

Person-to-person technology transfer

Engineers and other transportation practitioners are always on the lookout for new technologies and practices, but they prefer to learn about them firsthand. Reports and conferences only go so far.

The NCHRP U.S. Domestic Scan Program, launched as a pilot in 2006, recognizes this practitioner need. Now in its fifth year, the program sponsors up to five scans per year, putting DOT practitioners who need solutions in touch with innovative peers around the country, speeding the transfer of technology and know-how.



Lessons learned from the Right-of-Way scan helped speed construction on Connecticut DOT's Busway project.

During the intense experience of the scan (typically one to two weeks), participants see how a new technology or best practice works in the real world. They also develop close professional relationships that remain readily available to them even years later. "Since the scan," says Bimla Rhinehart of California DOT, "I can pick up the phone and call Texas, Washington, or Florida to talk to specific people about specific issues."

Tracing impacts

The final report for NCHRP Project 20-68B(01), *Accelerating the Rate of Innovation Among State DOTs—Tracing Domestic Scan Impacts*, examined the impacts of the two pilot domestic scans that shaped the current program. Researchers interviewed not only Domestic Scan team members but also practitioners who implemented scan findings

after learning about them secondhand. Here are a few examples of investigators' findings.

After returning from the scan tour on Transportation Asset Management, Dennis Merida of FHWA–New Jersey used technology transfer funds to bring high-level members of New Jersey DOT to Ohio for a day of face-to-face encounters. The result: implementation of robust asset management practices at NJDOT. "The DOT commis-

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sioner commented that the day he spent in Ohio was one of his best days on the job," Merida says.

Michael Marzi of Connecticut DOT heard about a new team approach to right-of-way acquisition from colleague and scan participant Rich Allen. Marzi used the team approach to speed construction of the \$569 million Busway project between New Britain and Hartford. "The team approach from the Domestic Scan," says Marzi, "made a huge impact on the Busway project."

As an outgrowth of the scan on asset management, Leonard Evans of Ohio DOT now manages a long-running quarterly webinar series focusing on asset management issues. Co-sponsored by FHWA and AASHTO, the webinars draw upward of 100 participants from around the country. "People call us after every webinar to get even more information," Evans says. "It's been a good means of communication."

Improving the scans

The Project 20-68B(01) report recommended several avenues for enhancing the current success of the Domestic Scan Program: formalizing the requirement for implementation plans from each participant, establishing a regular schedule of follow-up meetings, and creating "targeted response teams" to aid state DOTs in implementing solutions in their own unique environments.

The consultant's report, *Accelerating the Rate of Innovation Among State DOTs—Tracing Domestic Scan Impacts*, is available online at apps.trb.org/cmsfeed/TRBNetProjectDisplay.asp?ProjectID=2658.

Domestic Scan Topics

PILOT	Asset Management
PILOT	Right-of-Way/Utilities
2007-01	Project Delivery
2007-02	Accelerated Construction
2007-03	Winter Maintenance
2007-04	Regional Traffic Signal Operations
2007-05	Bridge Management
2008-01	Planning Under Fiscal Constraints
2008-02	Maximizing Traffic Flow
2008-03	Water Quality Issues
2008-04	Work Zone Assessment
2009-01	QC/QA of Design Plans
2009-02	Project Delivery with Program Acceleration
2009-03	Lane Departures and Traffic Calming
2009-04	Motorcycle Safety
2009-05	Roadway Tunnels

For details, see apps.trb.org/cmsfeed/TRBNetProjectDisplay.asp?ProjectID=1570

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