

DOT Today

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 DOT Ties America Together

Earthquake '94

A spirit of partnership and cooperation marked the aftermath of the strongest earthquake in Los Angeles history. The January 17 quake, measuring 6.6 on the Richter Scale, left behind an estimated \$25 to 30 billion in damages to buildings, highways, bridges and overpasses.

Secretary Peña was on the scene less than 12 hours after the earthquake struck, and gave verbal approval to \$3.6 million in demolition contracts to begin clearing the debris at the damaged freeways. Work began before nightfall that day.

Administrators Rodney Slater (FHWA), David Hinson (FAA) and Gordon Linton (FTA) followed within 24 hours. The federal government provided additional funds to expand the capacity of California's transit and commuter rail, including

building temporary Metrolink stations in just three days.

The Secretary later accompanied President Clinton to areas with the worst damage, where along with California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) officials, they conducted inspections both from the air and at ground level.

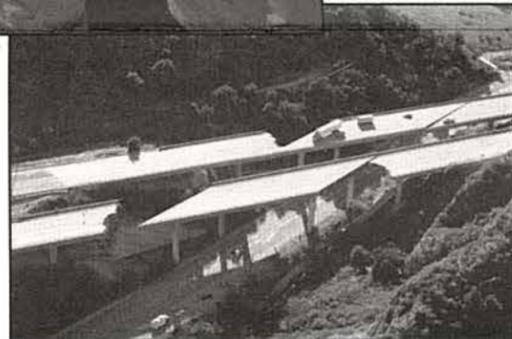
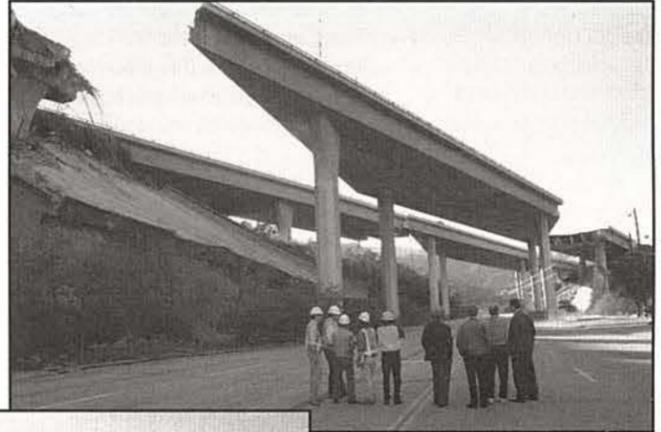
Immediate priorities after the quake involved establishing the extent of damage and coming up with alternate routes for vital freeway segments that had been damaged or demolished.

Hundreds of thousands of commuters were unable to get to work in the city via the freeways. Old highways that parallel the much-used interstates were now handling commuter traffic, and lanes on undamaged stretches of freeways were dedicated to

high-occupancy vehicles (HOV).

Intelligent Vehicle Highway Systems (IVHS) technology has been in place along California's I-10 corridor since 1990. The package, called the SMART Corridor, employs Advanced Traffic Management Systems (ATMS) and Advanced Traveler

Information Systems. This technology is now being used to rapidly adjust signal timing at intersections to help ease congestion of traffic coming into Los Angeles and close-in jurisdictions. Changeable message signs alert drivers to



Top and Bottom: Freeway damage was extensive along Interstate 5 near Newhall.
Left: Los Angeles Mayor Richard Riordan, President Clinton and Secretary Peña survey damage along I-10 with officials from California's Department of Transportation.

Photos:
Robert A. Eplett, California OET



DOT "Ties America Together"

Secretary Peña Presents the Department's Strategic Plan

On January 24, Secretary Peña presented the Department of Transportation Strategic Plan to employees. Associate Deputy Secretary Michael Huerta, who introduced the Secretary, offered a definition of a strategic plan: "(it is) just what its name implies," he said. "It is a statement of a unifying vision, mission and goals that we must all work together to meet...a summary of the initiatives that, together, point toward a vision of the transportation system we would like to see in the future."

The Secretary outlined the seven strategic goals of the plan, calling it "a vision for the future of transportation, reflecting the collective talent, thoughts, aspiration and diversity" of our department. "I want each of you to have one of these documents on your desk so that you will be constantly and daily reminded of how we are to focus our resources, our time and our priorities," the Secretary continued.

