**ED’s CORNER**

**FY 01 TxDOT RMC Expenditures — Great! But Let’s Hire!**

As you know we’ve been emphasizing a 90%+ objective for expenditure of TOG RMC Projects. Here’s our numbers as of September 28, 2001.

**Congratulations to everyone!**

Accounting for the encumbrances that are expected to be paid over the next several months, our percent spent is likely to go up to 97.3%.

The percentage spent has been an ongoing issue within TTI for years. So our performance puts us in good standing.

But, fiscal year 02 will be the biggest challenge we’ve had in a long time. Our RMC awards have been relatively flat the last three years; and our performance has varied only $56,854.

FY02 is a 14% increase in awards. In addition, our staffing estimates show us understaffed to meet our total TOG commitments. We’ve got to hire!

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**CONFERENCE CALLS**

There is an inexpensive option available through Centrex to arrange multi-party conference calls. TAMU has a limited number of 800 numbers available for a total cost of $.10/minute. To make a reservation, please contact Angela Moore at 845-5171. If a line is available for the date and time needed, a Centrex account number will need to be provided and a workorder processed. An 800 number would be provided that all parties would call to get hooked up for the conference call. It is expected that this service will start to get busy as word is getting out, so make your reservations early.

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**TOG’s Mission**

To facilitate innovations in transportation system operations through leadership in research, education, and technology transfer.

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**INTERCHANGE**

Transportation Operations Group

http://tog.tamu.edu

Texas Transportation Institute

Volume 7 Number 10 October 2001

http://tti.tamu.edu

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**THANK YOU!!!**

I would like to thank everyone who donated to the American Red Cross September 11th fund on behalf of TTI. We were able to collect over $1,300 dollars. The donations were greatly appreciated.

Thank you,

Jaime Helmuth

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**CALENDAR MARKS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oct 8</td>
<td>Columbus Day (observed) (TxDOT and some other state offices closed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct 8</td>
<td>Thanksgiving Day (Canada)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct 15-17</td>
<td>TxDOT Transportation Short Course, Rudder Conference Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct 28</td>
<td>Daylight savings time ends</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov 4-7</td>
<td>National Highway-Rail Grade Crossing Conference, Dallas</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov 5-8</td>
<td>TxDOT RMC meetings, San Antonio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov 6</td>
<td>Election Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov 11</td>
<td>Veterans Day</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov 11</td>
<td>Remembrance Day (Canada)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov 14-16</td>
<td>ITS Texas Annual Meeting, College Station</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov 17</td>
<td>First Day of Ramadan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov 22</td>
<td>Thanksgiving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov 22-23</td>
<td>Thanksgiving Holidays</td>
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**TOG RMC Info**

| FY99   | $2,968,074 95.1% |
| FY00   | $3,047,082 94.5% |
| FY01   | $2,929,073 96.6% |
| FY02   | $3,340,454      |
UPCOMING CAMPUS and OTHER EVENTS

Jul 3-Oct 30  Stars and Stripes Exhibition, Bush Library
Aug 27-Nov 30  Steamboats of the Natchez, from the Center for American History, Forsyth Galleries in the MSC,
Oct 3  Academic Conference, Higher Education in and for a Just Society, Bush Conference Center
Oct 4  TAMU 125th Anniversary Celebration
Oct 4  Academic Convocation Rudder Auditorium
Oct 6-Feb 10  Picturing the Century: One Hundred Years of Photography from the National Archives, Bush Library
Oct 23-24  MSC OPAS, Ragtime
Nov 8  Distinguished Lecture Series, Dr. Norman Hackerman, Science and Technology in Texas, Presidential Conference Center, 7:30 p.m.
Nov 12  World War II and It’s Legacy, 2-Day conference, Presidential Conference Center
Nov 13  "Canada-U.S. Relations: The Past and Future at the Turn of the Twenty-first Century", 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m., Rudder Tower
Dec 4  Distinguished Lecture Series, Dr. James Womack, The Genomics Revolution: Marching Into the Millennium with the Secrets of Life, Presidential Conference Center, 7:30 p.m.

IS YOUR TIME DRIFTING AWAY?

No, this isn't an ad for a time management class! We're talking PC clocks here. Does your PC clock tend to drift and get out of sync with the real world? Do you find yourself showing up late for meetings because Outlook just informed you that you had 15 minutes to go.....5 minutes after the meeting has already started? If so, read on.

The major problem is that our PC clock is set to the network time only when we log in. If we stay logged in for several days, we never get time synched again to the servers which are synched with the real world. Since PC clocks are fairly inaccurate, in that they drift, you may notice your time drifting by as much as 10 or 20 minutes after a day or two.

