

## Proposals for New TRB Joint Subcommittee for Emergency Responders

### Proposed Name:

Joint Subcommittee for Emergency Responders

### Mission Statement:

To promote interdisciplinary collaboration, research, and innovation for responders within transportation and to encourage technology transfer and dissemination of knowledge across all fields of interest to make travel safer, more efficient, equitable, and resilient for all users.

### Parent Committee:

ABR30 - Standing Committee on Emergency Evacuation (confirmed)

### Co-Sponsoring Committees:

ANB40 - Standing Committee on Traffic Law Enforcement (confirmed); ANB10 - Standing Committee on Transportation Safety Management (confirmation pending); AHB10 - Standing Committee on Regional Transportation Systems Management and Operations (confirmation pending)

### Proposed Chair:

Scott Parr, Ph.D.

### Problem and Issues:

Police, fire, ambulance, towing, utility, and motorist assistance personnel fill a vital role in preserving the lives and safety of people during emergencies and incidents. These users and their vehicles often operate in ways that are different from other travelers, including methods in which roads were not intended. Given the nature of their work and their interaction with routine traffic, issues can arise that impact both the safety and operational efficiency of transportation systems and vice versa. For example, ambulances drive through busy intersections on red phases, police officers stand in the middle of intersections to direct traffic, fire trucks drive over and on curbs and sidewalks, tow vehicles operate on roadway shoulders, and service patrol vehicles park and block active freeway lanes for extended durations. Because of this, responder groups and their vehicles encounter conditions that often limit their ability to safely and effectively to do their jobs and have led to disproportionately high rates of injuries and deaths.

### Research Need:

Responder groups form a class that is uniquely separate from standard road users. Similar to other user groups like young and older drivers, responders have particular design, planning, operations, training, management, safety, and research needs that differ from the traveling public more broadly. Historically, this has been a lightly studied area within the greater context of transportation research. Based on these needs, this subcommittee has been proposed to create a focal point for research into responder operations and safety as well as the planning, design, and management of transportation facilities to more effectively support their needs. These include, but are not limited to, incident zone traffic control and enforcement; safe and effective emergency vehicle operations and routing; emergency transportation management and resource allocation; emergency responder safety; vehicle [extrication](#) and scene clearance; modeling and

**Commented [EET1]:** This document reflects my vision and desire for the joint subcommittee. And before you "po-po" the name. Please go through the document and see the angle I am presenting. Then "po-po" the name and anything else in need of it.

**Commented [DG2]:** Meh, not sure this phrase works. How about "who have a duty to respond to roadway incidents"?

**Commented [EET3]:** The mission statement is pretty much a rehash of the TRB mission statement, combined with the Resiliency Section mission statement and geared toward our committee. I think the "all users" cover the base that we want to make things better for everyone, not just responders.

**Commented [EET4]:** ABR30 said they really want to be the parent committee and no body else has offered. ANB40 explicitly said they did not want to be the parent committee.

**Commented [DG5R4]:** Actually a good thing it won't be under ANB40. Other emergency response sectors think LE has enjoyed a disproportionate amount of focus and would bias the subcommittee work. Just addressing an elephant in the room.

**Commented [EET6]:** I put "confirmed" here because this committee has voted and approved the co-sponsorship. The same goes for ABR30. I know we have the support of ANB10, but in your committee meeting you said were looking to shrink the number of subcommittees, not grow them. Also, I am not sure if this is something ANB10 would like to vote on.

**Commented [EET7]:** Eileen Singleton and Pat Noyes (co-chairs for AHB10(8)) are big supporters of our effort, but I was not able to sit down and talk with the chair of AHB10 to politic him yet.

**Commented [EET8]:** I'd like to be the chair, plain and simple. I have the energy and passion to bring everyone on board. Because I am an academic, running this subcommittee is a part of my job, so in that regard, I'll have the time too. I also think my "young professional" status signifies the "handing of the baton".

**Commented [DG9R8]:** You'd be frickin' awesome!

**Commented [EET10]:** The next two sections I shrunk down from a much larger argument for creation of the subcommittee. I have that also, if you would like to look at it, but I think concise is the way to go for now.

**Deleted:** extraction

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assessment of emergency response performance; transport of injured people; crash avoidance; and the development and application of emerging infrastructure, technologies, and methods to support emergency response transportation activities.

### Background:

The joint subcommittee for emergency responders touches upon several existing committees and subcommittees within TRB. The nature of the need for such a subcommittee requires expertise from planning, design, operations, management, and safety as well as responders from police, fire, EMS, towing, and road service patrol. Broadly, the sponsoring committees provide expertise within these areas and will serve to promote and expand the membership of the subcommittee and potentially TRB as a whole. The parent committee, ABR30 has been tasked by the resiliency section to expand its scope beyond emergency evacuation to include additional emergency related capabilities. ABR30 sees this subcommittee as one avenue to enact this change. Two subcommittees have also touched upon the subject matter of this proposed subcommittee: ANB10 (5) - EMS Safety and AHB10 (8) - Regional Traffic Incident Management (TIM). ANB10 (5) was dissolved by the parent committee in 2017 and AHB (8) has been combined with AHB (5) - Sustainability to form AHB (x) - Operational Resiliency subcommittee. Within the justification and scope of ANH (x) the co-chairs of the AHB (8) (Pat Noyes and Eileen Singleton) states: "Currently, there is an effort to create a joint TRB subcommittee on emergency response that would include TIM [Traffic incident management]. Pat [Noyes] and Eileen [Singleton] have been involved in the development of that group and believe it could take over some of the TIM-focused research needs identification, as well as expand into emergency transportation operations." With the dissolution of ANB10 (5) and the re-scoping of AHB (8), there is a need for a subcommittee which is not solely focused on EMS Safety Research or TIM, but responders as a whole, which could also fill the gap within TRB caused by the exodus of these two subcommittees. The proposed joint subcommittee also spans four committees and three sections within the TRB structure, to bring together transportation professionals behind the common goals of promoting safe and efficient emergency response.

### Scope:

Broadly, the scope of the proposed subcommittee predominately addresses responders and their interaction with the transportation network and vice versa. The scope of the subcommittee also includes the impact that responders have on roadway operations and safety as well as planning, maintenance, technology/knowledge transfer, and design considerations for responders in emergency and non-emergency circumstances.

**Objective 1:** Stimulate multidisciplinary research which can improve transportation safety, efficiency, and resiliency for responders and the traveling public

**Objective 2:** Promote technology transfer and the dissemination of research findings and best practices toward implementation

**Objective 3:** Identify transportation requirements and research needs which can better improve the lives of responders and the traveling public

For more information contact Dr. Scott Parr at parrs1@erau.edu / (386) 226-7530

**Commented [EET11]:** This section is entirely not needed. I developed it to provided a justification to any that says "well TRB already has so many committees addressing these issues".

**Commented [EET12]:** The incoming chair of ABR30 was asked to do this in the upcoming Triannual review. I will be co-authoring this document.