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Events & dates to remember

Selected recent activities

Welcome to the first new look FEHRL News. At the recent FEHRL Road Research Meeting (FeRRM) we launched the new FEHRL logo. As announced on the official brochure, the message we intend to convey is "new look, new vision, new perspective", which flows from the achievements and results of 15 years of intensive work.

With participants from 24 countries, FeRRM was held at the facilities of the Belgian Road Research Centre in June.

FeRRM was not just one of the many events to showcase projects, neither was it merely a conference that brought together different actors. FeRRM provided a platform to facilitate the exchange of knowledge and expertise, to promote links and synergies and to offer the researchers and those looking for the solutions from research the opportunity to meet and discuss in support of this concept.

The FeRRM event was also an opportunity to discuss, with a large audience, the achievements of FEHRL as well as FEHRL's vision of its future. We took a good look at our past accomplishments and as a result have worked towards developing a common vision of where the road sector would like to be in the near future. FEHRL intends to establish partnerships with a wide range of stakeholders and to go beyond the current formula of research and give greater emphasis to implementation.

A number of associated meetings were hosted within FeRRM's umbrella.

In this edition of FEHRL News, besides reporting on FeRRM, we bring you updates from FEHRL institutes, and recently appointed new research coordinators. A special welcome also goes out to the recently appointed president of FEHRL, Jorgen Christensen, Director General of DRI.

Last but not least, you will also find an update on new FEHRL projects and various initiatives.

We hope you will find this edition useful and we remind our readers that the next issue of FEHRL News will be published in December 2004.

The CD-Rom of the proceedings of FeRRM, priced at 50€, can be requested to sara@fehrl.org. It will be delivered by the FEHRL Secretariat upon request and reception of payment



FEHRL ROAD RESEARCH MEETING

Plenary "Roads for the Future" Session

The main day of the meeting was Tuesday, 15th June, when the plenary "Roads for the future" session was held. The developments of FEHRL in the last 15 years were introduced. On this occasion the need to develop a common vision in order to develop a more strategic approach to research was pointed out. In this perspective Implementation aspects are to be considered as well.

It was pointed out that a vision is a prerequisite for the development of a long-lasting road infrastructure. Last but not least, FEHRL recognises the key role of its staffs in shaping and sharing common goals and aspirations.

FeRRM, Plenary Session, 15th June 2004

A clear vision of where to go is also the critical factor of the cluster approach adopted by FEHRL to coordinate research activities through the Strategic European Road Research Programme (SERRP). This cluster supports the Commission's FP6 objectives of closer integration of research activities as well as FEHRL's aims of maximising the use of the most appropriate research and management staff from the institutes.

Finally the opportunity was taken to present in detail the FEHRL vision and considered in four broad themes: Environment, Energy and Resources; Safety & Security; Transport Mobility & infrastructure; Design and Production.

By looking at FEHRL projects in the context of themes, the intention is to start to build up a coherent set of projects within the SERRP programme.



FeRRM, Plenary Session, 15th June 2004



The reception and the barbecue held on 14th June was an opportunity to get together and network

Launch of NR2C project

FeRRM provided the opportunity for the official launch of NR2C (New Road Construction Concepts).

The objective of the NR2C project supported by the European Commission is two-fold: to develop new concepts for the roads of the future (2040) and to develop innovations to support and implement progressively the concepts (feasibility study, preliminary design, detailed design, test laboratory, test in situ).



Brigitte Mahut,
NR2C project manager

During the launch it was pointed out that although road construction has reached a higher degree of mechanisation and automation and better working conditions over the last 70 or so years, the basic concept remains unchanged. Current innovations regard restyling and redesigning but rethinking

(approaching the problem in different ways) is still sporadic. In this respect NR2C serves as a quest for conceptual and technical answers to the mobility demands of the future.

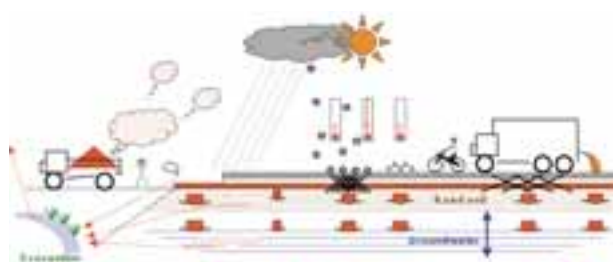
There is a clear need to develop a concept of the future for a smart investment policy, to stimulate integrated thinking processes and to deal with problems pro-actively instead of reactively. The rapid pace of developments and increasing demand of citizens are also to be taken into account.

