

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 goal 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 FHWA 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 Voting privileges are assessed by the lead state (WSDOT) on April 1 of each year and are rescinded for states that have not committed funds for current year (see Funding).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 (WSDOT) 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, non-voting pooled fund members 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 simple majority of the TAC’s voting members. The lead state (WSDOT) will be responsible for tallying and reporting the vote results. The lead state (WSDOT) is also responsible for determining the voting method that will be used for any particular vote. The lead state (WSDOT) 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 (WSDOT) at the request from the simple 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: The pooled fund holds several virtual meetings each year culminating with an in-person annual meeting. The annual meeting discusses the progress on current pooled fund projects, voting on new projects for the upcoming year, national roadside safety news & committee updates (TRB, TCRS, MwRSF, etc.), 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 an in-person meeting that is held once a year and is normally scheduled to take place over a minimum of two consecutive days. TAC members are welcome to attend and participate as described in "Membership" above. Travel costs for the voting member representing each agency is sponsored by the transportation pooled fund. The location for the annual meeting is typically at Texas Transportation Institute (TTI) in College Station, TX. This is the preferred location because the site provides superior quality meeting venues, computer and audio-visual resources, and provides the TAC an opportunity for onsite observation of various ongoing research and testing efforts. The lead state (WSDOT) 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 Chairperson 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) Planning 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 under 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 (see Supplemental Projects section below).

Mainstream Program Research Projects: Projects are assigned a Principal Investigator (PI) by TTI, and that person is responsible for conducting the research. The PI's are also responsible for providing internal monthly reports on completed work, and quarterly reports for the overall program that includes the progress and status on each project per FHWA requirements. Completed quarterly reports are

posted to the FHWA pooled fund website. The PI may occasionally be called upon to present the research project's progress to the TAC during a meeting or conference call. When the PI determines that it is in the best interest of the states for a project to be modified, and the technical monitor (TM) concurs, the terms of that modification are brought to the lead state (WSDOT) for action. In the case of a no-cost scope or schedule change, the lead state (WSDOT) may approve the change with or without a vote of the membership. In the case of a project budget change, the decision shall be brought to the membership for a vote. The voting is conducted as described in the **Decisions** section.

Research Proposals: Prior the annual meeting, proposals for mainstream program research projects are prepared by individual TAC members. A TAC member from one of the pooled fund participating states is expected to be the lead author and representative for each proposal. The 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 project scope and estimate. The project scope and estimate are both required as part of the proposal before that proposal can be voted on.

Research Project Oversight: Once it's determined at the annual meeting that a mainstream program project will likely be funded in the upcoming fiscal year, a technical monitor (TM) is selected. The TM will typically be the original research project proposal author. The TM will act on behalf of the TAC membership in consulting with the PI about questions that may arise during 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, verifying project monthly invoices, and reviewing interim, draft, and final findings and reports. See **Mainstream Program Research Projects** section for approval responsibilities for existing task order modifications.

Supplemental Research Projects: In addition to the mainstream program projects described above, TAC members have the option to implement individual state supplemental research projects. A supplemental research project is a pooled fund benefit that states can use to individually sponsor a research project that may not have widespread pooled fund interest or needs to be completed on a timely basis. To process a supplemental project, the member state must follow the steps shown below:

- **Step 1:** Work with TTI to develop a research proposal including project scope and budget.
- **Step 2:** Work with the Lead State (WSDOT) research office to determine when the supplemental project can be implemented. Note: The lead state (WSDOT) has federal authority spending limits that must be verified. If necessary, the supplemental project may need to be split into two or more phases to spread out project costs or may require a delayed start. When the final version of the proposal is approved by the Lead State (WSDOT), then funding and preparation of the project task order can begin.
- **Step 3:** The sponsoring state must fully fund the supplemental project before the project can begin work. The funding for supplemental projects shall be obligated through the regular pooled fund contribution process to the estimated value required under the task order. Sponsoring member states may only use SPR-B federal funds for supplemental projects.

Supplemental task orders will be executed by WSDOT only after the SPR-B funds have been received. The total dollar amount of approved supplemental projects will be limited to a maximum of up to \$600,000 per biennium (22-23 Biennium, 24-25 Biennium, 26-27 Biennium) or an average of up to \$300,000 per federal fiscal year. These dollar amount limits are necessary for planning and spending within federal authority limits, pooled fund spending plan estimates, and to be cognizant of the additional demand these projects place on lead state (WSDOT) staff for managing these funds.

NOTE: In the event of constrained resources or timelines, mainstream pooled fund projects will take precedence over supplemental projects.

