



NEWS

June/July/August 2004
Volume 12, Issue 3

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Sarath Joshua, PE, PhD



Dear AZITE Member,

We are almost at the end of our 2003-2004 calendar and this is my final message to you as the President of AZITE. The board was hopeful that there would be sufficient interest to hold a July meeting in Flagstaff. That would have been yet another first for our Section in reaching out beyond our base in Phoenix. However, the response to my email on this subject clearly indicated that we would not have enough participants to make a July meeting feasible.

Our final meeting for this year was held on June 24th, with the Women's Transportation Seminar (WTS), Society of Women Engineers (SWE) and the Conference of Minority Transportation Officials (COMTO), at the Phoenix Country Club. We established a new record for attendance (145?) and listened to a great panel discussion on the Regional Transportation Plan and Proposition 400 (extension of the half-cent sale tax dedicated for transportation in Maricopa County). If you were not able to be there, you missed out a great opportunity to get an update on this very important topic and also network with your professional colleagues.

I see a very exciting future for transportation professionals in our state. This is based on my optimism on the passage of Proposition 400 in November and SAFETEA federal transportation reauthorization in 2005. These two outcomes will provide a lot of resources for transportation system improvements – meaning a lot of challenging work for all of us. The role of future transportation professionals is rapidly changing as we face the fact that many technology applications (ITS) is now a normal part of doing business for all of us. Much of this change is still not covered well in college courses. It demands new skills and continuing education. That is where AZITE can help you. One way to keep abreast of all these developments is by attending monthly Section meetings next year – mark your calendars, fourth Thursday of every month.

Recent Activities:

Last month, in Sacramento, I presented a proposal to ITE District 6 Board for hosting the 2009 Annual Meeting in Phoenix. We lost the bid to Denver but we were encouraged to try for a future year.

You may recall that the biggest challenge for us during the past year was SB 1271. By working together we were able to convince our lawmakers not to go forward with the bill. We have taken this issue (with support and encouragement from Randy McCourt, District 6 President) to the ITE Policy and Legislative Committee and will be heard at their next meeting in Florida next month (see AZITE statement on this topic to PLC on page 3 and 4). We have requested for an ITE policy statement to indicate that signal timing and phasing decisions must ONLY be made by a qualified professional engineer.

Recap of Last Year:

Back in September, I identified a few focus areas where we needed to improve. We have been able to reach most of our goals in these areas. The credit for all these achievements go to the individuals or teams that I have identified below:

1. Redesign the AZITE website at the District 6 website and make it our first stop for all information on AZITE - Led By Sylvia Mousseux and Nak Kim - Voted the Best ITE Section website in Western USA
2. A series of fun projects and activities by the Active Member Group led by Christine Warren - AZITE Golf Shirts, Ball Game, Monday Evening Happy Hour, etc.
3. Provide support and possibly mentoring for ASU and U of A student chapters – Mark Hickman is doing a great job as the advisor to U of A chapter. Randy McCourt gave an inspiring speech to the ASU chapter. We still need a few ASU alumni to get the ASU chapter active again.

4. Help recruit new AZITE members – Dan Hartig, Bill Birdwell, Chris Lemka
5. Professional training – PTOE exam in October 2004 – Jenny Grote helped bring the exam here
6. Increase AZITE community involvement through participation in Future City, Eweek, MathCounts – we sponsored the Future City Competition and Eweek
7. Establish an Electronic Forum where anyone may pose questions related to traffic engineering to a panel of AZITE volunteers – We did establish an Electronic Forum at our website but it has not been used much

I have enjoyed working with fellow board members, committee chairs and all of you to make our Section a useful part of our professional lives. We have accomplished much this year and I am sure the new board with Scott's leadership will take AZITE to new heights.

I want to thank Joe Spadafino of Kirkham Michael for being the Newsletter Editor for a number of years. Upon Joe's recommendation I have asked Amara Ibeji of CK Engineering to be his successor. This newsletter was put together by Amara with some guidance from Joe. I am sure all of you join me congratulating Amara. Please help him by forwarding articles, announcements, amusing pictures etc. He can be reached at: aibeji@ckengr.com

Don't forget the ITE 2004 Annual Meeting and Exhibit, Lake Buena Vista, Florida, August 1-4.

