

Tribal Listening Session Transcript: 6/20/2019, Oklahoma

FHWA Staff (F)

Tribal Partners (T)

TONY FURST (F)

I'm Tony Furst, Office of Innovative Program Delivery, FHWA. With me is Victoria Peters, who is the Center Director for the Center for Local Aid Support.

We would like to hear from you as we evaluate the TTAP and decide what the next steps are going to be for this program. I would remind everybody again that this session is being recorded, so when you speak, please let us know your name, your tribal affiliation and the position you hold within your tribe. Also, please be sure to sign in on the sign-in sheet.

Before I turn it over to you and listen to you, I want to give you a brief overview on where we are with the program. In 2017, there were 7 regional TTAP Centers populating the areas you see on the slide. Three of these Centers had reached the end of their 5 year cooperative agreements. So all of the centers had 5 year cooperative agreements, 2 base years and 3 option years. 3 of the Centers had completed their 5th year, and the other 4 had completed their base years and had entered their option years.

So we looked at the agreements. Although they were all at different times, we looked at the coverage of the centers in terms of geography and the number of tribes served by the centers, and started thinking about options that revolved around the regional partners that you see here and national partners. And one of the rationales for looking at national coverage was to look at replacing seven center directors with one center director and taking some of those resources and putting them toward creating more training capacity in the TTAP.

So we reviewed the comments and the performance of the TTAPS, all of the training hours were self-reported by the centers themselves. Each TTAP Center received the same amount of federal money, approximately \$300,000 dollars. As you can see on the bottom of the slide, the annual training hours delivered by the TTAP Centers varied by Center and also varied by year.

So we looked over a five year period. The average number of training hours delivered by each TTAP Center was 233 hours per year. The Local Technical Assistance Program is run by the state DOTs. Some states keep that program in house, and some states farm it out, usually to a university. Each LTAP Center receives 150,000 per year from Federal Highways that is at least matched by the state. So a number of the LTAP Centers had the same exact funding as the TTAP Centers, \$300,000 dollars a year. These two programs are in the same part of the legislation that we have, the training and education section. Both of these centers have exactly the same platform, to provide training and technical assistance to their constituency. Some of the LTAP Centers have a budget over \$300,000 dollars a year, but we only looked at the annual training hour delivery of those LTAP Centers that had 300,000 dollars a year in funding, so we could

compare. The average for those centers was 576 hours per year of training hours delivered. From the review we conducted, and ensuring we are aligned with congressional intent, we settled on the program objectives that you see here on this slide.

Part of the rationale in looking at a national model was a reduction in the overhead from having one center director versus seven center directors, and being able to use those resources to provide additional training capacity. So in the first half of 2017, we started looking at and discussing options with tribal organizations and in tribal meetings. As you can see on the slide, we held multiple meetings with tribal transportation committee and at different venues. We held national webinars to discuss the program, and options going forward. We clearly failed the tribal community – this did not constitute tribal consultation. Clearly, our outreach, our methods and our committees did not meet your expectations, which is why we are holding these consultation sessions now. When we put out the RFP in August of 2017, it was informed by tribal engagement and outreach. It was not done in a vacuum, and it was not done????.

The two year fixed price contract for the pilot of a national model was awarded in December 2017 and expires in December of this year. The annual funding of that contract is exactly the same funding that the 7 TTAP Centers combined received on an annual basis. The curriculum focuses on core foundational elements of the transportation program. It focuses on procurement, safety, project delivery, maintenance and operations and data and asset management. It took the Center about 2 and a half months to pull all of the pieces together, and they began delivering the program in March of 2018.

So here is where we are. These are the training hours. The training hours of the former structure you've seen before. For a year to year comparison, year one you see on the pilot, is from mid March of 2018 to mid March of 2019. For year two, it's mid March of 2019 through mid-May of 2019. The column that is the most aligned is the blue column. The delivered column. It matches best with delivered hours for the former TTAP Centers. And now I'm going to show you a comparison of training locations over a comparable period. The black dots show where the tribes are located, and the red dots show where pilot training was delivered. If the map included the trainings offered, not just the training delivered, then you would see a third more red dots. We wanted to keep the comparison consistent, so we only used the training hours that were actually delivered. The green dots are where training was delivered by the former TTAP Centers.

