

Meeting Minutes for AHB45 Committee on Traffic Flow Theory and Characteristics (January 14, 2014)

Prepared by the Committee Secretary, Soyoung Ahn

News

Robert Bertini will be the Chair of the Operations Group starting April 2014. Pete Briglia moves to chair the Operations and Preservation Section at the same time.

Volunteers

Development of strategic planning 2015-2018: Rob Bertini, Sue Ahn, Hani Mahmassani, Marguerite Zarrillo, and Stephen Mattingly

Conception and development of call for papers on autonomous systems (e.g., connected vehicles): Rob Bertini, Michael Zhang, Hani Mahmassani; Calls for papers are due May 1, 2014.

Volunteers are needed for the SimSub task groups in the areas of webinar, newsletter, and award.

Volunteers are also needed to support Hans van Lint's effort for PEPSub.

Voting Result

There were two proposals for the 2016 TRB TFC summer meeting: Beijing, China and Gold Coast, Australia. Fourteen members favored Beijing, and eighteen favored Gold Coast.

Suggestions

TRB Mid-year Meeting

Create a subcommittee to organize and coordinate TRB TFC mid-year meetings to streamline the process (suggestion from Hani Mahmassani).

Best Paper Award

Create another best paper award focusing on papers with theoretical merit to diversify awards (suggestion from Ludovic Leclercq). This idea was suggested since the Greenshield's Prize emphasizes experimental studies (with real data), and many highly rated theoretical papers are not rewarded since they do not meet the criteria of other TRB-wide prizes. Members should provide feedback on the scope of a new award to Ludovic Leclercq. The award may be given occasionally rather than annually based on the quality (suggestion from Hani Mahmassani).

Paper Review Process

Ric Cunard mentioned that there have been some concerns about the quality of paper reviews. The technical advisory council is developing guidelines to filter out low quality papers. The Chairman

suggested that the TFTC committee should provide feedback in the process. The Chairman also suggested that to keep the review process more manageable, a reviewer should let the paper review coordinator know early on if there is any paper that should not be reviewed. A paper review coordinator should remind the reviewers when assigning papers to quickly review the papers and determine the necessity for further review (suggestion from Benn Coifman). There were some questions about how to streamline presentation-only papers. These issues are being discussed at the editorial board.

TRR does not have the "major revision" option, and there is only one month available for revisions. Perhaps authors should be given more time to address the comments and revise the papers (suggestion from Nikolas Geroliminis). Ric Curnard responded that TRB handles many papers following tight timeline. Thus it would be difficult to allow more time to authors or have a separate process in place.

Look into the possibility of creating an option for authors to select "practice" track or "academic research" track to avoid papers being routed to inappropriate committees (suggestion from Ben Coifman).

Publication of Accepted Paper

There was a concern over the long lag between paper submission and final publication in TRR due to the long printing process. Ric Curnard responded that TRB is looking into releasing volume numbers earlier, though page numbers cannot be released until the final stage due to the editing process.

In Feb TFTC will provide a list of papers accepted for publication to reduce publication lag. The list will also be included in the TFTC newsletter. In addition to this, if possible, DOI numbers should be assigned to papers immediately after they are accepted (suggestion from Ben Coifman and Vikash Gayah). There were questions as to when DOIs become available and if the issue numbers are included in the DOIs. These questions will be forwarded to TRB. Another suggestion is to put the accepted papers in pre-print form in an archive such as arXiv.org, though the papers will have to be uploaded by the authors.

TFTC Historic Paper Subcommittee

The chairman suggested that this subcommittee should continue with a different name.

Ethan Xuan presented the subcommittee's effort to create Google Scholar profiles for TRR by the TFTC committee and ISTTT. Papers before 1980 were not included in the TRR Google Scholar Top Ten since they were not digitalized. It was also suggested that papers before 1967 become accessible.

The 2-year impact factor is estimated to be 1.135 for 2011, 0.600 for 2010 and 0.267 for 2009 for the TFTC TRR papers, which is lower than expected. Hani Mahmassani commented that the impact factor is underestimated because the TRB publication cycle is about 2 years, and citations on the presentation papers in the compendium are not included. A 5-year impact factor would be more meaningful. Ethan Xuan responded that the 5-year impact factor for 2011 would be difficult because the 2006 TRR papers are not indexed; however, we may be able to improvise something. Moving forward, the 5-year impact factor could be estimated starting 2012.

TFTC Webinar

The webinar by the Network Committee receives support from TRB. The Chairman responded that support by TRB is generally available, but some procedure is attached with that support. The TFTC committee has not needed any support.

Special Report on TFT

Hani Mahmassani reported that it is necessary to redo the report, which is a matter of funding. It may be possible to do it on a voluntary basis, although quality control and oversight will need to be in place. This may be accomplished through crowd sourcing (e.g., Wikibooks) (suggestion from Jorge Laval).

Crowd Flow Dynamics, Modeling, and Management Subcommittee

Create a link of the subcommittee on the TFTC website. This subcommittee should coordinate with the Pedestrian and Bicycle committee to avoid conflict. Majid Sarvi responded that the scope is quite different since the subcommittee focuses on a large number of people (potentially in evacuation situations).