administrations brings together matters related to the policies and strategies that transport administrations develop and enact. This TC is developing guidance on these issues based on the experience of member countries at different stages of development focussing around the following terms of reference split into three distinct pieces of work.

### ***Working Group 1 - Understanding how Road and Transport Administrations are measuring the efficiency and effectiveness of Customer Experience and Public Value Creation – Working Group Leaders – Alan Colegate (Australia) and Ilaria Coppa (Italy)***

During this cycle the Committee will be looking at reporting on the performance of road and transport administrations focussing on the customer facing levels of service underpinning asset management, models and frameworks in use, how we capture creation of public value and understanding decisions and practices around communicating, engaging and activating the community. During this meeting the Working Group we had a max of 11 participants from 8 countries and we:

- Reviewed the findings from the 15 case studies received and discussed the top-level highlights that were common within each agency and a sense check of themes
- Considered the drivers of customer experience now and into the future from the case studies and discussed the structure of the first output describing current status.
- Explored the work being done in conjunction with TC3.3 on Asset Management and the development of a joint questionnaire for distribution across both TC's focussed on Customer Facing Levels of Service and influence on decision making in the context of customer experience.
- Much of the Asset Management theme roundtable discussion are focussed around Europe and it is pleasing that we are involving members from CEDR in the discussions.
- Reviewed the initial understandings that were arising from the literature research around the Public Value Creation and how and what that means in the context of customer experience and future decision making.
- The final piece of work was around a concept proposed that sought to capture all elements of a possible transport agency of the future under a broad heading of North Star and Guiding Principles.

### ***Working Group 2 - The Role of Transport Agencies in Shaping Disruptive Technology and Service Models – Working Group Leaders – Jonathan Spears (UK) and Anne-Séverine Poupeleer (Belgium)***

The Committee will also be looking at the transformation and new role of road and transport administrations in the face of the sharing economy model and new disruptive and innovative technologies such as connected and autonomous vehicles (CAV), on-demand ride sharing services, Mobility as a Service (MaaS) and so on. These will continue to alter the landscape of how people view mobility, how they travel, how freight moves, and what their overall travel behaviour and expectations are. The power of new technologies to connect us along with the emergence of sharing platforms is forcing transport industries to re-evaluate their current business-models. During this meeting the Working Group:

- Shared the findings from 69 fully completed questionnaire responses and commenced analysis and assessment of the findings. 44 organisations indicated they were prepared to provide further information with 31 of those agreeing to provide case studies.
- It was clear that new transport technologies and service models are having a high future impact however, the strength of that impact varies between the technologies and service models. There is also considerable variation as to when these might mature and see substantial adoption.
- The strongest barriers continue to be policy and regulation; budgets; safety certification and legacy infrastructure. However, most organisations believe they have partial skills in new technologies with 20% (n=55) saying they are fully equipped.
- Information received has led to the development of a chart outlining potential future roles for transport agencies in the context of disruptive technologies built around early interventions, market framing and adoption and integration.
- The group is also exploring a future mobility maturity curve across six stages and aligned characteristics against four key roles of a transport agency in the future.
- The WG will now move towards testing the key concepts and findings from the survey, continue developing the maturity model and toolkit and work with NCHRP on future visioning of the Transport Agency of the Future.

### **Working Group 3 - Organization of Staff and Human Resources – Working Group Leaders Anna Wildt Persson (Sweden) and Alex Walcher (Austria)**

The final area of focus is concerned with matters of diversity, whether it be gender, ethnicity, culture, disability, age, religion, political ideas or ideology, income or other factors perceived to represent disadvantage in achieving personal and community opportunities. Approaches include positive discrimination, the setting of targets for recruitment or career progression, professional networks, publicity around role models or selective support for educational or training opportunities. The Committee will analyse effective approaches for defining and promoting diversity in opportunity across the roads and transportation sectors including how to attract new employees into the transport industry and profession, especially, young professionals. During this meeting the Working Group:

- Reported on the outcomes of the three round tables held so far bringing together participants from 13 countries, continuing to refine the agenda and the process but pleased with the level of input and involvement to date. Plans for two more to be held with a focus on LMIC and young professionals.
- Topics covered include dimensions of diversity, challenges and needs, how are you working with gender equity, how do you measure and evaluation performance with regard to gender equity and has COVID impacted on gender equity.
- A draft literature review has been completed and is being reviewed by members including pulling out key themes that might influence the final report.
- An article for Routes/Roads on the findings from the roundtables and the literature review is in development
- Reviewing the findings from the Survey carried out by WG2 in respect of the skills and future requirements arising from disruptive technologies.
- Call for Case studies has been issued and

### **Presentation by TRB on Leading Practices in Strategic Workforce Management by Transportation Agencies**

The meeting concluded with a presentation from the Commissioner of the Alaska Department of Transport Amanda Holland, sharing the findings from the TRB on Leading Practices in Strategic Workforce Management by Transportation Agencies.

The Transportation Research Board's (TRB's) National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP) commissioned this project to synthesize the current state of practice with the implementation of workforce planning and development strategies at DOTs. The project identifies challenges, opportunities, and lessons learned through a literature review and a survey of state DOTs.

The research project examined innovative strategic workforce management strategies that USA transport agencies are implementing, particularly those activities that can be quickly adopted and implemented to recruit, develop, and retain the workforce agencies need today and for the future. Overall, it found that transportation workforce strategies are highly decentralised with no national standards for operations, planning, or programming.

It does recognise the variation in the workforce needs from state to state. However, it means there is little documentation of best practices, making it difficult to know what innovation can be transferred.

A primary conclusion from the research was the need for a focus on developing a national (USA) perspective for transportation workforce development and the need for evidence-based methodology and research into peer-to-peer learning addressing benchmarking in order learn from each other. In closing Amanda said that what is clear is that the work and need for state DOT workforce strategies will remain of paramount importance and must continue to evolve to meet the needs of a changing workforce and industry. This is particularly useful in the context of the activities being done in Working Group 3 around the organisation of staff and human resources.

A full copy of the report and findings is available from the TRB website, the full name of the report is the NCHRP Synthesis 543 – Transportation Workforce Planning and Development Strategies.

## **Emerging Issues**

As reported last time COVID-19 remains the single largest emerging issue facing TC1.1 with both positive and negative implications in terms of the risk associated with the delivery of our outputs in an effective and timely manner. It is also impacting on the expected level of sharing of knowledge and skills and gathering of information from LMIC within final outputs.

Beyond that, the work programs and issues being addressed remain relevant and current and reflect strategic issues being considered by the Austroads Board and its member agencies.

## **Conclusions and recommendations**

In addressing the work plans, we reviewed and confirmed that our PIARC schedules considered the impacts of COVID 19 and discussed the practical inclusion of how we could ensure that LMIC matters are explicitly addressed. We also revisited the future directions and meetings of the committee. There was agreement that this type of meeting whilst satisfactory in the current circumstances is not as good or as productive as the face to face meetings however, progress is being made on the final products.

It was noted that with existing restrictions in Australia that whilst it might be possible to host a meeting in Austria in October 2021 it would need to be a hybrid arrangement. Tentative plans have been made for a possible seminar in South Africa in early April 2022 and a future TC meeting in Singapore in October 2022 although everyone acknowledged that face to face meetings remain challenging.

There is a strong commitment from everyone who participated to share what they know and contribute towards achieving products that will be useful and highly valued and to continue to strive to achieve the agreed outcomes despite some of the difficulties being faced.

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