Shifting from a national view to a regional view, on the left is the TTAP center from before the pilot, with the best 5 year training average, and the topics of the courses that they delivered. On the right is the same region, with the topics and the training hours delivered, under the current pilot. This is the dashboard that is available on the TTAP website that has numbers for the program. It has a lag time of about 2 months. I'll also point out that there is an online capacity for tribes that is part of the pilot. We realize that not every tribe has access to that online capacity, but a great many tribes do. And it does not detract from the in-person instruction that is provided in a lot of the training. Additionally, FHWA has negotiated and paid for access to AASHTO's TC3 online training and we are negotiating access to the National Highway Institute's online training for all tribal members and for all local public agencies served by the TTAP Centers. We know that the numbers do not tell the whole story. We've been receiving feedback from the tribal community since the pilot began. We've attended every TTAP meeting, with the

exception of the one that was scheduled in concert with LTAP's national meeting, and multiple tribal events and conferences. While this is not all-inclusive, here are the broad themes of what we've heard and we are here today to continue to solicit and receive your feedback on the TTAP. And we can come back to any slide at any time. In addition to everything we hear today comments can be submitted through July 19. Again, this session is being recorded and if you have comments, please tell us your name, your tribal affiliation and your position. I'd like to start with tribal leaders and then open the floor to other individuals who have comments. So the floor is yours and we are here to listen.

ANGELA BLIND (T)

Hello. My name is Angela Blind. I am Transportation Director for the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes of Oklahoma.

TONY FURST (F)

This is if you have comments for us. We have sign in sheets that will tell us who you are.

ANGELA BLIND (T)

I'm sorry, I thought we were doing introductions first.

TONY FURST (F)

Well we can if you like, instead of just looking at the sign-in sheets. Why don't we get started then, and go around, starting with you.

CHARLES ULREY (T)

Hi, my name is Charles Ulrey, I'm with the Ottawa Tribe of Oklahoma.

FRANK AKONETO (T)

Frank Akoneto, Comanche Nation of Oklahoma, Transportation Planner.

JENNA CRAFT (T)

Hi, I'm Jenna Craft with the Delaware Nation of Oklahoma.

ROB ENDICOTT (T)

Rob Endicott, Cherokee Nation.

ANDREA TAYLOR (T)

Andrea Taylor, Cherokee Nation.

MICHAEL LYNN (T)

Michael Lynn, Cherokee Nation

RANDALL CARTER (T)

Randall Carter, Sak and Fox Nation of the Iowa Tribe.

Art Mullen, Potawatomi Nation

LENDEN ALLEN (T)

Lenden Allen, Tonkawa Tribe.

CHRIS MCCRAY (T)

Chris McCray, Pawnee Nation.

MARTHA JAMES (T)

Martha James, also with the Pawnee Nation.

ASHLEY MULDER (T)

Ashley Mulder, Pawnee Nation.

SKYLER MATTHEWS (T)

Skyler Matthews, Kaw Nation

ADELZON SOLDANA (T)

Adelzon Soldana, Tribal Transportation Director, Wichita Tribe.

SHANNON SHEFFERT (T)

Shannon Sheffert, OK LTAP Director.

CINDI PTAK (F)

Cindi Ptak, FHWA, OIPD.

VIVIEN PHILBIN (T)

Vivien Philbin, FLMA Chief Counsel.

DAWN JOHNSON (T)

Dawn Johnson, Cross Timbers Consulting.

ANDY BYRA (F)

Andy Byra, FHWA, OIPD, CLAS.

BARRY HUGHES (T)

Barry Hughes, BIA.

WALT CATLETT, (T)

Walt Catlett, TTAP.

TRINA MARTINE (T)

Trina Martine, Navajo.

SAMUEL RIFFLE (T)

Samuel Riffle, Transportation Director, Cheyenne-Arapaho Tribe

JORY TIGER (T)

Jory Tiger, Wichita Tribe

TONY FURST (F)

So as we evaluate the TTAP going forward, we need your input here to make this program meet your needs. We are here for consultations, we are here so you can tell us how to shape this program....?????....So if you want to go back to the slides, what we've heard before. So tell us your comments, observations and tell us what it is you want, and we're going to make this program as effective as we can.

MICHAEL LYNN (T)

Cherokee Nation: You've shown some information and data up there for us, offered, delivered, offered and also as far as the people or folks you've trained. Give me data that shows what the percentages or actual numbers were for tribal participants. The reason I ask is that I've been to training in the past, and training one of my co-workers went to, and she was the only tribal employee. The rest of them were employees from cities, towns, municipalities. She came back and was telling me about it and I asked her to write up something and I brought that with me today. But, she said the instructor asked many questions of her, like "How does the Cherokee Nation do this?" and "What do you do differently?". See, when she was there she participated more than the instructor that instructed the class. So, although your numbers look decent, I would like you to do a little bit better job. They're skewed by tribal participation.

TONY FURST (F)

If you look at the tribal participation training, you can see the number of tribal participants and the number of non-tribal participants up here. So we tracked all that. So there were over 75% participants are tribal. For the one that your individual attended, it may have been different. But the numbers you see here cover the entire program.

MARTHA JAMES (T)

M. James, Pawnee Nation: I can't read that real clear, and you said 75% were tribal members. But do those 75% actually work for a tribe?

