**Transportation Pooled Fund Solicitation**

**Title:**

First International Roadside Safety Conference of the Transportation Research Board

**Study Number:**

 **Former Study Number:** XXX

 **Related Study Number:** XXX

**Lead Agency:**

Nebraska Department of Roads – Gibson, Jodi

**Project Facilitator:**

 **Agency Name:** Transportation Research Board

 of the National Academies

 **Last Name:** Maher

 **First Name:** Stephen

**Study Objectives:**

Every year, over 17,000 people are killed in roadway departure crashes in the U.S. The primary goal of the Transportation Research Board’s (TRB’s) Roadside Safety Design (AFB20) standing committee is to help effect changes that will reduce the frequency and severity of roadside crashes. The ultimate measure of effectiveness is a reduction in the number of fatalities and injuries resulting from run-off-road crashes. To help meet this goal, the AFB20 committee has determined it would be worthwhile to develop and implement a Roadside Safety Conference that would occur every 3 to 5 years.

The primary objective for the TRB First International Roadside Safety Conference (IRSC) would be to reduce deaths and serious injuries associated with run-off-road crashes by identifying, acquiring, disseminating, and promoting the use of improved cost-effective safety treatments and best practices for existing or new roadside infrastructure. The final outcome of this project would be the First IRSC event held in the continental U.S., with the subsequent (or concurrent) publication of presentations and/or papers in a TRB Research Circular.

Secondary objectives would include: (1) improved dissemination of information within the international roadside safety community; (2) increased collaboration with international roadside safety experts, researchers, government agencies, and engineering consultants; and (3) a more rapid implementation of new technologies, best practices, and products from around the world.

Key focus areas may include:

• Advances in rigid and flexible barrier design

• Geometric features – i.e., slopes, ditches, drainage culverts, curbs, pavement edges

• Work-zone and temporary traffic control safety

• Implementation guidelines for safety treatments

• In-service performance evaluations

• Barrier compatibility for vehicles and motorcycles

• Vulnerable user safety – pedestrians, bicyclists, & motorcyclists

• Cost-effective safety improvements for low-volume roads

• Barrier selection criteria

• Narrow hazards - trees, luminaires, utility poles, signs, and traffic signals

• New energy-absorbing technologies

• Aesthetic safety treatments and practices

• Median design and crash prevention

• Improved visibility and delineation

• Maintenance of existing roadside safety infrastructure

• Computer simulation, dynamic component testing, and full-scale crash testing

• Road/roadside safety audits or management systems

• “Safe System Approach”

• Before/after crash data studies

• Concepts, products, and methods designed to reduce roadway departure crashes

• Strategic Highway Safety Plans and

• Rollover crashes.

**Background:**

In 2007, TRB Committee AFB20 developed a Strategic Plan (SP) that identified and outlined different goals and strategies to make incremental improvements to solve current roadside safety problems. The 2007 SP was developed to (1) help focus the committee’s efforts, (2) provide guidance to its future activities, (3) define its role within TRB as well as with other standing committees, and (4) establish goals and measures for evaluating any progress toward achieving the committee’s vision.

From the SP, it was noted that advances in roadside safety design would still occur with the continued sponsorship of meetings, workshops, and paper sessions as part of the annual TRB meetings and AFB20 paper sessions. However, significant improvements in roadside safety would be best achieved by taking active measures to promote roadside safety design around the world through the use of increased dissemination of information and improved collaboration and participation with the international roadside safety community.

From 2009 to 2011, TRB Committee AFB20 further explored the development and sponsorship of an ongoing International Roadside Safety Conference (IRSC) with the preparation of a White Paper. With Committee discussions continuing in 2012 and 2013, it was determined that the first TRB IRSC event would be held within the U.S., while later events could be held at various locations around the world and alternate between U.S. and International locations on a rotating basis. The TRB AFB20 Committee’s sponsorship of an International Roadside Safety Conference (IRSC) would help to reduce deaths and injuries associated with run-off-road crashes while also greatly assisting the committee to achieve its goals and vision.

**Scope of Work:**

The TRB Roadside Safety Design (AFB20) committee will help to appoint a committee consisting of U.S. and International representatives to plan a 2 or 3 day International Roadside Safety Conference (IRSC). The conference will provide a forum to (1) explore current problems and practices used within roadside safety, both in the United States and abroad, (2) discuss and disseminate research related to a full range of issues, including administration, planning, design, construction, operations, and maintenance, and (3) provide exhibition space for manufacturers and private industry to showcase new technologies and/or conduct live demonstrations. Both papers and/or presentations will be accepted. Papers will be published in advance of the conference and made available to participants as well as to others following the event.

