



ITS PULSE

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FREE MARKETING OPPORTUNITY

If you are a member of ITS Heartland and have an Internet Web site, please contact Dennis Kroeger (kroeger@iastate.edu) to create a link to your Web site from the ITS Heartland Web site. Just send him your URL.

Annual Meeting Held in Spring

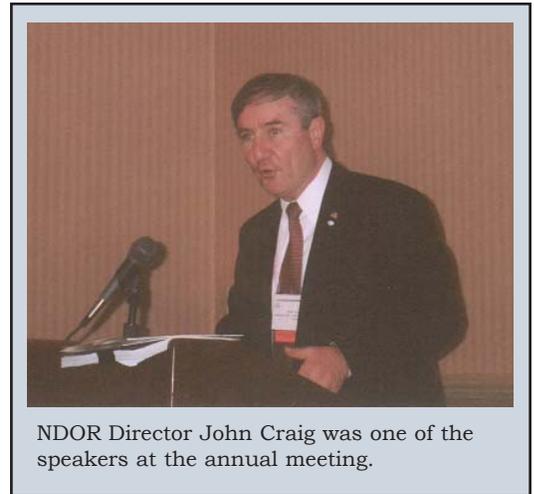
by Tom Dancey, City of Springfield, Missouri

Over 200 ITS professionals from 27 states and provinces met in Kansas City, Missouri, for the ITS Heartland Fifth Annual Meeting this past March. A special thanks goes out to the many individuals and organizations whose contribution helped make this year's meeting an overwhelming success.

In the opening session, ITS Heartland President Erin Flanigan welcomed all in attendance, provided opening remarks and introduced the following speakers including MoDOT's Henry Hungerbeeler who provided a warm welcome to Missouri; Brent Bair, incoming Chair of ITS America, with a special presentation on ITS success in Oakland County, Michigan, and an update on ITS America; and Michael Freitas, Travel Management Coordinator with the US DOT ITS Joint Program Office, who reported on ITS initiatives at the federal level.

The morning was rounded out with a mega session highlighting the focus, vision, and new developments in each of the four Heartland states. The future of ITS in the Heartland is bright indeed with such improvements as the Omaha Freeway Management System in Nebraska, the 800 MHz statewide communications project in Kansas, an integrated statewide management and operations system in Missouri, and the TripGuide Des Moines Area ITS project in Iowa.

Valuable information abounded in proceeding technical sessions with a multitude of engaging speakers presenting a wide range of topics including wireless communications, getting the word out on ITS, center-to-center challenges and direction,



NDOR Director John Craig was one of the speakers at the annual meeting.

municipal ITS issues, integration initiatives, and the role of ITS in homeland security.

In another mega session, representatives from the University of Nebraska, University of Oklahoma, Iowa State University, and University of Missouri provided evidence that advancements in research and technology will continue to afford new opportunities for ITS to improve transportation in the Heartland and beyond. This glimpse into the future was highlighted by several unique research activities including robotic highway safety monitors--yes, those drums really did move on their own!

Speaking of technology, as in years past, the ITS Heartland vendors stole the show in the Exhibit Hall with 25 display booths showcasing the latest in available ITS technology and services. Meeting attendees took advantage of many opportunities to learn about a variety of products, software, and

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Annual Meeting

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consulting and contracting services with excellent potential to meet the needs of projects back home.

Two technical tours allowed many attendees to see the home of the Kansas City Scout freeway management system unveiled this year by the Kansas and Missouri Departments of Transportation. Participants traveled by bus to the KC Scout Traffic Operations Center for a guided tour and demonstration. During the trek, information was provided to offer background in the planning, development, deployment and operation of the center and roadside elements including vehicle detector stations, CCTV cameras, electronic message signs, and communications equipment viewed along the way. The tour showed first-hand that wherever you're going while traveling the freeways in Kansas City, Scout helps in "getting you there."

The 2004 Annual Meeting was brought to a close at the business luncheon with officer reports, announcements of upcoming events, and officer election results. Congratulations to those with new positions on the 2004-2005 Board

(listed with contact information on page 10).

