



Meeting Minutes Program Management Committee

**June 11, 2003
Hanover, MD**

1. Introductory Comments and Agenda Overview

Nancy Ross welcomed everyone to Maryland and opened the meeting with a review of the day's agenda. Self-introductions were made.

John Baniak welcomed Bill Stoeckert as the newest member of the Coalition Staff. Bill will be the Technical Program Coordinator and will oversee the activities of the Traveler Information, Intermodal Passenger and Electronic Payment Services committees. Mr. Baniak also presented a certificate and recognized Patty Reich for her service to the Coalition.

2. Task Force Updates

The following task force updates were given; the full presentations are attached to these minutes.

Integrated System for Corridor Operations & Management – Gary Euler provided an update on the current ISCOM activities, including research on data-source options for developing the GIS transportation network, developing a work program for the next stage of ISCOM development and conducting outreach with ISCOM stakeholders. It was mentioned that Jerry Lutin had stepped down as Chair of the Task Force, and the Coalition is seeking a Task Force Chair plus volunteers for the Technical and Operations Subcommittees.

Information Architecture – Gary Euler reviewed the recent activities of the Information Architecture project and its relationship to FHWA's Infostructure concept. A summary of application thoughts, high-level architecture, Information Architecture and FHWA Infostructure concepts of operations, and upcoming issues was provided. In order to properly coordinate activities between the Coalition and FHWA, Mr. Euler will attend a FHWA Infostructure meeting on June 16 and then follow-up with PMC leadership.

Outreach and Reauthorization Task Forces – Noreen Hazelton detailed the recent and upcoming Reauthorization and Outreach activities. Under Reauthorization, Coalition Staff conducted educational visits (with congressional staffers, member agencies and FHWA), sent informational letters to the Senate EPW Committee leadership, and hosted guest speakers Senator Frank Lautenberg and Frederick "Bud" Wright (FHWA's Executive Director) at the Executive Board Meeting. Outreach activities include an upcoming newsletter, web page improvements, updates of printed materials, and participation in meetings and events.

Training Task Force – Noreen Hazelton indicated that the Training Task Force is hosting a TMC Technician KSA Workshop July 24 in Delaware, and participating in the FHWA Project Management Course. The Incident Management Track is scheduling an Advanced Incident Management Course in New Hampshire (August) and the Commercial Vehicle Operations Track is conducting CVISN training in Delaware and in New England.

3. Executive Board/Steering Committee Follow-up

John Baniak provided an update of recent Coalition meetings, noting that the Executive Board had recently approved the Steering Committee's recommended Annual Work Plan for FY '03 (Year 11). Approved projects under the Program Management Committee include Education and Outreach (\$400,000) and ISCOM (\$250,000).

Mr. Baniak noted that changes at agencies, some spurred by the November elections, resulted in the Chair and Co-chairs of the Executive Board stepping down from their positions with the Coalition. Two Board members, Ken Philmus (PANYNJ) and Neil Pedersen (Maryland DOT), will now serve as Co-Chairs, and Harry Harris (ConnDOT) will serve as Interim Chair.

An Intermodal Leadership Forum was held on May 13 and had approximately 80 attendees representing various transportation modes. The following recommendations from the Forum were presented to the Executive Board:

- The System is the Driver,
- A framework is needed to evaluate major policy choices at the regional level, and
- Member agencies are needed to support committee participation and projects.

Jeff Secrist, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, thanked the Coalition for its administrative and financial support of the ITS CVO Showcase held earlier in the year.

4. Task Force on Impact of Growth and Change

Bob Pento reviewed the evolution of membership, structure and program in preparation for a discussion on managing the impact of the Coalition's growth. He further detailed a management study to review the Coalition's culture, messages, program support and logistics, resource allocation, and program complexity. The study information will assess, anticipate and plan for growth. In doing so, the Coalition intends to remain an organization that best supports the mission, strategy and values of the evolving membership and program.

The Management Study will be conducted through telephone "conversation circles" with a cross section of Coalition stakeholders. The Growth and Change Task Force will evaluate information and develop findings and recommendations for the Steering Committee. The telephone conversations will focus on:

- Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats from expansion
- Effects of expansion on validity and priority of strategies
- Reaction to alternative structures for Coalition participation and processes
- Perception of other impacts on culture or resource allocation resulting from expansion
- Recommendations

The timeframe for the study allows the telephone conversations and Task Force review to occur over the summer, with findings and recommendations presented to the Steering Committee in September. The Task Force will finalize its report following the Steering Committee meeting, and then present their recommendations at the Winter Executive Board meeting. Approved findings will be implemented in early 2004.

