

Information Technology Meeting

Meeting was called to order at 8:00 AM.

Roll call of members was taken by the TAG Coordinator.

Nominations for assistant Coordinator were solicited.

Jennifer McAllister nominated Tony Compton. The nomination was seconded by Andy Crenshaw. No other nominations were received, and therefore Tony was elected by acclamation.

Tony Compton moved to waive reading of past meeting minutes. Motion was seconded by Andy Crenshaw. Minutes from the past meeting were approved.

The Coordinator solicited volunteers for secretary to record the meeting minutes. Jennifer McAllister volunteered after being prodded by the Coordinator.

Announcements:

There is a class to be conducted this evening

Old Business:

A discussion regarding the resolution from the 2003 TUG regarding support of web enabling Trns.port was held. The group noted that the CES parametric function had been through beta and was ready for production. More applications are planned for the future. We discussed the possibility of reworking the existing resolution in an attempt at garnering support from the TUG, who rejected it at the previous meeting in 2003. After listening to the TTF representative, as well as the discussion regarding Virginia's initiative toward web enablement, it was determined that the best course of action is for the TAG to adopt a wait and see approach. A presentation at this year's TUG entitled "The Next Generation of Trns.port" is planned, and it may shed sufficient light on the plan and process so as to provide a clearer path to the TAG regarding web enabling.

The resolution from last year to gain support for web enabling Trns.port products. Do we want to re-introduce this resolution? CES parametric estimation has been done. More applications may need to be reworked in the same manner to move Trns.port toward web enabling. Some of the recent demos have been conceptual design on the construction side, might be able to garner more support. Resolution should be re-worked and presented again in a manner to capture more interest of the SM participants in the TUG audience.

Mitch asks the TTF to elaborate on their direction on web enabling. TTF Stat. Initiative has been to web enable, and still will be. Funding and priority are the issues. Enhancement money cannot be spent on maintenance. That's where the conflict exists. Encourages all of us to attend "Next Generation Trns.Port" on Thursday night. More

elaborate than putting a web front end on the existing application. Virginia DOT is funding a proposal to web enable PES/LAS. Those are the relatively stable modules, business rules are very well known so risk is minimized.

Virginia is looking at SM module as well. Will look at prototype on the first stage, and then move on to the SM and other modules. They are looking for other states to assist in this effort. Might consider drafting a resolution after the presentation saying that the IT TAG supports what is presented.

Suggestion that we put a place on the web site for innovations other agencies are involved in.

Tony thinks the TAGs should be in contact with each other to see what areas are crossing over. The IT TAG is more global in that it addresses issues relative to all of the modules, whereas the other TAGs are somewhat module specific.

IT TAG will reconvene after the presentation of Next Generation Trns.port and discuss a resolution to support that initiative.

New Business:

Write down all I said regarding new functionality.

Turner talked about MoDot's lack of knowledge regarding the loss of edit functionality and the compromise that was made by the developers to put that product out to all including SM. Functionality had to be the same for all platforms.

Funding the same item twice – like DSS edits, and CES and Estimator enhancements.

How do we improve the communication of what is happening within the TRT during development? Lee suggested the list service should be utilized.

Suggests that when functionality is going to be dropped, the user reps have to be notified regarding that loss and sign off.

Virginia thinks this will make the process so cumbersome that development will be slowed.

Functionality should never be lost.

Paul – document on cloverleaf discusses responsibilities of beta testing and TRT's. One is to contact others if they are unsure of something. Encourage others to join the TRT's and do beta testing. Call for beta testing went out for Test Suite and DSS Edits. There is a TRT now for Estimator right now where they are looking for members. Also HiREG, which is undergoing revision. Anything and everything that happens and doesn't happen with Trns.port is the responsibility of the TTF. They need assistance from the group.

Question regarding the role of TRT and Beta Test sites. TRT are subject matter experts. Participation varies dependant on what the enhancement involves.

