

National Cooperative Transit Research & Development Program

FOR THE PERIOD
JULY 1 THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 1988
CONTRACTS DTUM60-81-C-72012
and DTUM60-83-C-71226

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TRANSPORTATION RESEARCH BOARD

NATIONAL RESEARCH COUNCIL

PROGRESS REPORT 15

NATIONAL COOPERATIVE TRANSIT RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

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PROGRESS REPORT 15

FOR THE PERIOD JULY 1 THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 1988

TO THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION/URBAN MASS TRANSPORTATION ADMINISTRATION
(DOT CONTRACTS DTUM60-81-C-72012 and DTUM60-83-C-71226)

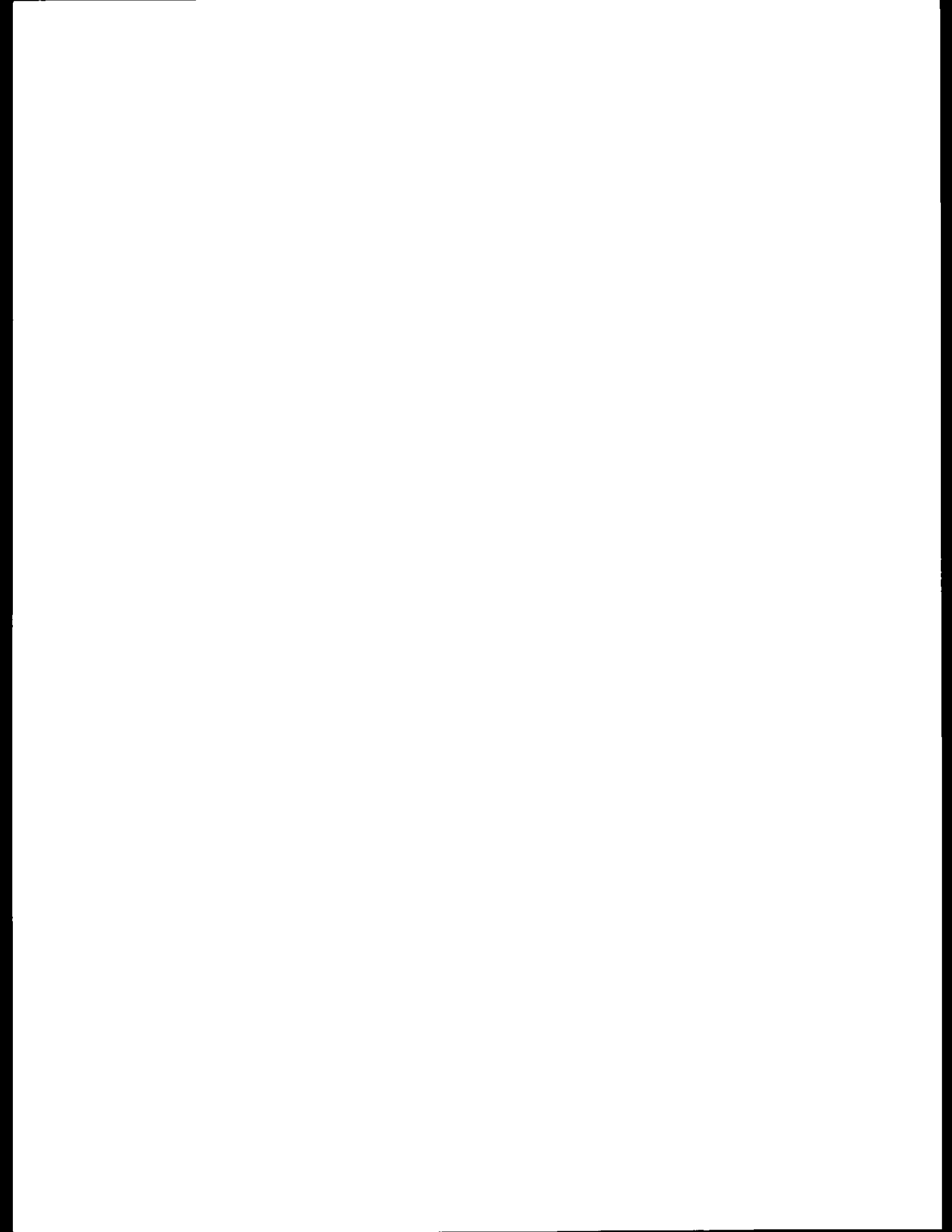
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This document responds to Article II, Deliverable Items and Delivery Schedule, of DOT Contracts DTUM60-81-C-72012 and DTUM60-83-C-71226 between the U.S. Department of Transportation/Urban Mass Transportation Administration and the National Academy of Sciences, National Research Council, designated the Primary Technical Contractor(PTC), for technical and administrative services relative to the Urban Mass Transportation Administration's National Cooperative Transit Research & Development Program(NCTRP). Distribution of this document is made only to the sponsors and others participating officially in the conduct of the NCTRP.

Annual NCTRP activity consists of five (5) distinct phases: (1) Problem Identification, (2) Program Formulation, (3) Project Formulation, (4) Project Execution, and (5) Project Reporting. The PTC's obligation is relative to Phases 2 through 5, and responsibilities for administration of technical matters under these phases have been assigned to the Transportation Research Board, a major unit of the National Research Council. The TRB consists of four(4) divisions with Division D, Cooperative Research Programs, being the one to which NCTRP administration is assigned.

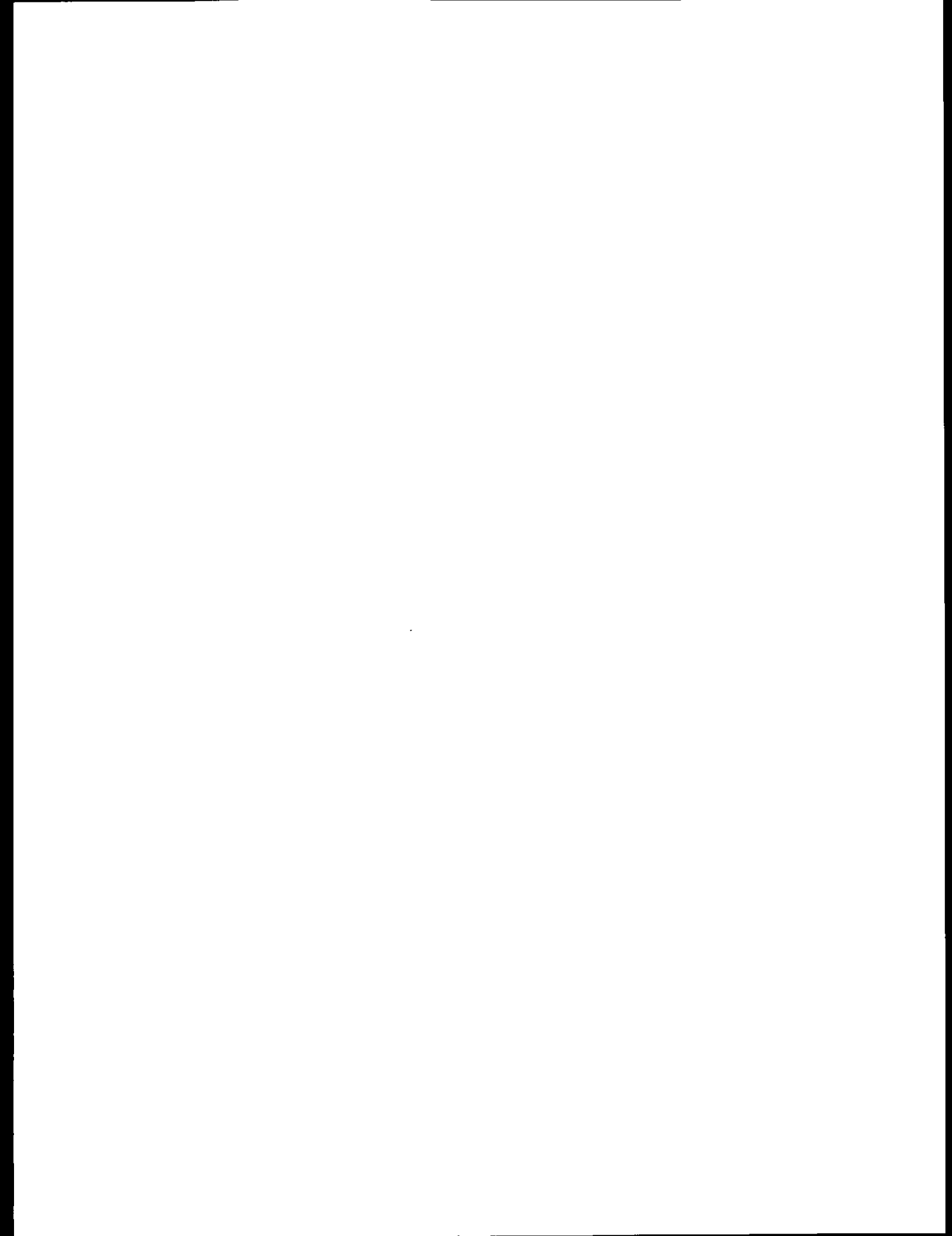
Research programs are referred annually by UMTA to the PTC for administration, and semi-annual progress reporting includes: (1) general coverage of the historical development of the NCTRP and the means by which the Program is carried forward, (2) elaboration on the management practices exercised by the TRB in behalf of the PTC and UMTA, (3) summarization of management activities and deliverables in the six months reported, and (4) provision of detailed reports on each project under contract during the report period as to the: (a) general research need, (b) specific research objectives, (c) progress in achieving project objectives, (d) availability of any reports emanating from the study, and (e) prognosis for ultimate success. Each project report includes identification of the TRB staff engineer having surveillance responsibility and with whom contact may be made for additional insight concerning any details of the contractor's work. Opinions and/or conclusions conveyed by the project reports are those of the research agencies and do not necessarily reflect the position of the Transportation Research Board, the National Research Council, or the Urban Mass Transportation Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation, and no official endorsement should be inferred.

