Committee Updates
Note: Work plans for all SCOH subcommittees are included in the SCOH agenda and materials.

Subcommittee on Bridges and Structures, Mal Kerley, VA
- Annual Meeting coming up in Snowbird, Utah, May 21-26
- The Technical Committee for Seismic Design (T-3) is finishing up work on the new seismic LRFD design specifications.
- The subcommittee also recently held a workshop to update the strategic research plan to meet the changing needs in bridge engineering.
- Full implementation of the LRFD design specifications in scheduled for 2007, so federal projects after that date would have to use these specs. The committee is continuing to support and oversee the implementation of the LRFD through its LRFD Oversight Committee.

Subcommittee on Construction, Len Sanderson, NC
- Update of the Guide Specifications for Highway Construction will be balloted by the subcommittee this summer, so an update should be coming to SCOH for ballot shortly thereafter.
- Another publication that’s currently on the web, the Primer on Contracting for 21st Century, which provides information on innovative contracting techniques, is also being updated.
- Some issues that the subcommittee is looking into include the following:
  - Lump sum contracts are increasing, but where is the unit cost information coming from to develop cost estimates? The subcommittee will do a survey on best practices related to this issue
  - Antitrust issues are a concern, so the subcommittee will do a survey on debarred contractors
  - The subcommittee wants to develop practices for certifying/prequalifying construction staff in work zones
  - Finally, the subcommittee has concerns related to the application and interpretation of Federal DBE rules. As mentioned at the full SCOH meeting, they have proposed to create a work group of 2-to-3 representatives from each of the following groups:
    - Subcommittee on Construction
    - Subcommittee on Civil Rights
    - FHWA
    - Contracting industry
  - The goal is to train contractors on the rules and their application, as well as to provide some uniformity and consistency across the country.
Subcommittee on Design, Bob Walters, AR
- June 13-16, 2006, in Orlando
- Continuing to explore opportunities to meet with other groups on cross-cutting issues
- Finalizing an effort to resolve inconsistencies on clear zone in various design guides (Green Book, Roadside Design Guide, and Bike Guide) as they are updated
- Activities of Design’s various technical committees include:
  o New guidance on cost estimating coming this year (final estimates) and within 2 years (estimating from cradle to grave)
  o New design-build guidance coming soon on RFQs/RFPs
  o Update Guide for Managing Consultants coming soon
  o Updated Chapter 6 of the Roadside Design Guide (on median barriers) will be voted on at the full SCOH meeting and will be published this year.

Subcommittee on Materials, Grant Levi, ND
- 26th edition of the Materials Manual will be out this summer
- Currently, there is a federal Notice of Proposed Rule Making on pipes that the committee is working to develop a response to.

Subcommittee on Right of Way and Utilities, Len Hill, ID
- Annual meeting was recently held in Baltimore
  o Among the topics discussed was accelerating project delivery and the role ROW and utility issues play. Len will send out additional information on subsurface utility engineering after the meeting.
  o A proposal they want to forward is to get ROW and utilities out of the environmental process. They anticipate coordinating with legislative liaisons at the federal level and others, as part of the slow down with these tasks is that they have to wait for environmental compliance.
- From an international scan conducted in 2000, 13 experimental projects were tested in various states. One project included providing incentives to expedite the acquisition and/or relocation process (for example, on a Virginia bridge project, incentives were provided to relocate people within 15 or 30 days). FHWA has started to OK these new processes.
- Proposed domestic scan was funded on ROW/utility issues and will be conducted this summer
- Other topics of interest include: assistance with relocation payments from AASHTOWare, electronic appraisals, and geospatial technology
- It was noted that an NCHRP project on mitigating delays in construction is due to be completed at the end of year. This project includes utility issues.

Task Force on Context Sensitive Solutions, Neil Pedersen, MD
- The task force was initially set up after the 1998 “Thinking Beyond the Pavement” conference.
- Current activities include a major focus on a national workshop on CSS, to be held September 6-8, 2006, in Baltimore, Maryland
  o The workshop is geared primarily toward State DOT and FHWA folks (75% of attendees), and 300 people are expected.
A letter was sent out to DOT CEOs last week encouraging them to send multi-disciplinary teams to this conference.
The organizers are minimizing presentations and maximizing discussion sessions on items such as lessons learned and mainstreaming CSS.
Proposed action plans will be developed by attendees to take back to their DOTs.
Follow-up meeting will be held with various AASHTO committee chairs to talk about where AASHTO goes from here with CSS.

