

Standardized Procedures for Personal Travel Surveys

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Problem

Over the past 40 years, millions of dollars have been spent on collecting household or person based data for transportation planning. For most metropolitan areas, the largest routine expenditure item in planning budgets, averaging about \$400,000 in consultant services, is for conducting household or personal travel surveys. In spite of this huge expenditure, there are no agreed upon standards for assessing the quality of the end prod-

uct. This study was developed to address that problem.

Objectives

The objective of this NCHRP project is two-fold. The first goal of this project is to develop objective standards that would lead to an overall increase in the quality and reliability of transportation surveys performed at household and person levels, and would also improve the comparability between surveys. These standards will provide



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guidance on how to select cost effective survey methods, implement the survey, analyze the results, and report measures that assess the quality of the data.

Secondly, it will be necessary to identify the costs and tradeoffs of these standardized procedures and assessment measures resulting from this research. It will then be established whether specific procedures and assessment measures are worthwhile to introduce as standards.

Research Approach

The following tasks are identified for completion of the study:

Task 1: Literature Review

Review of literature on personal travel surveys as well as all relevant research and current procedures and practices of state DOTs and MPOs.

Task 2: Identification of procedures and assessment measures

Identify the procedures and assessment measures determined from Task 1 and categorize them into three groups based on their application throughout the planning industry.

Task 3: Interim Report

Document the work performed in Tasks 1 and 2.

Task 4: Prepare a summary of the interim report

Prepare a concise summary of the interim report that can be pub-

lished as an NCHRP Research Results Digest in order to provide early dissemination of the preliminary findings.

Task 5: Test selected procedures

Test those procedures and measures identified in Task 2 for development and testing in this project and to evaluate the effectiveness and applicability of the selected procedures and assessment measures.

Task 6: Final report

Prepare a final report to disseminate research findings and the recommended procedures and assessment measures.

Implementation Potential

This research project will produce a number of personal travel survey procedures and assessment measures that:

1) Can be standardized within the planning industry.

2) Will improve the quality, comparability, and accuracy of travel surveys.

3) Reduce cost.

By establishing consistent and objective standards, comparability of data from place to place and time to time will be enhanced.

The reliability of data will be increased, and doubts as to applicability of data will be removed.

The final report will describe these procedures and assessment measures in sufficient detail and language to allow practitioners to implement them directly from the final report materials. Where appropriate, either detailed calculation steps, descriptions of a procedure, or examples of application will be provided to assist practitioners in understanding how to apply these standardized procedures and measures to their specific surveys. Recommended training procedures and priorities that would encourage widespread adoption and use of the procedures and measures will also be included in the final report.

Plans also include placing the results on a web site, so that access can be provided to the results and to programming modules that would assist implementation of the appropriate procedures and assessment measures.