Specific activities would include:

• A kick-off meeting of the conference committee and follow-on meetings (in-person and/or web-based)

• Development of a conference theme and key areas of interest

• Issuance of a Call for Presentations and/or Papers

• Production of a conference announcement and ongoing communications/marketing to advertise event

• Creation of a conference web page with general event and registration information

• Archive of presentations on a conference website

• Publication of papers in the TRB Transportation Research Circular

• Development of both preliminary and final conference agendas with posting on conference web page

• Development of a prospectus to attract and register exhibitors to conference and manage all logistics

• Selection of U.S. location and hotel/conference center to accommodate 200 to 300 participants

Optional activities may include:

• Plan for local or regional field trips for conference delegates to discuss and review current or proven innovative road/roadside safety practices and policies ready for implementation around the globe

**Status:**

For four years, the TRB Roadside Safety Design (AFB20) committee has been holding ongoing discussions with its members and friends regarding the feasibility and implementation of the First International Roadside Safety Conference. Based on the feedback received, as well as the success of two AFB20 international subcommittee International Safety Workshops in Italy (2012) and Brussels (2013), several Committee Members have begun to formalize the process to seek project funding deemed necessary to develop and implement the First IRSC event in the U.S. in 2016. Project funding up to $95,000 is being sought to begin preparations and make plans for the roadside safety conference.

**Comments:**

 **Deliverables:**

The conference is proposed for the summer of 2016. Deliverables will include quarterly report updates, electronic access to all presentations, and proceedings of the conference presentations/papers in the form of a TRB Transportation Research Circular.

 **Conference Planning Committee:**

A Conference Planning Committee will be formed by TRB and shall include U.S. and International members from: University research/academia; federal, state, and local government agencies; administrators; construction/manufacturing industry; and consultant engineers. It is also proposed that the planning committee will include one member from each of the first 6 states which post commitments to the project. In addition, each Pooled Fund partner state will be a member of the Pooled Fund Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). As such, TAC members will receive quarterly report updates. All Pooled Fund partner states will receive two, four, or six complimentary conference registration fee waivers for commitments of $5,000, $7,500, or $10,000, respectively. State DOT funding in amounts less than $5,000 would also be accepted, although a complimentary registration fee waiver would not be provided. Project funding could also come from the use of SP&R funds, and possibly HSIP funds, and be distributed over a one or two year period. Sponsorship from other government agencies and private organizations would also be accepted.

**Project Implementation:**

The TRB Responsible Staff Officer will be Stephen F. Maher, Senior Program Officer/Engineer of Design, Technical Activities Division. He has full responsibility for two similar TRB International Bridge Engineering Conferences (2005 and 2010), with the assistance of TRB’s in-house meetings and conference staff. The TRB staff is highly experienced and responsible for dozens of meetings and conferences annually, including the TRB Annual Meeting in Washington, D.C., which is attended by nearly 12,000 people each January.

He will also have the knowledge, skills and effort of the TRB Roadside Safety Design (AFB20) committee volunteers, and an NRC established Conference committee. Most notably, Roadside Safety Design (AFB20) committee members, Dr. Ronald Faller with the Midwest Roadside Safety Facility, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Dr. Roger Bligh of the Texas A&M Transportation Institute, Texas A&M University, Mr. Mike Dreznes with the International Road Federation, Mr. Richard Albin of the Federal Highway Administration, and Dr. Rod Troutbeck of Troutbeck & Associates.

Organization Name & Address:

Transportation Research Board1

 of the National Academies2

500 5th Street, NW

Washington, DC 20001

United States of America

[www.trb.org](http://www.trb.org)

1 - The mission of the Transportation Research Board is to provide leadership in transportation innovation and progress through research and information exchange, conducted within a setting that is objective, interdisciplinary, and multimodal. The program is supported by state transportation departments, federal agencies including the component administrations of the U.S. Department of Transportation, and other organizations and individuals interested in the development of transportation.

2 - The National Academy of Sciences, National Academy of Engineering, Institute of Medicine, and National Research Council are private, non-profit institutions that provide expert advice on some of the most pressing challenges facing the nation and the world. Known collectively as the National Academies, our organization produces groundbreaking reports that have helped shape sound policies, inform public opinion, and advance the pursuit of science, engineering, and medicine.

**Potential Partners:**

Global participation will be improved by other organizations recognizing and providing visibility for the IRSC event. Such organizations may include but are not limited to: International Road Federation (IRF); International Road Assessment Program (iRAP); European Road Federation (ERF); American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO); Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) of the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT); AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety; FIA Foundation; Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS); and The World Bank.