

Roadside Safety Pooled Fund – Phase 3

TPF-5(501)

Technical Advisory Committee Charter

Purpose: The purpose of the Roadside Safety Pooled Fund – Phase 3 is to reduce or eliminate fatalities on the nation’s roadways due to roadway departure crashes. The National Safety Council (NSC) manages the Road to Zero program which has a targeted goal of zero deaths and serious injuries on the nation’s roadways. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has identified roadway departure crashes (RwD) as one of three critical focus areas with the greatest potential to reduce highway fatalities using infrastructure-oriented improvements. The objective of this pooled fund is to assist transportation agencies in achieving their RwD related state Strategic Highway Safety Plan goals through development, evaluation, and deployment of life-saving roadside safety devices and countermeasures in accordance with the American Association of Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) and FHWA adopted standards such as the Manual for Assessing Safety Hardware (MASH). The pooled fund will also continue to support MASH implementation in those roadside hardware categories that have lagged in achieving MASH compliance (special barrier applications, sign supports, work zone traffic control devices, luminaire poles, etc.) due to various design and performance challenges and other related factors. These activities will directly support and impact states efforts to achieve Target Zero by helping reduce the frequency and severity of roadway departure crashes.

The purpose of the Roadside Safety Pooled Fund – Phase 3 *Technical Advisory Committee* (hereinafter TAC) is to provide for meaningful input, feedback, and decision-making that supports the pooled fund’s purpose. The TAC’s work is funded through the Transportation Pooled Fund program that allows member states to combine their funding resources for research.

Membership and Voting: The TAC is comprised of one member from each State that contributes to the pooled fund, and therefore is a member of the pooled fund. Voting privileges are assessed by the lead state on April 1 of each year and are rescinded for states that have not committed funds for current year (see Funding). States that have committed funding for the Federal Fiscal Year current at the time of the vote can designate a voting member and participate in voting. Each participating agency informs the lead state who on their staff will serve as the voting member, and the voting member may only be an employee of that agency. In advance of a meeting where voting will take place, the voting member may delegate their vote to another agency employee. Other agency staff participating in the pooled fund, including those who are employed by member states, TTI, and FHWA cannot vote. However, they are welcome to participate in all pooled fund meetings, conference calls, and other events at their own cost.

Decisions: Voting on all matters before the TAC; including the work plan, research priorities, or questions posed by or to the TAC, will be decided by a majority of the TAC’s voting members present. The lead state will be responsible for tallying and reporting out vote results. The lead state is also responsible for determining the voting method that will be used for any particular vote. The lead state shall announce the chosen voting method before the vote is taken and may solicit advice from voting members or other participants. This includes decisions related to the confidentiality of any particular vote. A revote on an issue may be conducted by the lead state at the request of a majority of the TAC.

Votes may be taken either live or using an electronic tool such as a web-based survey software at the lead state's discretion.

Meetings: Typically, the pooled fund holds several meetings each year culminating with an annual meeting to discuss the progress on current pooled fund projects, voting on new projects, and other topics. Only state agency, FHWA, and TTI staff will be allowed to attend pooled fund meetings. Outside agencies are not allowed to attend any pooled fund meetings. The annual meeting is a face-to-face meeting that is held once a year and is normally scheduled to take place over a minimum of two consecutive days. Members are welcome to attend and participate as described in "Membership" above. Travel for the voting member representing each agency is sponsored by the transportation pooled fund. The location for the annual meeting is at TTI in College Station TX. This is the preferred location because the site provides superior quality meeting areas, computer and audio/video resources, and provides the TAC an opportunity for onsite observation of various ongoing research and testing efforts. Please note that the lead state has the option to change the location of the annual meeting in any given year.

TAC Chair: The TAC Chair will be the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) voting member. The Chairman participates in the development of the meeting agenda, facilitates the meeting discussion and decision-making, and provides direction and oversight of the administration of the pooled fund.

Lead State: WSDOT is the lead state for the pooled fund program. As the lead state, it is responsible for the following:

- 1) Collecting the financial transfers from participating states into the pooled fund.
- 2) Developing and executing work under the master research agreement with TTI.
- 3) Reviewing and processing invoices on task orders. It is also responsible for fulfilling bookkeeping, reporting, and other requirements imposed by FHWA on pooled fund operations.
- 4) Reimbursing travel for the TAC members based on their commitment status.
- 5) Making arrangements for meetings and events or arranging for that work to be done by others. Coordinating with TTI on products such as agendas, information materials, presentations, and other details about the program necessary for conducting meetings as required.

Texas A&M Transportation Institute (TTI): TTI is the contractor with WSDOT which is established to perform research on roadside safety devices. TTI is responsible for managing and executing the TAC's work plan, research reports and products, internal and external website, letters of acceptance, and other documentation necessary to serve the TAC's needs. Work is described in individual task orders that are applied to the master agreement, and work proceeds upon execution (endorsement) of these task orders by TTI and WSDOT.

