



Highway Information Quarterly Newsletter

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Table of Contents

Highway Information Seminar.....	3
State Practices Used to Report Local Area Travel	3
Changes in Demographics 1969 – 2001.....	4
Highway Statistics 2002.....	5
HPMS Latest Publications Posted.....	5
HPMS Workshops planned for 2004.....	6
HPMS Data Quality Workshop – CPI Principles.....	6
OHPI Director Addresses Planners.....	7
Traffic Data Quality Workshop – Final Proceedings.....	8
Toll Facilities in the United States – Just Released.....	9

Highway Information Seminar



The Office of Highway Policy Information will host the annual *Highway Information Seminar* on November 18-20 2003, at the Renaissance Hotel, at 999 9th St. N.W. Washington, D.C. 20001.

The seminar provides FHWA and State/MPO data providers the opportunity to address issues related to the *Highway Statistics* reported to FHWA on motor fuel, highway finance, the HPMS, traffic and other data issues.

The seminar also allows for special focus workshops to allow participants to share their concerns and questions, and provide in-depth information on the *Highway Statistics* reporting. This is a great opportunity to share experiences with other data providers, and gain insight into the yearly *Highway Statistics* reporting procedure each year.

If you would like more information on the upcoming Highway Information Seminar, contact Sharon.R.Smith@fhwa.dot.gov or call 202-366-0180.

State Practices Used to Report Local Area Travel

The Office of Highway Policy Information has recently posted *State Practices Used to Report Local Area Travel* at <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/policy/ohpi/hpms/hpmspubs.htm>. The report provides survey information on promising and innovative State practices used to estimate local area travel in rural, small urban, and urbanized areas.

States are required to report annually to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) aggregate estimates of vehicle miles traveled (VMT) on the rural minor collector and local functional systems in rural, small urban, and urbanized areas. The current practices used by the States to prepare these local area estimates vary significantly and often are not thoroughly documented. To gain an understanding of the various practices in use, FHWA conducted a survey of the States in April 2002 through its field division offices; the information from 50 States, the District of Columbia, and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico is the basis for the report. The most noteworthy State activities were found in Georgia, Kansas, Kentucky, New York, and Texas. For more information, contact Paul Svercl at paul.svercl@fhwa.dot.gov or call 202-366-5036.

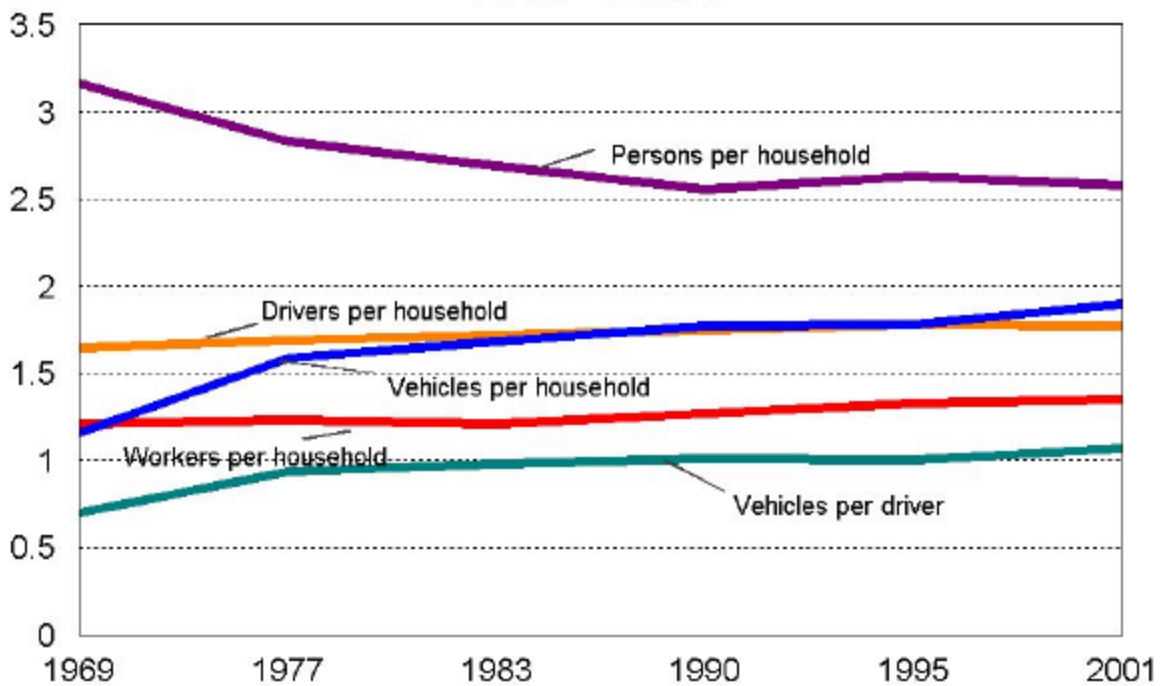
Changes in Demographics (1969-2001) 2001 National Household Travel Survey

Since 1969, the greatest changes and impact in demographics have been the decrease in household size, and the corresponding increase in the number of vehicles per household. According to the *2001 National Household Travel Survey* (NHTS), the number of persons per household shrank from 3.16 in 1969 to 2.58 in 2001. During the same period, the number of vehicles increased from 1.16 in 1969 to 1.9 by 2001. Equally important is the increase in the number of vehicles per driver (up from 0.70 in 1969 to 1.07 by 2001).