TONY FURST (F)

Do we have that information?

VICTORIA PETERS (F)

So we actually look at when they register and they register for which tribe that they work for. Also, we also look at their email address, and that's how we distinguish that they do work for the tribe. It's not just that they're tribal.

CHRIS MCCRAY (T)

You show the data, you know, that the classes were delivered, but what's not provided in that information is how many attendees did you have? We hear, you know, that somebody attended where there was one person in that class, so you know that kind of destroys those hours. Whereas some of them you may have had four. So I think some of those numbers may be skewed that way. Also, for, there was a committee of the tribal members that helped guide you know, for what the TTAPs were doing, and I think that would definitely help if you got input of the tribes in the regions of how we need to get the training and what trainings we need. That could be very helpful.

TONY FURST (F)

Sorry, I'm shuffling back through slides. If you could go back to the one that shows what we've heard so far. So if you go about midway down, there's a bullet there that says "Create a way for tribes to inform the TTAP on what it is they need." Does that cover what you are talking about?

CHRIS MCCRAY (T)

Yes.

RANDALL CARTER (T)

Mr. Furst, I'm Randall Carter. Of course recently you heard from me in San Diego, I was here to serve in place of the TTAP Advisory Committee. At least in our region, we listened to all of the tribes, what their needs were, and the one thing I did not mention in San Diego, was the only thing I can recommend on top of what you've heard in the previous sessions, was what's not in the regs, what's not being performed is that at least from all 7 regions, there should be an advisory committee to the actual TTAP. If you're going to centralize it, because every region, as I had stated before, when you travel to the regions you see this firsthand, not all tribes are the same. And each region they have certain ways they go about conducting business even with federal partners. My suggestion is that maybe that needs to be changed in the law if that's mandated into this group, because our advisory committee, in 2017, we only had one meeting saying it's going to be a centralized TTAP, and not reauthorized as seven different regions. And that was the only consultation that we had as the advisory committee, and that is surprised us. We are coordinating as tribes trying to get locations. Our biggest deal is that if not everybody has online access, it's hard for some of the tribes on the western side to get some of those, like Broken Arrow, vice versa and the eastern side to come across Oklahoma. And at Sac and Fox we're building a new facility, and we welcome training activity from them next year when we complete construction. My recommendation is to take in addition to San Diego's comments, we'll be providing a letter as well, is that at least you need to have consultation in all seven regions.

UNKNOWN SPEAKER (T)

So, I've got a couple of questions, some you've already touched on, but one is about the two conferences, and , I hold a couple of conferences and if the TTAP conference could be turned into an annual or bi-annual safety summit to kind of help them on travel and expenses. And

then the next part is about starting to talk with the TTAP about local needs, or the regional needs being identified and customized and just creating a way to develop that.

JENNA CRAFT (T)

J. Craft, Delaware Nation: Just kind of had a question about the locations. How have you all in the past chosen location? What do you look at whenever you go to choose a specific place for your trainings?

TONY FURST (F)

Victoria, what do we look at when selecting a location?

VICTORIA PETERS (F)

So when we are looking at locations, we've put together a lot of criteria that we look at, I mean, we look at where tribal training has been held in the past, we went back and looked at all of that, similar to what we did in the maps to see where it's at. We looked at the training we had done in the first year and how many had attended at the various locations, we looked at are there hotels in the area, are there food in the area, what kind of facilities are there. We even had comments come in to us saying, hey, if you would put it in more of a destination location, you would get more attendance. So we tried to sprinkle some of those in this year to see if that was better. I had tribes up in the northwest saying you know, if there was a Costco there, that would be a good regional location to have it in. And so guess what, we took that advice and looked at that too as we were picking locations. At our conference last September, we had a map up there and we asked everyone to put a pin in those locations where they thought training would be good. We took that and put that into the matrix. We also had a call for all of you to submit locations during October and we included that information in there. We also looked at timings of when on everything we could find on tribal events, and we had that listed in that criteria. So we had a big matrix of criteria trying to determine this year, okay, what could we do different, what could we do to pick those locations. Are they perfect? No. And quite honestly, I get as many calls from people saying "Thank you for having it in this location, you've never been anywhere near us before, and then I'll get the same region and I'll have as many people say, "Why did you have it there?". I don't have a magic formula.

UNKNOWN SPEAKER (T)

I want to chime in on that. I went to Procurement Training held in Fort Cobb, Oklahoma. And I don't know if some of you all have been to Fort Cobb, Oklahoma, but there isn't even a stoplight in Ft. Cobb. There's no restaurants, the closest hotel for some of the attendees was over 45 minutes away. It was convenient for me because it was a ten minute drive. But, I was the only tribal represented person there, everybody else was just in construction in general, and I think we've only had two types of these trainings in the western side of the state. There was one in Anadarko, which there is really no hotels in Anadarko to stay at. It's a good restaurant place, but just the western side of the state has been neglected I feel like. And I understand most of the representation around here is eastern tribes, but please don't forget us out on the west side.

