

TMC Clearinghouse Development and Initiation

Another TMC PFS Project

Project Fact Sheet
May 2005, Ver. 1

Objectives

- Develop, initiate, support, and maintain an on-line clearinghouse of TMC related information.
- Assess the staffing, resources, data management, and warehousing needs for the on-going support and maintenance of the clearinghouse.
- Assist with the outreach and awareness related to this project.



Background and Need

Traffic Management Centers (TMCs) play a vital role in ensuring the safe and efficient movement of people and goods on the surface transportation system on daily basis. A significant amount of TMC related resources and literature are currently available to provide knowledge, tools, experience, and guidance to assist TMC practitioners in performing their duties and achieving the goals and objectives of their respective TMCs. However, there is a lack of a common information repository that allows practitioners to easily access, share, and exchange a wide array of TMC related resources. Searching for appropriate TMC references could be time consuming and critical information may easily be missed if it is not categorized in an organized manner.

Transportation practitioners and professionals can greatly benefit from having a central clearinghouse that stores and organizes current TMC related information resources. Such a clearinghouse will allow them to quickly find and access the appropriate information that they are looking for. A central clearinghouse can also provide practitioners and professionals a common place to exchange their experiences and techniques on a regular basis.

This project is being funded by the TMC Pooled Fund Study.

What Will the Clearinghouse Include?

- A forum where TMC managers and practitioners could discuss and exchange information on various TMC and traffic management related subjects.
- Links to other related initiatives, forums, and discussion groups.
- A prospective resource for transportation management peer networking and national program development.
- Links to other TMC and traffic management related web sites.
- A collection of or access to TMC related information.
- A facility and project inventory of TMCs, transportation management systems, freeway management systems, corridor management systems, and traffic signal control systems.
- Points of contact of TMC operating agencies.
- On-line forms for agency points of contact to post new or update existing project/facility information in the inventory database.
- Lists of available training courses and other TMC-related events.
- Lists of hardware, software, technologies available and required in future.



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Issues and Challenges

One of the primary challenges that affects nearly every database driven web site on the Internet is keeping the information current and relevant. Given the nature of how quickly technology is changing, a web site clearinghouse devoted to storing information on such technologies is particularly challenging. It will be crucial to the success of the clearinghouse to continually monitor the database using numerous techniques in order to avoid such obsolescence. Such techniques may include:

- Regular (monthly) automated checks for broken links.
- Regular (annually) automated emails to database contacts.
- Feedback area for users to submit new information or update current information.
- Periodic (monthly) searches for new material to include on the web site.
- A documented plan that describes the procedures for updating the information in the clearinghouse.



Primary Tasks and Target Schedule

Task	Scheduled Completion Date
A: Kick-Off Meeting and Work Plan	May 30, 2005
B: Collect TMC Resources and Facility Inventory	June 22, 2005
C: Develop Web-Based TMC Clearinghouse	January 30, 2006
D: Testing	March 30, 2006
E: Implementation and Outreach	April 24, 2006
F: Support and Maintenance	April 24, 2006

For More Information

TMC Pooled-Fund Study website:
<http://tmcdfs.ops.fhwa.dot.gov>

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