This would suggest that Americans are more affluent and mobile than ever before in our nation's history.

Changes in Demographics

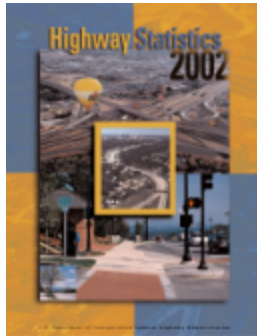
1969 - 2001



The number of workers and the number of drivers per household have remained fairly consistent over time, with only slight increases.

If you would like more information on the National Household Travel Survey (NHTS), contact Bryant.Gross@fhwa.dot.gov or call 202-366-5026.

Highway Statistics 2002



The annual publication *Highway Statistics 2002* is expected on the web in early **November 2003**, followed by hard copies by **January 2004**.

This report provides a host of analyzed statistical data on motor fuel, motor vehicles, driver licensing, highway user taxation, State and local highway finance, highway mileage, Federal-aid for highways, and selected data on international data comparisons.

This report has been published each year since 1945. Publications from 1992 to present are also available in electronic format on the web at:

<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/policy/ohpi/hss/index.htm>

For more information, contact the Editor at Bryant.Gross@fhwa.dot.gov or call 202-366-0160.

Latest publications on HPMS posted

The Office of Highway Policy Information has recently posted several HPMS related reports and resources on its web site at

<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/policy/ohpi/hpms/hpmspubs.htm>.

- **HPMS Primer:** The recently posted *Overview of Highway Performance Monitoring System for FHWA Field staff* contains basic information on the HPMS including its purpose, the authority under which it operates, and information on State and FHWA responsibilities. It also includes lists of useful HPMS resources and FHWA headquarters office contacts. Although written primarily for FHWA field staff, the primer is recommended reading for anyone who is unfamiliar with the HPMS program requirements, and who may be assuming responsibilities for this program whether at the FHWA, State, or local level. For more information, contact Mr. James Getzewich at jim.getzewich@fhwa.dot.gov or call 202-366-0175.
- **Highway Performance Indicators:** The recently posted *HPMS Performance Trends: 1997 – 2001* provides 5-year performance related data trends for each of the States and at the National level for

performance indicators including miles, lane-miles, travel (VMT), and pavement smoothness for the National Highway System and the STRAHNET. These data are derived from State submitted HPMS data and will be annually updated to reflect the most recent 5-year period for which data are available. FHWA expects to add the 2002 data to this site early in 2004. For more information, contact Mr. Thomas Roff at thomas.roff@fhwa.dot.gov or at 202-366-5053.

- **Improving HPMS Data Quality:** The recently posted report *A Continuous Process Improvement Model for HPMS* adapts the general FHWA CPI model to an application that can be used to assess the quality of HPMS related data collection and reporting processes. Throughout the report, CPI concepts are related specifically to HPMS program needs. In addition to providing background information on this application of the CPI, the report also documents the various steps that can be followed to undertake a complete CPI review of the HPMS. For further information, contact Fred.Orloski@fhwa.dot.gov or at 517-702-1840.

HPMS Workshops Planned for 2004

An *HPMS Data Partnering Workshop* is being planned for the first quarter of 2004 to discuss and promote the concept of States using other agencies to help collect data reported in HPMS and for other applications. The theme “Collect it Once, Use it Often” will be explored as a way to maximize the use of resources to collect appropriate and reliable data for HPMS and other purposes. Procedures, applications, agreements, resources, and quality assurance will be among the topics discussed. This will be a 3-day workshop with presentations and participation from Metropolitan Planning Organizations, local agencies, consultants, and other State agencies involved in HPMS data collection activities. For further information, contact Fred Orloski at fred.orloski@fhwa.dot.gov or at 517-702-1840.

Once again, the Office of Highway Policy information will offer a *HPMS Submittal Software Workshop*. The workshop will feature in depth, hands on instruction on the upcoming version 6.0 software, and will provide an opportunity to talk directly with the application developers about specific issues in the submittal process and to learn about the new features and updates. This 2-day session is being planned for early March 2004, at the National Highway Institute, Arlington, Virginia. The intended audience is State HPMS staff and FHWA Division planners who have limited or no experience with the current version of the software. For more information, contact Tom Roff at thomas.roff@fhwa.dot.gov or at 202-366-5053.