R. FAIR (T)

R. Fair, OK DOT: I was under the understanding or the impression that one of the restrictions on having a host location was that it could not be attached to a gaming facility, is there any possibility that that could be changed? Because that would open up so many opportunities for meeting facilities that are located adjacent to the hotels that are in gaming facilities, I know that there's plenty on the western side of the state as well as the eastern side of the state, and I know that this isn't just an Oklahoma issue either, because many other regions in the country have tribes that are engaged in gaming. If there were any way to figure out a way to circumvent or appeal that it would open up a lot of locations that are currently not available because of what is really a somewhat arbitrary rule in the opinion of most people I've talked to on the tribal side. Just a comment or a suggestion.

TONY FURST (F)

We've heard that comment multiple times. The restriction basically dates back to the GMO Las Vegas debacle. We cannot attend at locations that are hosted at casino facilities. If we are going to host a training, we have to be able to make a business case that it was a more cost-effective option. So we can get there, but we have to demonstrate that it is a more cost-beneficial option to hold a training event in facility co-located with a tribal gaming facility.

R. FAIR (T)

I think if there were an understanding of the possibility among the tribes that you might have more opportunities to partner with tribes in locations such as that. But I don't think that many people understand that there are ways around that, so if you could make that more clear to people....

TONY FURST (F)

It's not a??? It's making a strong business case.

R. FAIR (T)

It's just different sides of the same point, in a lot of ways.

RANDALL CARTER (T)

I forgot to mention one thing. Prior to all of this change, the centralization of the program, I don't know the exact percent, but it was a majority of our classroom training was eliminated. The western tribes and the eastern tribes all attended, and that was in Stillwater. And you had the ability to utilize the college staff to assist the TTAP, the LTAP, they were all working at one facility. I know that everybody's looking for a central location. At the Sac and Fox we understand the limitations posed when we construct our facility. It's off a turnpike, it's tribal run, it's a non-gaming facility, but ??? for our tribal partners. That's Federal Highway, that's BIA, and due to this fact, you have that rule, you have to make that business case decision, we are seeing the regs. But again, we would like to have representation probably from all regions within the country, so you do know what to expect and what to help provide to all 500 tribes in the country. Because some are large and some are small. Some have large land base areas and some do not. -----It's a unique way for the TTAP to tell the tribes this is what we'll listen to. And we felt here in Oklahoma that it wasn't heard. And what you're hearing over the first year

matters – some were good, some were bad. But yeah, I think in Oklahoma most of us are just waiting on the input on what we need in our region, because the needs for the western region may be a little different than ours, and hopefully this pilot will be a successful one if that's going to be the mainstay, if they're not gonna go back out to seven different regions. And so with that, that's all I have.

TONY FURST (F)

Ok.

CHRIS MCCRAY (T)

On your data, the data doesn't show the equipment program that you have. I know it was talked about last year, how it didn't get going, and I'd be personally satisfied if you could give us an update of why everything ended up the way it did and what it didn't get going, why that is?

TONY FURST (F)

That's the Road Scholars Program?

CHRIS MCCRAY (T)

Yes.

VICTORIA PETERS (F)

Back in September we had the opening at the conference and we were getting ready to launch. We actually had a couple of the participants at that time take one of the pre-test exams. We stopped at that point. We didn't have all of the classes done, and we took a hard look at what we were putting together before the pre-test and the post-test, and what we were actually going to be testing. And rather than roll out a program that really wasn't ready yet, at that point we decided to step back and take and really build that program correctly, because you know, if you're getting certified, it's not a training program. It's where you're going to come in and certify that you truly do have those skills. And we wanted to make sure that once we started, we had the right program going. So, we took the time in that case. Now we are at that point where we feel we are ready and we've done advertising, we've actually had a few individuals starting to take that pretest and work through that process.

MICHAEL LYNN (T)

M. Lynn, Cherokee Nation: Victoria's response was a good segue to my question. You talked about equipment and construction versus materials, but what about everything else that's out there. Do the trainers go through a vetting process, do you guys realize, or do you know when you hire them, of they have experience working with tribes? And also, does anyone from your office sit in on these, maybe a trial run on the presentations that these instructors are giving? I guess again, and some of the stuff that's being sent out there, that we were provided with just doesn't pertain to tribes, and I'm wondering if you guys even know about it. Are they just out there running amok? Have they just been providing training, and you guys had collected that and said no, we're good. Do you really know what's happening out there that's my question.