Also, as part of the business meeting, Erin Flanigan presented Kathy Glenn with a plaque



Jim Brachtel (FHWA) and Mike Rose (Wavetronix) discuss applications of the Wavetronix SmartSensor.

recognizing appreciation for Kathy's exceptional contribution to ITS Heartland as Chapter Administrator for the past four years. Kathy has recently accepted a new position within the University of Nebraska and no longer works at the Mid-American Transportation Center (MATC), which provides administrative services for ITS Heartland.

The chapter also recognized our three past presidents, Erin Flanigan, Matt Volz and Tom Ryan for their distinguished leadership

and service that has built a strong foundation for ITS Heartland to continue to prosper far into the future.

The success of the 2004 Annual Meeting is also due in large part to the generous financial support of the following sponsoring organizations: Black & Veatch, Cambridge Systematics, CITE, HNTB, Iowa Department of Transportation, Jacobs Civil, Kansas Department of Transportation, Mixon Hill, Missouri Department of Transportation, Nebraska Department of Roads, Olsson Associates, PB Farradyne, SRF Consulting Group, TransCore, TranSystems Corporation, URS, and Wavetronix.

The ITS Heartland Annual Meeting continues to provide a venue to promote awareness of ITS activity in the region and a greater understanding of available resources through its program of technical presentations and exhibits. However, the greatest benefit may be the information gained through unexpected opportunities for all to share ideas and experiences as we work together to improve transportation in the Heartland. ■

For information about ITS Pulse, or to recommend articles for future ITS Pulse editions, please contact your state representative:

Kansas: Steve Rockers
Iowa: Dennis Kroger
Nebraska: Jaimie Huber
Missouri: Tom Clancy

Plan to attend ...

ITS America 2005
 15th Annual Meeting and Exposition
 May 2-4, 2005
 Phoenix Civic Plaza, Phoenix, AZ
www.itsa.org

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President's Message

by Leslie Spencer Fowler, President, Kansas Department of Transportation

Thanks for allowing me the opportunity to serve as President of this important and terrific four state organization. As many of you know or don't know, I have been associated with this organization for over ten years stretching back to the first annual meeting in St. Joseph, Missouri. I am



Leslie Spencer Fowler,
ITS Heartland President

fortunate and privileged to work with so many talented and dedicated professionals in the common pursuit of improving our transportation infrastructure through technology. During the period of my involvement with ITS

Heartland there have been great strides because of your involvement and interest. Yet there is much to be done.

My predecessor, Erin Flanigan, guided ITS Heartland through a challenging year. While continuing the initiatives that Erin started, I am focusing on the collective work needed for budget,

membership benefits, and continued growth. As for any vibrant organization, the challenge is to bring in new members. It is my sense that there are many other transportation entities who are

unaware of, or do not even know, ITS Heartland exists. To that end, I ask each reader of my message to bang the drum for ITS Heartland, an important organization that always needs new members.

Remember to keep open the dates of March 14-16, 2005, for the ITS Heartland Chapter Annual Meeting at the Capital Plaza Hotel in Topeka, Kansas. Joining us will be members from MOVITE. I'm looking forward to seeing and talking with you in March 2005.

If you have any suggestion about improvement in the organization, please email me at leslie@ksdot.org. I am a great believer in the collective wisdom of the ITS Heartland membership.

Past President's Message

by Erin Flanigan, Past President, TransCore, Inc.

Time is the coin of your life. It is the only coin you have, and only you can determine how it will be spent. Be careful lest you let other people spend it for you.

- Carl Sandburg
(1878 - 1967)

Time seems to go by so quickly and this is definitely true for

my past year as President of ITS Heartland, but it has been a coin well spent! I have enjoyed working with the wonderful Board of Directors and it is in good hands with the leadership of Leslie Fowler this next year.

I have had so much fun as president of ITS Heartland and I encourage everyone to get involved at some level with this



Erin Flanigan, ITS
Heartland Past President

great organization. The annual meeting and working with the folks involved with this organization are only part of what makes ITS Heartland great. At the heart of things we come together for the camaraderie within our organization, and to make good friends.

From my heart... this is an

extraordinary group. The camaraderie of our group is what makes the difference at our annual meeting and within the organization. Our time together is memorable. That is what I hope for all of you, that you make new friends and meet colleagues you'll associate with in projects throughout your career here in the Heartland.

