

MINNESOTA FREIGHT ADVISORY COMMITTEE SPRING MEETING RECAP

The Minnesota Freight Advisory Committee (MFAC) met May 20, 2005, for its Spring quarterly meeting in St. Paul, Minnesota.

Minnesota Statewide Freight Plan

The final Minnesota Statewide Freight Plan was presented by Cecil Selness, Director – Office of Freight & Commercial Vehicle Operations of Mn/DOT. The committee members raised additional issues and topics that they feel should be examined including: 1) CDL training for new/younger drivers 2) Security measures impacts on international freight shipments 3) Concerns regarding intermodal rail service and costs in Minnesota 4) Status of regional air cargo distribution center concept. A draft of the final Statewide Freight Plan can be viewed at: http://www.dot.state.mn.us/ofrw/statewide_plan.htm.

Strategies for Improved Twin Cities Truck Traffic Management

Dr. Tom Maze of the Center for Transportation Research & Education (CTRE), Iowa State University, and Principal Investigator presented the results and implementation strategy recommendations developed in the Mn/DOT/CTS – funded research study, “*Trucks & Twin Cities Traffic Management*”. The top five strategies recommended for implementation were: 1) Provide design guidance for local governments addressing truck movements on local roads 2) Improve “Quick Clearance” rules 3) Address truck parking supply needs on the urban fringe 4) Improve advanced signing on arterials for freeway entrances 5) Expand use/construction of truck-friendly acceleration/deceleration lanes. Mn/DOT’s Office of Research Services is developing an implementation plan built around these strategies. For more information on this study check the web site at: <http://www.ctre.iastate.edu/educweb/tctruckin/> . Or check the CTS research web site for final publication later in 2005.

Mn/DOT Truck Size & Weight Policy Review Plan

Bill Gardner, Director of Freight Planning & Development, Mn/DOT, and Project Manager, presented a preview of the proposed study entitled, “*Minnesota Plan to Increase Truck Size & Weight*”. The main purposes of the plan are to: 1) Propose increases to heavy truck size & weight laws on state and local roads and bridges 2) Specify requirements for these increases (number of axles, fees, etc) 3) Develop methods to evaluate impacts on infrastructure, safety and the economy. The primary goal is to introduce legislation on this topic for the 2006 Minnesota Legislative Session. Contact Bill Gardner for further information and status of the project at: Phone: 651-406-4806/e-mail: william.gardner@dot.state.mn.us

2005 Legislative Session – Transportation Legislation Status/Results

Betsy Parker, Office of Government Affairs, Mn/DOT presented an update on the status of transportation-related legislation for the 2005 Legislative Session including a brief outline of the provisions in the Transportation Bill vetoed by the Governor and information on special session processes and possible state government shutdown scenarios.

MFAC is a partnership between government and business to exchange ideas and recommend policy and actions that promote safe, productive, and sustainable freight transportation in Minnesota. MFAC, consists of representatives from Minnesota's shipper and carrier communities, as well as a variety of other interested organizations, and provides advice to the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MN/DOT) and the Metropolitan Council regarding freight issues and investments.

For more information, contact Bill Gardner, MN/DOT Office of Freight & Commercial Vehicle Operations at 651-406-4806 or william.gardner@dot.state.mn.us.