TONY FURST (F)

We continually communicate with our contractor who is delivering the program. And they're the ones that we have a relationship with, the University of Virginia, and they in turn hire the staff to do this. Are we paying attention to what is being delivered? Yes. And these individuals and how they relate to the tribal community will be what we look at going forward. ----- muffled---cannot make out what is being said----

ROB ENDICOTT (T)

Can you address why there's two different dates in the federal register notice for our comments? One's July 5th, and one's July 19th.

SHANNON SHEFFERT (T)

S. Sheffert, OK LTAP: I'm pretty new to this program. I've been here about 6 months. I do have some questions about the reporting of hours and classes. One thing I noticed here on the presentation earlier was that the LTAP Programs average 576 hours and last year we reported 24,000 hours. And then I noticed that the TTAP Program averages 233 hours. I'm just going to take a wild guess, because I have not collected any information on tribal affiliation or anything like that, but just knowing some of our members here in Oklahoma, I'm just gonna take a wild guess in the 6 month that I've been working here, I've probably had 50 tribal members attend classes, and if I'm just taking that at 8 hours per class, some of them are two day classes, some of them are 4 hour classes, but just an 8 hour average, that's 200 hours, I'm already matching, you know, the average. And again, I just don't see where the difference is in the numbers, between our 24,000 and the average of 576. So maybe you can address that just a little bit. And then one other thing I'd like to point out, working with Walt, I've attended a few of the TTAP classes here in Oklahoma. I thought they were good classes, but it surprised me in the classes that I've attended, and again, a small sampling of the classes that you've had, I've seen 3-12 people on average in those classes counting myself. And that sure doesn't add up to very many hours that way. So, again, I'm just kinda wondering about the numbers. Thank you.

TONY FURST (F)

The numbers that were shown on the slide are self-reported by the TTAPS themselves. And the numbers from the LTAPS are the numbers reported by the LTAPS. The LTAP comparison is for LTAPS of a comparable size to a TTAP. It's not the entire LTAP structure. So it's only LTAPS that have budgets that are comparable to what a TTAP Center would have had. There are many LTAPS that have budgets that are significantly larger. Those are hours delivered. It's not hours times people. It's hours of training delivered. I don't know where you're getting the 24,000 conversion, but these are just hours that are delivered in training, not the hours delivered times the number of participants.

MICHAEL LYNN (T)

Excuse me, just to clarify, what center is the TTAP program under?

TONY FURST (F)

The Center for Local Aid Support. The Center that handles the LTAP.

MICHAEL LYNN (T)

What other areas underneath that umbrella, what other areas do you support the tribes? Or is it a single area?

TONY FURST (F)

CTIP, but it's predominantly an LTAP Program. We work with Federal Lands on TTP.

VICTORIA PETERS (T)

Within the Center for Local Aid, we have a coordinated technology implementation program, which, we work with our federal land management partners, Forest Service, National Park Service, up until about 4 or 5 years ago, BIA always participated in that program. But it's only been in the last 4 years that they have decided not to be a participant in that program.

MICHAEL LYNN (T)

And the only reason I ask is if we're talking about...indistinct... and other things that were brought up here as well, the lack of, where this is coming from, the University of Virginia, has little to no truck with a tribal program, other than this contract to deliver a tribal program. Also, your office has little to no experience with tribes in any other way except for this program. Why is it not required for a native program, like the tribal transportation program, why is that area not overseen? Trying to figure out why it's under this umbrella versus that one.

TONY FURST (F)

The only direction I can give you is the two technical transportation programs are under the Training and Education section of the legislation for the program. And this is the educational branch of this program. So we have a number of other educational programs in this Center. Under OIPD, the Center for Workforce Development provides education and training to tribes as well. So the education and training functions are actually physically under the TTP. Could they be combined? Well, if that's a recommendation that you guys want to make or propose, we'll take all input you have to us on how we can move this program going forward.

MICHAEL LYNN (T)

Thank you, I'm sorry. As far as the questions and things you've heard here, how will we know what they were and how they were considered. Will they be published?

TONY FURST (F)

We are receiving feedback all through these consultation sessions. And we will take that feedback and sit down and think through how we are going to proceed with the TTAP. The idea is that we can take everything we've heard and weave it into the program going forward. And exactly where we go from there, we'll have to cross that bridge when we get to it. It will all be communicated to the tribes. I can tell you right now that we have a blank sheet. We have not made any decisions one way or another.

