

BLUE TOP

THE VIRGINIA TRANSPORTATION CONSTRUCTION ALLIANCE

June 2011

Annual Meeting Room Deadline June 14!

Your Alliance took the leadership role in pursuing a transportation funding package. The General Assembly enacted legislation that will more than double VDOT's construction budget for the next three years. Now we must design, supply and build these projects on time and on budget. Our reputation depends on it.

At the VTCA Annual Meeting July 14-17, you will have the opportunity to exchange ideas and information with VDOT leadership and benefit from these presentations:

OSHA Update

MSHA Enforcement Update

Improving and Reforming America's Surface Transportation Programs

What's Your Business Legal IQ? - Part Two

In addition to the professional development programs, you'll enjoy one of our most anticipated annual activities - the PAC Silent Auction. We'll lure you in with our "Bids, Bites and Brews" party where you'll enjoy bidding on great items. Of course, there's the Golf Tournament and the Sporting Clays Tournament too. We'll round out the meeting with "Grillin' and Chillin' on the Casino Lawn." There will be great food, music and activities for the kids.

Leggz, one of the east coast's best party bands, will get you on the dance floor! Registration is well under way. Don't be left out! The deadline for making room reservations is June 14. If you need any help, contact Jan Morehead or Stephanie Rusnak at VTCA.



Good News - Delay Expected On IRS Provision To Withhold 3% Of Contract Payments

A federal tax provision has been in process to take effect January 1, 2012, requiring governments at all levels to withhold 3 percent of contract payments for goods and services, including construction. On May 5 the Internal Revenue Service issued proposed final regulations that would delay this until January 1, 2013. It is likely that this delay will take place as proposed.

ARTBA, both individually and through participation in the Government Withholding Relief Coalition (www.withholdingrelief.com), has worked diligently for repeal of this provision since its passage as part of a large federal tax bill in 2006. While the latest one-year delay would be a positive step in the process, the goal remains full repeal of this burdensome and costly provision. On that front, a House repeal bill (H.R. 674) currently has more than 100 co-sponsors, while two Senate repeal bills (S. 89 and S. 164) have a total of 16 co-sponsors.

ARTBA will submit comments on the proposed final rule—due to the IRS by August 8, 2011. The Federal Register notice can be found here: www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2011-05-09/pdf/2011-10758.pdf.

Dedicated to advancing the interests of the transportation construction industries.

Luck Stone Hosts Inverted Base Demo

On May 25 and 26, **Luck Stone** hosted an inverted base demonstration at their Manassas Plant. The event included a general session on the history of inverted base and a primer on inverted base principles. It also featured an in-depth technical session, with speakers from around the country and several site demonstrations where a test road is being constructed. Interested parties from around the Virginia and several from outside the U.S. attended. The very beneficial program was coordinated by Randy Weingart of Luck Stone.



Shane Buchannan, Senior Materials Engineer
with **Vulcan Materials Company**

Recycled Concrete Spec Meeting With VDOT

There has been some concern within the aggregate community regarding the specifications currently in place for recycled concrete in Virginia. The concern arises over whether recycled concrete is being held to the same testing standards as virgin aggregate material that might otherwise be utilized on the same project.

Of specific concern is when a stockpile of recycled concrete may be comprised of a number of unknown sources without sufficient quality assurance testing having taken place.

Members of VTCA's Aggregate Producer Technical Committee recently met with John Schuler and others members of VDOT's Material Division. Discussions are underway to develop a specification that will mirror that of virgin material. The membership will be notified if/when changes occur.

Habitat Partners© Recognizes Boxley's Piney River Quarry

The Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (VDGIF) recently presented Boxley's Piney River Quarry in Amherst County with a Habitat Partners© Corporate Habitat certificate. The certificate was awarded to recognize over 10 years of habitat restoration work on the non-active portions of the company's property.

There were about half a dozen natural wetlands already occurring on the site. Boxley's vision was to enhance the benefits of these wetlands so that amphibians like spotted salamanders and wood frogs would have even more opportunities to thrive. Boxley created vernal pools, which fill with water in the spring and provide ideal conditions for amphibians to breed. More than 400 students from area schools and colleges have visited the site that serves as a hands-on classroom.

"Projects like these that restore wetlands and vernal pools are highly valuable to local wildlife populations," says Carol Heiser, VDGIF Habitat Education Coordinator. "We commend the Boxley company for their hard work to preserve the unique natural heritage of the ancient ecosystem on their site."