HPMS Data Quality Workshop - Promoting CPI Principles

An *HPMS Data Quality Workshop* was held on August 26-27, 2003 in Nashville for FHWA Division and Resource Center Offices. Participants discussed FHWA data review activities and the application of a Continuous Process Improvement (CPI) model to the HPMS. More than half of the Divisions participated in this 2-day workshop; which included presentations, discussions, and group activities. The format of the sessions

followed the CPI process that has been recommended to the Divisions for use in conducting HPMS program reviews; identifying at-risk areas using risk assessment, conducting the review using the FADE (Focus, Analyze, Develop, Execute) model, implementing recommendations, developing an action plan, and gaining support and commitment from the State through the SPR work program. Examples of tools readily available to the Divisions were explained, and methods for information sharing were discussed. The breakout sessions on risk assessment and developing action plans were well received and produced useful information.

Showcase presentations by four pilot Divisions that have initiated CPI reviews discussed topics such as how they got started, steps completed, State support and endorsement, and implementation activities. Each of the pilot CPI reviews was on a different at-risk area - traffic monitoring, pavement data, sample management, and truck data - and each was at a different stage of the CPI process. Each review followed the 10-step process and guidance contained in the February 24, 2003 memo to all Division Offices on applying the CPI process to the HPMS. The presentations were well received by the participants as were the discussions on SPR work program development and monitoring, identifying at-risk areas, and completing annual Division reviews. Copies of the four pilot presentations will be provided to each Division Office for use in getting started with CPI reviews in each State. As Divisions undertake CPI reviews, we would appreciate receiving information on activities underway, implementation plans, and State support and acceptance of quality improvement recommendations, so we can share this information with other Divisions. For further information on this workshop and assistance on implementing the CPI review process for HPMS, please contact Fred Orloski at fred.orloski@fhwa.dot.gov or at 517-702-1840.

Office of Highway Policy Information Director Addresses Planners

On August 14, 2003, Mr. Barna Juhasz addressed 30-40 FHWA Planners and other DOT staff at the *Advanced Planning Seminar* in Alexandria, Virginia.

Mr. Juhasz covered a wide range of topics in the area of Information Management and Planning. His main theme were the following:

- The Changing Data Environment
 - SAFTEA Data Provision;
 - Data Quality Act;
 - Data Trends
- HPMS;
- Motor Fuel;
- Highway Travel;
- Field Role in Data and
- New Approaches

Mr. Juhasz stressed the importance of data based on the key purposes for which the State-reported data is used. These include:

- Apportionment Factors;
- Performance Measures;
- Reports to Congress and

- Public Information

He noted the apportionment factors of vehicle miles of travel, public road mileage, and motor-fuel used on highways, explaining that motor fuel is the factor used in “TEA-21 Minimum Guarantees”. This is the single most important factor in determining how much Federal-aid a State receives in Federal-aid funds.

Mr. Juhasz pointed out that changes in the information environment include such things as reduced VMT growth, increasing congestion, ITS data, and Asset Management. He also noted that turnover in FHWA and State staff involved in information management was very important challenge if data quality is going to be maintained and improved. He suggested that training and good documentation were the best tools to meet this challenge.

He discussed *the Data Quality Act* and described U.S. DOT’s and FHWA’s implementation of OMB’s implementation guidelines. Mr. Juhasz, while claiming no reading of a “crystal ball”, predicted however, that Federal re-authorization would call for more data, with higher quality demands, and with no additional funds.

Mr. Juhasz spent some time describing recent steps that the Office of Highway Policy Information had taken to improve data quality in the HPMS and fuel areas. He told the attendees that his office cannot “do it alone” and urged them to be partners in this work.

Traffic Data Quality Workshop Proceedings and Action Plan: Final Report

The report entitled “*Traffic Data Quality Workshop*” was released by the Office of Highway Policy Information in September 2003. The quality of traffic data for performance monitoring, planning, and operations is increasingly important. The primary objective of this project was to define an action plan to address traffic data quality issues.

The development of this plan involved several steps. First, the issues associated with traffic data quality were reviewed. Second, three white papers were developed on issues identified from published reports and through interviews with state and local agencies involved with traffic data collection, use, and management. These white papers were then used to stimulate discussions and obtain inputs from workshop participants in Columbus, OH, and Salt Lake City, UT, and to develop an action plan that addresses traffic data quality issues. To view online, go to:

http://www.itsdocs.fhwa.dot.gov//JPODOCS/REPTS_TE//13839.html

For more information contact Ralph.Gillmann@fhwa.dot.gov or call 202-366-5042.

Toll Facilities in the United States – biennial report just released

An updated report, *Toll Facilities in the United States – Bridges, Roads, Tunnels, Ferries* has been added to FHWA's web site at www.fhwa.dot.gov/policy/ohpi/referral.htm. The report contains selected information on toll facilities in the United States. The information is based on a survey of facilities in operation, financed, or under construction as of January 1, 2003. For further information, please contact Robert Rozycki at robert.rozycki@fhwa.dot.gov or at 202-366-5059.