A detailed overview of all aspects of NCTRP operation may be obtained from the following:

- NCTRP Annual Summary of Progress
- NCTRP Information and Instructions for Preparing Proposals

These are available from the Transportation Research Board on request through:

Cooperative Research Programs
Transportation Research Board
2101 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20418
(202) 334-3224



NATIONAL COOPERATIVE TRANSIT RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

INTRODUCTION

Administrators, engineers, and many others in the transit industry are faced with a multitude of complex problems that range between local, regional, and national in their prevalence. How they might be solved is open to a variety of approaches; however, it is an established fact that a highly effective approach to problems of widespread commonality is one in which operating agencies join cooperatively to support, both in financial and other participatory respects, systematic research that is well designed, practically oriented, and carried out by highly competent researchers. As problems grow rapidly in number and escalate in complexity, the value of an orderly, high-quality cooperative endeavor likewise escalates.

Recognizing this in light of the many needs of the transit industry at large, the Urban Mass Transportation Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation, got under way in 1980 the National Cooperative Transit Research and Development Program (NCTRP). This is an objective national program that provides a mechanism by which UMTA's principal client groups across the nation can join cooperatively in an attempt to solve near-term public transportation problems through applied research, development, test, and evaluation. Particularly noteworthy is the fact that the client groups now have a channel through which they can directly influence a portion of UMTA's annual activities in transit technology development and deployment. Although present funding of the NCTRP is entirely from UMTA's Section 6 funds, the planning leading to inception of the Program envisioned that UMTA's client groups would join ultimately in providing additional support, thereby enabling the Program to address a larger number of problems each year.

The NCTRP operates by means of agreements between UMTA as the sponsor and (1) the National Academy of Sciences (NAS), a private, nonprofit institution, as the Primary Technical Contractor (PTC) responsible for administrative and technical services, and (2) the American Public Transit Association responsible for operation of a Technical Steering Group (TSG) comprised of representatives of transit operators, local government officials, State DOT officials, and officials from UMTA's Office of Technical Assistance.

NCTRP activity consists of five (5) distinct phases: (1) Problem Identification, (2) Program Formulation, (3)

Project Formulation, (4) Project Execution, and (5) Project Reporting. The PTC's role is relative to Phases 2 through 5.

Research programs for the NCTRP are developed by the Technical Steering Group, which identifies key problems, ranks them in order of priority, and establishes programs of projects for UMTA approval. Once approved, they are referred to the PTC for administration through the Transportation Research Board (TRB).

The Board, established in 1920, is a unit of the National Research Council, which serves as the principal operating agency of both the National Academy of Sciences and the National Academy of Engineering, and is uniquely suited for the administrative role because: it has a record of successful management of the National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP) since 1962, the program after which the NCTRP has been modeled; it maintains an extensive committee structure from which authorities on any transportation subject may be drawn; it possesses the avenues of communications and cooperation with federal, state, and local government agencies, universities, and industry; it is recognized for its objectivity and understanding of modern research practices; its relationship to the National Research Council is an insurance of objectivity, and it maintains a full-time staff of research specialists in transportation matters to take the findings of research directly to those who are in a position to use them.

Research projects addressing the problems referred from UMTA are defined by panels of experts established by the TRB to provide technical guidance and counsel in the problem areas. The projects are advertised widely for proposals, and qualified agencies are selected on the basis of research plans offering the greatest probabilities of success. The research is carried out by these agencies under contract to the PTC, and administration and surveillance of the contract work are the responsibilities of the PTC and the Board.

The needs for transit research are many, and the National Cooperative Transit Research and Development Program is a mechanism for deriving timely solutions for transportation problems of mutual concern to many responsible groups. In doing so, the Program operates complementary to, rather than as a substitute for or duplicate of, other transit research programs.

MANAGEMENT PRACTICES IN THE NCTRP

The commentary that follows is to provide insight into the Academy's functions directed to TRB's management of UMTA's resource allocation for NCTRP research under Contracts DTUM60-81-C-72012 and DTUM 60-83-C-71226. Highlighted are those activities in which all possible opportunity is taken to weight the odds in favor of obtaining implementable solutions to near-term public transportation problems. A more detailed overview of all aspects of Program operation may be obtained from the following:

- NCTRP Annual Summary of Progress
- NCTRP Information and Instructions for Preparing Proposals

Organizationally, the TRB consists of four divisions, each headed by an assistant director reporting to an executive director, who in turn reports to an executive committee. Division D, renamed in 1979 as *Cooperative Research Programs*, was established in 1962 as a special-purpose activity to administer contracts for research under the NCHRP, and it now encompasses the NCTRP. Division D's activities are thus distinctly different from the Board's traditional role of information gathering and dissemination on behalf of a variety of sponsors. Among the differences in operation is the fact that the funds supporting Division D are obtained through channels outside those pertaining to the Board's other divisions; they are budgeted separately; they are accounted for separately; and they are audited independently of those for the Board's other activities. Furthermore, the funds can be spent only on the research designated by the sponsors of the programs administered under Division D.

It should also be recognized that the overall policies and procedures, including the formulation of annual research programs, are entirely the responsibilities and prerogatives of the sponsors. Neither the regular committees nor the Board's staff have a role in the submission or selection of research problems.

UMTA's goal for the NCTRP is a program within which its resources will be managed well and appropriately directed in the search for solutions to near-term public transportation problems. Applied, or mission-oriented, research is a means to the end as regards the technological approach.

The findings from basic research completed elsewhere are brought into play to bring about new technologies. The expectation from the sponsor is that the resource allocation will result in the development of technology that, when implemented, will make life a little easier—not merely the development of scientific knowledge that has no direct practical application. Meeting this expectation is somewhat comparable to new-product research in industry, and, in addition to being extremely costly, the probability of failure is high. Furthermore, although projects may begin as applied research, the synergistic nature of research often catapults them back into the realm of basic studies, because true solutions are not achieved without understanding the underlying causes for the problem so that they may be accounted for in the future.

Although each year's funding base is targeted at about \$1 million, which represents about one-fourth the amount contemplated in the planning processes leading to establishment of the NCTRP, the actual amounts being made available are falling short of the target. Consequently, an urgent need exists for supplementary support from UMTA's client groups joined in a cooperative venture. In any event, proper management of resources is the sole basis for establishment of the Board's entire philosophy, organization, and functions regarding work under Division D. Toward this end, network control is employed in the classic sense of network utilization for project management. Primary focus is on those milestones where the best opportunities lie for positively weighting the odds of success. These opportunities are afforded through the use of common-sense strategies to control various circumstances surrounding each milestone. Processes result that will, through the natural evolution of interdependent events, increase the probability of research results being implemented and improving transportation practices. Such an approach is complex and must be monitored constantly. Nonetheless, its practical application cannot be neglected if, in the context of total administrative responsibility, one wants to take advantage of all possible opportunities to ensure the best return on the sponsor's investment.

As a first element of strategy, the NCTRP establishes the research agency and personnel qualifications that are mandatory if the projects are to have any chance of success. These are spelled out to potential proposers and are adhered to in selecting research agencies. By means of the project statements and various other widely distributed publications, the NCTRP clearly states the agency attributes deemed essential and thereby hopefully precludes proposals from any but qualified researchers having practical experience in the problem area. Emphasis is placed on the importance of a record of successful past performance in endeavors similar to those to be undertaken. The specifications for proposals are demanding in the sense of requiring the agencies to lay their knowledge, experience and accomplishments on the line, and proposals simply are not accepted if, among other factors, they do not contain specific statements as to how the contemplated results can be used to improve practice.

The next element of strategy comes into play when a research problem and its objectives are first defined in the form of an NCTRP Project Statement by which research proposals will be solicited. A continuing responsibility of the Board is to see that the projects are sensibly structured around the practical facts of operational life and that they represent current circumstances. Therefore, this task is carried out by persons not only very knowledgeable in the problem area but who also have a complete understanding of the needs of the practitioners with whom the problem originated and the best format by which the practitioner can utilize the results. Improved odds therefore become immediately inherent.

Toward the goal of sensible projects, the Board has established seven broad research fields under which project panels are organized to deal with research in specific

NCTRP RESEARCH FIELDS AND AREAS

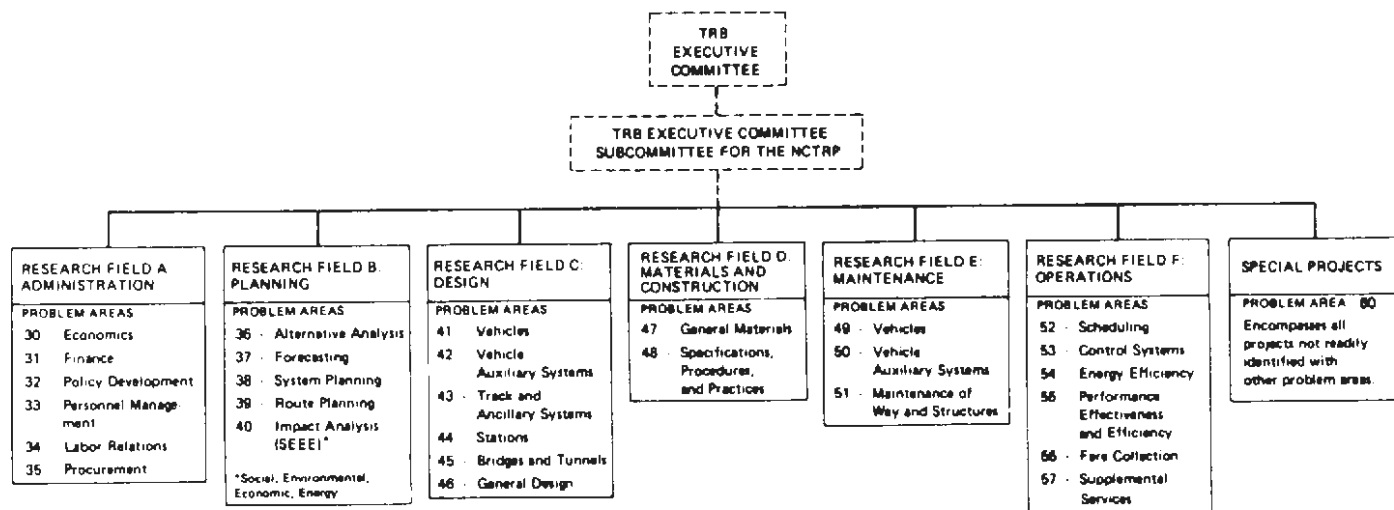


FIGURE 1

problem areas falling within the broad fields (refer to Figure 1). For example, in the broad subject field of Operations each project falling within the more specific subject areas of Energy Efficiency—Area 54—is assigned a project panel comprised of outstanding individuals who are very knowledgeable in the specifics of the particular project and who are looked to for guidance and counsel throughout the research and reporting phases. Those projects that do not conveniently fit under one of the first six general fields are assigned to the seventh one, Special Projects.