The Habitat Partners© program encourages other private businesses to follow Boxley's lead. "Look at your site for opportunities to improve habitat," says Heiser. "There are bound to be places where you could plant trees and shrubs, or perhaps convert unused lawn into a native warm-season grass meadow." One of the easiest ways to improve habitat is to simply stop mowing an area and let it naturalize. Just be sure to remove any invasive exotic plants that might try to take over, such as Japanese honeysuckle or autumn olive.

To see streaming video of Boxley's site and other Corporate Habitat examples, or to find out more about the Habitat Partners© program, visit www.dgif.virginia.gov/habitat.

Former NSSGA Chairman Testifies On MSHA Reforms

On May 4, Louis Griesemer, former NSSGA Board Chairman, testified before the House Subcommittee on Workforce Protections. The subcommittee is focusing on modernizing MSHA. Griesemer's remarks gave examples of what aggregates operators, large and small, have to contend with in dealing with inappropriate MSHA enforcement. He also gave suggestions for improvements in the agency's operations. The following is a summary of the major points in his testimony.

In NSSGA's presentation of ideas for more effective, risk-based enforcement, Griesemer suggested that MSHA be relieved of the mandate that all facilities be subject to the mandatory conduct of at least two surface inspections and four underground inspections annually, despite operations' compliance records. In fact, Griesemer testified that operations with excellent compliance and safety records should be eligible for fewer inspections, especially given the budgetary restrictions faced by all Federal agencies.

Griesemer also said that many small operations don't even run throughout the year; and he said, much of aggregates production does not change frequently, hence another reason to see that mandatory two's and four's are not appropriate for all operators. Griesemer took the opportunity to re-state NSSGA's disappointment over the planned closing of the Small Mine Office, which has done so much to usher safety into small operations.

In response to a question about enforcement inconsistency, Griesemer highlighted a recent example of having been served with a citation for a back-up alarm allegedly not loud enough; though, shortly after the citation was issued, the alarm was tested and determined to reach 89 decibels.

Griesemer also responded to a question about the effects on consistency of follow-up inspections. Griesemer walked the panel through a scenario in which two different inspectors conduct inspections at a facility and, in effect, and have different ideas of how compliance is to be achieved. This results in higher – and frequently unnecessary – abatement costs, and utter confusion concerning which way to comply is the most satisfactory.

The NSSGA proposals for MSHA modernization included the adoption of a Pattern of Compliance program, which would grant credit to operators with very good compliance and safety records; examples of forms in which this credit could come include:

- *increased good-faith reductions in penalty assessments,*
- *chances for a notice in lieu of citation for de minimis hazards, and*
- *elimination of a citation if the hazard is abated immediately.*

MSHA SE District Pilot Program Ends

The Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) Southeastern District pilot program for health and safety conferences ended on May 30, 2011.

The program, initiated on November 30, 2010, had been extended to provide more time to collect additional data and more accurately evaluate the results. Effective May 31, 2011 standard procedures for contesting citations will resume. This will require you to formally request a conference within 10 days of issuance. The conference will be delayed by the District's Conference Litigation Officer (CLR) until you have received the assessments package.

If you have additional questions please contact Joe Bosley, MSHA Staunton Field Office Supervisor at 540-887-9682.

Division Of Mineral Mining Information

With the promotion of Conrad Spangler to Director of the Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy, there have been several personnel changes. For example, Jim Smith now serves as Inspector Supervisor for the entire state. Accordingly, please find a link below with several documents that might assist you, especially in the event of a serious injury or fatality.

These documents include the Violation Notification Poster, which must be posted "at the mine office and on a bulletin board at a prominent place at the mine site where it can be read..." Other documents include contact information for all key DMM personnel as well as the proper fatality/serious injury form (remember MSHA is not the only agency that must be contacted). These documents are at: http://vtcaonline.com/images/uploads/DMME_Mine_Safety_Information.pdf.

Legislation Directs VDOT To Conduct Pilot Projects Using ‘Quiet-Pavement’ Materials

Governor Bob McDonnell recently signed legislation that directs VDOT to construct several demonstration projects to further study “quiet-pavement” technologies. These projects will help determine how well the new pavements perform over two winters in Virginia.

The Quiet Pavement Task Force is a cooperative group consisting of representatives from VDOT and the asphalt and concrete paving industries. The group studies and identifies roads around the Commonwealth that would be candidates for quiet-pavement installations.

