

SECTION 305 NGEC Executive Board Conference Call Meeting

MINUTES APRIL 30, 2013 11:30AM EASTERN CONFERENCE CALL

FACILITATOR	<i>Bill Bronte, Chair, S305 NGEC Executive Board</i>
ATTENDEES	Executive Board Members: <i>Bill Bronte, Mario Bergeron, Paul Nissenbaum, Eric Curtit, Ray Hessinger, John Oimoen, Paul Worley, Jason Biggs as proxy for Ron Pate, Arun Rao as proxy for Ron Adams, Tammy Nicholson</i> Support: <i>Shayne Gill, Steve Hewitt, John Tunna, Kevin Kesler, Nico Lindenau, Ashok Sundararajan, Vincent Brotski, David Ewing,</i>
ABSENTEES	Board Members: <i>Ron Adams, Johnson Bridgwater, Alan Ware, Bill Auve, Ron Pate, Kevin Lawson</i> Support: <i>Tim Hoeffner, Allan Paul, Leo Penne, Andy House, Larry Salci, Whitney Phend, Ryan Swick, Martin Schroeder, Brian Beeler II, Patrick Centolanzi, Dale Engelhardt, Dave Warner</i>

WELCOME/ROLL CALL/ACTION ITEMS REVIEW

1.

Opening – Bill Bronte-chair:

Chairman Bill Bronte was detained by traffic and asked Steve Hewitt to “kick off” the call and take the roll. Bill joined the call shortly after it began.

2.

Roll Call – Steve Hewitt, Manager, S305 NGEC Support Services:

Steve Hewitt took a roll of Executive Board members, and established the presence of a quorum with 10 of 14 voting members (FRA, Amtrak and 8 of 11 states) present or represented by proxy.

3.

Action Item Review –Steve Hewitt:

Decisions/Status of Open Action Items

The locomotive procurement status will remain as an agenda item to keep the Board updated as to its progress. **IDOT** will be responsible for providing these bi-weekly updates. Prior to the next Executive Board call, talking points will be distributed in regards to the schedule and will be discussed as part of the status update. **Status: This will be covered under agenda item #7.**

Jeff Gordon will continue to provide the AASHTO, Amtrak and FRA public affairs officers with email notifications of NGEC activities. **Status: Ongoing**

On the next SFTF call, Eric Curtit will recommend that the SFTF change its conference call schedule from bi-weekly to once every four weeks. **Status: On April 22, 2013, the SFTF agreed revise the call schedule from bi-weekly to once every 4 weeks. Steve Hewitt has sent the new schedule to the calendars of all SFTF members. The next conference call meeting of the SFTF will be held on May 20, 2013.**

The contractor for the SFTF section 6/deployment project is expected to provide a DRAFT of Task 1 by the end of April, and a 50% draft of Task 1 by today or tomorrow. Eric Curtit will continue to keep the Board apprised of progress being made. **Status: Eric will report on SFTF activities under agenda item #5.**

AASHTO will add an extension (as being worked out between the contractor and SFTF) to the Section 6/Deployment contract to ensure that there is time to complete the work as described in the current SOW.

Status: Eric will report on SFTF activities under agenda item #5.

The 6 person task force established during the workshop to develop proposed strategic goals met following the April 2 and April 16, 2013 Executive Board calls. The subgroup is planning to meet in Washington, DC May 7th and 8th. The Board will be apprised as this group moves forward with its task. Steve Hewitt has been asked to become involved in the efforts of the task force and to plan to attend the meetings in Washington May 7th and 8th. **Status: The task force will meet today (April 30, 2013) following this call, and the meetings planned for May 7-8 will take place in DC. A full progress report will be provided by Bill Bronte under agenda item # 6.**

