

Minutes

North Central Superpave Center Steering Committee Video Conference June 5, 2002

Steering Committee Members Participating

Lee Gallivan (FHWA)
Eric Harm (IDOT)
Dave Andrews (INDOT)
Mike Frankhouse (MDOT)
John Volker (WISDOT)
Laird Weishahn (Nebraska DOT)
Ray Hogrefe (Jebro)
Mike Heitzman (IowaDOT)
Sub for Mike Kavach (Iowa APA)
Mark Shelton (MODOT)
Joe Meade (MinnDOT)
Gene Skok (MinnDOT)

Others Participating

Jan Olek (NCSC, Purdue U.)
Rebecca McDaniel (NCSC)
James Esler (NCSC)
Jim Berger (IowaDOT)
Joe Schroer (MODOT)
Roger Olson (MinnDOT)
John Garrity (MinnDOT)
Noel Schulz (Jebro)
Valerie Miller (Jebro)
Magdy Abdelrahman (Univ of NE)

Steering Committee Chairman Mike Frankhouse opened the meeting and thanked everyone involved in the videoconference. The agenda for the meeting is attached as Appendix A.

Overview of Activities

Jan Olek presented a summary of the Superpave Center's recent activities in terms of priorities established at the Wisconsin Dell's meeting. A copy of the presentation is attached as Appendix B. Some of the key points he discussed included the following:

- Superpave is no longer a novelty. How does the NCSC remain useful?
- Dissemination of information is one of our strong suits. The NCSC serves as a clearinghouse.
- The NCSC provides a needed link between the research community and practitioners.
- Training was initially an intensive activity. Now the focus has changed to providing more detailed courses for more experienced personnel and taking more courses on the road.
- The North Central Superpave Center is the only Superpave Center that is independent, not wrapped closely into another organization such as a university or other agency.
- The NCSC is able to offer low overhead of 0 to 26%.
- The NCSC can collaborate easily with other states and organizations.
- Since the resources come from multiple organizations, research and other activities can be more cost effective for everyone.

Testing and Equipment

Becky McDaniel continued the presentation with a discussion about testing activities and equipment. In terms of specialized or verification testing, the NCSC will soon begin performing repeated shear testing on some Indiana mixes to help determine if low air void mixes can be left in place (with a reduction in pay) or must be removed and replaced by the contractor. Activities in the evaluation of test equipment include binder direct tension (DT) ruggedness testing, which is on hold until we receive samples; evaluation of a new automated aggregate SSD device; and the ongoing evaluation of regional mixes in the candidate simple performance tests (SPT). We are also ready to assist Mike Heitzman and Rich Wolters with their work on test standardization. Discussion of other topics related to equipment and testing ensued.

Compactor Internal Angle Comparisons

- Dave Andrews said Indiana has seen a 2% difference between the Troxlers the contractors use and baby Pines used by the state. INDOT is allowing the Troxlers to be set out of spec to get the internal angle needed. He felt that training was needed for the Dynamic Angle Verification

(DAV) kit. Lee Gallivan asked if the NCSC should buy a DAV kit. Heitzman said that the internal angle could change as the mix is being compacted, so the practicality of implementing the device should be examined. Eric Harm proposed that a pooled fund study could be used to share information and avoid duplication of efforts. John Volker agreed with this idea. Joe Meade also supports DAV evaluation. The NCSC will look into options for obtaining a DAV kit and training and how we can best use it to serve the region.

- Laird Weishahn commented on the DT device. He feels that the test is too time consuming and there is no clear understanding of the meaning of the results. The device could be used to set standards rather than on a project basis.
- John Volker suggested having modified gradations for low volume roads. What is the intent within the region with respect to uniformity of the specifications and deviations? Comparing what each state is doing is more of a function of the North Central Asphalt User/Producer Group (NCAUPG).

Andrewski – Should we evaluate CoreLok™ Technology?

- Mike Heitzman asked if the CoreLok™ results have been good. Harm said to check to see what NCAT had done. John Garrity said that fine mixes are okay under T166, but with SMA and some coarser mixes there may be errors. The CoreLok™ may be useful for remedying these errors. McDaniel will look into what NCAT, the South East Asphalt User Producer Group (SEAUPG) and others have already done to see if we should address this further.

Asphalt Pavement Analyzer (APA)

- Volker asked if the APA should be explored; what are the uses and shortcomings? Harm has one that Illinois is not currently using. Illinois is waiting for results of what SEAUPG is working on, but the results don't look promising. Gene Skok is sending a questionnaire to the Loaded Wheel Tester Users Group and will share the results with everyone. Mark Shelton said Missouri uses the APA to test all their mixes and thinks it has potential. Gallivan said that he would distribute an article by John Bukowski on the FHWA stance on the APA. The NCSC will collect information and report back to the Steering Committee.