Over the course of the past year each Board Member has given time and energy to ITS Heartland and for that I thank the entire Board, thank you. ITS Heartland is a vibrant organization as evident in the success of the 5th Annual meeting. Each year attendance at the meeting increases, as does the excitement and energy within the organization. I encourage the membership to become engaged in the organization through involvement with the Board, committees, and planning of the annual meeting.

Thank you for the opportunity to be your President this past year. I hope to see you at all of ITS Heartland's future activities.

Kansans Like 511 Replacement for Road Hotline

by Barb Blue, ATIS Coordinator, Kansas Department of Transportation

The early success of Kansas' 511 system is told by the numbers.

KDOT projected that the system, which had its "soft" deployment in January, would handle 100,000 calls in its first year. By July 10, nearly 136,000 calls had already been received.

We have been very pleased with the public response to 511 thus far. Comments received from callers have been extremely positive; they like 511, and find it helpful and easy to use.

511 has already reached more than just the traveling public. The Kansas Highway Patrol reports that calls to their dispatch centers regarding weather and road conditions have been reduced, freeing them to attend to needs on the highways. KDOT District Office personnel also report a reduction in calls to their offices for similar information, with similar benefit. School Superintendents have found the route-specific weather and road condition information provided by 511 helpful in assisting them in making decisions about closing schools during inclement winter weather.

The first phase of 511, the new Advanced Travel Information System, was publicly deployed in Kansas on January 15, 2004. The primary goal for Phase I was to

convert the existing Road Condition Hotline (1-800-585-

ROAD) to 511, while improving customer service. This goal was met on June 30, 2004, when the Kansas 511 System officially replaced the old Road Condition Hotline. Receiving travel information in Kansas is now as simple as calling 511.

Many callers have told us what a great improvement 511 is over the road condition hotline. 511 is easier (3 easy digits to dial), supplies more complete information (route-specific information that is near real-time), and is quicker to use. Callers like that they can ask for route-specific information and not listen to information they don't need or want.

By calling 511 inside Kansas or 1-866-511-KDOT anywhere in the US via a landline or cellular phone, travelers can get route-specific road conditions, construction detours, and travel weather information for the Kansas State Highway System and the Kansas Turnpike 24 hours a day. Kansas 511 also provides similar information for Nebraska (the only bordering state

with an active 511 system). Currently, phone numbers are provided for callers to access road/travel information in other adjacent states. As these states deploy, Kansas will work to make their information available as well. Soon 511 in Kansas will also have

the ability to broadcast alerts (AMBER, General Transportation, and/or Homeland Security).

Road condition information is entered by KDOT crews across the state. The same road condition information is also available on the internet through KDOT's Kanroad system at www.kanroad.org.

The Kansas 511 System was built by Meridian Environmental Technology, Inc., #SAFE innovators, located in Grand Forks, North Dakota. The system is fully automated and callers are connected to a computerized voice message system that offers voice response or touch-tone command options. The call is free from a landline phone. Depending upon the caller's wireless service plan, the call may count against their cellular minutes, but no roaming fee should be involved.

Because KDOT opted for a "soft" deployment of 511 to give KDOT and its partners the opportunity to try the system and provide feedback before wide public promotion, KDOT began expanded 511 promotion efforts in May. Road Condition Hotline signs have been removed and have, in many cases, been replaced with 511 signs. 511 signs have been placed at all major points of entry into Kansas from any direction to provide information for travelers entering the state, as well as at major turnpike exchanges for turnpike travelers, such as truckers. Additional signs may also be placed at or near major highway junctions across the state.

Other promotion efforts are under way as well. Television and



#SAFE 511 Steering Committee. Front row (L to R): Dottie Shoup, Brandi Tesch, Jim McGee, Jaimie Huber, Laura Perkins. Middle row: Dave Huft, Bill Hobbs, Julie Maaske, Barb Blue, Mark Owens. Back row: Mike Carlyle, Bob Seliskar, Paul Cammack, Jon Becker, Steve Garbe, Bruce Hunt, and John Forman

Nebraska Received '04 Protect Act Amber Plan Grant

Rest Area Upgrades and Metro Electronic Message Board Installation are Planned for Alerts

by Jim McGee, Nebraska Department of Roads

The Nebraska Department of Roads is among 19 jurisdictions that have been selected to receive 2004 Protect Act Amber Plan grants of \$400,000.

