



August 2007

President's Message

I guess my wife has figured out that I'm a 'gadget guy'. She and the kids bought me an in-vehicle navigation unit for Fathers Day. This experience has been a rollercoaster of excitement and disappointment as I now see moment by moment just how well our efforts of the past 15 years are paying off for the traveling consumer – and the potential of where we have to go. For example, on my route to work if I know exactly where the traffic backup is on the Tollway I can divert to a few well chosen streets and save a significant amount of time. Ideally, this unit would detect the exact length of the delay, measure that against the exact amount of delay of several alternate routes, then pause Carrie Underwood just long enough to alert me to choose which alternate route I would like to take. Honestly, the reality is frustratingly close to this scenario. I feel like a kid waiting for Christmas, I know it will come but just not soon enough. It is impressive how much information can be crammed inside such a small and seemingly simple device. It is amazing just how accurate the real time traveler information can be – most of the time. I suppose that's where the disappointment has been though. It isn't always correct and therefore I can't mindlessly depend on it the way that I would really like to. No doubt, my expectations as an ITS professional were much greater than the average owner of these devices, and my imagination of what could be far more vivid. It's a reminder of just how difficult a task we have set out to do – to be accurate 100 percent of the time will be nearly

impossible but it must be what we strive for in real time traveler information. What we strive for is to be so successful that everyone takes us for granted. If we can accomplish that, it will truly be a remarkable achievement.

Well, I hope you find this newsletter both informative and useful as you plan your activities for the coming year. This years meeting will be held at the Holiday Inn Select on IH 635 near IH 35 in Dallas on November 14 through 16. The board is doing an excellent job of assembling training, great speakers and opportunities to just relax and enjoy fellowship with each other. The theme this year is ITS 24/7 and we will be taking some liberties with the hit TV show "24". The opening and closing session at this years annual meeting will enable you to participate in a table top exercise to help us all understand how ITS is quickly becoming a key component of emergency management. Imagine yourselves in the traffic engineering version of "CTU".

We had a very successful training seminar in Austin where we learned about Ethernet, its origins, current applications and where it will be taking us in the future. In case you missed it we will be offering it again in November as part of the annual meeting.

Check our website www.itstexas.org for updates on the annual meeting. We will be opening registration soon and will post the speaker information in the very near future.

Finally, please forward this newsletter on to others in your organization or colleagues that are involved in ITS and would be interested in what ITS Texas has to offer. We only reach those who are on our current email list and we know that several have changed jobs or email addresses and no longer receive information from us. We have no intentions to send spam to anyone but there are colleagues that would like to participate in ITS Texas events that just don't hear about us. The more ITS professionals that come to the annual meeting the

more successful the meeting will be. So please tell others about the ITS Texas meeting in November and feel free to forward this newsletter to everyone you know.

Paul Luedtke
President
ITS Texas

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MARK YOUR CALENDAR 2007 ITS Texas Annual Meeting



The ITS Texas Board would like to invite you to attend the 2007 ITS Texas Annual Meeting. The 2007 ITS Texas Annual Meeting will be held at the Holiday Inn Select in North Dallas, November 14 – 16. The Board is excited about the training, tours and sessions beginning offered this year. Below is a sneak peak of the 2007 ITS Texas Annual Meeting Program.

Wednesday, November 14, 2007

ITS Texas Sponsored Training: WireLine Communications

This workshop is intended to expose traffic engineers and system technicians to wireline communications concepts. Upon completion, participants will be familiar with background information, limitations, and applicability of modern data communications technologies to Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS).

The workshop will explore various media types (i.e. Fiber, copper, coax), common protocols (i.e. Fast Ethernet, Gigabit Ethernet, ATM and SONET), network topologies (i.e. Star, Ring) and commonly implemented communication technologies used in the ITS arena. A number of special topics such as video and security will be discussed. The workshop will also present a methodology for weighing system needs criteria against available technologies.

Participants will receive a desk reference notebook containing the information presented in the course.

Wednesday, November 14, 2007

Tours

ITS Texas sponsored tours include DalTrans (Texas Department of Transportation- Dallas District Traffic Management Center) and Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport Operations Center.

Wednesday, November 14, 2007 – Thursday, November 15, 2007

VII Roadshow

ITS Texas is proud to announce that the VII Roadshow will be participating in the conference. The VII Roadshow provides demonstrations of how VII technology is being implemented to provide travelers with more information and improve safety for their vehicles. Make plans to ride in a VII enabled vehicle to see how these technologies work. The demonstrations are planned to run continuously from Wednesday noon through Thursday evening.