Each project is assigned a panel consisting of outstanding individuals very knowledgeable in the project area and who are looked to for technical guidance and counsel throughout the research and reporting phases. A search is made far and wide for these individuals, and the Board usually receives about four to five times as many nominees as can be used in the available panel positions. Panels are appointed by the National Research Council for the life of their projects and, with the coming and going of projects, usually involve some 200 people at any one time. All members serve without compensation, and their total yearly contribution to the Program runs to thousands of man-days. The panel members are drawn from all walks of professional life, and heavy dependence is placed on the sponsor for providing members. Their perspective, in defining the research needed for operational problems, is most important if projects that are both practical and "doable" within the limits of available funds are to be structured.

When the project panels meet for the first time to prepare project statements, it is stressed to them that a first-class statement is the first of the two most important factors bearing on the ultimate success of any project. Accordingly, extreme care is exercised in the development of clear, concise project statements that are distributed to the research community at large. These statements contain objectives designed to result in the most extensive work possible for the available funding. They spell out what is expected of a contractor in terms of findings from

innovative research that can be applied practically; they do not spell out how to go about the research. Statements of explicit objectives, matched to funding, places proposers in the position of knowing exactly what is expected of them, because the available funding is made known along with the objectives. Not only does this result in more realistic proposals, but it most assuredly eases each project panel's task of comparative evaluation. Of the members of the NCTRP's project panels to date, about 34 percent come from transit operating agencies. Because of their intimate involvement in the development of the various research projects, their knowledge of what is to be expected, and the "spreading of the word" among their associates, there is yet another step toward improving the odds that results will be put to use.

The second of the two most important factors, and the next element of strategy, concerns the process of evaluating proposals to select research agencies. The odds can be advanced materially if extreme care is exercised throughout this activity. Indeed, this activity constitutes the milestone on which the success of the project can become totally dependent, irrespective of the strengths built in at the preceding milestones. Prior to contracting, there *must* be satisfaction not only that the proposed research plan is the best possible in addressing the specifics of the objectives, but also that it culminates with the best promise for providing transit agencies with a product that is both usable and readily implementable; otherwise, the proposal process—and possibly that of project definition—should be repeated. The importance of this activity is made abundantly clear to the project panels when they meet to select agencies and suggest minor modifications of the research plans as a means for keeping them squarely on target. A comprehensively detailed research plan not only aids the selection process but also serves as the yardstick by which the staff exercises day-to-day surveillance of research progress.

Two top proposals are chosen for each project. The deliberations of the project panel include a review of all known aspects of agency performance on other research

projects under NCTRP or elsewhere and a determination that the first-choice research plan offers the best promise for providing a product that is both usable and readily implementable. A key factor is the merit of the research approach and the experiment design. There is nothing anywhere in the Program's specifications that says the project statements must be adhered to strictly in every detail and that any deviation in research thrust or from the proposed project period warrants outright rejection. The key element is that the agencies must present a strong, convincing case for whatever approaches they take. These always receive just consideration because the sole interest of the project panels is to determine the plan with the best probability of success.

Prior to contracting, any suggested modifications are taken by the Program staff to the agencies, and a clear meeting of the minds is established regarding what is specifically expected from the research and the personnel carrying it out. By means of the "Procedural Manual for Agencies Conducting Research in the National Cooperative Transit Research and Development Program," further emphasis is placed on the requirement for practically oriented research and the proper means for reporting it. Experience has demonstrated that, once the research is under way, the practical fact of life is that the destiny of the research is pretty well committed, no matter how extensive the staff surveillance or how many administrative processes are available to accommodate changes. Rarely are changes accompanied by gains when having to stay within the original funding; rather, the effects are usually negative.

A first requirement of the research agency immediately after subcontracting is the development of a working plan that is intended to be a comprehensively detailed amplification of the approved research plan, inclusive of a specific schedule of events for the major tasks. This document is used by the staff in the day-to-day surveillance of the project's progress. Should review of this document by the staff and project panel bring to light necessary changes that were not previously apparent, these can be accommodated without hindering prosecution of the work. Through this activity, an additional opportunity is afforded for improvement of the odds of success.

As a means of mutual assistance while work is under way, two types of progress reports are required from the agencies. On a monthly basis, one-page progress schedules are submitted that graphically depict several aspects of progress. On a calendar quarter basis, narratives are required that fully describe accomplishments to date and outline future activities based on the accomplishments. Based on these reports and information gained through surveillance visits, Program staff prepares its own progress reports that are sent to UMTA and the Technical Steering Group as a measure of providing a current awareness of on-going work. By these controls the Program is, to some degree, able to appraise the agency's level of performance, while at the same time the agency is provided with tools to assist its own management responsibility in both administrative and technical respects. All too often in the administration of research programs problems arise because there is insufficient communication between the

agency's management staff and the technical staff performing the research.

Project surveillance constitutes a major element of strategy in achieving the administrative goal. The gains here reflect the effort that the NCTRP staff exerts (a) to keep the research in line with the approved research plan; (b) to keep the researchers continually aware of the needs of the practicing engineer; and (c) to see that all project developments, through final reporting, center around these practical needs. Projects engineers with wide-ranging experience are assigned to the NCTRP by the Board and are responsible for administrative and technical surveillance of the contracts. Their activities include visiting each research agency at least once every six months to discuss the status of the work with the principal investigator(s) and to determine if the research is being pursued in line with the approved research plan. Any need for change in the plan is referred to the project's panel for review and approval. Finally, the staff engineer and the project panel evaluate the final report on the completed research to determine the degree of technical compliance with the subcontract and to ensure adherence to the Program's specifications for report writing.

Research agencies are required to report their results in language that is understandable and succinctly summarizes the results so that the transit administrator and others may easily determine their usefulness to their operations. The objectives are accomplished through a "Summary of Findings" and a chapter on "Interpretation, Appraisal, and Application of Results." The detailed research techniques and analyses in which a researcher would be interested are presented as report appendices. Available to the researchers in report preparation are guidelines that have been developed with the objective of providing a report of maximum utility to the transit industry. Each report, as finally published in the regular NCTRP series (Reports or Syntheses of Transit Practice) also contains a staff-prepared foreword that directs the attention of the busy reader to the persons who would be most interested in the results and, also, to how the results fit into present knowledge and practice.

All reports are reviewed by the project's panel to determine if the report indicates reasonable accomplishment of the technical aspects of the research plan; if the conclusions are adequately supported; if the clarity of presentation is satisfactory; and if the report is free from statements on sensitive matters. If the report qualifies for publication at this point, it is further reviewed by the Committee on NRC Oversight (CNO) when a question of sensitivity is involved. Outside reviewers, i.e., reviewers having no responsibility in the conduct of the research, may be asked to review a report at any stage either for the benefit of their technical expertise or for opinions relating to broader issues underlying the report including public sensitivity.

Prior to publication, extraordinary measures are taken to ensure that useful research results are made immediately available to the appropriate personnel. One means consists of forwarding copies of the research agency drafts of final reports. According to the urgency of the particular circumstances, these drafts may be either uncorrected or

corrected on the basis of an acceptance review. Several copies of unedited drafts of the agency reports are retained until formal publication and are available, on a loan basis, to others having an interest in the research. Once published in their entirety, the drafts are destroyed.

After publication, each report is distributed widely through the TRB's selective distribution system. Copies go automatically to about 100 libraries, TRB transit representatives, educational institution liaison representatives, appropriate project panels and committees of the Board, and individual members who have selected publications in the particular subject area of the report. As a further means of disseminating the research reports, announcements of their availability are made to the trade press. Also, the Technical Activities Staff comprising the Board's Division A follow the progress of the work throughout its conduct and consequently are able to discuss application of the research results with potential users during visits to operating agencies.

Unfortunately research is too often a compilation of findings that, because of language and form, simply cannot be used until the sponsor devotes considerable supplementary effort to translating the findings into the language and working tools of the users. This kind of time cannot be afforded in the sponsor's scheme of day-to-day operation. In an applied research program such as the NCTRP, the sponsor rightfully expects a product that has immediate applicability to practice. This is not asking too much, because improvements are going to occur mostly in the form of incremental refinements of existing practices, rather than as dramatic innovations or breakthroughs that one might expect from extensive basic research. Therefore, where necessary as an integral part of administration, staff assumes the role of interpreter and interjects itself as a third party between the sponsor and the researcher by means of a very brief publication titled *NCTRP Research Results Digest*. The Digests are issued as a series of flyers to provide in understandable language an early awareness of project results so as to encourage early implementation. They are brief in summarizing specific findings—they do not deal with methodology—and require the reader to expend very little time in determining the usefulness of the findings. Reference is made in each to the fact that uncorrected draft copies of the agency's report are available on a loan basis for those desiring more extensive information. Where circumstances warrant, staff does not wait for requests for reports but distributes copies of the agencies' draft final reports to appropriate personnel.