The solicitation was announced by federal officials in June and applicants had only 30 days to respond. State officials will use the funds to provide critical information links at Nebraska rest areas, enabling the transmission of critical alerts, including child abductions, weather, and homeland security. The project is possible due to the cooperation of NETV and the use of NETV infrastructure and its communications capacity.

Another overhead electronic message board will also be added to the Omaha interstate system's

present nine signs. The Omaha signs have been activated a number of times for abduction alerts since they became operational in late 2002.

NDOR will partner with several other state agencies to develop the statewide project that will add another electronic message board in metropolitan Omaha and provide communications upgrades at about 25 Nebraska interstate highway rest areas with the intent of being able to deliver up-to-date real time alerts to remote rural travel information centers located within Nebraska's 25 rest facilities.

Two approaches are being considered. The first method involves the installation of a 3.7 meter satellite dish at candidate

rest areas that will provide a 24/7 data stream. The second method of delivery being considered is using Nebraska Educational Telecommunication's digital television signal, with the channel varying from site to site. The second approach would allow transmission during the NETV broadcast day which is 9 AM until 11 PM CDT.

Project partners include the Nebraska Department of Roads, Nebraska Attorney Generals Office, Nebraska Amber Plan Committee, Nebraska State Patrol, Nebraska Department of Economic Development Division of Tourism, and Nebraska Educational Telecommunications. ■

ITS Chapter Membership

Mission Statement

To improve the quality of life through advanced transportation technologies and communications for those transportation users who live, visit, and invest in America's Heartland Region.

Membership Rate Structure

membership year runs April 1-March 31

\$50 per year for individual public sector members

\$60 per year for individual private sector members

\$25 per year for student members

\$200 per year for corporation/agency members including up to five employees

Membership Forms

Forms are available on the chapter Web site. Make checks payable to ITS Heartland.

Your membership allows ITS Heartland to continue to produce ITS Pulse, the annual meetings, and other outreach activities throughout the year. Thank you for your continued support.

511

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radio spots were released in early July that will be carried by stations across Kansas. 511 will also be promoted at county fairs and the Kansas state Fair this summer and fall. Additional 511 information will be printed on the 2005-2006 Kansas State map.

KDOT wants to be certain everyone knows about 511 and that it replaces the old road condition hotline. ■

The Jetsons May Be Coming to Kansas

by Stan Young, Professor, Kansas State University

An interesting event occurred last week that may prompt the development of Jetson-like high-tech travel in Kansas.

A delegation from Kansas consisting of representatives from Kansas State University (KSU), City of Manhattan, Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT), Federal Highway Administration, and Federal Transit Association visited the University of West Virginia at Morgantown.

The topic of discussion may surprise people. Kansas and West Virginia have several things in common, partly due to the agricultural economy of both states. However, this conference had nothing to do with agriculture or rural issues. The delegation from Kansas was collaborating with representatives of the University of West Virginia on the design, operation, and implementation of a high-tech automated people mover system.

Morgantown is the site of a federal project built in the 1970s intended to demonstrate the technology that would be the basis for transit systems into the 21st century. Although the concept and technology demonstrated at Morgantown fell out of political favor soon after the system was inaugurated, the Morgantown People Mover (MPM) has operated successfully for 25 years. Even today, the MPM is the only automated system in the world that offers on-demand service and

delivers small groups of people directly to their destination without having to stop at every intervening station. The MPM carries roughly 2.2 million passengers per year, and the University and City are planning to expand it in the future.

KSU, in cooperation with KDOT, has been reevaluating the design and operating principles that underpin the MPM as a possible solution to unresolved mobility issues at the Manhattan campus. The close proximity of academic and recreational facilities at KSU combined with the large parking demand threatens to destroy the relaxing setting and pedestrian

atmosphere of the campus. If large parking garages or parking lots are located in the center of campus, large volumes of vehicles



Kansas Delegation to Morgantown, West Virginia [from left to right]: Darwin Abbott (KSU Director of Parking), James Devault (KSU EECE Professor), Mark Huffines (FHWA Technology Specialist), Robert Hendershot (WVU Host, MPM Systems Engineering Manager), Mark Taussig (Manhattan City Commissioner), Mokhtee Ahmad (FTA Region 7 Administrator), James Hatcher (WVU Host, MPM Systems Programmer), Stan Young (KDOT Research Engineer), Moni G. El-Aasar (BG Consultants, Manhattan), Bruce Shubert (KSU Associate VP of Administration and Finance), Justin Williams (KSU EECE Student). In the background is a MPM vehicle within the maintenance yard.

would be drawn to the campus core. Large capacity surface parking lots are available at the periphery of campus, but are unattractive due to walking distances to buildings. Students and faculty vying for the best parking clog streets in the core campus areas and produce undesirable and unsafe vehicle/pedestrian interaction.