Thursday, November 15, 2007

Session I – ITS 24 / 7

Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) has from its inception cut across professions and after the events of 911 and hurricane Katrina the significance of emergency management coordination with ITS has exploded. Yet many of us struggle with questions such as "what is our role?" and "what does the emergency management process look like?" In this session, the audience will have the opportunity to participate in a real table top exercise. In a scenario fashioned after the TV show "24" you will participate as this scenario unfolds before your eyes and watch as others in different roles react to your decisions. Updates from this scenario will be given throughout the day and during the last session on Friday we will conclude this event. Stay tuned for shocking new developments...

Session 2A – Traveler Information – Who, What, How

"Are we there yet?" "Mommy look, a turtle walking on the shoulder and it's moving faster than us!" "The snow is blowing really hard. Do you think we should go to your mother's tonight, or postpone the trip?" Travelers from coast to coast have struggled with these and other questions before and during their travels.

This session explores the variety and variability of the public's traveler information needs, different technologies use to capture data, and the ways to

present traveler information in an appealing and user-friendly format.

Please join us for the Who, What and How in Traveler Information so your travel inquiries can be answered with confidence and ease.

Session 2B – ITS Applications in the Public Transportation World

Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) have reached new heights in the public transportation area and several partnerships and cooperative efforts have been realized resulting in safer and more efficient systems for the traveling public. This session will focus on recent initiatives that were undertaken at local, state and federal levels to deploy technology related projects aimed at improving the commute for the daily traveler.

Session 3A - Communication Technology I

At the heart of any Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) project is the need for communications. Whether you transferring data or video, over, fiber, copper, or wireless, at a rate of once a second or constantly, it all involves communications. Within the industry, and the state, a vast number of innovative communication techniques and projects are being used to enhance ITS. Come to this session and hear about projects, technologies, pros and cons, and see what's applicable to your ITS communication needs.

Session 3B – Partnerships

Most Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) leaders have realized the full potential of this system can only be realized employing partnerships. As Federal funding rescissions continue and tax revenue for roadway improvements dwindle, leaders must form new and lasting partnerships to provide effective solutions. This session will explore examples of partnerships. Not always ideal, frequently not without controversy, partnerships presented in this session illustrate the effort in this field.

Session 4A – ITS in TxDOT

TxDOT has a number of distinctive Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) deployments around the state. This session will provide an overview of the different systems including a large urban area system, a rural system, and a coastal system. If you want to know what TxDOT is up to, you will want to attend this session.

Session 4B – Tolling and Managed Lanes: Local, State and National Perspectives

As the numbers of vehicles continue to increase on our roadways causing increased congestion, budgets continue to shrink for new highway construction, and time to complete construction on roadways increases alternative solutions must be conceived of and strongly considered. Texas has begun an effort to offset these issues by proposing and implementing toll roads and managed lanes across the state. The session will focus on some of the ongoing activities in the state, how managed lanes can be implemented, and a national perspective on how private companies are working together to prepare for the future implementation of electronic payment.

Friday, November 16, 2007

Session 5A – Engineering Ethics

Professional Engineers are required to complete one hour of engineering ethics each year. This session is designed to complete this requirement in a fun and informative way.

Session 5B – Funding for ITS Projects

The need is obvious; the technology is proven, the plan is complete. The last remaining piece of the puzzle to expand, upgrade, or implement an Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) is money. This session will focus on the process of procuring funding for ITS projects. Available funding categories, procedures, applications, and allowable

expenditures will be presented by representatives from the NCTCOG and HGAC. The session will conclude with of case study of how ITS funding was secured to develop an ITS system in Texas.

Session 6 – ITS 24 / 7 continued.....

During this session we will conclude the table top exercise bringing the 24 hours to a close. Our expectation is that this will be both an educational, sobering, and yet inspiring ITS view into the world of emergency management.

For more details on the 2007 ITS Texas Annual Meeting and registration information, please visit the ITS Texas website at <http://itstexas.tamu.edu/>. We hope to see you November 14 – 16 in Dallas.