These considerations will be the basis of further reflection that is instrumental for the elaboration of a specific vision that looks close at the needs for roads far into the future.

Key findings for SAMARIS

The presentation of SAMARIS (Sustainable and Advanced Materials for Road InfraStructure) in FeRRM raised many interested and valuable questions that emphasised the need to link with the European standardisation organisations and disseminate the results effectively in the new and coming EU member countries. It was evident that the audience was aware of the potential of the project's output for usage by other projects.

Following the public session the project met with its reference group of end users, which concentrated on questions regarding the dissemination of key results and the use of the SAMARIS site by the reference group members.



Interactions between alternative materials and the environment

ELLPAG's next steps

The European Long-Life Pavement Group (ELLPAG) has divided its work in three phases. These phases are devoted respectively to: fully flexible pavements, semi-rigid pavements and rigid pavements. The first phase has been accomplished and was presented at the FeRRM meeting in a dedicated workshop.

The group spent some time in reviewing the research needs and recommendations which have arisen from the first stage investigation. The methods of disseminating the outcome of phase 1 were examined, particularly in relation to CEDR (Conference of European Directors of Roads).

Further discussion was devoted to the next two phases that will be handled separately, starting with the issue of semi-rigid pavements. Some concern was given to the general definition of "Long Life" and its suitability of use for the type of structure being considered.

Further actions have been agreed, including the initiation of the third phase of the work which will cover rigid pavements.

Recommendations for ALT COST 347 follow-up

At the ALT COST 347 workshop emphasis was given to the importance of cooperation in Europe to ensure the deployment of results after the completion of the project at the end of 2004.



TRL's accelerated pavement test facility (PTF)

The need to develop a common code of good practice for the application of Accelerated Load Testing (ALT) was also stressed. The common code, which has the form of a series of specific recommendations, is aimed at harmonising the way ALT activities are currently conducted in Europe. The long-term benefits of the harmonisation are to optimise the use of the European ALT facilities including sharing of facilities and results among the interested parties for the benefit of the European road network and its users.

The workshop ended with a discussion about the opportunities for the European road sector to make the best possible use of ALT in planning and construction of roads in the future.

ORGANISATIONAL UPDATE

New President of FEHRL

Jørgen Christensen, Director of the Danish Road Institute, is the new President of FEHRL. The first time the FEHRL president has been appointed for a 3 year period.

Until 1992 Jørgen was Research Director for the Danish Council of Road Safety Research. From 1966 to 1978 he held various research positions in the Danish Defence Research Establishment.

He is the Danish delegate in the Steering Committee for OECD's and ECMT's Joint Transport Research Centre (JTRC). He has also been representing the Danish Road Directorate in CEDR's Subgroup on Research since 2001.



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New Research Coordinators in FEHRL

Since 1st January 2004, Marianne Grauers has been director of research at the VTI Highway Engineering Unit, and is a member of the management group of the Institute. The unit has a staff of about fifteen people, and research comprises models for analytical design and design with respect to bearing capacity, degradation, wear etc..

A considerable proportion of the research is concerned with materials and material properties, and the unit has good access to equipment and laboratories for measurement and testing, both at full scale and in the laboratory environment.

Marianne Grauers was previously employed with the contractor NCC where she held a number of posts and worked as specialist, project manager and head of department in different parts of the group over the past nine years.



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Kjersti Kvalheim Dunham, Head of Materials division in the Norwegian Public Roads Administration (NPRA), has been recently appointed Research Coordinator for FEHRL, taking over her colleague, Ian Markey, who has been elected to the FEHRL Executive Committee (FEC). Until 2002 Kjersti worked as head of Concrete division and she moved to the Material division in 2003.



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Ann Vanelstraete is the new FEHRL Research Coordinator at the Belgian Road Research Centre. Ann began to work at BRRC in 1990 as researcher on bituminous mixes and binders; more in particular in the field of performance related tests, reflective cracking and mix design. Since 2002 she is head of the Division "Asphalt Pavements, Bituminous Applications and Chemistry". She is also a member of the RILEM - committee TC PEB and is also member of the CEN-committee (CEN-TC227 WG1). Ann has taken over Dirk Gorle, the previous research coordinator, who retired from BRRC in June. We would like to express our gratitude for the effective work he carried out for FEHRL.



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FEHRL is governed by a Board from whom a President and vice-President are elected to serve for three years. The Board meets twice per year to conduct the business of FEHRL, and to ensure that the objectives are being vigorously pursued.

The day-to-day business of FEHRL is carried out by the FEHRL Executive Committee (FEC), under a Chairman elected by the Board. The current Executive Chairman is Dr Govert Sweere of DWW.