Chris Cox and Kathy Stein facilitated a discussion to determine PMC opinions on the study and on the impact of growth on the Coalition. The following comments were noted:

Study Assumptions:

The study assumptions are (1) no change will be made in the Coalition mission, vision and guiding principles, (2) stable or increased funding will be available in the future, and (3) guidance will be provided by the Growth & Change Task Force (Bob Pento, Chair). Comments on the assumptions were as follows:

- Assumption #1
 - It must be recognized that new members want to get something from the Coalition
 - Consider the use of the term “validate,” rather than “no change”
 - Should be open to any need to modify
- Assumption #2
 - Short term instability will be a threat
 - Should assume we have dollars to sustain, meet needs
 - There should be a clearer picture of reauthorization by the time the study is done

Overall Approach:

The study approach is to conduct telephone “conversation circles” with a cross-section of Coalition stakeholders. There will be five or six sessions of no more than 6 people on a call. Guided questions will be asked, with some information provided in advance. Comments on the approach were as follows:

- If the opportunity arises, the questions should be asked at PTC meetings.
- Calls for specific groups (MPO’s, CVO, Incident Management, etc.) should be considered.
- If calls/meetings are track-specific, the responses may be self-fulfilling.
- New members should be called to see if they have a different perspective. The questions could be rephrased to fit them.
- Original/long-term members should be on the calls to ensure that their opinions are heard and needs are being met.
- Each call should represent a cross-section of members.

SWOT Analysis:

The group was asked to list Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats of the Coalition in regard to its expansion to the southern states. The following comments were noted:

Strengths:

- Activities are aligned with the mission statement.
- There is no other forum to tackle multi-jurisdictional issues important to people.
- Working together with other member agencies (peers) is invaluable.
- The Coalition is not a threat to its members; it is a true partnership and an honest broker with no agenda. There is no pre-conceived win/lose strategy and there’s a willingness to take risks (address issues/questions others can’t/won’t do).
- The current membership structure allows for flexibility and provides for access to more perspectives.
- Federal funding provides stability and predictably.
- The organization is informal and has a culture formed by its volunteers.

Strengths of an Expanded Coalition:

- Breadth: Membership, modes, functions (operations, planning, etc.) are evolving and provide a broader pool of technical resources.
- Logical Area: The Coalition now covers the entire length of the East Coast and represents a logical network for market, trade, travel and tourism; a better alignment with the economy.
- Increased Resources: Newcomers bring energy, ideas, match, to supplement existing agencies.
- Synergy: It creates a new forum to focus on regional issues.

Weaknesses/Limitations:

- The geographically larger organization requires increased travel and logistics. This may negatively impact participation.
- The face-to-face time with peers is important to members and is threatened by the new size of the organization.
- Although studies show otherwise, there are perceived differences in travel cultures between the Northeast and Southeast states.
- There needs to be an effort made to get to know the new members.
- If there are too many voices in the room, there may be limited time for participants to speak.
- Leadership needs to represent a geographical balance.
- There needs to be stronger outreach to law enforcement agencies.
- TRANSCOM represents the Northeast states and there currently is no Coalition-related communications system in the Southeast.

Opportunities:

- The synergy can be used to address border issues, major events, evacuations, etc.
- The “new blood” brings more opportunities.
- There’s greater opportunity to develop a seamless network and provide more value to travelers.
- The Coalition’s exposure to customers and legislators is expanded.
- There’s more opportunity to tap into resources for planning (MPOs).
- The larger organization provides a better opportunity to be at the forefront of national issues (i.e., 511).

Threats:

- More members makes consensus harder.
- Current financial resources have to stretch further.
- Staff and volunteers will be spread too thin.
- The Coalition will be challenged to meet expectations.
- At some point, it needs to be determined when to stop the growth and say “no” to membership requests.
- The Coalition must avoid creating regional focuses for committees and projects. The focus should remain on function, not geography.
- It is imperative that the organization does not step on State DOT toes or allow for mission creep to occur.
- Membership participation may deteriorate and there may be more executive turnover.

5. Upcoming Events

The following upcoming events were announced:

- National Transportation Public Affairs Workshop – August 2003
- National Rural ITS Conference – August 2003
- Steering Committee – September 15 – Alexandria, VA