TRC® TRACKS

Summer 2002

Volume II, Issue 42

TRC INC. HOSTS INNOVATION FORUM

Governor of the state of Ohio, Bob Taft

On June 19, 2002, The Ohio State University's Fawcett Center in Columbus, Ohio was the stage for the 2002 Automotive News PACE Awards Innovation Forum hosted by Transportation Research Center Inc. Nine presenters spoke on the subject of innovation and its relevance in today's automotive Industry.

Ohio's Governor Bob Taft and The Ohio State University's President William E. (Brit) Kirwan highlighted the days events by focusing on Ohio's strength in the auto industry and how the state and the university are promoting automotive growth within its borders.

Three PACE Award winners: Dwight Morgan, President of The POM Group; Stephanie Brown, Lead Project Engineer of The Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company; and Jeffrey Owens, President of Delphi Corporation, also took the stage. They discussed how innovation within their companies is driving them to higher levels of profitability through new products and innovative ways of doing business.

The Innovation Forum also served as the kick-off for next year's *Automotive News* PACE Awards as PACE Judge Scott Whitlock gave examples of how past winners have innovated their companies, and Mr. Whitlock also explained the judging process. Dr. Giorgio Rizzoni of The Ohio State University's Center for Automotive Research – Intelligent Transportation gave a speech on "How to Use the University's Resources to Foster Innovation." Rudy Ruggles of Cap Gemini presented "International Examples of Innovation." Hosts were PACE Awards affiliates Peter Brown of *Automotive News*, Mike Wujiciak of Cap Gemini, and Rick Gildow of Transportation Research Center Inc.

The PACE Awards program is sponsored by Cap Gemini Ernst & Young, *Automotive News*, and Transportation Research Center Inc. It honors automotive suppliers who have embraced innovation or adapted and reinvented themselves to keep abreast of the constantly rising performance bar of the OEM/Customer. This prestigious program sets the standard for innovation and excellence and has become a significant industry credential.

If your company is looking to enter the PACE awards, or you would like to obtain more information about them, a complete overview is available at www.uscgey.com/PACE or an application can be downloaded at www.automotivenews.com.

A special thanks goes out to Honda of America Manufacturing, Inc. and The Ohio State University and its Center for Automotive Research – Intelligent Transportation for helping to make this event possible. Photos of the events and copies of the presentations are available at www.trcpg.com.

WHO'S GOING TO WIN – YOU OR THE LIGHT POLE?

Has it ever happened to you - you know the heart-stopping feeling when your vehicle begins to leave the roadway? We realize that's hardly the time to casually wonder if the light pole you are about to strike will budge or bend or if *you'll* be moved or bent! Well, you can relax just a little and take comfort in the fact that there are safety regulations these highway appurtenances must meet. To help prove their safety, manufacturers and government agencies have relied on TRC Inc.'s testing services to help them understand the dynamic behavior of these products.

The Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) policies require that all roadside appurtenances such as traffic barriers, barrier terminals, crash cushions, guardrails, signposts, bridge railings, portable concrete barriers, truck-mounted attenuators, and work zone hardware used on the National Highway Systems meet safety performance criteria. FHWA developed National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP) Report 350, a comprehensive procedure for crash testing of both permanent and temporary highway safety features and for evaluating criteria used to assess the test results.

Consistent with the Report 350 Guidelines, recent tests for a portable concrete barrier (PCB) focused on the design of the connection joint between barrier segments to limit overall deflection of the barrier and to limit the relative lateral deflection between barrier segments to prevent the impacting vehicle from colliding into the exposed blunt end of the next adjacent section. TRC's Impact Laboratory Multi-Vehicle Crash Pad test speed capability far exceeds the 100 kph pick-up truck speed required in NCHRP 350. For research programs, TRC Inc. can set-up tests with two vehicles moving at different speeds and angles into a variety of earth-mounted and concrete-set obstructions. High-speed motion picture and video photography completes the crash tests.

The FHWA has conducted the research to develop Finite Element Analysis (FEA) models which helps manufacturers and vendors of roadside safety equipment reduce the overall development time for new PCB and other roadside safety hardware designs. Battelle Memorial Institute of nearby Columbus, Ohio, has recently been named one of the five (5) independent FHWA-designated Centers of Excellence for Finite Element Crash Analysis. Battelle has identified TRC Inc. as its preferred laboratory for any testing needed to support their analyses. TRC Inc.'s experience conducting numerous NCHRP 350 tests combined with Battelle's analysis capability, unique expertise and evaluation tools provide roadside safety manufacturers and state highway agencies a new test resource to help them evaluate new products.

NEED A HOT SOAK? WANT PROOF OF DRIVER PERFORMANCE? CURIOUS ABOUT THE WEATHER HERE? YOUR OPINIONS, PLEASE!

TRC Inc.'s New Humidity Chamber Is Available.
A new humidity chamber capable of temperatures up to 120 degrees and 99% humidity was recently installed. The chamber holds three passenger cars or one class 8 truck. The new chamber will complement TRC's already extensive corrosion testing facilities that include: Salt Bath, 302 meter-long high and low Salt Spray Road, Stone Chipping Facility, Mud Pit, Grit Trough, and level and hilly Gravel Roads for both long and short term durability and corrosion testing.

New Customized Data Acquisition System Improves Durability Testing.
TRC Inc. has also developed a Testing Parameter Compliance System (TPCS) for better analysis and tracking of vehicle cycles driven. The TPCS is a Somat-based data acquisition system that can help assure proper correlation of test programs to our customers' driving cycles. Currently the TPCS system can support accelerometers, engine speed sensors, wheel speed sensors, engine and transmission temperatures, and other customer-specified measurements on the test vehicle or its components. The data is time-stamped and downloaded at the end of every shift to be analyzed by TRC Inc. and sent to the customer for review.

Real-Time TRC Weather Information Is Available on Our Web Site.
In response to your daily requests for weather conditions, forecasts and history, we have added an online weather page to our website. You can now access full real-time weather information from TRC's own weather station. It's so easy – just go to our website, www.trcpg.com and click on the weather information hyperlink or the anemometer, and it will take you to our current weather conditions. As an added option, you may also download a full ten-year history. In addition, TRC has a portable weather station that can be positioned anywhere on our facilities to give you exact measurements at that desired location.

Customer Surveys Are Available On Our Website
They can be completed using an interactive online form, or they can be downloaded in Adobe PDF format, completed and faxed or mailed to our customer relations staff. Please take the time during or at the completion of your next project to tell us your opinions. The information provided helps us more clearly understand your expectations and continuously improve our services to you.

TRACKS is a publication of Transportation Research Center Incorporated. For more information, contact Teri Elliot (ext. 354) or Jeff Sprague (ext. 349), Marketing, Transportation Research Center Inc., East Liberty, Ohio 43319-0367; phone (937) 666-2011; fax (937) 666-5066; www.trcpg.com.