

Administrative Services

The support system for all that RIDOT does

The Administrative Services Division at RIDOT serves as a support system for most activities undertaken by the Department, from contract administration to providing education and training to support transportation-related construction industries.

Administrative Services' primary responsibilities involve the development and implementation of a comprehensive administrative support services program; ensuring the effective and efficient achievement of departmental policies, goals and objectives; ensuring that resources are utilized in conformance with State and Federal laws, rules and regulations and overseeing major departments under it, including Contract Administration, the Office of Business and Community Resources and the Office on Highway Safety.

Overall, Administrative Services has the responsibility for all RIDOT administrative, programming, coordination and liaison duties for external advancement and educational programs including the University of Rhode Island's Transportation Center. In keeping with those responsibilities, Administrative Services has participated in the award of more than \$1 billion in contracts since 2001.

Among its major ventures, Administrative Services is the liaison between RIDOT and the University of Rhode Island in regard to URI's Center for Transportation Studies and its Transportation Center. RIDOT was instrumental in assisting to secure a \$12 million grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation, which requires a one-to-one match to assist URI in developing, implementing and administering the program. The Administrative Services Division

Assistant Director is responsible for all program coordination with the Transportation Center.

The Transportation Center was established in 1999 to conduct multidisciplinary education, research, technology transfer and outreach for surface transportation systems and advanced transportation infrastructure. The mission and goals of the center is to advance U.S. technology and expertise in the many disciplines comprising transportation through the mechanisms of education, research and technology transfer. The Center, in partnership with RIDOT, has implemented an aggressive program at Feinstein High School. This program is groundbreaking in the development of a school curriculum that recognizes math and engineering in every area of study. Teachers have worked with the Center and RIDOT to learn the many opportunities of transportation related careers.

RIDOT has also secured the commitment of the Rhode Island Consulting Engineers (RICE) who has provided, through their membership, assistance to classroom teachers and internship opportunities within their firms. This year they are committed to adding scholarship opportunities to their contribu-

tions. Students have been exposed to the college campus and classroom, and also been afforded internship opportunities. This school year will see

the advancement of this program. For more information, visit www.uritic.uri.edu.

One of the most visible components of this partnership with URI is the annual Construction Career Day, now in its sixth year. On May 17 and 18, 2006, RIDOT, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the Center and members of the private



Pictured here at the National Transportation Week Breakfast at the Sheraton Hotel in Warwick are, from left, Dr. Richard Horn, former Executive Director of the URI Transportation Center, FHWA Division Administrator Lucy Garliauskas, RIDOT Assistant Director Phillip Kydd, NHTSA New England Regional Administrator Philip Weiser, and FHWA Administrator Richard Capka.

construction industry, partnered to host the event at the Mid-State Facility in Coventry. The event addresses two different areas of concern, the large number of at-risk high school students who have no college plans or career plans as they finish their high school education and the growing deficit of well-trained employees entering the construction field. Construction Career Day offers these students the opportunity to explore the many different career opportunities within transportation construction.

About 1,600 students attended the event and were given the opportunity to speak to members of the construction industry and experience hands-on exposure to construction equipment. For more information, visit www.uritic.uri.edu/ccd.

Administrative Services has participated in the award of more than \$1 billion in contracts

The success of Construction Career Day in Rhode Island served as the impetus for the Administrative Services to lead a charge for the establishment of a National Construction Career Day Center (NCCDC). The NCCDC has been established under the auspices of Administrative Services at the URITC and is beginning its second year of operation. For more information, visit www.uritc.org/nccdc.

Other programs URI and RIDOT are working on collaboratively include a partnership between the Transportation Center and the University of Puerto Rico at Mayaguez to begin offering students exchange experiences. Students are given the opportunity to work at the Center, and at RIDOT within its summer intern program. This year marked the third year of the program and the first visit of URI students to the campus at Mayaguez. In the coming year, Administrative Services intends to expand the program to include an exchange of faculty and DOT engineers.

Another outreach program is called the Local Technology Assistance Program (LTAP). RIDOT continues to support this important program which is aimed at Rhode Island public works employees and other transportation practitioners. LTAP training provides useful assistance in workforce development, best practices, and safety. The LTAP is located at the Transportation Center where services are managed and planned. In the past year, a dozen individuals have been trained and certified as flaggers through the LTAP program. Trainings are provided throughout the year for cities and towns as well.