Peer exchanges are also being discussed between states to help spread the word about CSS and provide practical guidance on how to implement it.

**Standing Committee on Environment, Shannon Eggleston, AASHTO**
- Has been working with FHWA on SAFETEA-LU implementation
  - SCOE was pleased with many of the provisions that were included in the bill.
  - Many of the issues are cross-cutting with planning (SCOP), so the two committees are working together frequently.
  - The Center for Environmental Excellence hosted a successful workshop on SAFETEA-LU Implementation with SCOE/SCOP/FHWA to discuss issues/concerns.
- Upcoming joint meeting with SCOP in La Jolla, CA, June 12-15.
- Activities of the Center for Environmental Excellence include:
  - Currently finishing up an AASHTO/ACEC/FHWA joint effort focused on improving the quality of environmental documents. A report will be sent out for balloting in the next few months covering the topics of legal sufficiency and the quality and clarity of environmental documents. A second document on training will be posted on the web.
  - New concise guides/toolkits on specific environmental topics are also being released soon. These guides will provide step-by-step information, as well as resources for further information. There will be a series of these guides released over the next few years.
  - A comprehensive environmental database is being developed on the Center’s website, including summaries of research reports and a prioritized list of research needs. This site will provide a strategic foundation for TRB, FHWA, and State DOT research programs in the environmental area.

**Standing Committee on Planning, Ysela Llort, FL (handout)**
- Upcoming joint meeting with SCOE in La Jolla, CA, June 12-15.
- Four subcommittees report to the Standing Committee on Planning:
  - Capacity Building
  - Data – for transportation analysis
  - Asset Management – active committee, national conference held last November, also participated in an international scan
  - Research – recommends the slate of NCHRP projects from SCOP
- Research products from NCHRP Project 8-36 (which controls SCOP’s discretionary research funding) are located on the SCOP web site.
- SCOP is also working on SAFETEA-LU Implementation issues in conjunction with SCOE.
  - Workshops were held last fall and this spring.
Continuation of Metric Publications, Mal Kerley, VA
- Subcommittee on Bridges and Structures has proposed the discontinuation of its metric publications, since most states have converted back to US Customary units.
- A resolution has been proposed to the full SCOH membership.
- Members of the Council were in agreement with the rationale, but had concerns about the implication of sales to other countries that use the metric system.
- The resolution will be modified to include an investigation by AASHTO staff into the potential ramifications of this decision on international publications sales.

Proposed Task Group on Bridge Wave Loadings, Mal Kerley, VA (handout)
- Proposal to establish an AASHTO/FHWA task force on bridge wave loadings
- Hot topic since recent heavy hurricane seasons
- Group to include representatives from:
  - Subcommittee on Design (Tech Committee on Hydraulics and Hydrology),
  - Subcommittee on Bridges and Structures,
  - FHWA, and
  - coastal and geotechnical engineers.
- Goals of the group include:
  - Review research
  - Draft problem statement for NCHRP
  - develop guidance for bridge design that accounts for wave loadings, a screening process to determine vulnerability
- Will request approval from SCOH for the establishment of this joint task force

Consistency of Titles for AASHTO Publications, Jim McDonnell, AASHTO (handout)
- Issue: AASHTO’s current publication naming system is confusing and inconsistent
  - Each committee names its own publications
  - There are currently over 40 combinations of “basic” titles, including specs, guide specs, standard specs, manuals, guide manuals, guides, guidelines, etc.
- Report from NCHRP to investigate the implications of changing the names (both for more consistency and from a legal standpoint) is now complete
- The report included a draft system for categorizing and naming AASHTO publications more consistently
- These ideas will be taken to the various subcommittee meetings for discussion this summer, and a formal proposal will be drafted for consideration at the Annual Meeting

Proposed Workshop on Project Delivery Delays, Jim McDonnell, AASHTO
- No action has been taken on two ideas that were proposed at the last Council meeting:
  - Workshop on environmental issues and delay
  - Workshop on right-of-way and utilities issues and project delay
- The Council is still interested in these items and will pursue them with assistance from AASHTO, FHWA, and NCHRP
- A domestic scan on project delivery issues is slated for this summer, so output from this activity could inform the development of one or both proposed workshops