Communications: The lead state (WSDOT) 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, research management personnel, and 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 must post yearly commitments to the [Transportation Pooled Fund website](#). The yearly commitment is a promise to obligate (transfer) funds to the lead state (WSDOT) through the obligation transfer process. It is preferred that states use federal SPR-B funds. If desiring to use an alternative funding source, the member state must first contact the Lead State's (WSDOT's) research office to determine if the desired alternate funding source is acceptable. If the alternate funding is approved, the member state shall then work with the Lead State's (WSDOT's) research office to complete the alternate funding processing requirements.

The required member state pooled fund annual contribution is \$65,000. The lead state (WSDOT) shall only contract with TTI for work in which sufficient funding obligations have been received. Therefore, at a minimum, member states shall transfer yearly annual contributions that are due within a given federal fiscal year. It is preferred the annual contributions are obligated and transferred as soon as the funds become available (Note: Federal SPR-B funds are typically released in October of each year). This allows pooled fund work for the fiscal year to be planned meaningfully and quickly implemented. Multiple year transfers are also accepted.

The exception to the annual \$65,000 member state contribution is the required contribution amount of the lead state (WSDOT) which is \$32,500 annually. This reduced contribution amount is in recognition of the lead state staff time and resources spent in managing the pooled fund.

Any other contribution exceptions or extensions may be granted at the discretion of the lead state (WSDOT).

To support member travel to the annual meeting and maintain voting privileges (see **Membership**), contributions must be received and processed on or before March 31 of each year to be credited to the current federal fiscal year (ending September 30).

Annual Meeting Travel: Membership travel costs (flight, hotel, food, transportation, etc.) for the annual in-person meeting will be reimbursed by the pooled fund for one person per member state (currently 100% up to \$2300 or other amount as communicated by the lead state (WSDOT) via TTI.). The lead state (WSDOT) will be reimbursed for travel costs of two people (Lead Technical Representative & Lead Research Office Representative). Travel reimbursement rules and rates are aligned with 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.

Annual Meeting Travel – Additional Sponsored Travel Slots: In addition to sponsoring the annual meeting travel costs of one person per member state (or two people for the lead state (WSDOT)), the pooled fund offers four additional sponsored travel slots to those states applying for them. These additional slots are for states wishing to bring another person to the in-person annual meeting (such as a state’s 2nd pooled fund member, SME, research office representative, management representative, etc.). A poll will be sent out in the summer before the fall annual meeting asking for states to indicate interest in obtaining an additional sponsored travel slot. After the poll closes, the lead state will determine which of the applying states will receive an additional sponsored travel slot and notify those states. Selection of the additional sponsored travel slots will be prioritized as follows:

- 1st priority goes to the lead state (WSDOT). Typically, this additional travel slot will be used for the lead state’s 2nd technical representative to help organize and run the annual meeting, to provide in-person meeting experience/networking opportunities, and prepare them to eventually take over the lead TAC chair position.
- 2nd Priority goes to applying member states who have never used an additional sponsored travel slot. If more states who never used an additional sponsored travel slot are applying than there are slots available, then the applying states will be chosen randomly by the lead state (WSDOT) to determine who will receive the additional sponsored travel slot. The lead state (WSDOT) will ask and give any of the applying states a chance drop out before performing the random selection.
- 3rd Priority goes to applying member states who have used an additional sponsored travel slot in the past. Higher priority goes to those states who used the additional sponsored travel slot a longer time ago than other states -- for example, a state who last used an additional sponsored travel slot 2-years ago will be prioritized higher than a state who last used a slot 1-year ago. In the event of a tie for those applying states who used an additional sponsored travel slot an equal amount of time ago, the states will be chosen randomly by the lead state (WSDOT) to determine who will receive an additional sponsored travel slot. The lead state (WSDOT) will ask and give any of the applying states a chance drop out before performing the random selection.

Responsibilities or Functions Not Otherwise Described: The lead state (WSDOT) is responsible for making decisions and addressing questions that may arise and are not otherwise described in the charter. The lead state (WSDOT) 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 (TAC)

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

October 22, 2024



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

Oct 2024

- Updated/clarified ways that TAC pooled fund votes can be conducted (Research projects section)
- Created new Supplemental projects section to provide in-depth guidance on what supplemental projects are, how to process supplemental projects, and biennial total dollar limits (Supplemental Project section)
- Updated and provided additional guidance on annual funding (Funding section)
- Created new Annual Meeting Travel – Additional Sponsored Travel Slots section to allow an additional four sponsored trips to the in-person annual meeting in addition to the one sponsored trip each member state has (Annual Meeting – Additional Sponsored Travel Slots)
- Minor grammatical corrections and clarifications throughout the charter document