The solution to this problem is to update your clock by connecting to the National Atomic Clock and performing a time synch. There are numerous programs that do this. Typically, they're very small and efficient and just sit down in your system tray. In fact, you'll probably never even know they're doing anything, but your clock will remain accurate. All of the programs work using the Internet Time Service from the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST).

A freeware that works quite nicely is "About Time," which can be downloaded from http://tucows.myriad.net/preview/1078.html. The program provides a lot of flexibility in how often time synchs are performed, pre-configured satellite servers to use if NIST is down or busy and even works through firewalls. (Please note that there are versions for 98/ME/2000/NT so make sure to download the right version for your computer). If you want to see a more complete listing and pick a program that might suit your needs better, please see a large list of possibilities at: http://tucows.myriad.net/sync95.html

NIST also has a downloadable freeware program, which can found at the following web site: http://www.boulder.nist.gov/timefreq/service/its.htm. This program can synchronize your computer's clock in the background and keep it accurate. This is an older program, but it works and provides flexibility in the frequency your computer clock is updated.

One thing that you will want to do with most of these time setting programs (and definitely with the 2 mentioned above) is to place a shortcut to them in your Startup group so that they start automatically with Windows. For best results with About Time, check the Options tab to make sure you have the program configured as shown below.

If you're interested in learning more about the Nation's atomic clocks, please go to: http://www.boulder.nist.gov/timefreq/cesium/fountain.htm.

Bob Brydia and Gene Hawkins
REPRESENTING TTI

Anytime you go out in public, you need to remember that you are a representative of TTI, The Texas A&M University System, and the State of Texas government. We have an obligation to be good stewards of the public’s resources and to follow the rules and procedures that the state has established. Most everyone has the best of intentions to follow them, but over time, we can become complacent. And when the public observes complacency, it can create difficulties for all TTI employees.

One of the times when you are most visible to the public is when you are operating a TTI or A&M vehicle. These are clearly identifiable as state vehicles and the public has certain expectations on how they should be used. The following are just a few examples of actions that are not appropriate when operating a state vehicle:

- Speeding, aggressive driving, or other illegal driving maneuvers.
- Using a vehicle for personal activities. This includes running personal errands while on state business.
- Possessing or buying alcohol while using a state vehicle. This includes parking a state vehicle in the parking lot of a bar or similar type of establishment.
- Smoking in the vehicle.
- Littering from a state vehicle.

Vehicles are only one of the many situations where we are in the public eye. There are plenty of others. Every one of us has an obligation to make sure that we know and follow the rules and guidelines, but that we also use our common sense to decide what is appropriate and what is not. Always keep in mind that you never know who may be watching. There are citizens that are happy to report perceived indiscretions of state employees. And when they do, those complaints can be directed at anyone from the Governor to the agency director.

COLLEGE STATION INTEGRATION PROJECT

TTI is currently implementing the College Station Integration Project. Kevin Balke is the PI on this three-year project. This project was funded by a congressional grant with local match from TxDOT, TTI, and the City of College Station. The objective of the project is to integrate the traffic signals and video cameras in the Wellborn Corridor with the TransLink’s® Train Monitoring System. The information from these systems would then be available to the City of College Station Traffic Department and the City of College Station Fire Department through a variety of delivery mechanisms.

The project corridor consists of 5 intersections from West Main in the north to Harvey Mitchell Parkway in the south. As part of this project, TTI will be developing a Gigabit Ethernet network to integrate all the devices in the field with TTI and the City of College Station. TTI will upgrade the existing signal controller cabinets from West Main to Southwest Parkway to accommodate Cisco networking equipment. Upgrades to Joe Route will be done after the current construction activity is completed. The City of College Station and TTI will also upgrade the detection equipment at these intersections to video detection. TTI will also install some additional video monitoring equipment along the corridor to obtain rail information.

TTI has received most of the equipment and testing has started. A test network was implemented in the lab and tested. Subsequently initial deployment has begun with equipment at one intersection in the field and further testing is proceeding.

The goals of this project are to improve the train monitoring capabilities for TTI, enhance the traffic operation capabilities for the City of College Station and most importantly provide Train Monitoring information supplemented with video to the Fire Department to improve their emergency vehicle dispatch service. More information about the project will be provided as additional progress is made. For further information, please contact Kevin Balke, Srinivasa Sunkari, Bob Brydia, or Leonard Ruback.

Srinivasa Sunkari

ITS TEXAS ANNUAL MEETING

The ITS Texas Annual Meeting will be held in College Station, Tx. November 13-15, 2001. For information and registration see http://itstexas.tamu.edu for registration information.