The Administrative Services Division will oversee the continuation of the RIDOT/URI Collaborative Agreements. These agreements, beginning in December 2000, have established three transportation engineering faculty positions at the URI College of Engineering. Additionally, a senior transportation management faculty position, along with a faculty position in transportation and urban planning, has been established at the URI College of Business this year. This will further enhance a closer professional relationship with URI and assist in the professional linkage by expansion of the academic curriculum in concentrated areas of applied transportation research and the joint involvement in the RIDOT TRAC program.



Photos: Charles St. Martin
Above, a high school student tries his hand at a back hoe at Construction Career Days in May, 2006.
Below, a student practices welding by drawing his initials in a piece of steel.



Contract Administration

All contracts with RIDOT flow through this office

This section is responsible for all Contract Procurement at RIDOT, Computerized Highway Affirmative Action Management Program (CHAMP) and Quest/Electronic Bidding.

Within Contract Administration, the Office of Contracts & Specifications serves to establish formal business arrangements between RIDOT and suppliers of all major goods and services the Department purchases from the private sector. Procurement responsibilities fall into two contract categories, Construction projects that are selected through electronically-based bidding procedures and Professional Services contracts that are both engineering-oriented (such as Bridge, Highway and Traffic design related) and non-engineering related (such as media campaigns, computer services, highway safety initiatives, etc.). With Construction projects, the apparent low-bidder then undergoes a post-qualification process subject to both Departmental review and Federal acceptance, if required. Professional Services contracts are subject to qualification-based selection procedures in accordance with State and Federal laws and regulations. Final selection recommendations are then presented for both Departmental acceptance and State and Federal approvals before costs are negotiated and finalized for contract award.

Office of Contracts & Specifications oversees each step of the process, including coordination of on-line public notification of all transportation-related projects through the use of the Rhode Island Vendor Information Program (RIVIP), direct participation in a competitive selection process, estab-

lishment and execution of contractual documents, daily interaction with contractors, consultants and the general public as well as project coordination with the Department of Administration's Office of Purchases, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and other Federal or State agencies.

Occasionally, RIDOT needs to acquire specialized goods and services. These services can range from such disparate purposes including hiring professional management consultants and hiring specialized contractors to provide a broad range of services.

In fiscal year 2006, Contract Administration participated in the award of 84 construction projects worth \$312 million, including a number of

GARVEE projects. It also took many steps to streamline the process, including development and testing of a new web-based software for the development of engineer's estimates and to serve as the foundation for electronic bidding. Contract Administration successfully converted the advertising process for construction bids into an all-electronic format, making project documents available on disk at no charge to the public.

Contract Administration also led a team of RIDOT, FHWA and RIDOA Professionals in the review of State and Federal Procurement Practices and to recommend improvements. It also continued research efforts within RIDOT, FHWA, other states' DOTs and other states' online procurement systems to direct RIDOT toward the most efficient, effective participation in the Purchases' web-based Vendor Information Program, the RIVIP.

Among other activities in fiscal year 2006,

Contract Administration led the review and negotiations with the Rhode Island Consulting Engineers (RICE) group on the standard contract used on all design projects; continued expansion and advancement of web-supported procurement; execution of Master Price Agreement type procurements utilized for both bridge and steel inspection purposes; the continued expanded use of electronic data transfer to maximize paper reduction; and the integration of the new Construction Management System (CMS) into the existing Project Management Portal (PMP) and Financial Management System.

In the 2007 fiscal year, Contract Administration's goals include: Continued research, planning and implementation of electronic data transfer, disk- and web-based processes to most efficiently meet RIDOT procurement needs; planning and implementation of the new web-based software for Electronic Bidding, named Quest Web; and development and implementation of a Web-based software to streamline and integrate many reporting and compliance obligations.

In regard to CHAMP, the Office of Business and Community Resources and the Office of Contracts and Specifications uses the information from CHAMP to determine a contractor's compliance with 49 CFR Part 26 (a Federal law related to disadvantaged business enterprises). CHAMP has the capability to track Disadvantaged Business Enterprise participation, On the Job Training activity, workforce utilization and prevailing wage rates on RIDOT Federal Aid Projects. Contractors' information is submitted to RIDOT electronically, eliminating paper work. There are currently 110 contractors with Champ, 66 who have Champ CM (Prime Contractor Module) and 44 who have Champ SM (Subcontractor Module).