VDOT will install five demonstration projects to assess the performance of such materials for two years. They are all on four-lane, divided high-speed roads with good underlying pavement structures.

The three locations selected for the asphalt “quiet” technologies will be on the Route 7 Bypass in Leesburg, Route 199 west of Williamsburg and Route 288 near Chester. Concrete demonstration projects will be installed on a section of interstate in Hampton Roads and Route 76 (Powhite Parkway) in Richmond.

The Commonwealth Transportation Board awarded the contracts for the quiet asphalt pavement projects at its May 18, 2011, meeting. The concrete projects will be conducted through additions to existing patching contracts.

Following a year-long pilot begun in 2008, VDOT obtained positive results from a quiet-pavement installation on a section of Route 234 in Manassas using a hot-mix asphalt known as “porous friction course,” or PFC. This “open-graded mix” allows air and water to seep down from the road surface away from tires. It reduces hydroplaning, tire noise, and splash and spray. The improved drainage also cuts wet-night glare and improves the visibility of road markings.

The “quiet” concrete projects will employ two finishes applied to existing concrete pavements. The first is a simple diamond-grinding process often used to restore ride quality by knocking off high spots in the pavement. The second is a multi-step process, which follows the diamond-grinding process with a smoother grind and a longitudinal groove. The second finish was designed specifically to reduce tire-pavement noise. This will be the first time the second process will be used in Virginia.

The new law requires VDOT to provide an interim report on the status of these installations to the governor and General Assembly by June 30, 2012. The final report, due by June 30, 2013, will include results of the Virginia demonstration projects, results of the use of quiet pavement materials in other states and any safety, cost or performance issues from the demonstration projects.

2011 VTCA-VDOT Consultant Forum Set For September 8 - New Venue!

This year’s VTCA-VDOT Consultant Forum will be held on September 8th at a new location - the Hilton Richmond Hotel & Spa in Short Pump. The facility is conveniently located in west Richmond near the I-64 and I-295 interchange in Short Pump.

The annual conference brings transportation engineers and managers from the consultant community and VDOT together to discuss specific issues surrounding VDOT’s consultant design and inspection program. Don’t miss this unique opportunity to meet with your peers and VDOT officials to learn the latest issues and program updates impacting the program. Professional development hours (PDHs) will be offered for select agenda items.

Registration and sponsorship information will be available online in mid-June on VTCA’s web site. Mark your calendars now for what will be a busy program agenda.

Virginia To Host 2011 AASHTO Subcommittee On Construction

Virginia will be hosting the AASHTO 2011 Subcommittee on Construction Annual Meeting. The meeting will be held at the Wyndham Virginia Beach Oceanfront from July 31, 2011 through August 4, 2011.

All conference registration, sponsorship, and meeting information can be found on the conference web site www.virginiadot.org/info/2011_aashto_conference.asp. Online registration is available now.

Bid Express Service To Be Upgraded

Bidx.com, Inc. announced plans to upgrade the BidX system over the next several months. Changes will include improved design of the web pages across all areas to give users a more pleasant experience. A message center will be added to allow users to sign up for alerts from agencies and receive them via email or online. When users login for the first time after the upgrade rollout in Virginia, they will be returned to the home page where an agency can be selected; subsequent logins will take users to the last agency visited.

The MyBidx page – where users can access account management links – will be accessed by clicking an icon at the top of every page. The training center will be accessed by a link that is at the bottom of every page. For subscribers to the Bid Tab Analysis service, new search and sort parameters have been added (by county, vendor, number of bidders); data handling has been improved to make this service more accurate and user-friendly.

The page design changes will roll-out to agencies in small groups over the next several months. In the interim, users may notice that one agency is still on the current design, while another has been moved to the new design. Changes to Virginia's design are expected to rollout this fall.

By simply logging in to the system, users will experience the upgraded service depending on the agency with which one does business. All links and information have been retained – the appearance of these items is all that has changed. When the agencies one normally does business with have received the upgrade, the new message center will be available. Similarly, subscribers to the Bid Tab Analysis service will experience the upgraded features when using that service for states that have received the upgrade.

Additional information is available by contacting the BidX customer support team at customer.support@bidx.com or 888-352-BIDX (2439).

