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Events & dates to remember

Selected recent activities

FACILITATING HOLISTIC SOLUTIONS IN ROAD TRANSPORT

The 33rd FEHRL Board of Directors' meeting held in Athens recently culminated with a series of key resolutions for the future of FEHRL. There was widespread agreement about the need to turn FEHRL into a Centre of Excellence that would act as a corporate front office of the member institutes vis-à-vis European clients. In particular, the emphasis was put on FEHRL's active role in

supporting the delivery of solutions for holistic issues featuring on top of the agenda of client groups. This confirmed the vision of FEHRL as "Centre of Excellence on all road transport matters".

The resolutions taken at the last Board meeting were, indeed, part of the mid-term review of the FEHRL five-year plan 2002-2007 agreed by the FEHRL Board in 2002.

At the FEHRL Board of Directors there was enthusiasm for the underlying objectives.

Another issue discussed at the Board is the start of the task forces as one of the key components of SERRP IV (Strategic Road Research Programme). Four task forces were approved by the Board on the following topics: noise, air quality, skid resistance, infrastructure security. There is no doubt that all institutes will benefit greatly from the work of these FEHRL task forces.

The Athens meeting was also an opportunity to welcome the newest member of FEHRL. The Slovakian Transport Research institute (VUD) is FEHRL's twenty-ninth national institute. VUD's talents not only expand FEHRL's portfolio, but their enthusiasm for deepening cooperation further adds to FEHRL's strength.

We would like to conclude by inviting our members to join the Transport Research Arena (TRA) on 12 - 16 June 2006 in Goteborg, jointly organised by CEDR, ERTRAC and the European Commission. This conference is another important opportunity to network, exchange good practices, and, ultimately, help positioning FEHRL strongly as the European Centre of Excellence envisaged in the five-year plan.

NEW KNOWLEDGE CENTRE ONLINE

Since the beginning of this year, Matej Michelizza and Stas Urbanic at ZAG Ljubljana have been working hard on the upgrade of our extranet system – the FEHRL Knowledge Centre. The new system will provide FEHRL members with a wide range of features and services – file manager, calendar, forum and contact database.



Matej Michelizza and Stas Urbanic, ZAG Ljubljana

In a few clicks, members can download, upload and search documents, find other members' coordinates, participate in discussion forums, get status of an issue, view and post events. Also non-FEHRL members can enter the FEHRL knowledge Centre to download newsletters and project reports on selected topics.

Accessing the Knowledge Centre has never been so easy. It simply requires you to submit your details by filling out a one page registration form. You can also change your data yourself via the browser.

We hope you will find the new Knowledge Centre useful and we encourage you to register as soon as possible.



EUROPEAN FOCUS & COOPERATION

The European Road Transport Research Advisory Council pushes for the creation of national technology platforms



The multidisciplinary approach adopted by the European Road Transport Research Advisory Council (ERTRAC) in looking into road transport issues convinced the European Commission to support the continuation of ERTRAC activities through a three years' project ERTRAC II.

With FEHRL playing a key role, now it is time to build on the results of three years of intensive work that culminated with the release of the Strategic Research Agenda (SRA), a long-term research program on road transport matters.

The next step is to set up a professional secretariat to coordinate their the work of key stakeholders involved in the project. The ERTRAC Secretariat will be based in the Brussels POLIS office in Rue du Trône 98.

ERTRAC II will continue to bring the key stakeholders in Europe's road transport sector closer together to promote links with research carried out by Member States. ERTRAC is already actively working to support the creation of national technology platforms. In order to show their commitment, ERTRAC representatives including FEHRL attended the launch of the "Slovenian technology platform for vehicles, roads and traffic" in Ljubljana on November 10th. The event was organised on the initiative of ZAG Ljubljana and the Automobile Cluster of Slovenia.



The Slovenia's National platform is based on ERTRAC's four pillar domains (Transport, Mobility and Infrastructure; Safety and Security; Environment,

Energy and Resources and Design and Production Systems).

To kick start the activities, strategic orientations for the Slovene road-related industry will be set out and new members, particularly from public sector (representing Cities and Regions and Users/Consumers sectors) will be encouraged to join the initiative.