With the culmination of the formal reporting activity, plus any of the special measures just described, the NCTRP reaches the final milestone of its administrative network. What happens beyond that point—how successful the projects really turn out to be—is entirely up to UMTA and the operating agencies. Projects that have accomplished their objectives in providing useful products might just as well have been failures if, at least, consideration is not given to how the results might be used to improve operations. It simply does not make good sense to invest millions in research on critical problems and then not give adequate attention to a determination of

the implementation value of the products. Such determination can range from mere thought to total, immediate incorporation as standard practice. Certainly, any action must be temperate to avoid the pitfalls that are present in pushing too hard too fast. To aid decisions as to the course to be pursued, future NCTRP publications will report on all known uses of results, be they limited or extensive. Given the fact that the NCTRP addresses critical, national problems, documented payoff to any one agency should attract study by others. So should documented failures, for they also contain lessons by which all can profit. Research is a venture into risk and uncertainty, the risk being particularly high in applied or mission-oriented research such as the NCTRP undertakes. The wisdom of accepting risk is impossible to determine without studious inquiry into the benefits derived.

In summary, the NCTRP is an applied, contract research program that has been structured along specific lines to enable it to respond to specific needs of the nation's transit industry. The needs are expressed through problem statements referred from UMTA, and each problem is accompanied by the funds to see it through. From the preparation of project statements through final reporting on the projects results, the goal of the NCTRP is administration that, in the final analysis, will prove to be fully effective in obtaining the best return on the investment supporting the Program.

SUMMARY OF ADMINISTRATIVE PROGRESS

With respect to the TRB role in overall NCTRP operation, the Board (1) administers the annual program under which the Academy has contracted with various classes of agencies for research services, (2) administers the annual program next in line and referred by UMTA for contracting, and (3) provides technical support services for the Technical Steering Group (TSG) and/directed to the development of research programs under all years. The following summary addresses the research programs for fiscal years 1980 through 1986, and it pertains to specific activities occurring between January 1 and June 30, 1987.

FY 1980 Program

This program was initiated in November 1980 and was funded at \$1,040,000 to support eight projects, two of which were designated for syntheses by TRB. All research has been completed. Two syntheses, two *NCTRP Research Results Digests*, and five regular series reports have been published and delivered to UMTA. A brief summary of the status of these projects is:

- 31-1 Completed—Published as NCTRP Report 2
- 33-1 Completed—Unpublished (see report availability in Progress by Project Section.
- 36-1 Completed—Published as NCTRP Report 4.
- 47-1 Completed—Published as NCTRP Report 14.

- 54-1 Completed—Published as NCTRP Report 1
- 54-2 Completed—Published as NCTRP Report 3
- 60-1 Completed—Published as NCTRP Syntheses 1 and 2

Steps have been taken to close all contracts, pay final vouchers, and disband project panels.

In line with the requirements of Contract DTUM60-81-C-72012, Article XIX, Subcontracting Reporting Requirements, it is reported that no subcontracts for research under the FY 1980 program were entered into during the 6 months ending December 31, 1988.

FY 1981 Program

The program recommended to UMTA by the TSG was referred to TRB by UMTA, consisting of six projects and two syntheses funded at \$985,000. It was referred on May 30, 1982 to the Academy for administration, and all projects are completed. Six regular reports, two Research Results Digests, and two synthesis reports have been published and delivered to UMTA. A brief summary of the status of the FY '81 projects is:

- 30-1 Completed—Manual published as NCTRP Report 11; research report will not be published.
- 33-2 Completed—Published as NCTRP Reports 5 and 6.
- 38-1 Completed—Final report is available for loan—Published as NCTRP Digest 4.
- 39-1 Phase I Completed—Published as NCTRP Report 9.
- 39-1(2) Phase II Completed—Published as NCTRP Digest 5.
- 40-1 Completed—Published as NCTRP Report 8.
- 43-1 Completed—Published as NCTRP Report 7.
- 60-1 Completed—Published as NCTRP Syntheses 3 and 4.

Steps have been taken to close all contracts, pay final vouchers, and disband project panels.

In line with the requirements of Contract DTUM60-81-C-72012, Article XIX, Subcontracting Reporting Requirements, it is reported that no subcontracts for research under the FY 1981 program were entered into during the 6 months ending December 31, 1988.

FY 1982/1983 Program

NOTE: Formerly designated as the FY 1982 Program, the new designation was requested by UMTA so that succeeding-year designations will correspond more closely with actual fiscal years.

The TSG met in October 1982 and developed the FY '82/'83 program. Recommended to UMTA were two continuations, four syntheses, and six new projects. One new project was subsequently converted to a synthesis study.

UMTA approval action on the recommendations was taken according to funds available (\$990,000), and official referral of the final program to the Academy for administration was made on January 13, 1983.

Initiation of research depended on the provision of funds under a new contract. The reason for this was that the original contract was for four years, the last two of which provided for closing down the operation in the event that UMTA chose not to continue it. With development and referral of the third program of research projects, either a new contract or modification of the existing one became necessary. UMTA's election was for a new contract that would run concurrently with the existing one, and it was on this basis that a proposal was submitted to UMTA in May 1983. Although the contract was for \$6 million, this amount will not be realized as UMTA is not providing the funding requested for each of the four years, thus limiting the size of each annual program. A brief summary of the status of the FY '82/'83 projects is:

- 33-3 Completed—Published as NCTRP Report 10
- 40-2 Completed—Published as NCTRP Report 16
- 40-3 Completed—Published as NCTRP Report 12
- 46-1 Final report is available for loan.
- 55-1 Completed—Published as NCTRP Report 13
- 33-2(2) Completed—Report available from U.S. DOT (Ref. DOT-I-87-03)
- 38-1(2) Completed—Report available for loan. Research Results Digest to be published
- 60-1 Completed—Published as Syntheses 5, 6, 7, 8, and 11

In line with the requirements of Contract DTUM60-83-C-71226, Article XIX, Subcontracting Reporting Requirements, it is reported that no subcontracts were entered into during the 6 months ending December 31, 1988.

FY 1984 Program

This program was developed by the TSG in October 1983 and referred to the Academy on May 10, 1984. The program consists of four syntheses, two regular projects, and one continuation with research funding of \$680,000 (this includes funds for the two continuation projects authorized in FY 1982/1983).

One hundred forty-two problems were candidates for funding. Once again, the level of detail and quality of statements remained high in general. It is hoped that the large number of candidates is indicative of a growing awareness in the transit industry of what the NCTRP is all about and a mounting interest in the service it can provide. A larger funding base is needed so that the transit industry can have a reasonable share of its problems researched. A brief summary of the status of these projects is:

- 31-2 Completed—Published as NCTRP Report 15
- 36-1(2) Completed—Publication decision pending
- 48-1 Completed—Report available for loan. Research Results Digest to be published
- 60-1 Completed—Published as NCTRP Syntheses 9, 10, 12, and 13

In line with the reporting requirements of Contract DTUM60-83-C-71226, Article XIX, Subcontracting Reporting Requirements, it is reported that no subcontracts were entered into during the 6 months ending December 31, 1988.

A contract amendment was executed during the second half of 1987 to provide additional funds required for technical monitoring and publication of final reports on the work to be completed under the current contract.

FY 1985 Program

This program was developed by the TSG in December 1984. On September 24, 1987, UMTA executed a contract amendment for support of technical and administrative services for the FY '85 program which includes two projects (35-1 and 40-2A) and three synthesis topics (TS14, TS15, and TS16). The approved budget of \$732,555 is sufficient to support but a few of the 108 problems submitted for consideration.

FY 1986 Program

All work under this program is contingent on the APTA contract for conduct of the TSG operation relative to formulation of annual programs and other responsibilities. The APTA process began January 1985 with the call for problems. Problems have not been submitted to the PTC for action. TSG activities have been suspended pending a contract extension.

General—All Programs

Distribution was made early in the report period of NCTRP Progress Report 14 to UMTA and others participating directly in NCTRP work. The Annual Summary of Progress for 1988 was published near the end of 1988.

Difficulties Encountered During Report Period

Staff activity relative to administration of the program remains at a low-level, part-time basis and will continue so until there is a renewed commitment to funding the NCTRP.

PTC Activities in the Next Report Period

1. Routine surveillance of studies under contract.
2. Follow-up as appropriate on projects reaching expiration dates.
3. Approval and acceptance processes on receipt of FY '86 program officially referred from UMTA.
4. Formulation of project panels and meetings to write Project Statements for FY '86 research.
5. Solicitation of proposals.
6. Preparation for project panel meetings to select research agencies.
7. Preparation of a 6-month progress report for the period ending June 30, 1989.

AWARD-WINNING RESEARCH UNDER NCTRP

- NCTRP Project 40-3, "Strategies to Implement Benefit-Sharing for Fixed Transit Facilities." In 1986, this project, reported as *NCTRP Report 12*, "Strategies to Implement Benefit-Sharing for Fixed-Transit Facilities," received the Category III Award of the National Capital Area Chapter of the American Planning Association's 1986 Awards Program.