Communication

Olek next discussed communication. The newsletters are still being produced for three centers (NCSC, Penn State and Auburn) with the latest issue ready for mailing this week. The current contract runs through June 2003. The NCSC continues to expand and maintain the website and is planning to expand training offerings with more streaming videos and on-line self-study courses.

In order to encourage practitioners to share information for the newsletters he suggested establishment of a Practitioners' Corner Feature in the newsletter. The NCSC staff will write-up the information based on the verbal communication from the practitioners. McDaniel appealed to the members of the Steering Committee for the leads of people to talk to. Harm thought it was a good idea but maybe not realizable. Heitzman said that NCAT has tried this and found it hard to get input from others, but if NCSC does the legwork it may work.

Research

McDaniel covered current research efforts at the NCSC. The regional RAP study is complete and the report is at the printers. On-going studies include evaluation of simple performance tests, friction, fiber, a study of the possibility of hot mix contamination due to burner fuels or combustion conditions, and more. McDaniel also announced that Purdue and the NCSC are part of the team that will be setting the research agenda for the F-SHRP study on accelerating the pace of infrastructure renewal. Iowa State is the prime contractor and Purdue and Ted Ferragut's consulting company are subcontractors. This important national effort will help keep the NCSC at the forefront of future research. The center continues to gain national visibility through things like a recently produced video on RAP that will be widely distributed by NCHRP, a front page *Focus* article and numerous training classes and presentations. Additional discussion followed.

Performance Measures

- This was suggested as an area where the NCSC could do some work at the Dells meeting. The NCSC staff asked for more direction on what is needed in this area.
- Harm stated that the discussion at the Dells Meeting focused on, “Has our investment paid off?” The TRB Superpave committee has wrestled with this, but no one has looked at this nationally. Hopefully the individual states will look at it. Heitzman said that the examination of performance should be narrowed to one distress, such as rutting, since states measure and evaluate performance differently. Knowing how individual states are implementing Superpave is useful but overall comparisons of performance could “muddy the waters.” John Volker said that Wisconsin has increased the years of service they use in LCCA, but he doesn’t know if that is due to Superpave alone or not. A survey could be done to see how other states are computing LCCA and if they have a procedure to quantify the influence of Superpave mixtures on LCCA.
- Frankhouse stated that one way to look at performance is the expanded use of warranties. Michigan will continue to look at monitoring performance. Volker said Wisconsin is using more warranty jobs. Districts find them advantageous from a personnel standpoint, and reports show that warranty projects outperform conventional projects. Harm said to go to contractors who work on warranty projects and find out their methods. Volker can suggest contacts. Meade said that Minnesota is following the lead of Wisconsin and Michigan on warranties. Some contractors are not happy with this. He supports looking at performance measures, but is unsure how it could be done. Frankhouse said that the contractors in Michigan were not enthusiastic at first on Superpave or warranties, but now they are big supporters. Shelton asked what are the costs increases associated with warranties.

Training

McDaniel also discussed training. She reminded the Steering Committee that the states get four complimentary registrations each year. Customized training is available. The NCSC staff taught one special binder course for Payne and Dolan earlier this year and will be offering a binder course with emphasis on the DSR next week in Iowa. She also mentioned the planned work to put more videos on the web and develop on-line training courses.

Roadway Technicians Training Course

- This was another suggestion from the Dells meeting. McDaniel has obtained copies of three NHI courses to use as core material, but before developing a course would like to know the level of interest. Would this topic be too state-specific to develop regionally?
- Laird Weishahn said that there is a need for contractors and state employees to attend a roadway technician training course. Gallivan said that Lloyd Bandy also expressed a need for a class on best practices, not state specifics. Harm thought that this would be very tough to do because people would not expect best practices, but their state specifics. Olek concurred that roadway technician training may not be the best place to expend Superpave resources. If any particular state has an interest, we would gladly work with them, but at present will not work on developing a regional course.

Outreach

Olek covered outreach activities. The NCSC continues to have presence locally, regionally and nationally through presentations and attendance at numerous meetings and conferences. There is also a concentrated effort to assemble and share lessons learned. Assisting with implementation at the local level is an area where the NCSC could expand its services. McDaniel made presentations aimed at local agencies in Ohio and Indiana recently. She indicated that she thought Lloyd Bandy would be willing to share his ideas on developing a seminar for local agencies similar to one he hosted in Indiana last month. The NCSC would gladly work with other paving associations or LTAP centers to offer seminars or training classes. Some of the highlights of the discussion follow.

