

## Policy Resolution PR-9-09

### Title: Establish a Technical Service Program to Develop AASHTO Standards

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**WHEREAS**, The Statement of Purpose of the AASHTO Subcommittee on Materials states that the Subcommittee shall prepare, publish, and keep current specifications for materials and standard methods of sampling and testing for such materials used in the construction and maintenance of all transportation facilities including highways, bridges and structures, and

**WHEREAS**, A vision of the Highway Subcommittee on Materials is that it will be the voice for materials testing, and a champion for institutional and technical excellence, and

**WHEREAS**, A large portion of all public works agencies' budgets and expenses are allocated to materials that are used to construct and maintain transportation facilities, and

**WHEREAS**, Specifications and testing methods are paramount to ensuring that the materials used in construction and maintenance are of the utmost quality, and

**WHEREAS**, The need to update, review, and revise the AASHTO *Standard Specifications for Transportation Materials and Methods of Sampling and Testing* is important as it is used by the vast majority of the transportation community, while maintaining the involvement and interaction of national expertise in said development and revisions, and

**WHEREAS**, The attendance of the members of Subcommittee on Materials (SOM) is critical to the conduct of business during the annual meeting of the Subcommittee on Materials, and

**WHEREAS**, An SOM peer exchange, sponsored by NCHRP 20-7, was conducted during the SOM meeting in August to examine this issue of producing a quality document while maintaining the participation level of our members, and

**WHEREAS**, the peer exchange looked into several different options, including (1) funding through AASHTO mechanism (e.g., specific assessment to states, add to overall dues structure to cover expenses, pooled fund, tech service program), (2) dedicating a percentage of revenue from the sale of Materials book for SOM travel expense reimbursement and (3) partnering with FHWA to form an agreement to allow for Title 1 funds to be taken "off the top" before distribution and used to reimburse travel expenses of the subcommittee members and now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED**, That the AASHTO Board of Directors recommends the establishment of a voluntary AASHTO Technical Service Program for the development and revision of the AASHTO Standard Specifications for Transportation Materials document; and further be it

**RESOLVED**, The AASHTO Technical Service Program will support the participation of member departments at the annual meeting, which is convened for the discussion of outstanding ballot items, development of new standard, and revisions and updates to current standards; and further be it

**RESOLVED**, The AASHTO Technical Service Program may support the involvement of professional writers in the development of new specifications or major revisions of current specifications; and finally, be it

**RESOLVED**, That AASHTO Member Departments will be asked to sponsor this Technical Service Program by contributing a voluntary assessment of \$5,000 per sponsor annually to fund the establishment and ongoing activities of the program.

## HIGHWAYS SUBCOMMITTEE ON MATERIALS

### Title: Establish a Technical Service Program to Develop of AASHTO Standards

#### Proposed Policy Resolution Background:

##### **Background:**

The production of the AASHTO Standard Specification for Transportation Materials book is an important document for the quality and health of our transportation infrastructure. The materials that are used for many transportation construction projects require an AASHTO specification that is published in the Materials book.

The true value of this publication comes from the Subcommittee of Materials (SOM) members whose expertise and knowledge is the cornerstone of this document. The majority of the work that SOM conducts to complete this important document takes place at the SOM Annual Meeting. In recent years, AASHTO has seen a drop in attendance of our member states is mostly due to funding and not related to our mission. This inability to travel decreases participation in the development of the Materials book.

NCHRP sponsored travel for SOM members to conduct a peer exchange during the SOM meeting in August to examine this issue of producing a quality document while maintaining the participation level of our members. SOM looked into several different options, including funding through AASHTO mechanisms (specific assessment to states, add to overall dues structure to cover expenses, pooled fund, tech service program), dedicating a percentage of revenue from the sale of Materials book for SOM travel expense reimbursement and partnering with FHWA to form an agreement to allow for Title 1 funds to be taken "off the top" before distribution and used to reimburse travel expenses of the subcommittee members.

It is the SOM recommendation that SCOH move forward with a Technical Service program as outlined in the resolution and described below.

This resolution will allow states to participate in a voluntary technical service program that will reimburse travel costs for SOM members to attend the critical SOM Annual meeting to ensure that each member department maintains their voice in the Materials book.

The secondary application of this technical service program is to allow AASHTO, at the direction of SOM, to contract with technical writers to assist in the production and development of new standards and specifications. In today's environment, DOT employees may not have the time to do the leg work required to flesh out these documents. This mechanism allows SOM members to oversee and direct the work that is vital and key to new methods and specification.

It is envisioned that 60% of the contribution will be allocated for travel reimbursement, with the other 40% being used for technical writing contracts.