

State of Wisconsin/Department of Transportation
RESEARCH PROGRESS REPORT FOR THE QUARTER ENDING: December 31, 2006

Program: SPR-0010(36) FFY99	Part: II Research and Development
Project Title: Use of Functional Silos to Optimize Agency Decision-Making	Project ID: 0092-05-21
Administrative Contact: Jason Bittner	Sponsor: MRUTC
WisDOT Technical Contact: Nina McLawhorn	Approved Starting Date: 10/1/2004
Approved by COR/Steering Committee:	Approved Ending Date: 12/31/2006
Project Investigator (agency & contact): Tom Maze, Center for Transportation Research and Education at Iowa State University	

Description: Transportation Agencies are no different than other organizations and they tend to organize into functionally focused units. This allows the professionals in the group to develop expertise within the functional area. In a sense, the groups become the agency's experts in one core functional area and the high level of narrowly defined expertise is reinforced by repetitive experiences on the same or similar topics. The repetitiveness of experiences fosters professional growth, expertise growth within the functional area, and efficiency through repetitively focusing knowledgeable individuals on familiar problems. The purpose of this project is investigate how functional areas create barriers to efficient decision make and to identify practices which overcome these barriers.

Total study budget	Current FFY budget	Expenditures for current quarter	Total Expenditures to date	Percent Complete
\$100,000	\$100,000	\$0	\$68,339.29	68%

Progress This Quarter:

(Includes project committee mtgs, work plan status, contract status, significant progress, etc.)

During this quarter, very little progress was made and no funds were expended. We have completed our write-up on the Kansas City area MPO and the Kansas City council of governments. We found that their objective is esthetical functional silos becoming a barrier to efficient resource making. If the MPO has more authority, it would make a greater effort to bridge more functional silos.

We will distribute our draft of the Kansas City case study shortly.

Work Next Quarter:

During the next quarter, we will complete a case study of a second regional government/MPO. We will schedule a meeting with the Rochester, Minnesota MPO and conduct a final case study. However, we are extremely doubtful that we will find anything. We certainly do not see any need to go down to the local government level to look for barriers.

We will also develop an outline for a final report. We need to determine how to wrap up all the discrete activities we have performed and turn them all into something cohesive.

Circumstances affecting progress/budget:

We have been surprise that at no level have we really had many incidences of functional silos being a significant barrier. We were quite surprised that few agencies actually viewed category funding of federal funds a problem.