David C. how about TRT areas on the TUG website? Constantly reviewing and refining information. Maybe a preliminary or final draft of the SDS should be posted so that interested agencies can review those.

Don from Florida doesn't believe that you should have to interrogate the web site to find out new information. Was unaware that the June release of DSS wouldn't work with DSS 8. That information should have been readily disseminated.

Andy – Web site is the ideal place to put this information so that others don't have to be buried with those e-mails. What's new, make it journalized format.

Pushing info out is good, but it should not be thru the TUG list service. Onus on the IT TAG to monitor new postings.

What about a BLOG.

Paul – people don't recognize the impact to everyone in advance. Mitch counters that at least the information is out there.

Should be grouped by different levels – reduced functionality, new functionality, supported releases and platforms.

Back to the crux of the resolution – can we just ask the TTF to address the fact that the IT TAG is concerned about loss of functionality in new releases.

Mitch's first term ends after this conference.

Ballot Item Discussion:

Florida new issue – means of transfer from LAS to SiteManager. The action codes, every district handles their own work. Process is automated. Proposal to replace the single row of information on the LAS transfer screen where code is placed in the flag field. Florida is soliciting support for the ballot item. Allows for a positive control as to when data was passed. Ballot item doesn't yet have a number, but Florida asks us to consider it when we vote. TMR #8498

Jennifer moves to support Florida enhancement. Crenshaw Seconds.

Ballot item 6912 (Virginia), no password expiration on PES/LAS. Would like to force the password change and validate (3 strikes are out). Mirror the functionality in P/L that exists in SiteManager. This is an item that the IT TAG endorsed last year. Virginia solicits support of the TAG of this item. Should be an installation option. Some states may choose to not force password change. New York is in support, and received a proposal from Info Tech.

Marcita moves to support the resolution.
Tony seconds the motion.

New York has a TMR to make Estimator ODMA compliant. Allows Estimator files to be stored in ProjectWise. New York is asking support. If Estimator was ODMA compliant, then you could substitute file open and close commands from other ODMA applications.

Teresa explained the TMR and ballot item process as to how the TMR becomes a ballot item.

Virginia item 7247 – Spellchecker in SiteManager. Texas is also interested in this item as are others.

Motion to support item 7247 – Marcita moves to support. Tony seconds.

Ballot item related to DSS – request to add additional generic fields. Want generic fields in bidders and bidtabs tables.

Turner moves to support additional generic fields in DSS as stipulated by the TMR.
Marcita moves to second.

Election of a TAG Chair.

Jennifer nominates Mitch to serve second term as coordinator.
Seconded by Don Sangregorio.

Move to adjourn by Jennifer.
Seconded by someone.

-----NOTES FOR THE BUSINESS MEETING-----

THE IT TAG ELECTED TO ENDORSE BALLOT ITEMS 6912, 7247, and two others the do not yet have numbers the first one is a TMR # 8498 that Florida will write up an enhancement for. The other is a request for some more generic fields in two tables in DSS, they will write that up as well and submit as an enhancement for the ballot.

Resolution from the IT TAG to be presented to the TUG for approval in 2003, it was defeated, we have voted to resubmit this resolution to the TUG.

Whereas, the IT TAG endorses the solution suggested by InfoTech to move forward on development of “Web Based” Trns*port, to ensure the products are evolving with current technological trends; not to replace any portion of the product suite but to evolve along side the current client server products.

Resolution from the IT TAG to be presented to the TUG for approval in 2004

Whereas the Trns•port User Group (TUG) is comprised of representatives of all licensees of the Trns•port modules available from AASHTO, and

Whereas the licensees of the product perform functions diversely and uniquely within their respective agencies, and

Whereas the TUG advocates continuing enhancement and evolution of the product, with ongoing support for existing business practices,

We hereby resolve that the TUG urges the Transport Task Force to ensure there is no loss of functionality in new releases until all affected parties have been notified and the impact of the lost functionality is thoroughly explored and addressed. Further, the TUG requests that more emphasis is placed on this issue by the respective Technical Review Teams.