

**MDOT ORBP Peer Exchange**  
**Bridging the Gap: Implementing Research Results**  
**December 7-9, 2010**

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### Visiting Team Members

- Mark Morvant, Louisiana DOTD (Chair)
- Rhonda Brooks, Washington State DOT
- Joe Conway, FHWA, Washington, D.C.
- Bonnie Fields, Pennsylvania DOT
- Sue Sillick, Montana DOT
- Amy Schutzbach, Illinois DOT

### MDOT Strengths

ORBP has developed a comprehensive new process for implementing the results of research projects at MDOT. Participants at this peer exchange noted the following key strengths of the new plan:

- The process is well documented in ORBP's Research and Implementation Manual and is designed to communicate, facilitate, and guide the research and implementation stakeholders through the process of developing projects that address department priorities.
- The research program advances MDOT's strategic initiatives and responds to agency needs by including internal and external stakeholders.
- ORBP strives to provide applied research that is implementable. Involvement and commitment by the Research Executive Committee (REC) throughout the research and implementation process make this possible.
- The REC's identification and prioritization of the research and implementation program provides direction and support throughout the agency.
- ORBP's plan provides flexibility to quickly move forward with small-scale efforts and has a defined process to advance implementation of large-scale projects.
- Implementation is considered at the beginning of the research process and throughout the project lifecycle.
- An implementation plan is developed for each project that outlines the budget, participants in the process, timeline, and expected outcomes. This document will serve as a basis for performance measures reporting.
- Roles and responsibilities for the implementation coordinator, project manager, and research manager are designated at the beginning of the research project for effective oversight and management of implementation activities.
- Tools are being developed to support the new process, including implementation forms, plans, and guidelines.

### Keys to Success Moving Forward

- Set aside funding for optimizing success of implementation projects.
- Active REC support is necessary to encourage stakeholder participation on Research Advisory Panels, ensuring effective implementation of results.
- Encourage MDOT managers to include research and implementation efforts in employee performance evaluations and priorities.
- Add a new ORBP position dedicated to leading implementation and managing research.
- ORBP research managers will provide critical administrative support, ongoing communication, and coordination for all stakeholders involved in research and implementation.
- Build research and implementation performance measures around the priorities of MDOT executives.
- Provide funding for the development and dissemination of marketing materials to communicate program services, effectiveness, and impacts.
- Incorporate implementation project selection and prioritization into the research process to reduce the amount of additional work required of the REC and Research Advisory Panels.
- Be mindful of the impacts of implementation on all parts of MDOT and external stakeholders.
- ORBP research managers will become involved in everyday MDOT business by sitting on committees, attending meetings, and getting to know staff and their issues and needs.
- Include projects to identify the long-term impacts and benefits of implementation.
- Look for implementation funding sources elsewhere within MDOT or externally, such as FHWA.
- Include implementation activities, products, and results in project tracking databases.