Here are the seven strategic goals in the plan - prioritized to fulfill the department's mission. Included are the Secretary's comments on each of them:

1. "Tie America Together" through an effective intermodal transportation system. "It is now time for us to think about all of our transportation systems and how they integrate into one national transportation system - and, in doing so, find a way to encourage people at the local level to think about how they can tie all their forms of transportation together to make their system more efficient. To make all forms of transportation viable, we will focus particular attention on three

industries: aviation, maritime and passenger rail. We cannot have an intermodal, integrated system unless all the components are healthy."

2. Invest strategically in transportation infrastructure, which will increase productivity, stimulate the economy, and create jobs. "And as we do that, we have to do two very fundamental things: First, work to complete what we have started, and to repair what has broken - on time and within budget. We have invested in a number of very complicated and far-reaching investments throughout the country. It is now time to complete them. Let's finally realize that if we're going to finish the Northeast Corridor, let's finish it. If we're going to finish the transit system in Los Angeles, let's do it and let's do it on time and on budget. Let's begin to change the way we think about investing in these projects, and let's get them done. And, if we're going to start new projects, we have to have the same commitment. We must ensure that every investment pays off and is being done for a very strategic reason. The old days of pork barrel projects that had questionable impacts are gone. Year-to-year funding is gone. We've got to develop a stable, reliable and continuing funding program for investment in infrastructure."

3. Create a new alliance between the nation's transportation and technology industries, to make them both more efficient and internationally competitive. "As I travel throughout the country, I see the opportunities we have in the

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Post-NAFTA Conference Announced

University Transportation Center's Students of the Year Awards

by Amy Stearns, RSPA

On January 12, DOT Deputy Secretary Mort Downey, acting RSPA Administrator Rose McMurray, and Dr. Chia S. Shih, RSPA associate administrator, presented awards to 13 of the nation's top students in the field of transportation. At a ceremony in honor of DOT's University Transportation Centers Program (UTC) Students of the Year, the Deputy Secretary praised the next generation of transportation professionals, who, he said, must possess a much broader background than ever before to face a world that requires as much consideration of financial and environmental issues as it does of conventional engineering ones.

The Deputy Secretary reaffirmed the department's commitment to attracting the best and brightest talent to the study and practice of transportation, and DOT's dedication to lowering entry barriers that may have caused women and minorities to be traditionally underrepresented in the transportation field.

Established by Congress in 1987, the UTC program is managed by the Research and Special Programs Administration. The program provides grants to universities in each federal region to operate centers of transportation excellence. These centers serve the nation's need for safe, efficient, and environmentally sound transportation through a wide range of educational, research, and technology transfer activities. Funding for the program comes from the Highway Trust Fund and is provided

by both the Federal Highway and Federal Transit Administrations.

The UTC Students of the Year were selected on the basis of academic performance, excellence in research, professionalism, and leadership. Of the 13 students receiving awards this year, four are working toward a doctorate, eight toward master's degrees, and one toward a bachelor's degree. All have earned honors and distinction at their universities, and many from professional associations as well. Several of the award winners have already published articles in technical journals, and at least three presented papers at the annual meeting of the Transportation Research Board in Washington, D.C., last month.

The University Transportation Centers provide financial support and research opportunities to transportation students. Nearly 900 students receive scholarships that help pay the costs of their schooling. This availability of funding is considered vital to attracting talented students into the field of transportation, particularly those pursuing advanced science and engineering degrees. Most students also work as researchers and analysts on center research projects. This provides practical experience in putting knowledge to work, and it also exposes the students to potential areas of future employment, and often to potential employers, as well. Most centers offer continuing education programs for those already holding jobs in transportation, so educa-



tional opportunities are by no means limited to fulltime students working toward specialized degrees.

UTC graduates are already taking their places in the transportation field. Some former students are now employed by state and local transportation departments, at transportation-related businesses and consulting firms, in academia, and even here at DOT.

For more information on the University Transportation Centers Program, contact RSPA's Office of University Research and Education at (202) 366-5442.