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ACTIVE MEMBERS GROUP MEETING

The next meeting of the Active Members Group will be on September 14th at Rosie McCaffrey's at 5:30 PM. Rosie McCaffrey's is located at 906 East Camelback Road, Phoenix. For additional information, contact Christine Warren at cwarren@ch2m.com. AMG will be having its yearly planning session during this meeting. Please come prepared with event suggestions for the coming year. All ITE members are welcome and encouraged to attend.

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Professional Traffic Operations Engineer Exam

News and information impacting Professional Traffic Operations Engineer certification as of July 2, 2004

PTOE Exams for 2004

Currently, there are 1,106 certified PTOEs internationally. As of July 1, 50 individuals are registered to take the exam on July 31 at the ITE 2004 Annual Meeting and Exhibit in Lake Buena Vista, FL, USA. The exam has been held 18 times in a total of 43 locations.

Additional exams in 2004 will be held on the following dates:

Date and Location

- October 23, 2004 Chicago, IL
- Hartford, CT
- Minneapolis, MN
- Phoenix, AZ
- Toronto, ON
- December 5, 2004 Jacksonville, FL
- December 7, 2004 University Park, PA

PTOE -A Mark of Excellence

Based on materials ITE has seen, many consulting firms are including in their promotional materials and newsletters the number of PTOEs in their firms and are announcing those who have recently completed PTOE certification requirements. Also on the rise is the number of clients who recognize or require PTOE certification for employment and contract consideration.

Renewal Rates on the Rise

The renewal rate for those whose PTOE expired in 2002 and 2003 is greater than anticipated. Of those whose PTOE expired in 2002 and 2003, 91.3% and 91.9%, respectively, have renewed their PTOE certification. To renew, PTOEs have to meet or exceed the requirement to earn 45 Professional Development Hours (PDH) during the previous three years.

AN ALL-DAY PTOE REFRESHER COURSE WILL BE HELD ON OCTOBER 2ND, 9AM-4PM AT THE ADOT HRDC TRAINING CENTER LOCATED AT 1130 N. 22ND AVENUE.

**** Please use the registration form attached ****

Transportation Professionals Certification Board (TPCB) Meeting

There will be a meeting of the TPCB Board of Directors at the ITE 2004 Annual Meeting and Exhibit, on August 3 in Fiesta 3 from 9:30 a.m.-noon at Disney's Coronado Springs Resort in Lake Buena Vista, FL, USA.

This meeting will be followed by the TPCB Annual Business Meeting in Fiesta 1 and 2 from 12:30 p.m.-2:00 p.m. All PTOEs are invited to attend the Annual Business Meeting.

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CONGRATULATIONS...

To all successful examinees of the professional engineers exam. Continue reaching for the skies.



**Institute of Transportation
Engineers
Arizona Section**

MEMORANDUM

June 28, 2004

TO: Chair, ITE Policy and Legislative Committee
FROM: Sarath Joshua, President, Arizona Section of ITE
SUBJECT: An ITE Policy to Protect the Practice of Traffic Engineering & A National Study on Leading and Lagging Left Phasing

This memorandum is being submitted to the ITE PLC with the request that the two issues highlighted be considered for future action.

Earlier this year, members of the Arizona Section of ITE spent a considerable amount of time and energy to discourage the state legislature from passing a bill related to traffic engineering. Arizona Senate Bill 1271 sought to mandate the lagging left turn traffic signal phasing sequence across the state. Public sector members of the Arizona Section of ITE, representing individual agencies, actively participated in the process. They attended a number of meetings at the legislature and provided pertinent information to support the near unanimous position that such decisions should be left to trained professionals. When it seemed like the bill was going forward anyway despite all this effort, the Arizona Section of ITE sent a letter to the entire senate prior to a crucial vote in the senate (See Attachment). Fortunately for all of us, common sense prevailed and the bill was defeated. We feel that our timely action contributed to preventing a nightmare for traffic engineering professionals in our state.

