

SICOP QUARTERLY REPORT

October-December 2005

RWIS/Anti-Icing Computer-Based Training Program

Background

This project was identified by AASHTO's Winter Maintenance Policy Coordinating Committee (WMPCC) as two projects, reviewed and evaluated at the Snow and Ice Cooperative Fund Program (SICOP) Workshop held in Minneapolis in April 1997, and given the highest priority by WMPCC at their October 2-3, 1997 meeting. One project was entitled "Anti-icing training for state, county and municipal highway operations" and the other "Road Weather Information System (RWIS) Training": The two subjects were so interrelated that it was decided to combine them into one project, RWIS/AI Computer-Based Training. The objective of the training was to develop and deliver a comprehensive training program on RWIS, anti-icing strategies, snow and ice control materials, equipment and procedures for personnel responsible for deciding the level of service to be provided on highways and streets under winter conditions. Training would utilize a series of realistic scenario-based exercises. Critiques following each exercise would be designed to contribute to new insights by participants, and provide a basis for subsequent exercises. The concept was endorsed by the FHWA's Lead States Program which subsequently formed a Lead States Anti-icing Team. This Team put together the basic course content before the Lead States Program was sunset in September 2000. At that point, the Aurora Consortium stepped forward and put together the Request for Proposal, advertised the RFP, and assisted in selecting the contractor. AASHTO wrote a letter to all member States in June 2000 announcing the opportunity to participate in the pooled fund project. The pooled fund was originally assigned a study number of SPR-3(104) and because of a duplicate number problem was assigned a second number of TPF-5(009). Most of the snow-belt states have joined the pooled fund study. A contract was let in March 2001 and a Technical Working Group (TWG) formed to guide the project. Thirty-one states, APWA, NACE, FHWA, Aurora and the New York State Thruway Authority have joined and have paid or are in the process of paying into the pooled fund. The Technical Working Group (TWG) met with the contractor September 10-13, 2001 in Nevada to review draft storyboards for the seven lessons of the CBT. The contractor completed a draft CD-ROM containing all seven lessons and submitted to the TWG for final comments and approval. TWG was able to complete their review of the first three lessons in summer 2002, lessons 4-6 in mid-March 2003, and Lesson 7 in mid April 2003. In October 2002 the contractor submitted a CD-ROM containing the first three lessons to the State DOTs who joined the pooled fund and asked for their recommendations for any customization they needed. The CD-ROM containing all seven lessons (with additional revisions to lessons 1-3) was submitted May 1, 2003 to the State DOTs asking for their final customization recommendations.

Quarterly Progress

Contractor finished the customizations reported last quarter with the exception of North Dakota which is still beta testing their version and attempting to network their new computers. As reported last quarter Environment Canada announced it will no longer be providing RWIS

service to the Provinces and Cities, so work will begin on inserting new screen shots from the VAMS when the Provinces and the Ontario Good Road Association determine who will be providing this service.

Twenty four new scenarios were completed and distributed by the contractor last quarter and several states installed them and found they worked satisfactory. This gives the CBT a total of 32 scenarios to use in the final exam, so the student will not be repeating the same exam as they take refresher training.

Contractor finished 89 pages of new storyboards which will incorporate the contents of NCHRP Report 529, "Snow and Ice Control: Guidelines for Materials and Methods" into the original 800 pages of storyboards in the CBT. This will keep the CBT current with results of newly completed research work. During the very detailed review of the NCHRP material the contractor discovered several of the tables in the NCHRP report were in error. AASHTO is currently working with NCHRP to determine how the report should be corrected.