RANDALL CARTER (T)

Mr. Furst, this is Randal Carter again. I thought of another idea. My only question now to TTAP providing training, tribes can have a mixed bag. We can follow all of these federal rules that are required from Federal Highways for funding, and so this goes down to the BIA. My only question is used to our own TTAP would coordinate with the BIA and do, let's say, reference training. How will you guys coordinate with that kind of training, because we now have the electronic reporting systems, federal highway tribes do it, directly with federal highways and their certain ways, the G2G tribes have the follow-through to be going through the electronic change. What I'm finding out through this new TTAP, none of that has been provided through this pilot, the training for all of those tribes. My only question is how can you better serve all the tribes across the country because you've got such a variance of how delivery is made to the tribes regarding transportation. Which some are direct tribes, you know, BIA offers it, some are G2G, some are self-governance, and some are under federal highways. How is the TTAP program nationally going to address all of those issues? Because I have not seen anything regarding that yet. We literally hear locally we have to talk locally to our agency heads about all that. And right now, that has not been addressed in the TTAP. And that would be something that I would like to see is addressed, from the TTAP position.

TONY FURST (F)

So, going forward we will add yet another comment to these and we're going to be seeking from all the tribal communities, that where we go needs to accommodate that need. If you can provide us with written comments that would describe that in more detail, that would be fantastic.

RANDALL CARTER (T)

I'll put it in an official letter.

TONY FURST (F)

Any other questions, comments, concerns?

UNKNOWN SPEAKER (T)

Written comments need to be received by July???

TONY FURST (F)

July 19.

TONY FURST (F)

Ok, as we said in the federal register....everybody who wants to make a comment has made a comment, and has best covered whatever concerns you may have. So unless somebody has something else you'd like to say, the floor is still open.

SHANE LEWIS (T)

Good afternoon, everybody. My name's Shane Lewis. I'm from the Navajo. Navajo DOT . I just want to share a few comments. One is, I know it's on the website that, for the schedule out there, but sometimes those schedules they're not clear as to how many students can attend to have the class. The reason I want to know is because our office manager had scheduled to take a class in Phoenix, which from our nation to Phoenix I believe is about 5 hours, so she would have that scheduled, she was registered, and she made her accommodations for lodging, but then the instructor contacted us, or her, and said the class was cancelled due to not that many students. But then again, they didn't contact us until the day before she was ready to travel. And we had to pay a lodging fee because our reservations were already made. So you know, I see the flyer, but I don't see how many students you need to be attending, to have this class. And then another comment I have is on your Road Scholar Program, off that test that you guys administer, that pre-test, how is that based off, or based on a far as like the tribal communities and their road system? Because not all tribes are set up with gravel road and paved roads. For example, we have 386 miles of earth roads. So according to the test, from my foreman who took it based off his experience, you know, he was asked questions of an urban type operation of maintenance. I don't know what the exact question was, but it was based more on urban-centered than out in rural areas. So that was another comment as well, how that test was formatted, you know, based towards the tribes. Thank you.

TONY FURST (F)

So my understanding of the certification is that it is a general certification. So it is not a certification you need toward one type of program or another. A person can get certified and that certification stands in a number of different job centers. A certification is not unique to rural or urban communities, a certification can be presented anywhere.

SHANE LEWIS (T)

So if it's a multi-certification, then that's fine. I've got a suggestion, maybe on the west coast and the east coast open up another facility, just for operations and maintenance, for hands-on heavy equipment training.

ROB ENDICOTT (T)

R. Endicott, Cherokee Nation: Something that comes to my mind here, do you guys have any kind of a cost for delivering the program versus what was being delivered before? In other words, like a cost-ratio? What's the cost to deliver training now versus what the cost was to deliver training before.

TONY FURST (F)

The amount of funding that we are putting toward the annual training in this program is exactly what we were putting forth under the seven centers, 2.5 million dollars a year.

ROB ENDICOTT (T)

So to further break that down, if the budget's the same, then do we have a breakdown on how far that budget's going in terms of hours delivered, versus what was being done before?

TONY FURST (F)

I suppose we could do those kinds of comparisons, but off the top of my head, I don't know. I'm not exactly sure what I should ask them for. So hourly?

ROB ENDICOTT (T)

Well I'm trying to figure out is it costing us more to deliver training now than it used to, per student.

TONY FURST (F)

We haven't run those numbers.

ROB ENDICOTT (T)

Like costs per student or per hour? Per class? I think we would like to see both, or even anything else you've got that you can think of to kind of get an idea of how effective are we being by making this change.

TONY FURST (F)

So going forward as we think about the TTAP Program, we want to consider that whatever model we pick there should be a threshold for the cost per student per training. Regardless of what model we use. Is that the idea we want to pursue?

UNKNOWN SPEAKER (T)

I think what he's saying is he wants a cost comparison, a side by side comparison of what Victoria presented to us before they made the change.

ROB ENDICOTT (T)

I wanna know if what you did is being more cost-effective than what we had before. No thresholds, I didn't say that at all.

TONY FURST (F)

What I'm thinking is that going forward we need to decide what model we will use to deliver this program.

