

## **Trns•port User's Group Ballot Process Fact Sheet June 2006**

Each AASHTO fiscal year, the Trns•port Task Force (TTF) reviews and makes decisions related to enhancements and new development requests for Trns•port. An Enhancement Trns•port Modification Request (TMR) is a request to change the software programs or documentation to extend or improve functionality or performance. All enhancements and new development to the generic Trns•port system must have the approval of the TTF prior to being implemented. One aspect, of several, that contributes to the TTF decision process is user input on the value and benefits of requested enhancements. This user input is facilitated through a ballot process conducted each fiscal year as defined and administered by the Trns•port User's Group (TUG).

The purpose of the ballot process is to ensure that end users have a voice in the on-going and strategic direction of the Trns•port product. Through an Automated Ballot System (ABS) on Cloverleaf, each member agency is given the opportunity to vote for improvements the agency regards as most important. The results of the voting are forwarded to the TUG Chairperson for review then to the TTF to be considered for inclusion in the AASTHO Trns•port Long Range Work Plan (LRWP).

As the enhancements are submitted throughout the year, the TMR tracking system that supports the ABS is regularly updated to reflect the most current status of each request. During the fiscal year users, Technical Advisory Groups (TAGs) and Info Tech product experts review and comment on requested enhancements prior to the official ballot process. The current year's ballot is a combination of newly reported enhancement items and the open ballot items from the previous year. This information is available throughout the year in the [Trns•port Pre-Ballot](#) on Cloverleaf. The pre-ballot is a replica of the 'live' ballot, without the functionality to cast a vote. The secure web-based voting process is activated once a year, immediately following the TUG conference.

### General Information and Workflow

Enhancement requests may be submitted by one or more agencies, the TTF or Info Tech.

In order to ensure that all enhancements are captured and handled properly, all requests for enhancements are stored in the TMR tracking system maintained by Info Tech. The [Electronic Request Form \(ERF\)](#) on Cloverleaf should be used to submit enhancement requests. Direct e-mails to [customer.support@infotechfl.com](mailto:customer.support@infotechfl.com) are also accepted. Enhancement requests not shown on the pre-ballot can be viewed through the [Browse TMRs](#) link on Cloverleaf. After reviewing the enhancement TMR, Info Tech product leads log contractor comments and assess complexity. New enhancement requests are added to the pre-ballot throughout the year up until two weeks prior to the TUG conference. Enhancement items remain on the ballot each fiscal year unless removal is requested by reporting agency(ies) or the associated TAG.

The following table provides a high level view of the activities during a typical fiscal year in support of the ballot process.

Fiscal Year Activity	Time Frame
Ballot Item Submittal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agency logs enhancement TMR</li> <li>• ITI reviews enhancement TMR and logs comment on development approach then assesses complexity</li> <li>• Enhancement TMR is added to pre-ballot</li> </ul>	Throughout the fiscal year
TUG Chair Conference with TAG Coordinators	June/July
Pre-Ballot Preparation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TAGs review the ballot items and make recommendations on endorsements, removal, revisions</li> </ul>	July – October
TUG Conference	October/Early November
Ballot Voting	November
TUG Chair and TTF Review of Ballot Results	November
TTF takes Ballot Results into consideration for future enhancements and new development in the MSE (define MSE) Work Plan	Ongoing during fiscal year with focus December – January
Ballot Results Reflected in Next Fiscal Year LRWP (define LRWP) Appendix	April

It is **strongly recommended** that enhancement requests be submitted throughout the year to allow for timely Info Tech and TAG review. With this ongoing approach, more time and attention can be given to each request. For each enhancement request, Info Tech verifies the description (what is the user need), assigns preliminary complexity, and provides contractor comments reflecting recommendations and feedback, for example, potential impacts, options for development approach, etc. The TAGs represent specific Trns•port functional areas and have the opportunity to endorse ballot items or recommend removal. The TAGs facilitate collaboration and input across multiple agencies and product areas.

### Ballot Layout and Overview

The ballot items are grouped by categories (functional area) within Trns•port to allow focus on the business area to enhance or develop, for example *Contract Monitoring*. Each category may then be further broken down into subcategories, for example *Bid Analysis*. For each ballot item, the following information is provided for review during the balloting process:

- Enhancement # – the TMR number assigned to the proposed enhancement. Click on the number to access details on the TMR including all reporting agencies, comments, etc.
- Title – the short description of the TMR
- Proposed By – Agency that recommends and needs the proposed enhancement. More than one proposing agency is represented by *Multiple Organizations*.
- Date Submitted – the date the enhancement request was initially reported
- Complexity – this column represents the magnitude of difficulty or intricacy of the enhancement (low, medium, high) based on preliminary assessment and is not directly related to scope or level of effort to complete.

## Ballot Voting, Calculations & Rules

### **TUG Representative**

Each agency assigns one person to represent the agency during the TUG conference and the voting process. ITI provides previous fiscal year's list of assigned agency representatives (voters) to the TUG Secretary/Treasurer for review and validation with the agencies.