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Office of Business and Community Resources

Outreach for business, outreach for education

The Office of Business and Community Resources is all about making connections for business by providing them training while at the same time supporting the overall construction industry.

This section is responsible for the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program, Emerging Business Program and the On the Job Training Program. Many accomplishments were realized in 2006.

Business and Community Resources again successfully partnered with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the University of Rhode Island's Transportation Center to conduct the annual Transportation Summer Institute. The Institute takes place during July each year and includes two, one-week sessions for middle school students. It offers them exposure to transportation careers, often reaching students who are under unfamiliar with engineering and transportation issues.

Also working cooperatively with the Transportation Center, RIDOT operates the RIDOT Transportation Research Activity Center (TRAC) program. This is a national transportation and civil engineering outreach program, developed to stimulate the interests of middle and high school students, particularly minorities and women. The program has the participation of RIDOT transportation professionals, as well as the Rhode Island Consulting Engineers (RICE) and the Rhode Island Society of Professional Engineers (RISPE). Ten high school seniors from the Feinstein School were placed in internships this spring with RISPE firms.

In Summer 2006, RIDOT entered into an agreement with the Talent Development Program at

URI to assist with recruitment and delivery of the TRAC Program. Talent Development has had a presence in middle and high schools in urban areas.

Business and Community Resources does a great deal of outreach to those already in the job force, while also paying attention to minority-owned and small businesses. The Office monitors contractor compliance with disadvantaged business enterprise

underutilized DBEs to participate on RIDOT projects. This includes new areas of expertise within the DBE community such as fleet washing, hazardous waste, utility, specialized landscape items and catch basins.

DBE regulations recommend that DOT's utilize minority/women owned banks to assist in the development of DBE firms. While there are no minority/women owned banks in Rhode Island, the RIDOT has signed an agreement with the Minority Investment Development Corporation to administer the Emerging Business Program. This financing program has completed lines of credit for underutilized DBE contractors, provided financial counseling, credit repair, and financed equipment purchases.

This is accomplished by a comprehensive commercial loan vehicle placed within the underutilized DBE community through the MIDC. To date it has expended the first million dollars and looks to expend the second million dollars this fiscal year.

Lastly, Business and Community Resources in the past year hosted a DBE Networking session for prime contractors and underutilized DBEs that allowed face-to-face interaction in a social setting. The event was set-up like "speed dating," with firms scheduled to meet a particular firm for approximately eight minutes before moving on to the next prescheduled meeting. This continued until all firms had "dated" each other. All of RIDOT's prime contractors participated. A post event survey found that all in attendance felt it was a good idea and that this should be done yearly. Subcontracts were obtained as a result of this event.



Above, a RIDOT engineer discusses bridge designs at the annual Transportation Summer Institute at the URI Transportation Center.

[DBE] and On-the-Job Training regulations and goals. Currently approximately 31 individuals are participating in the On-the-Job program.

Within the next three years, RIDOT plans to emerge Rhode Island-based DBE firms into areas of work not currently performed by DBEs, based on the under-utilization of the protected classes defined in 49 CFR Part 26 (a Federal law related to disadvantaged business enterprises). This is part of the Emerging Business Program.

Business and Community Resources has expanded its approach to developing opportunities for

Office on Highway Safety

Working to keep people safe on the roads

The mission of the Office on Highway Safety is to reduce the number of fatalities and serious injuries on Rhode Island's roadways and to reduce the number of traffic crashes and the severity of their consequences. These efforts are supported by federal funding from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

Highway Safety and the Administrative Services Division as a whole supported changes in State legislation aimed at making roadways safer. Chief among them was a change that increased penalties for driving under the influence. Previously, a chemical test or breathalyzer refusal was only a civil offense while a first-offense driving under the influence (DUI) conviction was a misdemeanor. Under this new law, refusing to take a breath test for a first time remains a civil infraction, but the license suspension is doubled from six to 12 months. Refusing a second time or more within a five year period becomes a criminal misdemeanor offense and the fines, prison time and community service penalties are substantially increased.

Other legislation in the area of alcohol use included "social host" legislation which closed the loophole that made it virtually impossible for law enforcement to charge adults who provided alcohol to minors for consumption unless the actual purchase was documented. The new law expands the definition of procuring alcohol for minors to include permitting the consumption of alcohol by underage individuals in one's residence and any adult who knowingly allows minors to consume alcohol in his or her home will now be held criminally responsible.