ROB ENDICOTT (T)

The only thing I ask for is if the cost of what you're doing now is better than the cost of what we were doing before. That's all I'm asking for. I'm not asking for any future, for that to be incorporated into the program or anything. I want to know if this is more cost-effective than what we had before with the seven TTAPs.

ANGELA BLIND (T)

I do want to say that before the change, the tribes really depended on the TTAP Centers. We sent a lot of our staff there. They got the Roads Scholarship application, and once the program changed, and we had the same issues as the Cherokee Nations, sent individuals to the trainings,

and a great facility was provided at the Shako tribes and there were only 3 participants and they were from our tribe. There was nobody else in attendance. We had the same issues identified as far as the instructors weren't very informed of our tribal issues, so some of the materials they were exchanging or providing, wasn't relevant to the tribes. We want to see more information that's relevant to the tribes, and I think I'm hearing the same thing from the other tribes, it's not relevant when it pertains to urban areas and city areas. A lot of our tribes are rural areas, and deal with almost the same things, the dirt roads, the gravel roads, and not so much paved roads issues. And reiterating what Rob was trying to indicate, or ask for, is a side by side comparison or presentation be provided before the program was changed and how it's looking now. The hours, the cost. And also the number of tribal participants at these trainings based on the locations you provided on the map that showed a difference in the ratios of attendance at these trainings, so we would like to see that as well. In closing, I do want to ask is this presentation going to be available to the tribes, if so where can we get it?

CHRIS MCCRAY (T)

So, with this pilot coming to the end in December, when are you guys going to send out the RFP or make the decision to set up the RFP for next year?

TONY FURST (F)

We don't have a date yet. We're still at the point of collecting information from the tribal community.

R. FAIR (T)

I know that your data collection has focused mostly on what the TTAP has provided, and presentation to the tribes along that line. But has there been any thought if tribes are not using the TTAP services, are they getting those services from other entities, such as the LTAP? Has there been any thought about are they looking to other sources for this training? Is that affecting what you're doing in the end? What can you learn from the services they're using for additional training?

R. FAIR (T)

I'll take that silence as a no.

TONY FURST (F)

Well, I mean if the clients are not using TTAP, and they are seeking services elsewhere, and they tell us what services they are seeking that they're not getting from TTAP, and then we can see what we can do to get those services.

R. FAIR (T)

Or you could ask them and then they can tell you.

TONY FURST (F)

We have done.

ASHLEY MULDER (T)

Is there a certain email group that you get set up on, that you guys do seek the input? And if so, how do you get on that, because Rhonda brought up a really good point there. People are going to take the path of least resistance with the change. I think a lot of us went out to seek other avenues because our questions just weren't answered in the beginning.

TONY FURST (F)

You can communicate with us through the website anytime you want. There are opportunities that are posted on CLAS, the Center for Local Aid Support, where you can give us your input.

VICTORIA PETERS (F)

I receive a lot of phone calls directly and also we have a mailbox that is CLAS@dot.gov. It's been on all of our presentation material, usually it's the last slide, and as we've provided it at meetings and conferences, me and my staff watch that mailbox. I get a lot of comments.

RANDALL CARTER (T)

This is Randal Carter again. I have a question. Who collects your info at Federal Highways? I mean I know we have a deadline of July 19 and fax it to that specific number, or to a certain individual with recommendations of what classes or courses or any of that type, or coordination with the BIA. Comments like that. Who individually at Federal Highways takes that? Victoria is it you?

VICTORIA PETERS (F)

Yes.

RANDALL CARTER (T)

I know there was confusion out there for a while. We know it goes to Federal Highways, but we don't know who within that federal highways takes that and moves it.

ANDREA TAYLOR (T)

A. Taylor, Cherokee Nations: I think, just a suggestion. I hear a lot about the trainers not knowing what the tribal issues are and what have you. Urban trainers asking tribal people how they should be working on tribal roads. When you do the RFP, and it might be something you think about, for the providers, is that it's a university that's not anywhere near or has any issues or knowledge of tribal. It might be beneficial to maybe have an extension of that to a different agency or to the tribe itself to provide those trainers that actually do know, so the training would be more specific to tribal people and what their issues are, instead of trying to fit the West Virginia square peg trainer into the circle, it's just not gonna work sometimes. I mean you talk about the things you've heard, but just getting feedback piecemeal, know that your learning curve might be ten years in the making. If you just stop that, and get the people that know what they're talking about right up, that might just be something. And even have a few tribal trainers, and they don't have to train urban people. Maybe you can separate that out. Sometimes training with the tribes is very complicated when you get someone who's not sensitive to that

issue. I mean I know that the Cherokee Nation doesn't do the same things as the Pawnee Nation and some of the others do, but you know, it's a little closer.