### **Weighted Voting**

Each agency has the opportunity to allocate a total of 100 points across one or more ballot items in each Trns•port ballot category (functional area). This can be done for all categories including those not currently applicable to that agency. Each point constitutes one vote. The total number of points for all subcategories should add up to 100 points for the category. Points can be applied to one or more subcategories based on the agency's business needs. The more points allocated to an item, the higher the level of importance that item is to the agency. Info Tech calculates the results of the voting process and provides both licensed and unlicensed priority ranking to the TUG Chair and TTF.

### **Licensed Priority Ranking**

The "Licensed Priority Ranking" is calculated for each category by:

1. Summing the total number of points allocated by licensing agencies for an item within a specific Category.
2. Dividing this sum by the sum of all points allocated by all agencies that license features within that specific Category.
3. Multiplying by 100 to derive the "Licensing Priority Ranking".

### **Unlicensed Priority Ranking**

The "Unlicensed Priority Ranking" is calculated for each Category by:

1. Summing the total number of points allocated by non-licensing agencies for an item within a specific Category .
2. Dividing this sum by the sum of all points allocated by all agencies who do not license features within that specific Category.
3. Multiplying by 100 to derive the "Unlicensed Priority Ranking".

### **Ballot Item Selection**

The TTF uses voting results as one consideration in determining which items may be selected for Trns•port enhancement or new development. Typically, the items selected reflect a combination of feedback from the user community via the balloting process, the Strategic Direction for Trns•port as set by the TTF, and available funding.

### **Direct Funding**

Agencies wishing to fund enhancements to Trns•port will need to send a letter to AASHTO indicating their interest in funding the enhancements, and also request the enhancements be approved for inclusion in generic Trns•port. The agencies will work directly with AASHTO on how they wish to fund the items (Service Units, direct contract, etc.). The agency should also contact Info Tech for an impact assessment and budget projection for the proposed enhancement which the agency would also submitted to the TTF.

## Balloting Process Schedule Detail

### **❖ Pre-Ballot Preparation (ongoing with main focus in July to October time frame)**

- As new enhancement TMRs are logged, Info Tech and TAGs review. Info Tech revises details as appropriate throughout the pre-ballot period.
- Info Tech verifies ABS URL functional and content is current.

#### ❖ **Pre-Ballot Milestones for TUG Board and TAGs**

- Approximately three months prior to the TUG conference Info Tech notifies the TUG Chair that the Pre-Ballot for the current fiscal year is ready for initial review via the ABS URL and Pre-Ballot Acrobat pdf report. TUG Chair requests the TAGs and all interested users review the ballot items and provide feedback to the TAG coordinators and Info Tech, at least two weeks prior to the TUG conference. Info Tech TAG Reps provide on-call support to TAGs until end of the TUG conference.
- Approximately forty-five days prior to the TUG conference, TUG Chair sends reminder to the TAGs and all interested users to review the ballot items and provide feedback to the TAG coordinators and Info Tech, at least two weeks prior to the TUG conference.
- During the review but no later than two weeks prior to the TUG conference - TUG Chair, TAGs, and users submit newly reported enhancements to the ballot using the [Electronic Request Form \(ERF\)](#) and modifications to existing ballot items using the Comment function within the [Transport Pre-Ballot](#) or by direct e-mail to [customer.support@infotechfl.com](mailto:customer.support@infotechfl.com). The Comment function can also be found on the [Browse TMRs](#) link on Cloverleaf.
- Changes made to the ballot within two weeks prior to the TUG conference require approval of the TUG Chair and appropriate TAG(s).
- Approximately one month prior to the TUG conference, the TUG Secretary/Treasurer sends a letter to the TUG reps:
  1. To confirm they are still the official representatives
  2. To confirm whether or not they will be attending the TUG conference
  3. If not, who will be their proxy
- During the TUG conference - additional ballot items may be submitted and/or existing items may be withdrawn based on approval by the appropriate TAG or based on TUG Chair approval during the TUG Business Meeting. This approach, although allowed, does not typically facilitate adequate TAG or Info Tech review and feedback. It is ideal for additional ballot items or requests to withdraw existing ballot items be addressed prior to the TUG conference. The TMR tracking system and pre-ballot are continuously updated.

#### ❖ **Phase III – The Voting Begins**

- Two weeks prior to the TUG conference- TUG Chair provides Info Tech with the final list of agency voters
- Approximately one week after the TUG conference concludes - TUG Chair declares the ballot closed to further modification and approves Info Tech delivery of the ABS URL for the live ballot to the final voter's list. Voting begins!
- The live ballot remains open for two weeks.

#### ❖ **Phase IV – Ballot Calculation**

- Within one week after the voting deadline expires – Each agency's voting results are available on Cloverleaf.
- Info Tech calculates the priority rankings for each item and delivers the compiled results to the TUG Chair for approval.

#### ❖ **Phase V – TUG Chair Approval**

- Within one week after submittal of voting results – TUG Chair notifies Info Tech that the voting results have been accepted and approved, or identifies issues to resolve.
- Upon TUG Chair approval – TUG Chair notifies user community of final results approval.

#### ❖ **Phase VI – Annual MSE and Long Range Work Plan**

- TTF considers ballot results for selection of enhancements and new development in the MSE. Info Tech reflects the voting results as soon as possible into the next fiscal year's LRWP.