Highway Safety continues to advocate for changes in State legislation to create a primary seat-belt law. Currently Rhode Island has a secondary



Photos: Chuck Aube

Above, police officers stand on the base lines at McCoy Stadium in Pawtucket for an event to raise awareness of drunk driving laws. Below, the team's mascot Paws watches the festivities.

law which only allows police officers to cite offenders if they have been pulled over for other reasons. The exception to this is a primary law that requires seatbelts or appropriate child restraints for all children under 18. Highway Safety was, however, pleased to see legislation passed in 2006 that banned the use of cell phones – even with a hands-free



device – for drivers under 18.

Major accomplishments in the past year included the hosting of two events aimed at curbing DUI. In April, Highway Safety and the Rhode Island Judiciary co-sponsored a judicial summit entitled “Putting the Brakes on DUI.” The full day event featured national speakers providing innovative programs and trends dealing with the judicial, prosecutorial and educational aspects of the issues surrounding DUI. The 400 attendees included representatives from all State, local, profit and non-profit organizations involved in efforts to reduce drunk driving on Rhode Island's roadways.

In August, Rhode Island hosted a kickoff event as part of the “You Drink and Drive, You Lose” national campaign against drunk driving. The event featured a press conference on the infield at McCoy Stadium in Pawtucket, home of the Pawsox, the AAA affiliate of the Boston Red Sox. Jeremy Kapstein, the Boston Red Sox Senior Baseball Advisor, Pawtucket Red Sox officials, State and local police and RIDOT officials attended in the hopes of raising the visibility of the enforcement campaign. Highway Safety also funds year-round sustained DUI and speed enforcement patrols.

In other efforts to reduce alcohol-related fatalities on Rhode Island's roadways, Highway Safety sponsored the MADD (Mothers Against Drunk Driving) Team Spirit program for 185 high school students and 25 adults at Bryant University. Activities included highway safety presentations, role playing, team building and hands-on exercises. In another project, Highway Safety, the Rhode Island Municipal Police Training Academy and the Rhode Island Police Chiefs Association hosted a Standard Field Sobriety Test (SFST) instructor recertification program and SFST refresher course in May at the Community College of Rhode Island. Rhode Island is one of the first states in the nation to offer this refresher training to members of its State and local law enforcement agencies.

As for promoting greater seatbelt usage, Highway Safety joined the Interscholastic League, AAA, the Rhode Island State Police and WBRU to sponsor the “Buckle Up Teens” contest. High school students from around the state were challenged to develop a 30-second radio and/or television commercial promoting safety belt use among teens. The winning commercials from Rogers High School in Newport and Burrillville High School were used to kick off Rhode Island's “Click It or Ticket” campaign in concert with the national mobilization of that program in May, 2006.

Highway Safety also has been invited to join a partnership with the Rhode Island Civil Rights Roundtable and the Rhode Island Police Chiefs Association to discuss community outreach, training, and racial profiling issues. The purpose of this coalition is to develop trust and collaboration among the agencies who work on civil rights issues in Rhode Island, to form and maintain a communications network among participating agencies and to formulate a consensus agenda of common public policy or legal issues to work on together.

Additionally in the area of law enforcement outreach, Highway Safety hosted an awards program in June to recognize police departments for outstanding law enforcement related to safety belt, speed and impaired driving enforcement programs. Also in June, the New England Police Chiefs



Photos: Chuck Aube

Above, one of the student teams who placed third in the Buckle Up Teens contest, in which teenagers designed radio and television commercials to promote seat belt usage.

Association, in cooperation with Roger Williams University's Criminal Justice Institute, chose Rhode Island as the site for the regional Executive Leadership program for law enforcement management officials.

This past year, the Traffic Records Coordinating Committee was revitalized to develop a Traffic Records plan to improve the accessibility, accountability, timeliness, accuracy and reliability of traffic data from all State agencies with traffic data requirements. The plan was submitted to NHTSA and received funding under the SAFETEA-LU legislation to begin implementing programs submitted from State and local agencies.

In the coming year, Highway Safety has aggressive programs to address other NHTSA priorities related to alcohol, occupant protection, racial profiling and motorcycle safety.