KSU is examining automated people mover concepts similar to the MPM as a means to link large capacity perimeter parking lots with the major activity centers on campus. Such a system could relieve a substantial portion of intra-campus vehicle traffic, allow for more efficient movement between the various academic clusters, and provide for growth of the campus to the north where undeveloped land is available.

The effort at KSU is in its early stages. A research study funded

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Rural TIM on Missouri's I-70 Corridor Project

by Mike Stephenson, Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT)

MoDOT's Traffic Incident Management (TIM) Program will become an important tool in MoDOT's efforts to reduce congestion on Missouri's major roadways and improve the safety of the motoring public and emergency responders. As the first phase of a statewide TIM program, MoDOT has been working on a project to establish a TIM program for the I-70 corridor, including the urban areas of St. Louis and Kansas City. The purpose of the project is to raise awareness of the need for better TIM practices in both the urban and rural areas and educate emergency responders on "best practices" being used by incident responders across the nation.

Over the past year, MoDOT involved over 300 incident responders from 14 statewide incident response organizations in 10 workshops across the I-70

corridor. These organizations included law enforcement, fire and rescue, EMS, AAA, tow/recovery, motor carriers, broadcasters, insurance industry, regional planning councils, MoDOT, KDOT and FHWA. As a result of these workshops, plus surveys of incident responders and one-on-one interviews, 44 separate strategies for effective TIM have been recommended for implementation over a five-year period.

In addition to implementing effective TIM strategies, MoDOT will also pursue policy/legislative initiatives to update current policies and legislation, and establish a comprehensive set of performance measures to determine the effectiveness of the program. Following a "Train-the-Trainer" program in June, MoDOT is now working with the University of Missouri to establish

a program to train TIM "best practices" to the hundreds of incident responders across the I-70 corridor.

From the user perspective, the benefits of this program will be reduced time for drivers stopped on congested roadways due to traffic incidents, a decrease in driver frustration levels, and a reduction in secondary crashes which will in turn decrease property damage and save lives.

From the perspectives of the responder organizations, implementation of the project strategies can be expected to result in enhanced responder efficiencies, communications and on-scene safety. The number of deaths and injuries suffered by motorists, police, fire, EMS, transportation and towing workers can be cut significantly by implementing better TIM techniques. ■

Kansas

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by a grant from KDOT in 2000 concluded that the concept and technology would beneficially impact campus mobility. The positive results of the study combined with concerns over the appearance of overhead guide-ways at KSU prompted a follow-on architectural aesthetics analysis. This analysis was performed within the KSU Department of Architecture by a team of students led by faculty. The results are on display at the Facility Planning office in Dykstra Hall at KSU. Concurrently, the engineering department in collaboration with KDOT is developing a scale-model test-bed to demonstrate the

sensor and control technology of the envisioned system. Structural requirements, cost estimates and economic impact analysis are also planned, pending funding.

Proponents of the concept hope to complete these studies within eighteen months. The next step would be the development of a full-scale prototype at the KSU campus. If successful, such a system would not only solve KSU's mobility problems, but also address an entire untapped market in the transportation industry.

So the next time you see West Virginia and Kansas sharing the headlines, you may be surprised at what these 'rural' states are up to. ■



ITS and Transit in the Heartland

by Steve Bahler, Olsson Associates

The Kansas City Area Transportation Authority (KC-ATA) is in the final design of the first Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) in the Heartland. The BRT will take advantage of several ITS technologies to improve on-time reliability and customer satisfaction. This includes:

- Transit signal priority tied to automatic vehicle location
- Computer aided transit dispatching
- Bus arrival/departure signs at stations.

Omaha Metro Area Transit (MAT) is planning to study similar technologies to complement their planned new "hub and spoke" transit system.

Sioux City Transit was perhaps the first in the Heartland to implement transit AVL and kiosks to show riders where the buses are.

