

**Candidates for TRB "Big Issues" Policy Studies  
Submitted by Division A Council  
January 2003**

In response to a request from Division A Council in December, TRB standing committee chairs submitted 33 recommendations for consideration as TRB "Big Issues" policy studies. Division A Council has now reviewed this list and has ranked the following as the top candidates for additional consideration. The first three candidates were ranked as being "high" to "very high" priority.

- **Transportation funding - the future. A look at different funding approaches for achieving various goals - what are the policy implications surrounding the issue of how we could fund transportation needs?** (NOTE-This topic should be addressed to a considerable degree in new TRB policy study entitled the Long Term Viability of the Fuel Taxes for Transportation Finance. This study will also look at pros and cons of alternatives (other taxes, road pricing, tolls, etc.)
  - **Study why the nation's efforts to reduce drinking and driving have stalled over the past few years and what needs to be done to get us back on the right track.**
  - **Intercity rail passenger issues - how to pay for it, how to structure it, what services should be provided, which level(s) of government should shoulder a bigger burden?**
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- Congestion - what opportunities are there for making the best use of ALL elements of the transportation system?
- Alternative delivery systems for transportation facilities due to reduced agency staffing. Study should include all aspects including design, construction, maintenance, and encompass more than innovative contracting.
- Design/build/own/operate approaches to civil facilities. Pros and cons for the civil engineer, agency, and for the users/public.
- Identify institutional changes needed to incorporate asset management information and decision making processes into state DOTs and local governments.
- Identify institutional reforms needed to mainstream intelligent transportation systems and to develop a more specific orientation toward operations in state DOTs.
- Umbrella study on the issue of driver distraction/driver focus with a view toward recommending policy regarding in-vehicle electronics.
- How changing technology (fuel cell/electronic vehicles, flotillas of adaptive speed-control vehicles, ITS systems, etc.) and human adaptation (trading off living space for commute time, telework, increased willingness to use public transit, etc.) could combine to drastically change how people commute/travel in the not-so-distant future.
- Barriers to putting research results into practice. Overcoming legal and insurance challenges and quantifying economic loss through business as usual practices.

Division A Council has also asked standing committee chairs to discuss with their committee members any additional candidates that should be considered. Division A Council will follow up with the standing committees following this Annual Meeting, and submit any additional input to the TRB Executive Committee and the SPPR.

**Report of Task Force on Emergency Preparedness and Homeland Security for Freeway Operations**

Chair: Daniel H. Baxter, P.E., PB Farradyne, Inc

Task Force Participants/Membership (alphabetical):

John M. Corbin, Wisconsin DOT

Salvatore d'Agostino

Robert B. Franklin, Lockheed Martin

Glenn N. Havinoviski, WSA

Gregory M. Jones, FHWA

Jeffrey E. Purdy, E & K

Robert G. Rausch, TransCore

Thomas C. Werner, NYSDOT

Husham Al-Kaisey, Hillsborough County

**Task Force Activities:** The activities of the Task Force in 2002 were as follows:

1. Monitored publications and mail-serve lists regarding Security related issues for Freeway Operations. Reported to the committee chair prior to the mid year meeting in Utah that direct correlations between freeway operations and security issues were few. The most important correlations discovered are as follows:
  - International Border Crossing Delays
  - TMC Involvement in Response to Emergencies
  - Bridge and Tunnel Vulnerability Assessment and Mitigation
2. Provided comments of the Freeway Management Handbook related to security issues.
3. Reviewed the AASHTO Guidelines:
  - AASHTO Guidance on Updating Highway Emergency Response Plans for Terrorist Incidents: Parsons Brinckerhoff
  - AASHTO Guidance on Highway Vulnerability Assessment for Critical Asset Identification and Protection: SAICAvailable at: <http://security.transportation.org/community/security/guides.html>
4. Prepared a presentation for ASCE seminar based upon the Guidelines
5. Prepare A3AO9 materials for inclusion in the TR Circular on Transportation Security to be published by TRB. (Not published).

**Conclusion:** In 2002, national emphasis for transportation security was on Sea Ports and Airports, and establishment of the Homeland Defense Department. Highway security at Homeland Defense is likely to focus upon aid to local emergency responders.

**Recommend:** Conclude activities with the development of a position paper addressing the key issues identified in (1), and upon acceptance by the committee issue the position paper to interested parties. The Task Force chair recommends that the Ad Hoc committee be disbanded after member acceptance of the position paper. The Task Force Chair recommends we endorse the AASHTO Guidelines.

**Background:** The Task Force (ad hoc sub-committee) was voted into existence at the January 15, 2002 annual meeting of the Freeway Operations Committee. The Task Force charter was to serve as a focal point to evaluate and address emergency services, planning, preparedness and homeland security issues related to freeway operations.