SHANNON SHEFFERT (T)

I don't know if this is an option for you, but as you're going back through your RFP, could this be brought back down to the regional level, close to what the tribal needs are of each region? Here in Oklahoma, when the TTAP disbanded, we got rid of the equipment and everything. The people are all gone, so we would have to restart, and I'm not advocating for me or us, just asking as a group, similar to what she was asking, could this be put on by local tribal regional folks. It complicates things for sure, because you're trying to centralize things, but to look more at regional methods. Alaska's a lot different than Oklahoma and Texas, and Arizona. Thank you.

TONY FURST (F)

Like I said, we have a blank sheet of paper regarding how this model will go forward. And all of the feedback we're receiving from the tribal community, options to pursue, will be considered.

DAWN JOHNSON (T)

D. Johnson, Cross Timbers Consulting: And since we do have TTAP people here who are the hands-on ones actually contracted to organize it, for the delivery, I was wondering if we could hear from them on their experience over the last couple of years and ways that they see to make it better.

TONY FURST (F)

This is a session to listen to tribal concerns. It's not for members of the TTAP to talk about what they've learned. We're here to listen to the tribal community.

DAWN JOHNSON (T)

But in terms of delivery, they're the ones actually acting hands on with the tribes. I think it would be relevant. I mean it's relevant because they're the ones that are actually interacting, they're the people on the ground interacting.

TONY FURST (F)

This is a consultation session for the tribal community. If you have needs that can be addressed by the TTAP program, they are sitting right there, and they're here to listen just the same as we are. We're here to listen.

DAWN JOHNSON (T)

So you're forbidding for the people who are interacting with them right now to speak out in the listening session?

TONY FURST (F)

What is it exactly that you want them to address?

DAWN JOHNSON (T)

Well, that list of concerns that was up there, they're the ones in charge who made those sessions happen. And we just want them, I'm interested in their view, I'm interested in that list of concerns you got from the feedback, the people actually delivering it, and that organized the vetting process, and if they're the ones tasked with doing that, I'm just saying their interaction with it and how they've learned to improve what they're doing to better consult with the tribes on it.

TONY FURST (F)

Beth or Walt, do you want to comment on how you have received feedback from people who were in the classes that were conducted and what you have learned from that experience?

B. O'DONNELL (F)

B. O'Donnell, TTAP: I think I would encourage everyone in the room to reach out to us, offline. I'm not really going to say anything right now, but I think that is really what you should do. And my email is on there and that way if you have some questions I can give you answers. We are charged with the operation of this program, so handling those day to day in operations, and anything mechanically that may arise. I think, I feel like this setting might not be the right place, but I'm willing to have a conversation with each one of you individually, by email or by phone, to answer your questions. We are learning every single day. I think that might be the best way for me to address.

TONY FURST (F)

Do we have any more comments or concerns? Any observations?

UNKNOWN SPEAKER (T)

Ok, just so I can have a sense of, and you guys as well, how many people who are here in this room attended a class under the old TTAP Center? Ok, leave your hand up. Only take it down if, sorry I changed my mind. How many people have attended a class under the new system? Ok, thank you.

R. FAIR (T)

I guess now we know who prefers the old system.

Laughing.

UNKNOWN SPEAKER (T)

I just wanted to get a sense of how we have all interacted with both.

RANDALL CARTER (T)

I just have one final comment for Federal Highways. All I can do is speak on behalf of the Sac and Fox, but regardless of what method that your delivery's gonna be, whether it's one centralized, or regions like the old method, ... we just want the best method possible. And the consultations on what's been done already, we will try and put that in writing, our concerns and comments,

regarding that. But I think that's probably the biggest issue, is the delivery process right now. Thank you very much.

TONY FURST (F)

Any other comments, concerns or observations?

UNKNOWN SPEAKER (T)

I work with the Arapaho Tribe. I attended the Road Scholar under the old system, and my question is, is there any kind of business case going with the new system in favor of the old system, is there any kind of performance metrics that you have picked out?

TONY FURST (F)

You said the Roads Scholar program?

UNKNOWN SPEAKER (T)

Yessir, will it be under TTAP too, going forward?

TONY FURST (F)

The same methods we are collecting for TTAP now, are the same data we were collecting under the old TTAPs. The Roads Scholar program, hasn't been stood up, so we don't have metrics for the Roads Scholar Program.

TONY FURST (F)

Any more comments, observations, questions, concerns?

TONY FURST (F)

There will be three more sessions. The next one will be in Minneapolis, the third one will be in Anchorage, and the fourth one will be in >>>>. Written comments are available through July 19, so by all means if you have comments that have been circulated during this conversation, and would like to forward them to us, please do so. We are collecting all of this feedback and input to help us decide what the next steps will be. You can contact us at the website, at the register,????