HELLO AND GOODBYE

Hello

The Traffic Analysis and Design Program welcomes two new members: Carissa Mardiros and Stephanie Elmquist. Carissa Mardiros, a Graduate Research Assistant, earned her bachelors degree from TAMU in 1998 and has spent the past three years working in Houston for a consulting firm. She will be working with Kay Fitzpatrick on the TxDOT Urban Intersection Design project.

Stephanie Elmquist, Software Office Assistant, has an associates degree in Computer Network Administration from Blinn College. She works half time for Cushing Library and will be working half time for TTI in the afternoons.

Welcome Carissa and Stephanie!

Diane Fischer is the new Lead Office Assistant in the TransLink® Research Center. Diane comes most recently from the Journalism department on campus. She previously worked for various engineering and construction companies in the Houston area for many years. She loves sewing, gardening, and living in the country. Welcome Diane!
NOTES FROM THE CPD

Expanding Your Horizons

The Center for Professional Development is participating in the Expanding Your Horizons Program on Saturday, October 13th. Expanding Your Horizons is a conference for young women ages 12 to 17. The goal of the conference is to provide a venue for girls to meet women who use science and math in their careers.

Debbie Jasek and Brooke Durkop will present the workshop, Sign the Way. Sign the Way is a presentation on traffic signs and their meanings.

Operation Lifesaver

Debbie Jasek recently completed the Operation Lifesaver Level 1 presenter course. Operation Lifesaver is a national, non-profit education and awareness program dedicated to ending tragic collisions, fatalities and injuries at highway-rail grade crossings and on railroad rights-of-way. To accomplish its mission, Operation Lifesaver promotes 3 E’s: Education, Enforcement, and Engineering.

Transportation Science Fair

The Center for Professional Development will host a Transportation Science Competition and Fair next spring. The competition, held on April 11, 2002, will be open to all junior high and high school students. Details on the competition are available from Debbie Jasek and Brooke Durkop.

As always for more information on these topics please contact Gary Thomas at 458-3263 or by e-mail at g-thomas@tamu.edu or Debbie Jasek at 845-5239 or by e-mail at d-jasek@tamu.edu.

Gary Thomas

LOCAL PURCHASES

Purchasing items from local vendors may not be as easy as you think since many require TTI charge cards (available from the Business Office). Below is an abbreviated list of local vendor purchase requirements on a TTI account (not RF). For more detailed information, go to U:\Bus\BusShare\Logs\AcctPay\Charge Cards.

Charge Card Required
Barnes and Noble
Best Buy
Hastings
Hobby Lobby
Kinko's
Sears
Wal-Mart

Other Vendors
Circuit City: Minimum $150, detailed purchase order form must be completed by the Business Office
Office Depot: No TTI charge account exists. Employees may make purchases and then be reimbursed.
OfficeMax/CopyMax: No charge card. Employee must provide the TTI account number and tax exempt number as assigned by the store.
Sam's Club: Requisition must be prepared by the Business Office.

Additional Reminders
TTI is tax exempt. Do not pay any sales taxes. Most receipts from local vendors are invoices and must be used to prepare a voucher. If a billing statement is received from the business, payment will be late and interest will be charged.
Do not charge RF purchases to TTI.

Beth Neilson

TOG TRAVELS

Gary Thomas traveled to Washington DC to attend meetings for ASCE's Committee on Career Guidance.

Leonard Ruback and Srinivasa Sunkari attended an ITS Texas Seminar - Focus on the technologies in ITS: Communication - Fiber Basics and Wireless CDPD in Fort Worth on September 28th. The seminar was a very well attended and included was a very basic and useful presentation on fiber. Srinivasa is in the process of getting the PowerPoint file for this presentation. If anybody is interested in more information about the seminar, they can contact either Srinivasa or Leonard.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Oct 01 Dan Walker
Oct 04 Liz Post
Oct 08 Timothy Gates
Oct 11 Christopher Harrington
Oct 11 Omar Mata
Oct 11 Tim Wolff
Oct 17 Dongyoon Hyun
Oct 19 Gene Hawkins
Oct 19 Charles Stevens
Oct 20 Seung-Jun Kim
Oct 20 Brenda Manak
Oct 22 Juan Gabriel Rodriguez
Oct 27 Srinivasa Sunkari
Oct 31 Marcus Brewer
Nov 01 Ivan Lorenz
Nov 06 Gene Ritch
Nov 08 Mark Wooldridge
Nov 10 Paul Carlson
Nov 21 George Wright
Nov 22 Sue Chrysler
Nov 26 Joanie Stapp
Nov 27 Di Wu

CONTEST!!!!

We realize everyone was very busy this past month, so we are extending the deadline on the presentation template contest. We are looking for your designs of PowerPoint presentation templates that can be used by TOG staff members. Submit your designs to either Debbie Jasek (d-jasek@tamu.edu) or Beth Neilson (b-neilson@tamu.edu)