Strategic discussions regarding future funding for the NGECE and educational opportunities will remain a standing agenda item for Board calls. All members are asked to be on the alert for opportunities to educate congress or other key audiences on what the NGECE is, what it has accomplished and what it hopes to accomplish in the future. If there are suggestions of new strategies or opportunities members should submit them to Steve Hewitt and Bill Bronte. **Status: There have been no new ideas submitted to Steve Hewitt or Bill Bronte. However, a number of organizations, including: CSG-ERC, MIPRC, S4PRC, and CONEG have sent letters or submitted testimony to the House Appropriations subcommittee on Transportation, HUD and Related Agencies. Each of these organizations included a request for continued funding for the NGECE. Steve Hewitt, on April 29, 2013, sent copies of the letters and testimony to Board members and staff. A further discussion of strategy will take place under agenda item #8 as it remains a standing agenda item.**

State members are asked to provide Leo Penne with state specific information, quotes, graphics, and pictures to assist AASHTO in the production of the next educational piece. Steve Hewitt will send a **third** reminder to states to provide AASHTO with information for the follow up brochure.

Note: Following today's call, Steve sent the third reminder to the state members asking for their input as requested by Leo Penne.

Status: Following the reminder, a number of states have responded that they will put information together and get it to Leo Penne. Note: Leo was not on today's call – so Steve Hewitt, again, reminded those states who have not responded to do so as soon as possible.

Requests for additional copies of the Backgrounder should be submitted to Steve Hewitt along with the number requested and an address to send them to. **Status: AASHTO has now added the vision statement to the front page of the Backgrounder. Future printings will have the vision statement included. AASHTO has now gone to a fourth printing. AASHTO has also developed a new NGECE LOGO with the Vision statement as a part of it. The logo can be used as a letterhead. The logo was sent out April 29, 2013 to all Board members and staff. Steve Hewitt is now using the new logo as a letterhead on documents and correspondence.**

There was a brief discussion about the logo – and a question about whether it needed an Executive Board vote. Steve Hewitt noted that the logo is the same as it had been, with the addition of the vision statement and a green background. It can be used for any NGECE correspondence (or not) – "it's a matter of taste" as to using this one or the old one.

Steve Hewitt reminded all Board members who plan to attend the September 26th face to face Board meeting in Columbus, Ohio to make their room reservations by May 1st. AASHTO has arranged for this period to give Board members first shot at rooms before opening the reservations up to SCORT.

As the date gets close, Steve will send an email reminder.

Status: Friday, April 26, 2013, Steve sent a reminder notice that May 1st is the deadline before the room blocks are opened to all SCORT members.

The next RR101 webinar will take place sometime in late May, 2013. Shayne Gill, AASHTO, will keep Board members apprised as the date is firmed up. **Status: Shayne Gill reported that the next webinar topic is yet to be determined, but is expected to take place in late May, 2013. More information to follow.**

4.

Approval of the minutes from April 16, 2013 – Bill Bronte:

On a motion by Eric Curtit, Missouri DOT, and a second by John Oimoen, IDOT, the minutes of the April 16, 2013 conference call meeting of the Executive Board were approved without exception.

5. Status Update: Structure and Finance task force – Eric Curtit:

Eric Curtit reported that he has received the 50% of task 1 report from the Section 6/fleet deployment contractor. He has asked Nico Lindenau and Ashok Sundararajan (FRA consultants) to assist him in reviewing the product submitted. In the review, Eric is looking at "What is good? What is missing? And what should be taken out?"

Eric added that he wants to "make sure the content is right, and that we are getting what we need."

Eric will provide additional detail to the Board as the review of this early product has been completed.

6.

Executive Board subgroup/task force (developing strategic goals) – progress report – Bill Bronte:

Bill Bronte noted that Steve Hewitt had covered a lot of this topic in his action items update. Bill reiterated that the task force or subgroup would be talking again today, following the Executive Board call, to review the proposed agenda for the May 7-8 facilitated meeting of the task force. The task force is looking to build on the work done at the February 20, 2013 workshop, and carry that work forward with the development of strategic goals.