New Road Construction Concepts workshop highlights key innovations for 2040



The mid-term NR2C (New Road Construction Concepts) workshop held on December 16th in Brussels, highlighted directions to solutions in road construction. The event was organised by FEHRL under the framework of the NR2C project, a European Commission co-funded research project.

The discussion centred on four different concepts that appear to be major prerequisites to build the road infrastructure of the future. These are: reliable; green; safe and smart; human. Each concept has many facets and different solutions can be envisaged. For example the "green" concept, which scored high as a priority among the workshop attendees during the brainstorming sessions, should encompass solutions for saving natural resources and reducing emissions.

To learn more about NR2C's developments and proposed solutions for the roads of the future, download the presentations available at <http://www.fehrl.org/nr2c/workshop2005/index.php>.



In conjunction with the December workshop designed for a European audience, other national events and informal gatherings are being organised across Europe. The most recent national workshop was held in Poland (Zimrod) on November 29th at IBDiM's premises. The workshop was attended by 50 attendees including researchers, investors, business developers, road owners and operators, road designers, civil engineers and journalists.

During the workshop the emphasis was laid on environmental protection and the need of using by-products, for example the usage of fly-ash and slag. A key aspect in road construction is the use of industrial by-products (dust from technological products). To this end, the properties and the effect on the environment of these products need to be looked into closely. For many delegates, an important requirement is to have and to work within, a coherent and coordinated policy framework that would boost innovations.

The conclusions of the workshop will be embedded in the NR2C final vision that is expected to be published in April 2006.

Getting ready for the Transport Research Arena (TRA) conference in June 2006



Building on the success of the second FEHRL Road Research Meeting (FeRRM 05), the next calendar event of FEHRL is the Transport Research Arena (TRA) conference, set to take place in Göteborg, Sweden, next June.

Jointly organised by CEDR (Conference of European Directors of Roads), ERTRAC (European Road Transport Research Advisory Council) and the European Commission, TRA 2006's main theme is the implementation of the European Research Area (ERA) in support of a sustainable, safer and more efficient road transport system in Europe.

The conference programme is coming into place, structured around the ERTRAC core themes - Environment, Energy & Resources; Safety & Security; Transport, Mobility & Infrastructure; Design & Production Systems.

The Commission's Luisa Prista, Head of the Research Directorate-General's Surface Transport Unit, said, "The Göteborg conference in 2006 will be a major step towards a Transport Research Arena in Europe. The support that the Commission is giving to this initiative reflects the importance of sustainable road transport within the larger European agenda."

Further details about TRA 2006 are available at <http://www.traconference.com>.



More opportunities to work together knocking on FEHRL's door



The New Year starts on a positive note with the approval of seven project proposals with FEHRL leadership or participation. The proposals were submitted to the European Commission on September 1st.

Led by ZAG (Slovenia) and IBDiM (Poland), three proposals - SPENS, ARCHES and CERTAIN - are focused on road construction needs in Central and Eastern European Countries. In particular, CERTAIN will support coordination of research activities and provide training for project managers.

Another project that was considered favourably by the Commission is INQUEST (Information Network for QUIet European Road Surface Technologies) that aims at taking forward the results of the SiVia project - classification scheme for road surfaces - by means of national workshops across Europe under the leadership of BRRC (Belgium).

Shifting the focus to international cooperation, in the SIMBA project, FEHRL will work alongside ERTICO (ITS European organisation) and EUCAR (European Council for Automotive R&D). The key objective is to develop synergies with Europe's strategically important partners in developing world markets, such as China, India and South Africa.

The importance for FEHRL of working closely with industry partners is also exemplified by the involvement in the HeavyRoute proposal led by VTi (Sweden) that focuses on road-vehicle interaction.

Finally through ERTRAC II, FEHRL will consolidate the position of road engineering in the European Research Area (ERA) by coordinating national research activities.

These successful proposals will give us the opportunity to bring road engineering and infrastructure to the forefront of the European Union's agenda on transport issues.