- Harm stated that right now the locals are at the stage the states were at five years ago. Consultants are a bigger problem. Locals do not want to pay for training and don’t want to travel. This could be a niche for the NCSC to get into. Andrews said that Lloyd Bandy is a very vocal advocate.

He encourages his contractors to bring along locals or consultants and he buys lunch. Heitzman said that they have done 20 presentations. It is a big effort, but it saves on phone calls. Olek extended an offer to help if any states are interested.

- NCSC is keeping up a national presence, which is one of the reasons it was selected to participate in the NCHRP study focused on F-SHRP.

Vision Statement

Olek asked if the vision statement needs to be changed. Harm said that Superpave is still not fully understood at the local level. Since Superpave is becoming the HMA to use, the word “Superpave” in the vision and mission should be changed to “HMA.” What we are talking about is constant improvement of HMA, not a different kind of pavement. Heitzman agreed that HMA is a better description and Wisconsin, Indiana, Minnesota and Nebraska also agreed. The vision and mission statements will be changed, but the name of the center will remain the same. These changes will be sent out for review.

Other Business

- Gallivan asked if the Annual Meeting of the Steering Committee should be held during breakfast before the NCAUPG meeting or at the conclusion of the NCAUPG meeting (the last afternoon)? The breakfast meeting conflicts with the Technicians Meeting, but a meeting at the end would require delaying departures until late afternoon or evening. Heitzman can adjust to the conflict with Technicians meeting but wanted to know if others can as well. Another option would be a dinner meeting the night before the NCAUPG. The Steering Committee members were asked to think about this, and the NCSC will send out a survey soon to see which plan works best.
- Gallivan complimented the NCSC on the searchable database, which is getting a lot of attention and has been very helpful. Information needs to keep being sent and continual maintenance is needed.
- Gallivan reminded the Steering Committee that the Binder and Mix/Aggregate ETG meetings are in Minneapolis/St. Paul in August at the Radisson.
- Lastly, Gallivan announced that John Bukowski, long time supporter of the Superpave technology and the NCSC, had a severe heart attack. There is no word yet on if or when he will return to work. His son has a website when he posts daily updates on John’s condition (<http://userpages.umbc.edu/~ianb1/mainPage.htm>).
- Harm asked about the role of the Transportation Curriculum Coordinating Council and how the Superpave Center is interacting with them. McDaniel said that the NCSC actively participated in the Multi-Regional Training and Certification group, which is one part of the TCCC. She understood Chris Anderson was the region’s contact with the TCCC. Heitzman said he was not sure how involved Chris Anderson is. Gallivan said that Chris is active in the group and would be in Santa Fe next week at the TCCC meeting. Doug Hanson represents the Superpave centers. McDaniel will contact both Anderson and Hanson to see how we can stay informed of what is going on in the TCCC.
- Harm expressed concern with the lack of requirements for Superpave in-place density. He would like to know what the minimum acceptable in-place density is. The NCAT permeameter may yield a result. The NCSC will stay informed and share information as appropriate.
- Ray Hogrefe asked about T283 and other issues related to stripping. McDaniel responded that she had been involved in several efforts and was aware of more research on the horizon. She will stay on top of this issue as well.
- Heitzman asked if the base funding request would increase or decrease. Olek said that about 40% of the NCSC’s funding comes from the states. This level seems acceptable, based on the type of work we currently do and the number of states providing support. If more states are eventually picked up, the individual state’s load may decrease. Heitzman asked if there was any interest in extending the number of states. Olek responded that Ohio, North and South Dakota had worked with us on occasion, but they were not yet in a position to participate. Harm said that states in the south and west should be pursued. Gallivan added Oklahoma because FHWA is including them in the North Central area. Heitzman asked if FHWA could help market the Superpave center. Gallivan will talk to his counterparts in Springfield this summer, promoting the NCSC. The NCSC will try to diplomatically extend invitations to other states to join.

Effectiveness of the Meeting Format

Volker thought that the videoconference format for the meeting worked out well and asked if others agreed. Olek agreed except for the technical problems experienced by Kansas. Heitzman had hoped to see more industry participation. The videoconference did allow more people to participate in the meeting than if travel has been required. Harm said that the brainstorming that occurred in the Dell's meeting would probably not work this way, but for the transfer of information the videoconference worked well.

Adjournment

Olek thanked everyone for participating. Mike Frankhouse also thanked everyone and announced his early retirement plans. He will be retiring as of the end of October. Olek asked the Steering Committee to consider replacements for Mike. The NCSC wishes to thank Mike for his efforts.