



February 29, 2008

MEMORANDUM

TO: DISTRIBUTION

FROM: Crawford F. Jencks
Manager, NCFRP

SUBJECT: Request for FY2009 Research Problem Statements
National Cooperative Freight Research Program (NCFRP)

The National Cooperative Freight Research Program (NCFRP) is an applied, contract research program with the objective of developing information that will be used to improve the efficiency, reliability, safety, and security of the nation's freight transportation system. The NCFRP was authorized in federal legislation -- the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) -- that was enacted in August 2005. A Memorandum of Agreement has been executed between NCFRP's sponsor, the U.S. DOT's Research and Innovative Technology Administration (RITA), and NCFRP's manager, the Transportation Research Board (TRB) of the National Academies.

The NCFRP carries out applied research and other technical activities in a variety of freight system-related areas, including policy, planning, operations, economics, administration, environment, safety, and security. The program is governed by an NCFRP Oversight Committee, comprised primarily of freight-industry stakeholders.

The purpose of this announcement is to solicit problem statements identifying research needs for the FY 2009 program of the NCFRP; these submittals will help to form the basis for selection of NCFRP research projects by the Oversight Committee. The Oversight Committee has developed a strategic plan, which can be found on the NCFRP website < <http://www.trb.org/CRP/NCFRP/NCFRP.asp> >, that may help guide submitters in the interests of the Committee. The problems selected for FYs 2006-2008 can be found on the NCFRP website as well.

A problem-statement outline is enclosed. Research problem statement submittals should follow the outline and may be submitted by anyone at any time. However, to be considered for the FY 2009 program, we are asking that problems be submitted by **July 25, 2008**. Problem statements may be submitted by e-mail to ncfrp@nas.edu. If sent electronically, it is preferred that the problem statement be sent as an attachment to the e-mail message in Microsoft Word format. The problem statement may also be submitted in the text of an e-mail message. Please note that research problem statements need not be lengthy; 1-2 pages should be sufficient to describe the research topic in the requested format.

The NCFRP Oversight Committee is expected to meet in late fall to select the research problem statements for FY 2009. For research projects selected by the Oversight Committee, requests for proposals will be issued, and contractors will be selected through a competitive proposal process.

Thank you very much for your interest in the NCFRP. Your willingness to participate in the identification of relevant freight research topics is a key element of a successful, industry-driven NCFRP. Should you have any questions or need additional information, please contact me at 202/334-3224 or cjencks@nas.edu.

**OUTLINE FOR NATIONAL COOPERATIVE FREIGHT RESEARCH
PROGRAM PROBLEM STATEMENTS**

I. PROBLEM TITLE

The title should be no more than 10 words.

II. RESEARCH PROBLEM STATEMENT

In no more than three paragraphs, provide a general description of the problem requiring research.

III. OBJECTIVE

Include a clear, concise statement of the objectives (anticipated products) that are expected to be met by this research.

IV. RESEARCH PROPOSED

Provide a statement of the specific research proposed, how it relates to the research problem statement in Section II, and, if possible, describe the research approach and the tasks envisioned.

V. ESTIMATE OF THE PROBLEM FUNDING AND RESEARCH PERIOD

Recommended Funding: Include an estimate of the funds necessary to accomplish the objective stated in Section III. As a general guideline, the current cost for research averages approximately \$150,000-\$250,000 per professional staff-year. NCFRP projects will typically be in the \$300,000-\$500,000 range. A detailed budget is not needed in this problem statement.

Research Period: Provide an estimate of the period of time needed to complete the research, including 3 months for review and revision of a draft final report.

VI. URGENCY AND PAYOFF POTENTIAL

Include a statement on the importance of this particular research. Identify and, if possible, quantify the potential payoff from the achievement of the project objective. Any institutional, political, or socio-economic barriers to implementation of the anticipated research products should also be identified.

VII. RELATED RESEARCH

If known, provide information on other research—completed, in progress, or pending—that is closely related to the proposed problem.

VIII. PERSON(S) DEVELOPING THE PROBLEM

Provide the specifics (i.e., name, title, address, telephone, and fax numbers) for the person(s) who developed the problem.

IX. PROCESS USED TO DEVELOP PROBLEM STATEMENT

State whether this problem statement is the product of an individual, a formal committee, or another entity.

X. DATE AND SUBMITTED BY

Provide the specifics for the person(s) who submitted the problem and the date of submission.

Submit to:

Email: ncfrp@nas.edu
or
Crawford F. Jencks, Deputy Director
Cooperative Research Programs
Transportation Research Board
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Washington, D.C. 20001
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