ORGANISATIONAL UPDATE

FEHRL Executive Committee restructured to adjust to FEHRL priorities

The distribution of tasks within the FEHRL executive Committee (FEC) underwent a substantial overhaul. Each FEC member is now in charge of monitoring progress of work being carried out under a specific research theme.

Bojan Leben is in charge of monitoring and boosting activities that fall under "environment, energy and resources"; Robin Sébille is dealing with "design and production" related activities; Ian Markey is responsible for the "safety and security" theme; Rudi Bull-Wasser will provide assistance on all activities that regard transport mobility issues. Finally Govert Sweere will continue to take responsibility for organisational matters.

We would like to take the opportunity to thank Aurelio Ruiz for his endeavours and long-standing commitment to FEHRL. He stepped down from his position of FEC member and research coordinator for CEDEX in September 2005. On behalf of all our members, we would like to wish him all the best in the future.

FEHRL membership has now grown to twenty-nine institutes



FEHRL welcomed its newest member - the Slovak Transport Research Institute (VUD) – at the October Board of Directors.

With over fifty years of experience in road transport research, the Slovak institute is specialised in a wide range of areas, from transport management and road engineering to air quality, road safety and resources.

The institute appointed Jan Sedivy as Research Coordinator for FEHRL activities. Jan is the branch manager for road management in Bratislava. He is also associate professor at the Technical University in Zilina, (Faculty of Civil Engineering) and Chairman of the Slovak Road Association.

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New FEHRL Research Coordinators



The FEHRL Research Coordinator of Latvian State Roads (LAD) is Vladimirs Akimovs, working in the institute as Head of Road Laboratory. Vladimirs has extensive experience in pavement management systems and road maintenance.



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The Icelandic Road Administration (ICERA) formerly known in FEHRL as PRA (Public Road Administration) has recently nominated a new research coordinator.

Thorir Ingason is currently the head of the Research Department in the development division. In the past he worked as Head of the Road Division at the Icelandic Building Research Institute.



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New face at the FEHRL office

Bas R. Hemmen has recently joined the Brussels FEHRL team. The loan of Bas from ELGIP, a European platform of geotechnical R&D organisations, will contribute to build links with FEHRL and encourage knowledge transfer between the two organisations. ELGIP and FEHRL are both members of ECCREDI, the European Council for Construction Research. In this respect, Bas will also be in charge of reinforcing links between FEHRL and ECTP, the European construction technology platform.

Additionally Bas is involved in the ENABLE project, a specific support action aimed to set up national technology platforms in the construction sector. His extensive experience on European projects will be valuable for FEHRL.



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Staff changes

The increasing openness of labour markets makes it easier for researchers from FEHRL institutes to explore career opportunities across national borders. Recognising this increased job mobility and the importance of staff to FEHRL institutes, members of the FEHRL Executive Committee are actively involved in encouraging staff who wish to broaden their expertise to move between FEHRL institutes rather than be lost to FEHRL altogether. As an example of the opportunities that exist, TRL has recently appointed three new members of staff, all of whom have worked for or have had connections with the FEHRL institutes of LCPC, DWW and ZAG, and in addition, have had a fourth person on secondment from CDV.



Bas Oosterbaan

Bas joined TRL's Pavement Surface Assessment Team from DWW in the Netherlands. Bas is working on several projects dealing with pavement

assessment and skid resistance in particular. He is also designing and building a test rig to measure the micro texture of road surfaces.



Jure Leben

Jure is an Assistant Environmental Assessment Consultant. He assists in the

management of a number of environmental projects as well as producing newsletters on SEA and transport, and SEA and minerals. He also advises on how new EU countries can apply the new SEA Directives.



Josef Stryk

Josef was seconded to TRL from CDV in the Czech Republic for six months. He was involved with Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) analysis and its use in the

study of the sub structure of road pavements, including the non destructive evaluation of material thickness and properties. Josef's main client has been the Highways Agency.

Jean Iaquinta

Jean will be joining TRL's Technology Development team on the 1st February 2006.

The team specialises in the development and application of new technology to the assessment of pavement condition, and Jean will be supporting the team's wide range of projects.