“Rally For Roads” Sparks The TCC Fly-In

Investing in transportation infrastructure is one of the best ways to create jobs, stimulate economic investment and keep America strong. That was the message delivered to Congress by hundreds of transportation activists during the annual Fly-In sponsored by the Transportation Construction Coalition. Virginia's delegation was 30 strong, thanks to leadership provided by these members:

Boxley
Lanford Brothers Company
Michael Baker, Jr., Inc.

Branscome, Inc.
Luck Stone Corp.
Vulcan Materials Company

Dewberry
Martin Marietta



Our talking points framed our message. Every VTCA member should (1) tell everyone they know and (2) write to his or her Congressman and to Senators Warner and Webb, urging them to actively support passage of a surface transportation reauthorization bill in 2011.

1. Congress must pass a six-year federal highway bill in 2011. Short term extensions kick the can down the road. Its time for Congress to do its job, not shirk its responsibility.
2. The transportation construction industry has lost 2.23 million jobs since April 2006.
3. Investing in transportation creates good jobs for Americans. Each \$1 billion of federal spending on highway construction creates approximately 28,000 jobs annually - jobs that cannot be exported overseas.
4. Twenty-four percent of Virginia's major roads are in poor or mediocre condition.
5. Twenty-five percent of Virginia's bridges are deficient or functionally obsolete.
6. Poor roadway conditions are a significant factor in one-third of traffic fatalities.



The Health Costs Of Congestion? \$17.8 Billion And 2,200 Premature Deaths

Research at Harvard estimates that the additional fine particulate matter emissions that can be traced back to traffic congestion led to more than 2,200 premature deaths in the U.S. in 2010. The related public health cost was at least \$17 billion.

“The Public Health Costs of Traffic Congestion: A Health Risk Assessment” was published in the scientific journal “Environmental Health.” It was conducted by the Harvard Center for Risk Analysis at the School of Public Health. This was the first attempt to quantify the health implications of traffic congestion. The study was based on data collected in the nation’s 83 largest urban areas. The full study is available at www.transportationconstructioncoalition.org/.

McGinn Named To ARTBA Staff

Beth McGinn, a political communications veteran of Capitol Hill and several congressional campaigns, has been named Director of Public Affairs for the American Road & Transportation Builders Association. She will serve as an ARTBA spokesperson and handle all media relations activities. She will also manage the “Transportation Makes America Work” advocacy campaign.

McGinn was previously Communications Director for the House Judiciary Committee. She also worked for the National Republican Congressional Committee and the House Government Reform Committee. She holds a B.A. in political science from Rollins College

Welcome To Our Newest Member

Kemper Consulting, Inc. - government consulting, procurement consulting.

12 South 3rd St.
Richmond, VA 23219
Phone: 804-649-7945
Fax: 804-648-6261
Web: <http://kemperconsult.com>
Email: mradcliff@kemperconsult.com

Vice President: Marianne Radcliff
Vice President & Counsel: John Garrett Kemper
Vice President: Mike Edwards

MBP is pleased to announce that Dale Grigg, Jr., PE has joined the firm as the new Roanoke Branch Manager. Grigg will oversee the branch operations and activities and numerous projects in the southwestern Virginia region. He replaces former Roanoke Branch Manager, Kevin Bocock, PE, CCM who is now the Branch Manager of MBP’s Fairfax office.

Prior to joining MBP, Dale worked at the Virginia Department of Transportation as the Lynchburg District Construction Engineer. Beginning in 1994, Dale worked with MBP through VDOT projects such as the Danville Bypass and the Sweetbriar Interchange, and eventually served as the Acting District Administrator in Lynchburg.

Volkert welcomes Keith Weakley, PE. He will head the firm’s Design/Build and Special Projects practice for the Mid-Atlantic Region. Prior to joining Volkert, Weakley was with VDOT’s Staunton District Bridge Office for 16 years. He holds a B.S. degree in Civil Engineering from Virginia Tech and a Masters in Structural Engineering from the University of Virginia.

BLUE TOP



A monthly publication of the Virginia Transportation Construction Alliance

Jeffrey C. Southard
Executive Vice President

Dara Jan Morehead, CAE
Director of Administration and Membership Services (Editor)

Thomas M. Witt
Engineer Director

Samuel L. Hollins
Aggregates Program Manager

Dana C. Morris
Communications Technology Manager

Stephanie L. Rusnak
Administrative Operations Manager

Sandy E. Farmer
Accountant

Designed by
tba Public Relations and Advertising
www.tbtheagency.com

