

National Freight Advisory Committee Meeting Notes*

Friday, November 13, 2015, 8:30-12:30pm @ U.S. Department of Transportation.

NFAC Members, Designated Alternatives, Ex-Officios Staff in attendance include:

Adise, Russell
Briggs, Bobbi
Brubaker, Kevin L.
Burns, Jeffrey
Button, Terry
Canby, Anne P.
Downey III, Mortimer L.
Eggerman, David
Fenton, John E.
Geller, Michael
Gill, Tara
Giuliano, Genevieve
Hildebrand, Brad
Hodge, Stacey D.
Holmes, Jack A.
Inclima, Richard
Inman, Fran
Iwasaki, Randell
Keen, Dan
Kelly, Paul
Lacayo, Dona Toteva
LaMarre III, Paul C.
Livingstone, Michelle
Lynn, Andrew S.
Miller, Deb
Monahan, Jessica
Morris, Doug
Mullett, C. Randal
Murphy, Mike
Nam, Annie
Navejar, Rosa
Palmer, Gary A.
Previsich, John
Roberson, William "Rob"
Savage, Mark Andrew
Srivastava, Pragati
Tooley, Mike
Wojtowicz, Jeff

8:40: Introduction – John Drake, Deputy Assistance Secretary

- Purpose of the meeting is for the NFAC to prepare comments for DOT regarding the draft NFSP; comments are due to Secretary Foxx mid-December.

8:45 Group Discussion on draft NSFP – NFAC Members

- Members recognized the difficulty of the Department advancing legislative proposals apart from the Administration's process/stated policy but still think the NFSP should contain funding proposals.
 - Department response: more specific funding proposals was discussed with OMB.
- The concept of sustainability (such as recapitalizing low-density lines / rural service preserved by tax issue) should be underscored in the NFSP.
- NSFP should better acknowledge 5-year increment for planning cycle; need funding certainty.
- The NSFP should reflect that freight is economy in motion; vital to national/global economy.
- Partners/shipping alliances, etc have huge impacts which should be reflected in the Plan.
- The Department indicated the final Plan tentatively will be published early spring (includes 60-day comment period) and will conduct outreach prior to finalization including: possible TRB session, TRB freight committee meetings, national roundtables, get the attention of industry groups like AAR, AASHTO

9:30-10:30 Breakout Sessions and report out

Main point: NFPS is *independent* of Congress and the administration; the language used should express this and not rely heavily on direct references/promoting GROW.

Group 1 Comments

- Timid – needs dynamic vision – should be inspiring – how will policymakers (fed, other levels) use this plan? Need clear goals – specific timelines - Need to be aggressive – demonstrate urgency
- Funding issues – build on consequences of lack of funding – examples of how economy will be affected – how to pay for all this? Specifics
- Leverage current/future tech – v2v v2i traffic incident mgmt. – PPPs, private investment

Group 2 Comments

- Need more robust executive summary – crystallize recommendations
- Opportunities – address how DOT will deal with situations
- Organize multimodality – change org structure?
- Data role – DOT must step up to collect, aggregate data across platforms so states/MPOs can have better access to data
- Purchase private data – scrub for privacy
- How is plan being discussed/shared within DOT?

Group 3 Comments

- Discuss leveraging underutilized transportation resources
- Define public vs. private roles in freight
- Preserve issues – remove politics – increase life of the document
- Clearly show NFAC vs. DOT recs
- Federal focus on coordinating system pieces
- Fed cross-coordination/Accountability
- Categorical exclusion recommendation? Use same NEPA rules, e.g., FTA should recognize FHWA EIS

Group 4 Comments

- Tied too tightly to grow / admin – plan will be marginalized?
- 5-10 years still valid?

- Need middle organizational section – strategies too tied to now – don't lose NFAC recs – appendix?
- Crosses multiple levels of government: private/public sector
- Safety

Group 5 Comments

- Strengths: challenges discussion, workforce- next generation, Public-sector/MPO difficulties, recognizes lack of data
- Areas for improvement:
 - Holistic approach – look at it as freight *system*
 - Reinforce multimodal
 - Broad investments, not targeted
 - Needs more data; specifics on regulatory harmonization

12:00 Looking Ahead – John Drake, Deputy Assistant Secretary

- NFAC charter expires soon and the Department intends to shift focus to support reauthorization
- The committee must evolve to take into account a more specialized focus while keeping a broad voice of industry
- The Department will follow up with NFAC members on next steps.