TABLE I
SUMMARY OF STATUS THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 1988, FOR FY '80 THROUGH FY '85 PROJECTS

PROJECT		RESEARCH AGENCY	SUBCONTRACT AMOUNT OR SUBCONTRACT COST (\$)
NO.	TITLE		
AREA 30: ADMINISTRATION—ECONOMICS			
30-1	Small Transit Buses: A Manual for Improved Purchasing, Use, and Maintenance	Arthur D. Little	\$297,461 *
AREA 31: ADMINISTRATION—FINANCE			
31-1	The Impacts of Federal Grant Requirements on Transit Agencies	Booz-Allen	49,522 *
31-2	Transit Capital Investment to Reduce Operating Deficits: Alternative Bus Replacement Strategies	Fleet Maintenance	150,000 *
AREA 33: ADMINISTRATION—PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT			
33-1	Transit Bus Operator Selection and Training for Dealing with Stress	GAMS Inc.	150,000 *
33-2	Assessment of Job Enrichment Programs for the Transit Industry	Public Admin. Service	97,821 *
33-2(2)	Quality-of-Work-Life Programs for the Transit Industry—Regional Seminars	Public Admin. Service	52,454 *
33-3	Public Transit Bus Maintenance Manpower Planning	Fleet Maintenance	100,000 *
AREA 35: PROCUREMENT			
35-1	Impacts of Standardized vs Nonstandardized Bus Fleets	Fleet Maintenance	100,000
AREA 36: PLANNING—ALTERNATIVE ANALYSIS			
36-1	Improving Decision-Making for Major Urban Transit Investments	System Des. Concepts	200,000 *
36-1(2)	Assessment of Current Planning Practice for Major Transit Investments	SYDEC, Inc.	30,000 *
AREA 38: PLANNING—SYSTEM PLANNING			
38-1	National Transit Computer Software Directory	COMSIS Corp.	98,457 *
38-1(2)	National Transit Computer Software Directory, Phase II	COMSIS Corp.	50,000
AREA 39: PLANNING—ROUTE PLANNING			
39-1	A Modular Approach to On-Board, Automatic Data Collection Systems	The MITRE Corp.	148,787 *
39-1(2)	A Modular Approach to On-Board, Automatic Data Collection Systems—Seminar	The MITRE Corp.	26,141
AREA 40: PLANNING—IMPACT ANALYSIS			
40-1	Simplified Guidelines for Evaluating Transit Options in Small Urban Areas	Barton-Aschman	149,960 *
40-2	Estimating Incremental Costs of Bus-Route-Service Changes	SYDEC, Inc.	154,469 *
40-2A	Forecasting Incremental Ridership Impacts from Bus-Route-Service Changes	Ecosometrics	150,000
40-3	Strategies to Implement Benefit-Sharing for Fixed Transit Facilities	SG Associates	99,957 *
AREA 43: DESIGN—TRACK AND ANCILLARY SYSTEMS			
43-1	Detection of Low-Level Fault Currents on Rail Transit Systems	Chas. T. Main, Inc.	99,913 *
AREA 46: DESIGN—GENERAL DESIGN			
46-1	Single Cable Communications Technology for Rail-Transit Systems	Poly Inst of NY	150,000 *
AREA 47: MATERIALS AND CONSTRUCTION—GENERAL MATERIALS			
47-1	Improved Service Life of Urban Transit Coach Brakes	Battelle Mem Inst	300,000
AREA 48: MATERIALS AND CONSTRUCTION—SPECIFICATIONS, PROCEDURES, AND PRACTICES			
48-1	Electrolytic Corrosion in DC Powered Transit Systems	ITT Research Inst.	197,309
AREA 54: OPERATIONS—ENERGY EFFICIENCY			
54-1	Improve Transit Bus Energy Efficiency and Productivity	Booz-Allen	39,976 *
54-2	Energy Management of Electric Rail Transit Systems	Carnegie-Mellon	150,000 *

STARTING DATE	EXPECTED COMPLETION DATE	PROJECT STATUS (for details, see latest Summary of Progress)	PROJECT NO.
11/8/82	8/7/84	Completed—Manual published as NCTRP Report 11	30-1
11/30/81	12/15/82	Completed—Published as NCTRP Report 2	31-1
10/1/85	12/31/86	Completed—Published as NCTRP Report 15	31-2
10/15/81	4/14/84	Completed—Report summarized in RRD 3; see Prog. by Proj. section for report availability	33-1
11/1/82	2/29/84	Completed—Published as NCTRP Reports 5 and 6	33-2
12/1/84	9/1/86	Completed—Report available from U.S. DOT (Ref. DOT-I-87-03)	33-2(2)
11/1/83	10/31/84	Completed—Published as NCTRP Report 10	33-3
11/1/88	1/31/90	Research in progress	35-1
11/2/81	11/1/83	Completed—Published as NCTRP Report 4	36-1
2/2/86	6/30/87	Completed—Publication decision pending	36-1(2)
1/3/83	1/31/85	Completed—Report summarized in RRD 4; see Prog. by Proj. section for report availability	38-1
4/1/85	1/15/87	Completed—Research report available for loan; Research Results Digest to be publ.	38-1(2)
11/1/82	8/31/84	Completed—Published as NCTRP Report 9	39-1
8/12/85	7/11/86	Completed—Summary published as RRD 5	39-1(2)
10/25/82	10/23/84	Completed—Published as NCTRP Report 8	40-1
11/15/83	6/30/87	Completed—Published as NCTRP Report 16	40-2
11/15/88	5/15/90	Research in progress	40-2A
11/1/83	2/1/85	Completed—Published as NCTRP Report 12	40-3
1/3/83	11/30/84	Completed—Published as NCTRP Report 7	43-1
5/1/84	9/30/85	Completed—Final report is available for loan	46-1
12/1/81	11/30/84	Completed—Published as NCTRP Report 14	47-1
9/1/85	3/31/87	Completed—Report available for loan. Research Results Digest to be publ.	48-1
10/1/81	6/30/82	Completed—Published as NCTRP Report 1	54-1
10/1/81	12/31/83	Completed—Published as NCTRP Report 3	54-2

TABLE I (Continued)
SUMMARY OF STATUS THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 1988, FOR FY '80 THROUGH FY '85 PROJECTS

PROJECT		RESEARCH AGENCY	SUBCONTRACT AMOUNT OR SUBCONTRACT COST (\$)
NO.	TITLE		
AREA 55: OPERATIONS—PERFORMANCE, EFFECTIVENESS, AND EFFICIENCY			
55-1	Conversion to One-Person Operation of Heavy-Rail Rapid-Transit Trains	Battelle Mem Inst	150,000
AREA 60: SPECIAL PROJECTS			
60-1	Synthesis of Information Related to Transit Problems	TRB	885,000 ^a
	TS-1: Cleaning Equipment and Procedures for Transit Buses	ATE Mgmt	75,000 ^b
	TS-2: Priority Treatment for Buses on Urban Streets	PAWA	75,000 ^b
	TS-3: Effects of Fuel Additives and Alternative Fuel Grades for Transit Buses	Southwest Res Inst	30,000 ^b
	TS-4: Guidelines for Allocation of Time for Transit Coach Maintenance Functions	XYZYX Info Corp.	30,000 ^b
	TS-5: Extraboard Management Procedures and Tools	L. C. McDorman	40,000 ^b
	TS-6: Traffic Control and Regulation at Transit Stops	W. W. Rankin	45,000 ^b
	TS-7: Bus Communications Systems	Mitre	45,000 ^b
	TS-8: Passenger Information Systems for Transit Transfer Facilities	J. J. Fruin	45,000 ^b
	TS-9: Transit Fare Collection: Problems and Alternatives to Paper Currency	Mitre	75,000 ^b
	TS-10: Use of Part-Time Operators	L. C. McDorman	50,000
	TS-11: Transit Marketing: Success and Failures	Richard L. Oram	50,000
	TS-12: Use of Incentives to Attain Specified Performance Standards in Collective Bargaining for Mass Transit	Darold T. Barnum	50,000
	TS-13: Bus Inspection Guidelines	C. I. Giuliani	50,000
	TS-14: Supervision Strategies for Improved Reliability of Bus Routes	H. S. Levinson	75,000
	TS-15: Collection and Application of Ridership Data on Rapid Transit Systems	R. H. Pratt	75,000
	TS-16: Issues in the Shift from Regional to Local Provision of Bus Services	C. Ulberg	75,000

* Final Subcontract cost.

^a Continuing activity through FY '84. Annual amount varies; total to date shown.

^b Allocated—Balances are carried forward to support future synthesis studies.

TABLE II
PUBLISHED REPORTS OF THE NATIONAL COOPERATIVE TRANSIT RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Report			
No.	Title, Project, Pages, Price		
1	Transit Bus Energy Efficiency and Productivity—Bus Equipment Selection Handbook (Project 54-1),	55p.,	\$7.20.
2	Impacts of Federal Grant Requirements on Transit Agencies (Project 31-1),	73 p.,	\$7.60
3	Reduction of Peak-Power Demand for Electric Rail Transit Systems (Project 54-2),	142 p.,	\$10.40
4	Improving Decision-Making for Major Urban Transit Investments (Project 36-1),	47 p.,	\$7.20
5	Assessment of Quality of Work-Life Programs for the Transit Industry—Research Report (Project 33-2),	99 p.,	\$8.80
6	Assessment of Quality-of-Work-Life Programs for the Transit Industry—Model Programs (Project 33-2),	37 p.,	\$6.80
7	Detection of Low-Current Short Circuits (Project 43-1),	216 p.,	\$14.00
8	Simplified Guidelines for Evaluating Transit Service in Small Urban Areas (Project 40-1),	119 p.,	\$10.40
9	Modular Approach to On-Board Automatic Data Collection Systems (Project 39-1),	123 p.,	\$10.40
10	Public Transit Bus Maintenance Manpower Planning (Project 33-3),	56 p.,	\$8.00
11	Small Transit Vehicles: How to Buy, Operate, and Maintain Them (Project 30-1),	49 p.,	\$7.60
12	Strategies to Implement Benefit Sharing for Fixed Transit Facilities (Project 40-3),	214 p.,	\$14.00
13	Conversion to One-Person Operation of Rapid Transit Trains (Proj. 55-1),	49 p.,	\$8.40
14	Improved Service Life of Urban Transit Coach Brakes (Proj. 47-1),	56 p.,	\$8.40
15	Transit Capital Investment to Reduce Operating Deficits—Alternative Bus Replacement Strategies (Proj. 31-2),	69 p.,	\$10.40
16	Estimating Incremental Costs of Bus Route Service Changes (Proj. 40-2),	65 p.,	\$10.40