7.

Status Update: Locomotive Procurement – John Oimoen, IDOT:

John Oimoen, IDOT, reporting on the status of the Locomotive procurement stated "nice progress is being made". Jim Lindsay and his team have begun the writing process working closely with the states, FRA and Amtrak. John complimented all parties for their prompt responses and an adherence to short turnaround timelines.

John noted that they are developing criteria and also commented that there is a very detailed schedule.

There have been "challenges, but overall the effort is progressing nicely."

John also noted that talking points for states (and other Board members) are being developed. He expects to have them ready within 3-5 days.

John also stated that he expects that there will be an announcement to the industry in "the next week-week and a half."

8.

Ongoing Strategic Discussion: FY2014 Appropriations – NGEC future funding – Bill Bronte:

Bill Bronte reported that, as Steve Hewitt said earlier, "we have received no new ideas" on strategy, but we have received letters and testimony from CSG-ERC, MIPRC, S4PRC and CONEG in support of continued funding for the NGEC in FY 2014. Bill added that these letters and testimony, along with APTA and AASHTO having already called for the continuation of the NGEC in their reauthorization requests, "shows that we do have strong support...now we need to convert it into keeping 305 moving forward."

Bill asked David Ewing to comment on the new USDOT Secretary nominee Anthony Foxx in regards to his interest in 305.

David said that he feels "optimistic about his (Foxy's) interest and engagement in the topic."

Paul Worley, NCDOT, echoed David's comments, "I agree with David and believe he (Foxy) will be supportive...I think he will be there for us".

Bill Bronte noted, "he has big shoes to fill as Secretary LaHood has been very active" in support of our efforts.

David Ewing agreed, "LaHood was very interested in the subject and supportive of the overall program."

9.

Update: Guidance re: ADAAG & its applicability to Passenger Rail – Mario Bergeron/Kevin Kesler:

Kevin Kesler, FRA, reported on the Technical subcommittee's task of reviewing ADAAG and its applicability to passenger rail. He summarized the actions taken to date in reviewing the areas where 49 CFR Part 38 is silent and where ADAAG may apply.

The Accessibility Working Group (AWG) of the Technical subcommittee has developed informational guidelines as suggestions of potential applicability. Kevin emphasized that these guidelines "are just suggestions". Kevin noted "the way forward is for the new Accessibility Policy Group (APG) to review the guidelines and see what they would recommend...or what they would modify...or even delete."

Mario Bergeron agreed that Kevin had basically described it "in a nutshell." Mario went on to further explain that the "flow of this is actually a hybrid". The Technical subcommittee "got and reviewed USDOT's guidance letter" that stated that where 49 CFR Part 38 is silent ADAAG may apply.

Mario continued, "we then, within the Technical subcommittee, asked the AWG to review the ADAAG and see what would apply." It has now gone from the AWG to the Technical subcommittee. From here it will go to the Executive Board. "This is where the hybrid comes in". The APG was established after the subcommittee had already tasked the AWG with this review. Had the APG been established prior to the review, it would likely have been assigned to them to do the review.

The Technical subcommittee received the AWG guidelines on April 24, 2013, and is now reviewing the document. Members have been asked to send comments and questions to Melissa Shurland, FRA, and she will compile the comments and distribute them (through Steve Hewitt) prior to the next subcommittee call (May 9, 2013). At that time, the subcommittee will have a more formal discussion, and the document may well be updated based on comments received. After the subcommittee call, the guidelines will be sent to the Executive Board with a request that the Board organize the APG to do a policy review. The AWG will help to clarify any technical issues as the APG reviews the guidelines from a policy perspective.

Mario further explained that "this really is a heads up to the Executive Board to say that the AWG has done its work, so stand by, it is coming to you soon."

Bill Bronte asked when Mario would anticipate action to be taken by the APG.