The action we took in opposing the bill was not an easy one. It opened up the old debate whether "Leading" or "Lagging" left turn phasing was significantly different with respect to overall safety and congestion. Two Arizona jurisdictions, Scottsdale and Tucson, have predominantly lagging lefts while rest of the state have leading lefts. We feel that this debate, among traffic engineering experts, is still on going even at the national level and needs to be addressed at the national level. We learned a great lesson through this experience and have identified the need for a better strategy to deal with similar issues in the future. We are seeking help from the PLC in addressing this need.

We have identified two issues that need to be addressed at the national level:

1) A policy statement from ITE that clearly states that traffic signal timing and phasing decisions must be carried out by qualified professionals based on site specific and system wide traffic operations.

2) A national study that compares leading and lagging left turn signal phasing, and also associated variations, to provide better guidance to traffic engineers under what conditions different strategies are most effective for improving safety and reducing congestion or both.

Issue No. 1: ITE Policy

The Arizona Section had extended discussions of this topic during February and March when hearings on this Senate Bill were held. We are nearly unanimous in the opinion that the determination of any signal phasing should not be mandated through legislation. In developing our arguments to counter the proposed bill we discovered that there was no policy statement anywhere on who should make such decisions. The lack of a policy on this issue among traffic engineering professionals may be seen by some as a good area for politically driven decisions for short-term gain.

We looked at the MUTCD and ITE policies but could not find any reference that we could use in our letter to the legislature. In our letter to the legislature we requested that they leave this decision to qualified traffic engineers. An ITE policy with language similar to what we have shown in the next paragraph would have been immensely helpful to us and may have helped resolve this issue faster and also protect the practice of traffic engineering.

Determination of the most appropriate timing and sequence of traffic signal phasing at a specific intersection or a signalized street network should be based on traffic engineering principles. This is a traffic engineering decision that involves many considerations, such as safety and efficiency, and should be made by a qualified traffic engineer.

Our primary desire for such a policy is driven by our recent experience. It may be possible to develop a policy that would address broader issues including our particular challenge.

Issue No. 2: A National Study on Leading and Lagging Left Signal Phasing

At present most local jurisdictions determine the best phase sequence for a particular location and implement it. Two cities in the state, Scottsdale and Tucson, have predominantly lagging left phasing across their city system. Other jurisdictions use leading left but also use lagging at specific locations where lagging works best. A state DOT sponsored study compared the pros and cons of Lagging Vs Leading and concluded that there was no significant difference between the two methods for system wide safety.

The state senator advocating the bill for lagging lefts at all intersections managed to convince his home town council, Town of Gilbert (fastest growing city/town in the USA) to go along with his idea to mandate lagging left turn signal phasing. This has now created a problem for the town traffic engineer, who must justify any change from this town policy by a study.

The question whether one phasing sequence offers any clear advantage over the other, for system-wide implementation does not seem to have a clear answer. To explore how traffic engineers felt about this question at the national level the following questions were posed at the National Transportation Dialogue:

I would like to pose two questions to public sector traffic engineers that read this post.

1) What is the best approach when responding to an effort in your state that would seek to introduce a new law to require how traffic signal phasing is implemented? We just went through this experience in Arizona and managed to convince our senate to leave this to engineers. It was not an easy task. If passed, it would have required all signalized intersections with left turn phasing to go lagging left. The unproven claim is that lagging is much safer than leading.

2) Has anyone seen any solid evidence of lagging or leading left phasing being safer than the other, when implemented uniformly across a large network?

To date there have been 271 views of this question and only one response that stated legislators should steer clear of such issue areas. This clearly points to the fact that many traffic engineers do not seem to have clear answers to these questions or are not confident enough to state them publicly at a website.

This seems to support our thinking that a national study is needed to address this need for better guidance beyond the current language in the MUTCD.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter. We look forward to meeting with the PLC to discuss this important issue.