STARTING DATE	EXPECTED COMPLETION DATE	PROJECT STATUS (for details, see latest Summary of Progress)	PROJECT NO.
3/5/84	12/31/85	Completed—Published as NCTRP Report 13	55-1
11/7/80	*	Research in progress	60-1
2/16/81	12/31/81	Completed—Published as NCTRP Synthesis 1	(TS-1) 60-1
3/16/81	12/31/81	Completed—Published as NCTRP Synthesis 2	(TS-2) 60-1
10/1/82	9/30/83	Completed—Published as NCTRP Synthesis 3	(TS-3) 60-1
12/9/82	11/30/83	Completed—Published as NCTRP Synthesis 4	(TS-4) 60-1
11/31/83	10/31/84	Completed—Published as NCTRP Synthesis 5	(TS-5) 60-1
12/27/83	9/30/85	Completed—Published as NCTRP Synthesis 11	(TS-6) 60-1
11/21/83	3/31/85	Completed—Published as NCTRP Synthesis 8	(TS-7) 60-1
11/21/83	12/31/84	Completed—Published as NCTRP Synthesis 7	(TS-8) 60-1
12/2/83	12/31/84	Completed—Published as NCTRP Synthesis 6	(TS-9) 60-1
11/15/84	3/31/86	Completed—Published as NCTRP Synthesis 9	(TS-10) 60-1
11/15/84	5/31/86	Completed—Published as NCTRP Synthesis 12	(TS-11) 60-1
12/1/84	6/30/86	Completed—Published as NCTRP Synthesis 13	(TS-12) 60-1
11/15/84	3/31/86	Completed—Published as NCTRP Synthesis 10	(TS-13) 60-1
3/1/88	6/30/89	Research in progress	(TS-14) 60-1
3/1/88	8/31/89	Research in progress	(TS-15) 60-1
3/1/88	9/30/89	Research in progress	(TS-16) 60-1

TABLE II (Continued)

PUBLISHED REPORTS OF THE NATIONAL COOPERATIVE TRANSIT RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Synthesis of Transit Practice

No. Title, Pages, Price

- | | | | |
|-----|--|--------|--------|
| 1 | Cleaning Transit Buses: Equipment and Procedures (Proj. 60-1, Topic TS-1), | 39 p., | \$6.80 |
| • 2 | Enforcement of Priority Treatment for Buses on Urban Streets (Proj. 60-1, Topic TS-2), | 30 p., | \$6.40 |
| 3 | Diesel Fuel Quality and Effects of Fuel Additives (Proj. 60-1, Topic TS-3), | 62 p., | \$7.60 |
| 4 | Allocation of Time for Transit Bus Maintenance Function (Proj. 60-1, Topic TS-4), | 24 p., | \$6.40 |
| 5 | Extraboard Management: Procedures and Tools (Proj. 60-1, Topic TS-5), | 38 p., | \$7.60 |
| 6 | Transit Bus Fare Collection: Problems with and Alternatives to Paper Currency (Proj. 60-1, Topic TS-9), | 20 p., | \$6.80 |
| 7 | Passenger Information Systems for Transit Transfer Facilities (Proj. 60-1, Topic TS-8), | 39 p., | \$7.60 |
| 8 | Bus Communication Systems (Proj. 60-1, Topic TS-7), | 23 p., | \$7.20 |
| 9 | Use of Part-Time Operators (Proj. 60-1, Topic TS-10), | 33 p., | \$7.60 |
| 10 | Bus Inspection Guidelines (Proj. 60-1, Topic TS-13), | 73 p., | \$9.20 |
| 11 | Traffic Control and Regulation at Transit Stops (Proj. 60-1, Topic TS-6), | 28 p., | \$7.20 |
| 12 | Transit Marketing: Successes and Failures (Proj. 60-1, Topic TS-11), | 27 p., | \$6.80 |
| 13 | Use of Incentives to Attain Specified Standards in Collective Bargaining for Mass Transit (Proj. 60-1, Topic TS-12), | 68 p., | \$9.20 |

Note: Out of print publications marked with a bullet (•) are available only in microfiche form from the Transportation Research Board. See final page of this document for ordering information.

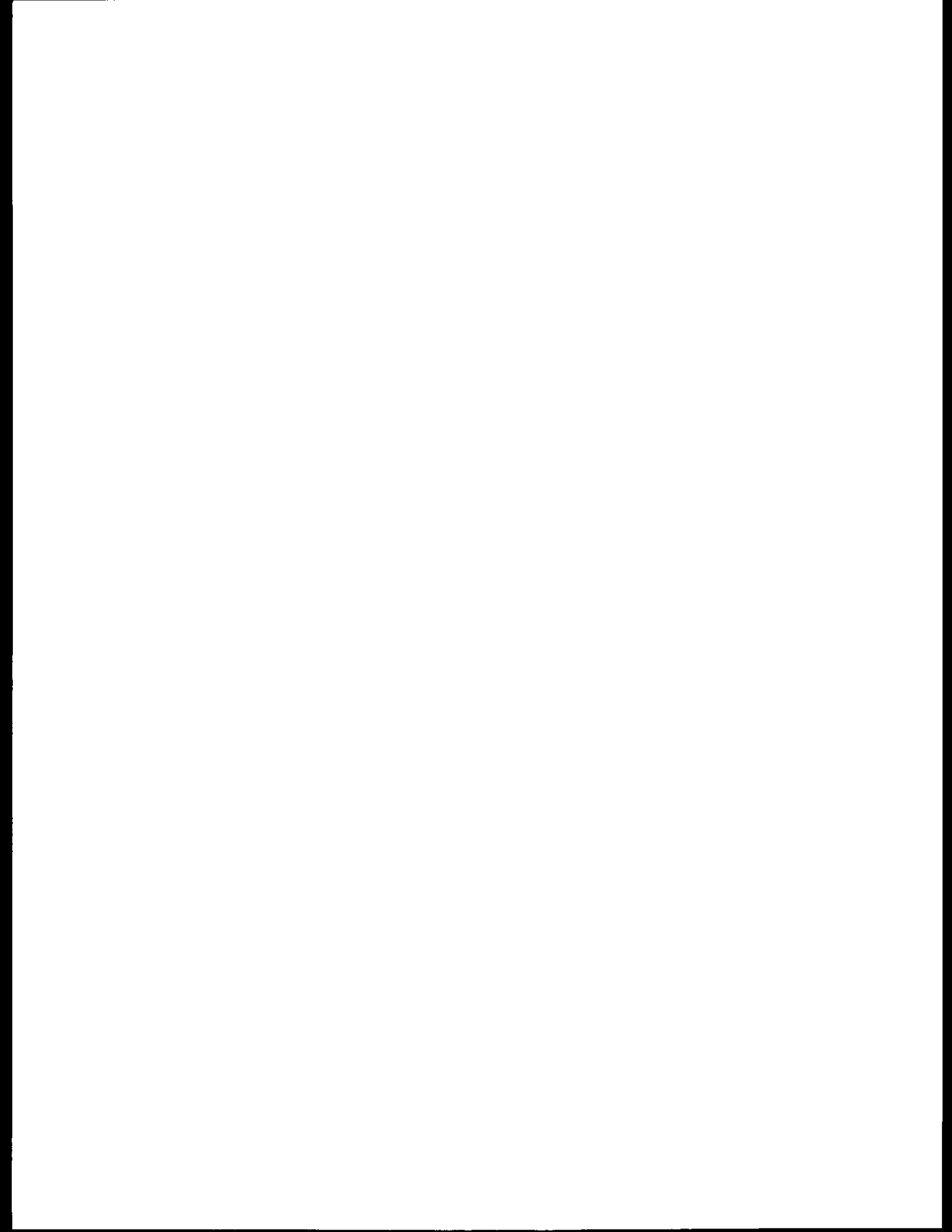
TABLE III
NCTRP RESEARCH RESULTS DIGESTS *

DIGEST NO.	PROJ. NO.	TITLE, PAGES, PRICE
1	33-1	Review of Literature Related to Bus Operator Stress, 15p., \$3.00
2	60-1	Project to Synthesize Information on Transit Problems, 3p., \$1.00
3	33-1	Predicting and Dealing with Bus Operator Stress, 4 p., 1.00
4	38-1	National Transit Computer Software Directory, 9 p., \$1.00
5	39-1(2)	Modular Approach to One-Board Automatic Data Collection System—Seminar, 7 p., \$3.00

* See Table I for project titles. See final page of this document for ordering information.

PROGRESS BY PROJECTS

The following pages present detailed status reports on those projects for which there remains any type of contractual activity. The status of *all* projects can be found in Table I.



AREA THIRTY-FIVE: PROCUREMENT

Project: 35-1, FY '85
Title: Impacts of Standardized vs Nonstandardized Bus Fleets

Research Agency: Fleet Maintenance Consultants, Inc.
Principal Investigators: Richard W. Drake

Effective Date: November 1, 1988
Completion Date: January 31, 1990

AGENCY PERFORMANCE

1. Is the project on schedule? Yes Percent project complete: 3
2. Is the research in keeping with the approved research plan? Yes
3. Subcontract Amount: \$100,000
4. Estimated Expenditures to 12/31/88 : \$1,000
5. Are the expenditures in keeping with the project? Yes

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

There is not now a methodology which public transit analysts and decision-makers can use to evaluate and consider trade-offs in the procurement of standard vs. nonstandard buses. Public procurement policies have historically, and appropriately, sought to maximize competition among prospective vendors, particularly for the purchase of buses. As a result, many transit systems operate vehicles produced by several different manufacturers, of differing configurations, each of which requires separate parts inventories, different maintenance procedures, and special training for maintenance and operations personnel. Given the number of domestic and foreign manufacturers of buses, the trade-off between standardized and nonstandardized fleets or subfleets must be considered. For the purpose of this project, the term standardization is intended to mean a bus fleet that has similar (or identical) major components regardless of manufacturer. Therefore, the real test of whether a new bus is standard or nonstandard is if its introduction will require additional cost for parts inventory, maintenance, or operations.

The objective of this research is to develop a methodology for estimating the costs and benefits of standardized vs. nonstandardized bus fleets. The scope of this research is limited to 35/40 foot transit coaches, although the principles of the methodology may be applicable to other types of vehicle fleets.

To meet this objective, the following tasks shall be accomplished:

Task 1. Identify the cost factors associated with operating standardized vs. nonstandardized fleets, such as: (a) parts inventories and storage capacity; (b) required maintenance procedures; (c) personnel and training (maintenance and operations); (d) facilities for servicing, operations, and maintenance; and (e) special tools and equipment. Develop a preliminary version of the methodology to be prepared in Task 3.

Task 2. Analyze the cost factors selected in Task 1 to determine the types of data that can be, or are being, collected and quantified by transit agencies to compare the effects of operating standardized vs. nonstandardized fleets. (This task shall include surveying transit agencies for the purpose of identifying the types of data available and the factors considered most important in fleet management and procurement.)