He will be leading work investigating the use of Micro-Electromechanical Systems and nanotechnology in fields including construction, maintenance, condition monitoring, and safety. Jean will also be investigating the use of slow-speed non contact measurement systems for the measurement of pavement profile, aimed at new road acceptance.

Joining forces in FEHRL

The FEHRL Board of Directors recently agreed on the creation of internal task forces on four key topics. These are: noise, air quality, skid resistance, and infrastructure security.

These task forces are key actions to ensure the overall success of FEHRL Strategic Road Research Programme (SERRP). They are the instrument under which FEHRL will develop research on specific topics and enhance cooperation by mapping research work and defining joint projects both between FEHRL institutes and with industrial, and other partners.

NEWS FROM AROUND FEHRL

Advantages of hiring VTI's Heavy Vehicle Simulator



The Swedish Transport Research Institute (VTI) is willing to rent the Heavy Vehicle Simulator (HVS) for accelerated testing of road pavements to other FEHRL members.

This equipment can simulate one year's heavy traffic in just one week. By replicating loading by heavy traffic it is possible to study how different types of road pavements stand up to heavy traffic.



Another key advantage is that the HVS simulator is mobile, which means that it can be used both in special test installations and out on the road. In 1997 the Swedish National Road and Transport Research Institute (VTI), the National Road Administrations of Finland (Finnra) and Sweden (SRA), and the Technical Research Centre of Finland (VTT) jointly invested in developing the simulator. The HVS equipment is currently owned and equally used by the two countries.

If you wish to learn more about the HVS simulator or hire the equipment, please contact:

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Masonry Society's most prestigious award for Miha Tomaževič



Prof. Dr. Miha Tomaževič, head of the Section for Earthquake Engineering and former director of Slovenian National Building and Civil Engineering Institute (ZAG), has been recently awarded the 2005 John B. Scalzi Award.



The annual award, named after Dr. John B. Scalzi of the National Science Foundation, pays tribute to individuals who have made outstanding contributions to masonry research.

Considered one of the most prestigious research awards in masonry, Dr. Miha Tomaževič joins an internationally recognised group of select and elite researchers.

Brand-new meeting facilities at the FEHRL office

The FEHRL office has inaugurated its brand-new meeting room for up to 40 delegates for presentations or 24 for meetings.



Frequent visitors know that the FEHRL office is located within 10 minutes walking distance from public transport (buses and metro line) and is well connected to the international airport.

EVENTS & DATES TO REMEMBER

23 February 2006

FEHRL-ECTRI meeting, Brussels, Belgium

28-29 February 2006

IPG Scientific Board, Brussels, Belgium

22-23 May 2006

FEHRL Board, Ljubljana, Slovenia

1-2 June 2006

Research Coordinators meeting, Brussels, Belgium

12-16 June 2006

Transport Research Arena (TRA) 2006, Göteborg, Sweden

SELECTED RECENT ACTIVITIES

18 October 2005

CALM II workshop, Brussels, Belgium

19-20 October 2005

FEHRL Board, Athens, Greece

3-4 November 2005

Research Coordinator Meeting, Sofia, Bulgaria

29 November 2005

National NR2C workshop, Zimrod, Poland

9 December 2005

FEHRL Executive Committee (FEC), Brussels, Belgium

16 December 2005

European NR2C workshop, Brussels, Belgium

18 January 2006

ERTRAC meeting, Brussels, Belgium

30 January 2006

FEC meeting, 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-nine 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



TECER, Estonia
www.teed.ee



LCPC, France
www.lcpc.fr



BASt, Germany
www.bast.de



KEDE, Greece



KTI, Hungary
www.kti.hu



ICERA, Iceland
www.vegagerdin.is



NRA, Ireland
www.nra.ie



ANAS, Italy
www.enteanas.it



LAD, Latvia
www.lad.lv



TKTI, Lithuania
www.tkti.lt



INRR, Luxembourg



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



NPRA, Norway
www.vegvesen.no



IBDiM, Poland
www.ibdim.edu.pl



LNEC, Portugal
www-ext.lnec.pt



CESTRIN, Romania
www.cestrin.ro



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www.highway.co.yu



VUD, Slovakia
www.vud.sk



ZAG, Slovenia
www.zag.si



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