

Minutes of Committee Meeting

**ABJ45T: Task Force on Understanding New Directions for
the National Household Travel Survey Task Force**

Tuesday, January 12, 2016 from 1:30 PM - 5:30 PM

Marriott Marquis, Liberty P (M4)

AGENDA

1. Introductions and Task Force Updates

Professor Karl Kim, a member of the Statistics committee (ABJ80), suggested organizing a contest centered on the 2016 NHTS in 2017 (the data would need to be posted by June 2016 with submissions due Nov 30) and reviews by mid-February. Two types of questions could be analyzed: 1) Use NHTS data to understand travel behavior for special needs people; and 2) data fusion with a health dataset. He would coordinate with the Statistics committee. ABJ45T would contribute at least 2 more volunteers to craft questions and organize reviews. Committee members thought that this is a great idea. Unfortunately, there is some uncertainty about when the dataset for the 2016 NHTS will be available. Adella and Mark will talk with Karl to organize such an event in the future.

2. FHWA Update on 2016 NHTS

In April of 2015, FHWA organized a panel of experts to get feedback on statistical design (Mick P. Couper from the Population Studies Center at the University of Michigan; Don A. Dillman from Washington State University; Laura Erhard, Senior Economist at the BLS who heads the consumer survey; Paul J. Lavrakas, a research psychologist at the National Opinion Research Center (NORC); Clyde Tucker, survey methodologist and pollster; Steve Polzin, from the University of South Florida; and Guy Rousseau, from the Atlanta Regional Commission). Purpose: review survey instrument & discuss 2020 survey. Focus on recruitment.

Adella Santos and her staff prepared the survey package in May 2015 for various reviews: first BTS, then Secretary, then OMB – Many questions back and forth. Many questions about statistical aspects (e.g., non-response). Obtained OMB clearance on November 7. There were questions about many facets of the survey because the sampling scheme is new and so is the retrieval process (it now has an internet component).

Then started pre-test – do not want to start during the holidays. Pre-test started in late November. Data collection was finished in January 2016: 500 people – 300 + 200 for 2 areas. Some preliminary results are available. Currently ~30% in recruitment, which is quite high. The data will be analyzed over the next month or two.

Add-on program: Stacey Bricka in charge of add-ons. Finalized some commitments: 9 states + 4 MPOS. 26,000 + 103,112 households. Each add-on could ask 6 additional questions. Helped do some cognitive testing on questions. So far, there are 53 new questions, including some long-distance travel questions.

Also unique: some add-ons were not sure what they were going to get for weekend samples. Compromise: some add-ons have 1/7th of a weekend for sampling.

3. 2016 Action Plan for ABJ45T

Here is a summary of the proposed action plan for 2016:

- A. Finish a Second Circular on the NHTS. The expected completion time is the second quarter of 2016. This circular will highlight some of the key changes implemented in the data collection for the 2017 NHTS and explore some potential impacts on the user community.
- B. Continue updating the user community (and potential users) on the NHTS data collection effort. This will be done mostly via our members, through a summer conference, by attending relevant conferences, and by having another call for posters for innovative uses of the NHTS data.
- C. Start planning a conference on the collection of new sources of transportation data (including “big data”). As discussed during our mid-year meeting, our task force will engage with a couple of other data section committees and FHWA to plan a conference on the future of transportation data and how those data could be used to inform key policy questions.
- D. Organize a mid-year conference to get feedback about the 2017 NHTS and work on item C above.

4. Second circular: status and next steps

This circular will highlight some of the key changes implemented in the data collection for the 2017 NHTS and explore some potential impacts on the user community. Contributions were received from several task force members. The current core group of writers includes Marc, Krishnan, and Jean-Daniel. Susan Liss and Patrick Coleman volunteered to help. A conference call will be organized after TRB to restart this effort.

5. National Household Travel Survey: Evaluation Briefing – Margaret Petrella and Lora Chajka-Cadin

Evaluation overview: as part of FHWA research & technology program. Key questions asked: Are goals being met? Longer term impacts?

Incorporate evaluations in more programs. Use Logic model. 4 impact areas: 1) Breadth and depth of use; 2) Impacts on policy, projects, & regulatory decision-making; 3) NHTS responsiveness to the user community [role of task force]; 4) Challenges and lessons learned.

NHTS widely used in areas related to energy, environment, and health, in addition to transportation. This shows the growing importance of the NHTS.

Report not yet available: it first needs to be peer-reviewed.

6. TRB update by Tom Palmerlee

- Proposal approved for data privacy task force as part of the data section
- Theme for next year: Transportation Innovation: Leading the Way in an Era of Rapid Change
- Necessary to plan for the future (action plan) – to track progress and communicate with other data groups
- Numbers: ~5600 papers received. Concerns about load for reviewers. One possibility would be to not review papers not submitted for publication.
- Papers approved for publication and not requiring revision could be submitted in November and published on line.
- Peer review by outside group of publication process: got some good feedback
- Attendance: +3-5% compared to last year; Printed 14,000 programs; all were used.