Task 3. Develop a methodology, easily usable by transit agencies, for estimating the costs and benefits associated with standardized vs. nonstandardized bus fleets.

Project 35-1 continued

Task 4. Verify, and refine as needed, the methodology developed in Task 3 using data collected from a representative sample of transit agencies.

Task 5. Prepare a final report documenting the results of this project, including a handbook which transit systems can use to apply the methodology in local bus procurements or subfleet management.

STATUS OF RESEARCH: The research is just underway.

AMENDMENT(S) THIS REPORTING PERIOD: None

PROBABILITY OF SUCCESS: Too early to assess

REPORT(S) AVAILABILITY: None

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR(S): Richard W. Drake
Fleet Maintenance Consultants, Inc.
1880 Dairy Ashford
Suite 109
Houston, TX 77077
713/496-7717

RESPONSIBLE NCTRP STAFF ENGINEER: Dan A. Rosen - 202/334-3231

AREA THIRTY-SIX: ALTERNATIVE ANALYSIS

Project: 36-1(2), FY '84
Title: Assessment of Current Planning Practice for Major Transit Investments
Research Agency: Sydec, Inc.
Principal Investigators: Joseph R. Stowers
Effective Date: February 2, 1986
Completion Date: October 31, 1986
Revised Completion Date: June 30, 1987

AGENCY PERFORMANCE

1. Is the project on schedule? Yes Percent project complete: 100
 2. Is the research in keeping with the approved research plan? Yes
 3. Subcontract Amount: \$30,000
 4. Estimated Expenditures to 12/31/88: \$30,000
 5. Are the expenditures in keeping with the project progress? Yes

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Over the past 10 years, the Urban Mass Transportation Administration has developed and applied a structured process for planning of major transit projects proposed for Federal funding assistance. The process is used by both local and Federal officials to make a series of decisions on the location, nature, and design of major new transit facilities.

Ideally, the technical work conducted in each phase of the process yields the information necessary to permit informed judgments at each decision point. However, integration of the technical work into decision-making has proven to be challenging. While the basic premises and structure of the process have remained unchanged, it has evolved as UMTA has made revisions in an effort to both streamline the technical work and clarify the decision points. Furthermore, the accumulated experience in the various technical fields has improved the quality and efficiency of many aspects of the analysis.

In an effort to examine the degree to which the technical work actually contributes to informed decision-making, NCTRP Report 4, "Decision-Making for Major Urban Transit Investments," examined a series of case studies that included projects developed within and outside of UMTA's early process. The report examined the extensiveness of study requirements, the role of technical information in decision-making at the local level, and the management and costs of studies in various phases of the process. While the report was generally supportive of the requirements, it also provided a series of recommendations to improve the process and the relevance of the information produced and to promote more efficient and timely analysis.

Because of the focus on case studies in NCTRP Report 4, its results and recommendations reflect UMTA's requirements as they were several years ago. Meanwhile, the process has continued to evolve as set forth in more recent references:

1. May 18, 1984, Federal Register policy statement.
2. "Procedural Guidelines for Alternatives Analysis," January 1984.
3. "Sample Outline for DEISs Produced in Alternatives Analysis," January 1984
4. "Technical Guidelines for Alternatives Analysis," January 1984.

Project 36-1(2) continued

Taken together, these documents reflect a matured technical process that strives to embrace "best practice" in all aspects of the analysis. The documents establish, for the first time, a clear benchmark with which to examine UMTA's recommendations on the process, the scope of the technical work, and the structure of the reports. They provide an opportunity to evaluate what has become standard planning practice in the field, to examine its consistency with the recommendations in NCTRP Report 4, and to recommend any further improvements that may be needed.

The general objective of this research is to evaluate the state of the art of technical work undertaken throughout the planning process for major urban transit investments with emphasis on the alternative analysis phase. The evaluation should lead to recommended improvements in UMTA's alternatives analysis guidelines (specifically the technical guidelines and sample DEIS outline for DEIS) that will allow them to stand for the coming years without major modification.

The following tasks are anticipated:

Task 1. Participation in a two-day project panel workshop conducted to critique the UMTA alternatives analysis guidelines. The findings of the workshop will lead to the development of a panel consensus on potential improvements to the guidelines that could be expected to result in more appropriate levels of technical work by transit agencies.

Task 2. Amplify the working plan to accomplish Tasks 3 through 5. Prepare draft survey of transit agencies and others responsible for major transit studies.

NOTE: One month should be allowed for NCTRP review and comment on the amplified working plan. Tasks 3 and 4 should proceed concurrently after UMTA completes any revisions to the guidelines based on the panel workshop.

Task 3. Evaluate proposed improvements to guidelines.

Task 4. Survey appropriate transit agencies and other responsible officials to document success or probable success of potential improvements.

Task 5. Develop recommendations to UMTA on changes to guidelines for technical work and to transit and other local agencies that will enable them to program appropriate technical work levels and otherwise improve quality of alternatives analysis studies.

STATUS OF RESEARCH

Research is completed. See report availability below.

AMENDMENT(S) THIS REPORTING PERIOD: None

PROBABILITY OF SUCCESS: The objective of the project was accomplished.

REPORT(S) AVAILABILITY: Final report, "Assessment of Current Planning Practice for Major Urban Transit Investments," is available on a loan basis from the Program Director, NCTRP. A decision on publication in the regular NCTRP report series is pending.

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Mr. Joseph R. Stowers
Sydec, Inc.
1601 Washington Plaza
Reston, VA 22090
703/435-7075

RESPONSIBLE NCTRP STAFF ENGINEER: Dan A. Rosen - 202/334-3231

AREA FORTY: IMPACT ANALYSIS

Project: 40-2A, FY '85
Title: Estimating Incremental Ridership Impact from Bus Route Service Changes

Research Agency: Ecosometrics, Inc.
Principal Investigator: Armando M. Lago

Effective Date: November 15, 1988
Completion Date: May 15, 1990

AGENCY PERFORMANCE

1. Is the project on schedule? Yes Percent project complete: 2
2. Is the research in keeping with the approved research plan? Yes
3. Subcontract Amount: \$150,000
4. Estimated Expenditures to 12/31/88 : \$1,700
5. Are the expenditures in keeping with the project progress? Yes

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Research under NCTRP Project 40-2, "Estimating Incremental Costs of Bus Route Service Changes" has recently produced three manual procedures and one computer model for estimating the incremental costs of proposed bus transit service changes. Transit agencies also need to predict the changes in ridership and the impact on revenues resulting from service changes. Reliable estimates of cost and revenue are very important in transit system performance evaluation.

Various techniques have been developed and used by transit agencies to forecast the incremental ridership changes that stem from either reductions or increases in bus service. Thus far, there is some doubt about the reliability, accuracy, and applicability of these techniques, especially with respect to bus route (as opposed to system) changes. As a consequence, there is a need to review and document existing techniques or develop new techniques.

The objective of this research is to identify or develop simple, reliable procedures that permit transit agencies to forecast the incremental ridership changes resulting from various bus route service changes in a variety of operating environments (e.g., those of differing density, system size, employment concentrations, and service patterns). In a broad context, these procedures should provide a means of addressing the question: If a specific service on a route should be changed, what incremental changes in ridership could be expected? More specifically, how will ridership levels change at intervals of 3 months, 6 months, 9 months, and one year after implementation of the change?

In particular, the procedures should identify the incremental ridership impact of the following kinds of route service changes: extensions, consolidations (alignment change), deletions or cutbacks, frequency (headway adjustments), fares (route level only), period of operation, and mode of operation (local, limited, express).

It is not intended that these procedures be responsive to long-range or system-wide conditions such as changes to the following: demographics (population, employment, etc.), land use, new routes to areas without transit service, system-wide fare levels, highway networks, automobile operating costs (including parking), and transit system network.

The criteria for evaluating the ridership forecasting procedures are:

1. Simplicity. Procedures should be formulated so that they can be readily used by transit agency planning staff.
2. Realistic Data Needs. Data should be consistent, to the extent possible, with the types of information commonly collected by or available to transit operators.
3. Broad Applicability. The methods should be applicable to various system sizes and operating environments.

Project 40-2A continued

4. Credibility. The resulting predictions should be easily explainable and justifiable to decision-makers.

5. Accuracy. The procedures should produce a reasonable level of accuracy for the specific service decisions that must be made.

The work undertaken should build upon and extend previous ridership analysis studies and use state-of-the-art knowledge of travel behavior. Proposers may suggest modifications or revisions to the research approach, as appropriate.

It is expected that the research will include the following tasks:

Task 1. Review Literature and Survey Transit Agencies

The contractor will review and assess existing literature in the subject area including:

1. "Route-Level Demand Models: A Review, "Report No. UMTA-DOT-I-82-6, January 1982.
2. "Estimating Incremental Costs of Bus Route Service Changes," final report on NCTRP Project 40-2, June 1987.

The contractor will interview key individuals in transit agencies that use methods of route-level ridership forecasting that show promise for adaptation to other agencies. These interviews should ascertain: (1) methodology for forecasting ridership, (2) applicability of forecasting methods to types of service changes, (3) degree to which forecasts are actually realized after the service changes are implemented, and (4) amount of satisfaction the agency has with the procedure(s).

From these sources and other relevant experiences, the contractor will identify candidate ridership forecasting procedures that appear to meet the objectives and criteria established above.

Task 2. Interim Report No. 1

The contractor will prepare an interim report briefly describing, evaluating, and recommending the ridership forecasting procedures that appear most promising for further development and testing.

Task 3. Develop Ridership Forecasting Procedures

Develop promising procedures to predict the effects of various service changes on ridership, and refine them as appropriate. Based upon the evaluation criteria, the contractor may decide to either modify existing procedures or develop new methods.

In developing these procedures the contractor can assume a transit operator has the following kinds of data available at the route level: scheduling data (vehicle-miles, vehicle-hours, and frequency of service), passenger boardings by time of day, passenger load checks, ridership by fare type, and population and employment data by census tract (adjacent to the route).