Thursday, January 7, 2016 via Webinar

Registered NFAC Members, Designated Alternatives, Ex-Officios Staff in attendance include:

Alterman, Steve
 Blakey, Leslie
 Brown, Darryl
 Brown, Steven
 Brubaker, Kevin
 Burnell, Tamiko
 Burns, Jeff
 Button, Terry
 Canby, Anne
 Conyngham, Michael
 Decas, Kristin
 Downey, Mortimer
 Eggermann, David
 Fenton, John
 Fouillen, Nolwenn
 Gill, Tara
 Gray, John
 Grimes, Jay
 Hamm-Niebruegge, Rhonda
 Hildebrand, Brad
 Hodge, Stacey
 Holguin-Veras, Jose
 Inman, Fran

Iwasaki, Randy
Kelly, Paul
Kildare, Shaun
LaMarre, Paul
Lawrence, Stephanie
Livingstone, Michelle
Long, David
Lynskey, Kevin
Monahan, Jessica
Mullett, C. Randy
Nam, Annie
Navejar, Rosa
Previsich, John
Probart, Ashley
Savage, Mark
Srivastava, Pragati
Thielen, Ben
Tooley, Michael
Toteva Lacayo, Dona
Vigue, Pete
Walton , Michael
Weakley, Tom
Wells, Michael

Introduction

- This webinar is a follow-on to the National Freight Advisory Committee's last meeting held in Washington DC on November 13, 2015 and is intended for the NFAC to finalize comments on the draft National Freight Strategic Plan.
- It is important to note that following the last NFAC meeting, Congress enacted the FAST Act which included a substantive freight title and some minor changes to the National Freight Strategic Plan requirements.
 - Specifically, the FAST Act clarifies and codifies the NFSP is a multimodal freight document and it ties the document to a multimodal freight policy.
- We know that there has been an overwhelming amount of public interest in the FAST Act and the NSFP and we want to ensure the impact members and members of the public that there will be future webinars and outreach on both the national freight strategic plan as well as freight provisions but this meeting today is intended to finalize the NFAC's comments for the NSFP.
- Any comment individually submitted by an NFAC member reviewed and discussed.
 - Adding an estimate for a cost of inaction will add a sense of urgency to the Plan, even if a reference to the cost of hours of delay from the Texas Transportation Institute.
 - The Department conducted back of the envelope analysis as part of it the Department's advocacy for a long-term robust reauthorization bill. We looked at some of the funding levels that were being proposed in the House and in the Senate reauthorization proposals and tried to evaluate what impact it would have on congestion and the worsening of the congestion over the life of the bills under consideration. But naming a price for inaction would be a difficult exercise only because of the many variables that have to be taken into consideration.
 - Safety impacts should also be referenced to increase sense of urgency.

- The document itself should be timeless and speak across political spectrum and across Administrations to the needs of America's freight system. At the same time this Administration has understandable reasons to talk about their own GROW America proposal, but it should be in the Appendix.
 - There will be changes in how GROW America is referenced as the NFSP moves to final format.
- Should safety be incorporated throughout the Plan or included as separate section?
 - Safety should be added as a separate section.
- Increase focus on funding – a combination of funding sources are responsible for supporting the freight system. It is important to point out that we need not only public but also private funding and also the combination because it is going to take all forces to get to where we need to be.
- Plan needs to be forward focused, based on scenario planning.
- The plan should include actions it should promote both the deployment and adoption of new technologies.
- Public comment
 - Letter should address the differences across the States. Everyone treats freight differently including how they permit or how it is transported, which impacts the efficiency and there needs to be an organization between the states.
 - Harmonizing policy, regulations, and programs is addressed as an NFAC recommendation.
 - The 27,000 mile PFN should also be addressed.

NFAC members reached consensus on the revised letter to Secretary Foxx with their comments on the draft NSFP.

**Pending final confirmation*