Supplemental task orders may also be executed to benefit individual member states in cooperation with TTI under the master agreement. The additional funding for these *supplemental* task orders shall be obligated through the regular pooled fund contribution process to the estimated value required under the task order. *Supplemental* task orders will be executed by WSDOT only after the funds have been received. Note that processing these *supplemental* task orders for individual states may be limited by the capacity of lead state staff, and/or various contractual or funding ceilings, authorizations and issues that may arise.

Research projects: Projects are assigned a Principal Investigator (PI) by TTI, and that person is responsible for conducting the research and providing quarterly reports on progress to be incorporated into a combined quarterly report for the overall program. The PI may occasionally be called upon to present the progress to the TAC during a meeting or conference call. When the PI determines that it is in the best interest of the states that the project be modified, and the technical monitor concurs, the terms of that modification are brought to the lead state for action. In the case of a no-cost scope or schedule change, the lead state may, at their option approve the change with or without a vote of the membership. In the case of a budget change, the decision must be brought to the membership for a vote, either during a regular or special conference call or face-to-face meeting, and the voting is conducted as described above.

Research proposals: Proposals for research are prepared by individual TAC members prior to the meeting. A TAC member from one member state is expected to be the lead author and representative for each proposal. That lead author is encouraged to solicit help from other pooled fund participants during the development of the proposal to benefit from fellow subject matter expertise and experience, and to generate interest and ultimately garner support for the proposal. The lead author is required to coordinate with TTI staff during proposal development so that an opportunity is provided to review and/or participate in the development of the scope and estimate, which are both required before the proposal can be voted on.

Oversight: Once it's determined at the annual meeting that a project will likely be funded in the upcoming fiscal year, a *technical monitor* (TM) is selected who will act on behalf of the membership in consulting with the PI about questions that may arise during the course of the work. Among the expectations of the TM are overseeing task order scoping and development at project initiation, participating in decisions brought to them by the research team during the course of the project, and reviewing interim, draft, and final findings and reports. See Research Projects section for approval responsibilities for changes to existing task order changes.

Communications: The lead state keeps a list of the voting member from each state who serves as the primary point of contact. Other names of agency staff may be submitted by the voting member to be included on that roster for routine communications. Occasionally, information about ongoing projects is requested by voting members or others, including outside parties. Information about ongoing projects may be shared by TTI or the TM with one or all voting members (one per state) who request it. It is each TAC member's responsibility to keep their respective states' decision makers, funding staff, and research management personnel, amongst others, apprised on the status and progress of the pooled fund and the benefits of maintaining their commitments and contributions as necessary.

Funding: Member states post yearly commitments to the Transportation Pooled Fund website, which is a promise to obligate (transfer), preferably federal SPR B funds, to WSDOT through the obligation transfer process. WSDOT shall ONLY contract with TTI for work in which sufficient obligations have been received. Therefore, states shall transfer, at a minimum, annual contributions within the federal fiscal year, preferably as soon as the funds become available, so work for the fiscal year can be planned meaningfully. Multiple year transfers will also be accepted. The required annual contribution is \$65,000. To support member travel to the annual meeting, and maintain voting privileges (see Membership), contributions must be applied on or before March 31 of each year to be credited to the current federal fiscal year (ending September 30). The exception is the contribution of the lead state which is \$32,500

annually, in recognition of the staff time and resources required in managing the pooled fund. Any other exceptions or extensions may be granted at the discretion of the lead state.

Travel: Membership travel will be reimbursed with transportation pooled funds. Travel reimbursement rules and rates are dictated by WSDOT travel rules and regulations which are consistent with GSA travel per diem rates. Travel may only be reimbursed if prior travel authorization is obtained by WSDOT.

Responsibilities or functions not otherwise described: The lead state is responsible for making decisions and addressing questions that may arise and are not otherwise described in the charter but may at their discretion seek advice on such decisions from the TAC in formal or informal communications.

Presented to and accepted by the TPF 5(501) Technical Advisory Committee

Timothy J. Moeckel, PE – TPF 5(501) Chair

September 27, 2022

Change Log:

April 2020

- the term “bilateral” was changed to “supplemental” in the section *Texas A&M Transportation Institute*.

April 2021

- Remove reference to minimum contribution amount (Membership section)
- More information about technical representative responsibilities (Oversight section)
- Minor grammatical corrections and clarifications

Sep 2022

- Change all pooled fund program references from the phase 2 TPF 5(343) to the phase 3 TPF 5(501) throughout the charter document
- Updated the charter to show the new TPF 5(501) Roadside Safety Pooled Fund – Phase 3 purpose and objectives (Purpose section)
- More information added about who is permitted to attend pooled fund meetings (Meetings Section)
- Updated the required commitment/obligation amount for participating annual pooled fund members (Funding Section)
- Minor grammatical corrections and clarifications throughout the charter document