The procedures developed should not rely on system-wide trip tables, coded transit networks, or coded highway networks. They may require use of personal computer hardware or software which is commonly available. If the contractor identifies procedures requiring other data, which could be obtained with a moderate amount of effort (such as origin-destination data by route), these may be considered in parallel with the less data-intensive procedures. For each procedure, there should be a clear statement of the types of service changes for which the techniques apply. Also, the data required, and any cautions or qualifiers that must be observed, should be noted.

Task 4. Prepare Testing Plan

Prepare a testing plan outlining the specific service changes and procedures that will be tested. The plan will provide for testing of service changes for which ridership and service level data (before and after the

Project 40-2A continued

change) are available or will be available. The responsibilities of the contractor and of the agencies for the site-specific application of procedures shall be outlined in the testing plan. Issues such as the need for special data collection, data analysis, and procedures calibration shall be addressed. The testing plan should include definition of procedures to control for effects unrelated to the service change implemented.

Task 5. Select Transit Agencies for Testing

It is anticipated that the proposed procedures will be tested in at least two transit agencies -- a large agency (more than 400 buses) and a medium-sized agency (100 to 400 buses). First consideration should be given to transit agencies represented on the NCTRP project panel. These are: Chicago Transit Authority, Southern California RTD, Houston Metro, and Tidewater Transportation District. The tests can be based on either historic data or planned service changes.

Task 6. Interim Report No. 2

The contractor shall prepare an interim report summarizing the ridership forecasting procedures to be tested and the testing plan. The NCTRP Project Panel will review and approve this plan prior to proceeding to Task 7.

Task 7. Execute the Testing Plan

The contractor shall conduct the test in cooperation with the transit agencies selected. The ridership-forecasting procedures developed in Task 3 will be applied to the service changes. The forecasts shall then be compared with actual ridership changes and with forecasts made by the transit agency. Significant differences between actual ridership changes and forecasts shall be explained. Based on the testing results, the contractor shall make appropriate refinements to the forecasting procedures.

Task 8. Prepare Final Report

The final report should document all research findings and the results of the procedures application. A user's guideline for application of the methods shall also be included.

STATUS OF RESEARCH: The research is just underway.

AMENDMENT(S) THIS REPORTING PERIOD: None

PROBABILITY OF SUCCESS: Too early to assess.

REPORT(S) AVAILABILITY: None

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR(S): Armando M. Lago
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301/652-2414

RESPONSIBLE NCTRP STAFF ENGINEER: Dan A. Rosen - 202/334-3231

ARE FORTY-EIGHT: SPECIFICATIONS, PROCEDURES, AND PRACTICES

Project: 48-1
Title: Corrosion Attributed to DC Powered Transit Systems
Research Agency: IIT Research Institute
Principal Investigator: J. J. English
Effective Date: September 1, 1985
Completion Date: December 1, 1986
Revised Completion Date: March 31, 1987

AGENCY PERFORMANCE

1. Is the project on schedule? Yes Percent project complete: 100
2. Is the research in keeping with the approved research plan? Yes
3. Subcontract Amount: \$197,309
4. Estimated Expenditures to 12/31/88: \$200,000
5. Are the expenditures in keeping with the project progress? Yes

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Structural damage to transit system properties and neighboring underground facilities due to corrosion caused by DC stray currents is a significant, persistent problem. Existing procedures and materials for prevention or mitigation are not sufficiently effective. The transit industry needs authoritative work that summarizes existing knowledge of damage caused by DC stray currents. Furthermore, there is a need to demonstrate the enormity of the problem and to design a research program that can provide cost-effective prevention and mitigation procedures.

The primary objectives of this research are to document and call attention to the severity of the corrosion problem caused by DC stray currents in terms of its economic, public safety, institutional and liability dimensions; to develop practical recommendations to transit agencies based on today's knowledge; and to design a research program to provide cost-effective solutions. Emphasis should be given to quantifying the dimensions to develop credibility. Furthermore, the research should stimulate coordination between key institutions involved in the DC stray current corrosion problem.

The following tasks are suggested:

Task 1. Review, together with significant unpublished reports in rail transit agencies, published literature from both North America and abroad. Such a review should include literature concerned with stray current corrosion problems stemming back to the turn of the century for DC powered rail transit systems. Significant issues with respect to economics, public safety, institutions, and liability should be identified and priorities developed. From the review, elements of effective practice in such areas as track and structure construction, power system configuration, negative return and ground, and corrective methods to reduce stray current magnitudes should be identified and evaluated. Prepare a report synthesizing this information for use by transit agencies.

Task 2. Conduct an indepth study of four transit agencies, and neighboring underground facilities, to document the severity of the problem in terms of economics, public safety, involved institutions, and liability. Furthermore, the study should identify agency practices to prevent or mitigate the problems. Consideration should be given to Boston, Chicago, Washington, and Toronto to provide a range of age and type of rail systems.

Task 3. Integrate the results of Task 2 into the report developed in Task 1.

Task 4. Develop a plan and conduct a workshop to serve the following purposes:

- a. Promulgation and review of the report.
- b. Development of practical recommendations to transit agencies.

Project 48-1 continued

- c. Development of a research action plan that reflects problems faced by neighboring institutions (such as utilities and agencies owning underground structures) affected by stray currents. Identify means and stimulate joint institutional support for such research. The plan should identify research projects and provide estimates of times and costs.

Task 5. Prepare reports to serve the following purposes:

- a. To call to the attention of transit and business executives, governmental officials, and the media, the stray current corrosion problem.
- b. To present practical recommendations for improving transit industry practice for preventing and mitigating stray current corrosion.
- c. To provide an annotated bibliography defining areas of importance for important engineering references on the subject matter.
- d. To present the research action plan that identifies means for interagency coordination and institutional support together with the identification of research projects.

STATUS OF RESEARCH

All research is completed. See report availability below.

AMENDMENT(S) this reporting period: None

PROBABILITY OF SUCCESS: The objectives of the project were accomplished.

REPORT(S) AVAILABILITY: Available on a loan basis from the Director, Cooperative Research Programs; Final Report, NCHRP Project 48-1, Corrosion Brochure, Literature Review Report, Engineering Practices Report, Site Survey Report, Research Plan and Final Report. Results will be summarized in a future Research Results Digest. In addition, a paper, "Attitudes and Practices: DC Transit Systems and Stray Current Corrosion" has been published in Transportation Research Record No. 1162, 1988.

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR(S): Mr. J. J. English
Senior Engineer
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RESPONSIBLE NCTRP STAFF ENGINEER: Dan A. Rosen - 202/334-3231

AREA 60: SPECIAL PROJECTS

Project: 60-1, FY '80 and continuing
Title: Synthesis of Information Related to Transit Problems

Research Agency: Transportation Research Board
Principal Investigator: Thomas L. Copas

Effective Date: November 7, 1980
Completion Date: Continuing

Agency Performance

1. Is the project on schedule? * Percent project complete: *
2. Is the research in keeping with the approved research plan? Yes
3. Subcontract Amount: \$223,500** FY '85
4. Estimated Expenditures to 12/31/88: \$48,000
5. Are the expenditures in keeping with the project progress? Yes

*Project is carried out on a continuing basis with new topics being incorporated each year. See below for status of each topic.

**10/1/88 to 9/30/89

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Transit professionals are continually faced with problems on which much information already exists, either in documented form or in terms of undocumented experience and practice. Unfortunately, this information is often fragmented, scattered, and underevaluated. Often it is unknown to the person normally responsible for initiating changes related to the topic (changes in specifications, procedures, etc.). As a consequence, full information on what has been learned about a valuable experience may be overlooked, and due consideration may not be given to recommended practices for solving or alleviating the problem.

In this project, particular transit problems, or sets of closely related problems, are designated as topics for information synthesis. For each topic the project objectives are: (1) to locate and assemble documented information; (2) to learn what methods are practiced for solving or alleviating the problem; (3) to identify all ongoing research; (4) to learn what problems remain largely unsolved; and (5) to organize, evaluate, and document the useful information that is acquired.

STATUS OF RESEARCH

Thirteen synthesis reports have been published under this project (see Table II); and syntheses on the following topics are in preparation:

TOPIC TS-14. "Supervision Strategies for Improved Reliability of Bus Routes"
 Started: March 1, 1988 Percent complete: 25

Reliability of service is a critical determinant of bus transit ridership. This synthesis will review the literature for relevant research efforts, survey a sampling of different-sized agencies in North America, identify impediments to transit service reliability, and identify strategies for maintaining reliability of service. The first panel meeting was held on April 4, 1988. The consultant is collecting information for the synthesis.

Topic Consultant: Herbert S. Levinson; New Haven, Connecticut

Project 60-1 continued

TOPIC TS-15. "Collection and Application of Ridership Data on Rapid Transit Systems"

Started: March 1, 1988 Percent complete: 25

A few rapid transit systems have fare structures that can collect ridership entrance and exit information, whereas others can collect only on entrance. In practice, all systems assign staff on platforms to collect data. Most data acquisition techniques are labor intensive. The synthesis will gather information on all aspects of ridership data collection systems by surveying transit agencies as to types of data collected and the uses made of the data. The first panel meeting was held on April 13, 1988. The consultant is collecting information for the synthesis.

Topic Consultant: Richard H. Pratt; Garrett Park, Maryland

TOPIC TS-16. "Issues in the Shift from Regional to Local Provision of Bus Services"

Started: March 1, 1988 Percent complete: 25

There is an increasing trend for local governments to replace or supplement regionally provided bus service. The synthesis will analyze the cross-cutting issues to provide some insight as to the implications of these changes. The primary emphasis will be to describe the changes in terms of why they have happened, how they have turned out, and what has been learned. The first panel meeting was held on April 26, 1988. The consultant is collecting information for the synthesis.

Topic Consultant: Cy Ulberg; Institute for Public Policy & Management; Washington State Transportation Center; Seattle, Washington

AMENDMENT(S) THIS REPORTING PERIOD

None--Continuing Project

PROBABILITY OF SUCCESS: High

REPORT(S) AVAILABILITY: See Table III

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR(S): Mr. Thomas Copas
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RESPONSIBLE STAFF OFFICER: Crawford F. Jencks - 202/334-2379

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