Mario responded that, because of the issue of the active bi-level car procurement and timelines associated with it, the hope is that it will come to the APG as soon as the next week or two. He added that the APG should be asked to prioritize aspects of their review in regards to the bi-level procurement.

Bill added "That's my concern. The design review process is underway and I do not want to create problems that may have unintended consequences."

Bill suggested that he and Mario talk "off line" to get some clarity.

Mario noted "clarity comes as we better understand it."

11.

Adjourn:

With no other business to come before the Board today, Bill Bronte adjourned the Executive Board meeting at approximately 12:02pm EDT, and asked the members of the strategic plan task force to stay on the line to discuss next steps in working towards the development of Strategic Goals and to firm up plans for the May 7-8 meetings in DC.

The next Executive Board conference call is May 14, 2013

Decisions/Action Items

The locomotive procurement status will remain as an agenda item to keep the Board updated as to its progress. **IDOT** will be responsible for providing these bi-weekly updates. Within the next 3-5 days talking points will be distributed in regards to the schedule. An industry announcement should take place in around a week or a week and a half from now.

Jeff Gordon will continue to provide the AASHTO, Amtrak and FRA public affairs officers with email notifications of NGEC activities. (ongoing)

The 6 person task force established during the workshop to develop proposed strategic goals met following the April 2 and April 16, 2013 Executive Board calls. The subgroup will meet in Washington, DC May 7th and 8th. The meetings will be facilitated by Paul Cooper (the facilitator for the February 20, 2013 workshop) The Board will be apprised as this group moves forward with its task.

Strategic discussions regarding future funding for the NGEC and educational opportunities will remain a standing agenda item for Board calls. All members are asked to be on the alert for opportunities to educate congress or other key audiences on what the NGEC is, what it has accomplished and what it hopes to accomplish in the future. If there are suggestions of new strategies or opportunities members should submit them to Steve Hewitt and Bill Bronte. Members should think about ways to capitalize on the strong support received by a number of regional and national organizations.

Requests for additional copies of the Backgrounder should be submitted to Steve Hewitt along with the number requested and an address to send them to.

State members are asked to provide Leo Penne with state specific information, quotes, graphics, and pictures to assist AASHTO in the production of the next educational piece.

Eric Curtit and FRA consultants Nico Lindenau and Ashok Sundararajan are reviewing the first product received (50% of task 1) from the Section 6/Fleet deployment contractor. Eric will report to the Board on the results of that review on the next call (May 14, 2013) and continue to keep the Board apprised of all SFTF progress as a standing agenda item.

The next RR101 webinar will take place sometime around the end of May, 2013. Shayne Gill, AASHTO, will keep Board members apprised as the date and topic is firmed up.

Following its conference call on May 9, 2013, the Technical subcommittee is expected to submit to the Board the AWG developed guidelines in regards to potential ADAAG applicability to passenger rail. On the Board's next call, May 14, 2013, it is expected to organize the APG and task it with a policy review of the guidelines.

ATTACHMENTS



**S305 NGEC Executive Board Conference Call
April 30, 2013
11:30 AM – 1:00 PM EDT
Call in number: 866 299 7945 passcode: 1601544#
Agenda**

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| 1. Open the Meeting | Bill Bronte |
| 2. Roll Call | Steve Hewitt |
| 3. Action Items Review | Steve Hewitt |
| 4. Approval of Minutes from April 16, 2013 | Bill Bronte |
| 5. Status Update: Structure and Finance Task Force | Eric Curtit |

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| 6. Executive Board subgroup (developing strategic goals) – progress report: | Bill Bronte |
| 7. Status Update: Locomotive procurement | IDOT Rep |
| 8. Ongoing Strategic Discussion: FY2014 Appropriations – NGEC | Bill Bronte |
| 9. Update: Guidance re:Part 38 & its applicability to ADAAG and next steps/process | Mario Bergeron/Kevin Kesler |
| 10. Other | All |

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