ITSA Announces Resignation of President & CEO Neil Schuster

ITS America recently announced that Neil Schuster has resigned as president and CEO of ITSA effective July 31, 2007. Mr. Schuster joined ITS America in November 2001. “We want to acknowledge the contributions Neil has made at ITS America, and as a result of his leadership, we have a strong management team in place with the experience and capability to continue to achieve the society’s objectives,” said Michael C. Doyle, chairman of ITS America’s board of directors. “We wish him well in his new leadership role and appreciate his commitment to a successful transition while the board executes its search for a new president and CEO.” Mr. Schuster became president and CEO of the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators on August 1.

(courtesy of ITSA)

ITSA Partners with USDOT to Expand the ITS Peer-to-Peer Program

The U.S. Department of Transportation (U.S. DOT) will join in a partnership with the Intelligent Transportation Society of America (ITS America)

to enhance and expand its Peer-to-Peer Program (P2P) for Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS). The ITS P2P program, which offers free, short-term assistance to public agencies, will leverage ITS America's sizable network of ITS industry experts and public agencies to expand the reach and resources of the current program.

"We are pleased to partner with ITS America on this important industry initiative," said Ron Giguere, Manager, ITS Professional Capacity Building Program, U.S. DOT. "Our joint efforts will provide an invaluable resource to public agencies involved in planning, evaluating, making decisions, or operating an ITS system."

The addition of knowledgeable and energetic volunteers within ITS America's network of industry experts will serve to effectively expand the coverage of the ITS P2P program. Furthermore, ITS America's membership and network of regional and state chapters will help to promote the program and ensure that public agencies are aware of the potential assistance they can receive.

P2P Program experts can help with a variety of ITS programs, such as:

- Amber alert
- Electronic payment options
- Emergency management services
- Fleet operations and maintenance
- In-vehicle technology for passenger and heavy vehicles
- ITS standards
- Modeling and simulation
- Procurement, resources, and financial issues
- Public safety and security
- System design, architecture, and integration
- Traffic signal control systems
- Training
- Transit management systems
- Travel information services
- Vehicle Infrastructure Integration (VII)

Depending on the nature of the issue, peers can make in-person agency visits, consult with agencies by e-mail or telephone, or recommend technical

references and publications. Based on the agency's need, an ITS P2P program coordinator will provide a recommended list of experts to choose from—or the requesting agency can recommend their own expert of their choosing.

Since the P2P program strives to cover travel, communication, and other associated expenses needed for an expert consultation, public agencies will incur little or no direct costs. To access ITS P2P program services for your agency or to receive information on becoming a peer, contact ITS America at peers@itsa.org or 800-374-8472, ext. 4228. www.itsa.org/peers.html. All peers are selected and approved by the U.S. DOT based on the extent of their expertise and experience with specific ITS technologies and applications.

(courtesy of ITSA)

STATE /LOCAL ISSUES

Second Annual Texas Transportation Forum: In Review

From *Commuting in America* author Alan Pisarski's insight on America's unique challenge—what he called the "tyranny of distance"—to Amtrak Chairman David Laney's call for multimodalism as a means to stay ahead of the competition, the Second Annual Texas Transportation Forum was filled with big ideas and big discussions.

Over 1,200 attended the annual event, with Governor Perry's dinner keynote speech urging those gathered to unite in an effort to achieve common goals. "When you have big dreams, people tell you, 'You can't get there from here,'" he said. "But I assure you we can get there from here, and we're going to get there together."

At Thursday's Opening Session, TxDOT Executive Director Michael Behrens gestured to a Prius that

had been brought into the ballroom as a symbol of the shrinking resources the state faces. "That Prius," Behrens said, "causes just as much congestion as an SUV that gets 13 miles to the gallon, but pays far fewer taxes per mile. Our world is shifting to cars like the Prius, but what they offer in fuel efficiency they add to congestion and decreasing fuel taxes. The Prius is the future and we need to plan for it."

Bill Hammond, President and CEO of the Texas Association of Business, talked about the need to bring as much new capital into the state as possible, and how congestion threatens that goal by increasing the cost of doing business.

For those interested in seeing what they missed, or those looking to recall something they saw or heard, photos, presentations and audio recordings of the event are available at www.texastransportationforum.com.

(courtesy Keep Texas Moving)

State Working to Improve Highway Pavement Conditions

Texas highways are showing the wear and tear of more traffic, and it will take an increase in maintenance funding to keep pavement conditions from deteriorating further.