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U.K.: SPEED CAMERAS SAVING LIVES

U.K. Transport Secretary Alistair Darling recently reported that the number of deaths and serious injuries at safety camera sites has declined by 40 percent during the last three years—more than 100 fewer deaths per year. The report provides detailed camera site data, including the location of each approved camera site, justification for its placement and its expected impact on road safety. Additional results from the report include:

- 33-percent reduction in injury accidents
- 35-percent reduction in pedestrians killed or seriously injured
- 7-percent reduction in average speeds at new sites
- 8-percent reduction in average speeds at urban sites
- 71-percent reduction in the number of vehicles speeding at new camera sites
- 79 percent of survey participants support the use of cameras to reduce accidents
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You can find the full report at www.ite.org/

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SCIENCE FUNNIES

When NASA first started sending up astronauts, they quickly discovered that ball-point pens would not work in zero gravity. To combat this problem, NASA scientists spent a decade and \$12 billion developing a pen that writes in zero gravity, upside down, on almost any surface including glass and at temperatures ranging from below freezing to over 300 degrees C. The Russians used a pencil.



Institute of Transportation Engineers
Arizona Section

**REGISTRATION FORM
FOR
PTOE REFRESHER COURSE**

Saturday October 2, 2004 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM
Instructor: Paul Basha, P.E., PTOE

NAME:.....
Last First

MEMBER OF AZITE? Y or N (circle one)

EMPLOYER:

CONTACT INFO:

Ph:

Email:

Address:

Address:

ALREADY REGISTERED FOR PTOE: Y or N (pl circle)

Please enclose a check for: \$40 for AZITE members
OR
\$50 for non-members

Mail this form and the check to: Kimberly Carroll, P.E.
AZITE Treasurer
Kirkham Michael
9201 N 25th Ave Ste 150
Phoenix AZ 85021

The training facility will be in the Phoenix metro area. You will receive information on it soon. The exam date is October 23, 2004. For more information and to register for the exam go to:

<http://www.ite.org/certification/index.asp>

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Sylvia Mousseux
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MEETING ANNOUNCEMENTS



SEPTEMBER MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT

The Next Monthly Meeting of the Arizona Section of ITE will be held on September 23, 2004 at 11:55 A.M.

Location: TBD

Cost: \$20.00

Menu: TBD

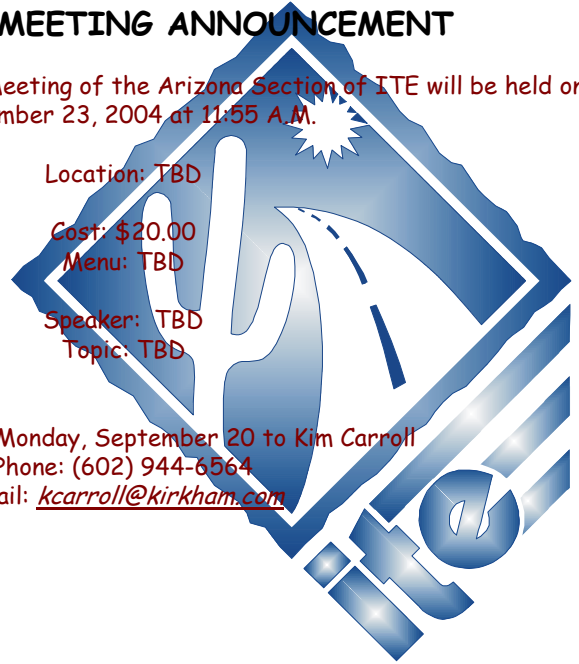
Speaker: TBD

Topic: TBD

RSVP by noon, Monday, September 20 to Kim Carroll

Phone: (602) 944-6564

Email: kcarroll@kirkham.com



C/O Amara Ibeji
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This newsletter is a bi-monthly publication of the Arizona Section of ITE. Send, e-mail or fax your articles to Amara Ibeji @ CK Engineering, Inc. (fax: 602.482.2885, aibeji@ckengr.com)