The FEC is responsible for implementing the decisions of the Board, ensuring that all possibilities for pursuing FEHRL objectives are identified and exploited, and that contacts with other appropriate organisations are encouraged and maintained.

FEHRL operates a network of Research Coordinators (RCs) in its institutes to provide expertise on a wide range of research and technical matters. Their ToR state that RCs provide a link on "all research and technical matters concerning infrastructure and road safety".

RCs are nominated by the corresponding FEHRL Institute Director. They provide a flexible and effective link between the FEC, the FEHRL Board and the FEHRL Institutes. Full list of RC's is given on the FEHRL web site at www.fehrl.org/contacts.htm.

The Board and the FEC are also served for administrative and business development activities by a Secretary General based in Brussels.

New memberships

The Lithuanian Transport and Road Research Institute (TKTI) joined FEHRL in last May. The broad range of interests of TKTI is reflected in the way the institute is organised. The institute is structured in seven divisions on the following topics: environmental protection, information system, road and bridge survey, traffic engineering, technology transfer. New applications are under review from further countries.

Although FEHRL's membership is growing fast, expansion is not the main priority. The main goal is to deepen cooperation and complement research activities.

EUROPEAN FOCUS & COOPERATION

Recent publication of ERTRAC Vision

ERTRAC, the European Road Transport Research Advisory Council, consisting of high level representatives from all road transport stakeholders, remains on course with its challenging task to define an ambitious yet realistic Vision of an improved European road transport system for 2020 and beyond. FEHRL serves actively at all levels in ERTRAC and regularly seeks input from key experts.

Future trends to achieve the Vision are grouped in four themes:

- Mobility of People and Transport of Goods
- Safety and Security
- Environment, Energy and Resources
- Design and production Systems

An initial publication released in June, reflects a consensus on the Vision 2020 and a summary of ERTRAC's work. The strategic Research Agenda with detailed definition of future research activities priorities and road maps will be part of subsequent publications.

For more information about ERTRAC www.ertrac.org.



Delegates brainstorm at the ERTRAC workshop on "Mobility of People and Transport of Goods" held in April at FEHRL in Brussels

Initiation of the ECCREDI Technology Platform

Since October of last year, intensive work has been under way to develop a technology platform (ETP) for the Construction Sector. As a founder member of ECCREDI, FEHRL has been heavily involved in this process.

The ETP on Construction will be composed of a HLG (High Level Group), SG (Support Group), Focus Areas and Secretariat. ETP will link to the different National Platform initiatives.

The E-CORE Conference B4E to be held on 14th and 15th October in Maastricht will give the opportunity to launch officially the Construction technology platform.

FEHRL in ESWRAC

FEHRL is one of the founding members and main contributors of the European Street Works Research Advisory Council (ESWRAC). The aim of this organisation is to contribute to the research for the development of efficient and sustainable methods and techniques for the maintenance, renewal and construction of infrastructure such as road and utility networks.

ESWRAC has actively participated to the extensive consultation initiated by the European Commission on issues concerning urban environment. This led to the preparation and following adoption in May of the communication "Towards a Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment".

Furthermore the ESWRAC research programme for buried asset location supports the objectives of the Commission's Communication, in particular Sustainable Urban Management and Urban Transport in the areas of Construction & Design.

More information about ESWRAC is available at www.eswrac.org.

Joint ECTRI-FERSI-FEHRL 2005 Young Researchers Seminar

The joint seminar "Young Researchers Seminar" (YRS) to be held in May 2005 in The Netherlands is the result of collaboration between FEHRL, ECTRI and FERSI. This initiative is to be seen as an indication of the endeavour of these organisations to foster a more extensive cooperation. It is also a very tangible contribution to the realisation of the "European Research Area" and it is hoped will ultimately include other organisations.

The main objective is to enable the networking of young transport researchers belonging to ECTRI, FERSI and FEHRL members and not least, to train young researchers to elaborate scientific communications. Therefore, this seminar is not only aimed at scientific excellence but also at presentation skills and the ability to communicate the work of research.

NEW PROJECTS

Green light for INTRO and SILENCE

Two proposals submitted to the second call of the Commission's DG Research for FP6 are currently in the contract negotiation stage.

The INTRO ("Intelligent Roads") and CALM II project proposals as well as the SILENCE Integrated Project submitted to DG RTD Sustainable Surface Transport second call in early April have been recently approved by the European Commission and will be soon ongoing.

INTRO is led by VTI and includes a substantial number of FEHRL institutes. FEHRL itself features as the leader of the dissemination and clustering work packages and as the umbrella for wider FEHRL involvement.