Officials with the Texas Department of Transportation said at last Thursday's commission meeting that billions of dollars may need to be transferred from new construction to routine maintenance to take care of the nearly 80,000-mile state highway system. "Just to keep our pavement conditions at the current level, it would take an additional \$6.3 billion between now and 2012," said Amadeo Saenz, TxDOT assistant executive director for engineering operations.

Several factors are contributing to deteriorating conditions: soaring inflation diminishes the purchasing power of highway maintenance funds,

increasing traffic wears down highways, and a prolonged drought that began in 2005 has caused pavements to crack, shift and settle. Since 2002, highway construction costs have increased by 73 percent, an inflation rate far higher than that for consumer goods.

Saenz said the situation points to the need for balancing two important goals: maintaining the existing highway system and reducing traffic congestion.

TxDOT evaluates statewide highway conditions each year, measuring the ride quality a pavement provides as well as the ruts, potholes and cracks in the road surface. After several years of improved pavement conditions, reports indicated a decline in 2006.

(courtesy Keep Texas Moving)

Texas Population Booming; Opportunities, Challenges for Texas Transportation

One of the most consistent messages coming out of the Texas Department of Transportation is the strain Texas' surging population will place on the state's existing infrastructure.

That message was reinforced recently by the U.S. Census Bureau report on the country's most populous cities, which stated that between 2005 and 2006, Texas has undergone the biggest increase in population, with Florida and California second and third, respectively.

In fact, Texas cities dominated the list of the 10 highest numerical gainers, with San Antonio, Fort Worth, Houston, Austin and Dallas each making the top 10. Overall, Texas leads all states in numerical gains, with eight Texas cities among the top 25.

Additionally, on the [list of the 10 fastest-growing cities](#), three were from the D/FW Metroplex:

McKinney, Grand Prairie, and Denton. Fort Worth just missed the list, ranking at number 11.

TxDOT has been analyzing this growth trend and is applying it to transportation, estimating that while use of the roads will go up 214 percent over the next 25 years, without new funding sources, road capacity is estimated to increase only 6 percent. While this growth is good news for economic development, the demand on the state's infrastructure will be great.

To find out more about TxDOT's plan to address the challenges and maximize opportunities, please visit www.KeepTexasMoving.com.

(courtesy Keep Texas Moving)

**ITS Texas on the web:
www.itstexas.org**

Have you visited the ITS Texas Web recently? Located at <http://www.itstexas.org>, the website is your source of information for what's going on in your state chapter. Information you can find at the website include items such as:

- Updated information for the ITS Texas Annual Meeting – as sessions are developed and speakers are confirmed, this section of the website is updated to provide the latest information. Start checking early in the calendar year for an announcement of annual meeting dates and location. Come back periodically to see if your favorite topic is being presented. If not, why not volunteer to present? Click “Annual Meeting” on the menu!
- Meeting archives – Did you know that ITS Texas maintains an archive of past meeting presentations? We've got coverage back to 2000 in Dallas! Looking for information on a particular topic? Why not check here?

Future plans include a database of past presentations with keywords to help aid you in searching. Click on “Annual Meeting” on the menu and look for the sub-heading of “Annual Meeting Archives”

- ITS Texas Events – this section details upcoming events that might be of interest to the ITS Texas membership. Do you have an event you'd like to see listed here? Email the ITS Texas webmaster and provide the information, including a link to the website or article for the event. (Publication of event information is at the discretion of the ITS Texas board of directors and should be limited to events pertaining to transportation and ITS). Click on “Upcoming Events” on the menu!
- Membership information – do you remember if you are a member? Don't pay a higher registration fee for the annual conference! Check prior to registering to ensure you receive the correct rate. The 2007 membership database is on-line. Click on “Membership” on the menu!
- Front Page – Remember that the front page of the website contains a bullet point listing all the breaking news we're aware of, with links to additional detail if available. Do you have something you'd like to see listed there? Would it be of benefit to the rest of the membership? Why not let us know about it? Simply go to <http://www.itstexas.org>
- Contact your board of directors! Your opinions matter! Let us hear from you. A complete listing of your ITS Texas Board of Directors and contact information is available on the website. Click on “Board of Directors” on the menu!

YOUR ARTICLE HERE

If you have information concerning an ITS project in Texas you would like to share, send it to

bburk@dot.state.tx.us for inclusion in the ITS Texas Newsletter.



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