Kearney, Nebraska, Transit led development of one of the nation's first statewide ITS Architectures focused on rural transit. The architecture proposes AVL and computer-aided dispatching for demand-responsive transit systems to improve ability to provide rider and coordinate trips between transit providers. ■

Thanks to the Sponsors and Vendors who Made the Annual Meeting a Success

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ATIS Web sites:
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www.kanroad.org
www.OzarksTraffic.info

Save the Date:
 6th Annual meeting for ITS Heartland Chapter,
 Capital Plaza Hotel, March 14-16, 2005,
 Topeka, Kansas

Progress is Key to Scout's Traffic Management

by Diana Kidwell, KC Scout

Kansas City Scout, KDOT's new, bi-state traffic management system, is on the pathway to progress after several months of test operations. Both the Kansas and Missouri departments of transportation launched the Scout traffic management system earlier this year. However, the states ran the system under limited test conditions. The idea was to work out any "kinks" in the new, high-tech system before the public was expected to rely on Scout for daily traffic information. Now, after several months of testing, KDOT and MoDOT are poised to formally launch the system and its newly-developed Web site publicly. Plans are underway for an official event this fall.

"Each day brings progress and promise," says Jason Sims, Scout Traffic Operations Engineer. Sims helps oversee daily operations and addresses policy and procedure issues as they develop within Kansas City's one-and-only traffic operations center.

Scout staff monitors 75 miles of freeway within the Kansas City metropolitan area. Staff can tell you it was a rough ride when KDOT and MoDOT first flipped the switch on Monday, January 12, 2004. "There's this huge learning curve," says Ray Webb, Scout Traffic Operations Manager. "The early days weren't just about testing the system, they were also about on the job training. Scout is the first of its kind in our area, there wasn't a large workforce to build our staff from."

Now, with several months of experience under its belt, Scout staff says it's smoother sailing. Operators monitoring daily traffic Monday through Fridays from 5:30 a.m. until 8 p.m. say they manage two to four incidents daily. And when they include having active work zones, the number of daily incidents is even



higher.

"The question we hear the most," says Webb, "is, 'Why are the message boards always blank?' The truth is we use them dozens of times in a one-month period. But if there is no incident or debris blocking one or more freeway lanes, if there is no AMBER Alert, or Ozone Alert, or any other emergency or weather alert, then the boards are blank."

Webb adds that Scout's message boards will be used more frequently as the system evolves and offers an increased level of traveler information services and when Scout begins operating around the clock -- seven days a week, 24 hours a day. ■



Map and legend from the Kansas City Scout Web site. The map shows traffic conditions at the end of morning drive time.

ITS Heartland 2004-05 Board of Directors Quick Contact List

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Trucks to get Radiation Scans along Iowa Interstates

In an effort to stop terrorists from smuggling bomb-making materials or stolen nuclear weapons, Iowa is a pioneer.

The state plans to become one of the first states in the nation to routinely check heavy trucks for illegal radioactive cargo.

Drive-through radiation detection equipment will be installed, probably in 2004, at five weigh stations on Interstate Highways 80 and 35, said Capt. Tom Sever, hazardous materials coordinator for the Iowa Department of Transportation.

Iowa's interstate highway system is at the crossroads of the nation, carrying thousands of freight-hauling trucks. Some of the state's busiest stretches of I-80 average more than 10,000 trucks daily, while sections of I-35 average about 5,000 trucks per day.

Acquiring radiation detection gear is part of the state's overall strategy to combat terrorism, said David Miller, chief of staff of the Iowa Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management. Law enforcement officers who inspect trucks at the weigh stations also will be given hand-held devices to check for explosives, he said.

Iowa DOT officials said they planned to regularly use radiation detectors at the five weigh stations to check large trucks passing through, although trucks will be selected randomly.

The radiation detection gear that Iowa plans to acquire costs about \$8,000 to \$10,000 for each unit. The hand-held explosive detection devices that will be purchased will cost about \$20,000 to \$30,000 apiece, state officials

said. The purchases will be made with federal homeland security money.

From the Des Moines Register and Tribune Company, June 28, 2004.

For additional information, contact Capt. Tom Sever at 515-237-3278.

National Rural ITS Conference

August 22-24, 2004
Duluth, Minnesota

Sponsor: FHWA, ITS America,
ITS MN

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