SILENCE with a budget of approximately 18M€ , is the result of one-year work and an extensive consultation that has involved a wide range of stakeholders in the field of noise. FEHRL is one of the eight core partners and includes under its 'umbrella' the contributions of approximately twelve FEHRL institutes.

In addition, FEHRL has been invited to join the CALM II project, which builds on the original CALM network. This brings together the leading stakeholders of European and national activities from road, rail, aeronautic and maritime transport as well as health and socio-economic issues in addition to the leaders of the European Noise Working Groups and the respective European Research Advisory Councils. The project will support the European Commission in setting up the agenda for future transport noise research and development.

COST ACTION 353 started in April

The first Management Committee of the COST Action 353 "Winter Service Strategies for Increased European Road Safety" convened in Brussels on 28th April.

Led by Marlyn Burtwell (TRL) the main objective of this COST Action is to develop a framework for the management of winter traffic for maximised road safety.

The secondary objective is to integrate new methods of winter maintenance management through the use of the latest technologies for data management, communication and vehicle positioning.

At the last meeting of the Working Group 2 held in Brussels on 14th July, partners agreed on the main areas of improvement and work plan.

The opportunity was also taken to agree a definition of both emerging and new technologies. The former refers to a technology or application not yet tried in Road Winter Maintenance, Traffic Management or Road safety and which has been already validated in another field. Whereas the latter refers to a technology already existing as pilot project, prototype in the field of Road Winter Maintenance, Traffic Management or Road safety.

15 YEARS OF FEHRL: THE WAY FORWARD

FEHRL was formed in 1989 in the United Kingdom. Since then its primary objective has been to provide opportunities for identifying research priorities and to create a positive climate for cooperation between its institutes. This position still defines the work of FEHRL today.

Europe is made up of a vast number of countries, with diverging needs.

In FEHRL's view cooperation "in diversity" is one of the main drivers to strengthen its position and become the European centre for the creation, transfer and application of knowledge in all road transport matters.

FEHRL institutes are also aware that close cooperation with the European Commission and other organisations whose aims are compatible with those of FEHRL is crucial to the realisation of FEHRL's aspirations and ambitions.

Events & dates to remember

9-10 September 2004

FEC Meeting, Brussels, Belgium

20-21 September 2004

FEHRL Vision workshop, TRL, UK

14-15 October 2004

B4E (ECCREDI & E-CORE Conference), Maastricht, The Netherlands

18-19 October 2004

Board Meeting, Budapest, Hungary

15-16 November 2004

Research Coordinators Meeting, Venice, Italy

24-26 November 2004

1st European Road Congress (ERF event), Lisbon, Portugal

Further events and details available online in KC>Publications

Selected recent activities

29 April 2004

ECCREDI Council, Brussels, Belgium

4 May 2004

Tripartite Cooperation meeting with FERSI and ECTRI, Brussels, Belgium

11-12 May 2004

FEHRL Board Meeting, BASt, Cologne, Germany

13-14 May 2004

TREE partners meeting, Zimrod, Poland

24-26 May 2004

ERTICO ITS Conference: "Moving Towards an Integrated Europe", Budapest, Hungary

27 - 28 May 2004

3rd ERRVIN workshop, Brussels, Belgium

9 June 2004

ECCREDI meeting with DG RTD, Brussels, Belgium

14-17 June 2004

FEHRL Road Research Meeting, Brussels, Belgium

30 June 2004

European Road Transport Research Conference 2005, Management Committee, Gothenburg

23 July 2004

Tyre/Road Noise Cooperation meeting with ETRTO, Brussels, Belgium

FEHRL Institutes

FEHRL is a registered International Association with a permanent Secretariat based in Brussels. Formed in 1989 as the Forum of European National Highway Research Laboratories, FEHRL is governed by the Directors of each of the national institutes. At present, FEHRL comprises twenty-five national laboratories from the member states in the European Union, the EFTA countries and the rest of Europe.



Arsenal Research, Austria
www.arsenal.ac.at



BRRC, Belgium
www.brcc.be



CRBL, Bulgaria



IGH, Croatia
www.igh.hr



CDV, Czech Republic
www.cdv.cz



DRI, Denmark
www.vd.dk



LCPC, France
www.lcpc.fr



BAST, Germany
www.bast.de



KEDE, Greece



KTI, Hungary
www.kti.hu



PRA, Iceland
www.vegagerdin.is



NRA, Ireland
www.nra.ie



TKTI, Lithuania
www.tkti.lt



ANAS, Italy
www.enteanas.it



INRR, Luxembourg



DWW, Netherlands
www.minvenw.nl/rws/dww



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