

Following in Lee Schipper's Footsteps in Pursuit of Good Travel and Fuel Economy Data

Transportation Research Board, 2012 Annual Meeting Workshop

Sunday January 22, 2012 1:30 pm – 5:30 pm

Including by a memorial roast for Lee Schipper.



Introduction. *As one of his final contributions to the TRB community, the late great Lee Schipper proposed a workshop with a classic Lee Schipper title, “Finding Nemo: Measuring Road Vehicle Use and Fuel Economy as our data sources wash away.” While our title isn’t as funny, we have attempted to design a workshop based on Lee’s original idea. We have big shoes to fill and look forward to your participation.*

Description

Tracking progress and designing effective policies to improve mobility and accessibility and reduce oil use and GHG emissions requires accurate, robust and timely data on travel and fuel economy. Analysts, practitioners and policy makers face many challenges including: new DOT road vehicle classifications, demise of valuable data sources (e.g., VIUS truck survey and household fuel use diaries), revised EPA fuel economy calculation methodologies and growing use of alternative fuel vehicles. Trends in vehicle use and fuel consumption are increasingly harder to track with the confidence necessary to track policy progress and improve policy performance.

As Lee Schipper put it: “The irony of the US situation is that we spent around half a trillion dollars on road fuels in 2010 yet almost nothing to survey vehicle users how they used that fuel. If we don’t know how we use road fuels, overwhelmingly based on oil, how can we reduce that use and thereby lower oil imports?”

This workshop will explore the state of US travel and fuel economy data and options for improvement. We will hear from leading experts who have examined these issues in depth and get reactions from leading researchers and practitioners with ‘skin in the game’ who rely upon on high quality data. This is meant to be an interactive session, with significant time for group discussion. To wrap up the session we will discuss how we can effectively communicate the urgency and value of improving travel and fuel economy data.



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1:30pm Introduction and Overview

Steve Winkelman, CCAP
Craig Raborn, Duke University

Part 1. State of US Travel Data and Options for Improvement

1:40pm "How We Travel: A Sustainable National Program for Travel Data"

Joseph L. Schofer, Northwestern University

Dr. Schofer will provide an overview of TRB Special Report 304 including: current travel data programs and gaps, new approaches for meeting travel data needs, designing a national travel data program and a strategy for improved travel data.

2:00pm Expert Panel of Respondents

Panelists will discuss how to improve the "what" and "where" of travel data, considering vehicle type (passenger & freight) and location (corridor, origin/destination, land use).

- Measuring vehicle use for freight and passenger vehicles Rolf Schmitt, FHWA
- Innovations in travel survey tools and technologies Johanna Zmud, RAND
- Tapping into real-time traffic data Ted Trepanier, INRIX
- Tracking transit, non-motorized and land use data Scott Bernstein, CNT

2:30pm Group Discussion

Part 2. State of US Fuel Economy Data and Options for Improvement

3:00pm Panel Discussion: Improving US Fuel Economy Data

Panelists will describe the importance of fuel economy data not just for enforcing standards, but also for the efficient operations of markets and for forecasting, planning, and policy analysis. They will discuss how passenger and freight vehicle fuel economy is currently measured, including laboratory testing, field testing, on-board probes and computer simulations. Panelists will provide thoughts on how fuel economy measurement can be enhanced cost effectively, taking into account diverse driving patterns.

- How good are current MPG measurements? David Greene, ORNL
- Lessons from on-road measurement of fuel consumption John Koupal, USEPA
- Industry perspectives and on-board diagnostics John Viera, Ford
- Low-cost options for real-time fuel economy data John German, ICCT

3:40pm Group Discussion

4:10pm Wrap-Up Discussion: Communicating the urgency and value of improving the data

4:30pm You're Not as Funny as Lee was ...

Open Podium

... so share some of his material! Bring anecdotes, expressions, pictures, videos...

5:30pm Adjourn