Award Winners

Zhi Liu, Harvard University

Richard Figaro, City College of New York

Lynn Kostival, Pennsylvania State University

Cheng-Tin Gan, University of Florida

Christopher R. Byrum, University of Michigan

Peter Shen-Te Chen, University of Texas at Austin

Jeffrey A. Barlow, University of Iowa

M. Wayne Bennion, Utah State University

Karim Chatti, University of California at Berkeley

David Dye, University of Washington

Melissa S. Tooley, University of Arkansas

Leslie J. Wright, Morgan State University

Maria P. Boile, New Jersey Institute of Technology

Coast Guard Opens Career Development Resource Center

by Susann Lee White

What color is your parachute when you land the career of your dreams?

Color it military or civilian, the Coast Guard's new Career Development Resource Center at their headquarters in Washington, D.C. is there to help. Located in Room B609, the center opened its doors February 1, complete with state-of-the-art computer assisted programs, and offering training seminars, information on post-secondary educational opportunities, group and individual testing, educational/occupational information, a lending library, audio and video programs and a full time career counselor. Michele McCarthy, a civilian contractor, gives advice on comprehensive organizational career management strategies for job hunters and career changers.

"I'm a career changer myself," says McCarthy, who has worked in the career development field for a number of years. "I see my role with people as a catalyst to assist them in their growth," she says.

The center is open from 10:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday through Friday for walk-ins and from 8 to 10:30 a.m. and 3 to 4 p.m. for individual counseling by appointment. Job hunters go through three major steps - self assessment, research and planning their transition -before starting the employment search process. Assessment means that users can find out their interests, skills, personality type and values by using three computer-assisted programs called Discover: Adults and Organizations, Military, and Retirement Planning (which offers self-assessment, educational/occupational information) and current job market trends.

"I help them narrow career options through these assessment tools," McCarthy says. "We are committed to professional development. This is really a way for people to take action on their own behalf."

In addition, the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator identifies personality types and appropriate occupational environments and tasks that correspond to personal preferences. Also used is the Campbell Interest and Skill survey (CISS) and the Strong Interest Inventory, which profiles an individual's interests related to occupations and leisure and academic activities. A touch screen computer is at the disposal of job seekers and gives federal job listings throughout the United States, and provides leads on civilian jobs through the center's job bank.

Finally, career transition and job search support helps job seekers prepare their SF-171s via a computer program, which helps make the appearance of the application neat and professional. The SF-171 can be tailor-made to fit the particular job for which a candidate may be applying. The center's staff is available to critique SF-171s, resumes and cover letters, and to advise individuals on how to implement an effective job search strategy, to enhance networking and to improve interviewing techniques.

The center is open to Coast Guard Headquarters military and civilian personnel and spouses. The phone number is (202) 267-1312.

New FHWA Associate Administrator for Policy

Gloria J. Jeff, former deputy director of the Michigan DOT's Bureau of Transportation Planning, is the new FHWA Associate Administrator for Policy.

"With more than 10 years of hands-on experience in transportation planning, Gloria brings a unique set of qualifications to this position," said FHWA Administrator Rodney Slater. "We look to her to bring the kind of leadership to our policy office that will strengthen our efforts to better serve the traveling public."

Jeff has been a professor of architecture and urban planning at the University of Michigan since 1988. From 1981 to 1984, she was division administrator for the Michigan DOT's Office of Urban Transportation Planning.

A native of Detroit, Jeff is a graduate of the University of Michigan, where she earned masters degrees in engineering and urban planning.

George Reagle Named FHWA Associate Administrator for Motor Carriers

George L. Reagle has been named the FHWA's Associate Administrator for Motor Carriers by FHWA Administrator Rodney Slater. Reagle, who was most recently director of the National Transportation Safety Board's Office of Surface Transportation Safety, was also with DOT's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) for almost 20 years, serving as Associate Administrator for Enforcement and Traffic Safety Programs from 1989-90.

Reagle will oversee the safety and performance of more than 275,000 carriers as well as approximately 30,000 shippers of hazardous materials engaged in interstate and foreign commerce.

A native of Baltimore, Reagle received his bachelor of science degree from the University of Maryland. He has done graduate work at the George Washington University in Washington, D.C., and the University of Iowa.