

TRANSPORT SURVEY METHODS: BEST PRACTICE FOR DECISION MAKING

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Preface

The objective of this book is to communicate the state of “good” practice in transport survey methods from around the world. It identifies the progress made toward methodological solutions and the challenges that remain ahead. Most importantly, it consolidates an international perspective on improving data and information to support transportation decision-making. One of the central conclusions to be drawn from its contents is that innovation to improve our international data and information infrastructure, and the thorough testing of innovations, should be a primary preoccupation for the immediate future.

This book brings together a selection of peer-reviewed papers and workshop syntheses from the 9th international conference held in Puyehue, Chile in November 2011. It is not a proceedings volume, as this role was fulfilled by the provision, to all participants, of unpublished electronic pre-prints of papers and posters that were accepted by a review board for presentation at the Conference.

Each ISCTSC conference is organized around key themes. The Chile Conference focused on “Scoping the Future While Staying on Track.” It sought a strategic balance between, on one hand, the anticipation of changing data needs that result from important ongoing shifts in major transport policy issues and, on the other, the imperative to ensure that benchmark data are stable and consistent enough for comparisons to be made across time. This is the contemporary context for identifying and researching developments in survey methods, in concert with other data sources, which can meet the resultant challenges. Of course, data collection methods are also subject to challenge and change, most notably in the current era from technological developments. Our overarching goal is thus to review, critique, and update the body of knowledge about survey methodologies, in order to enhance the quality, value, and utility of the data that surveys provide for shaping transport practice, policy, and programs.

This publication should be of substantial interest to analysts, planners, and researchers who provide information and knowledge to transportation policy makers and decision-makers. It should also be of interest to students and their teachers, because it considers the current condition of transport data and information to support good decision-making, and identifies where future improvements are needed. Finally, it has relevance for transportation policy makers and decision-makers who rely on good information and intelligence for the soundness of the work that they do.

The book's international perspective would not be possible without the institutional infrastructure of the International Steering Committee for Travel Survey Conferences (ISCTSC). This sentiment, which is usually placed in the acknowledgments, resides here because of the significance of this organization for good practice in transport survey methods. The mission of the organization is to organize periodic international conferences on research into the conduct of transport surveys that support planning, policy, modeling, monitoring, and related issues for urban, rural, regional, intercity, and international person, vehicle, and commodity movements. The ISCTSC vision is the continuous improvement of transport survey methods, and of the information they provide to decision-makers, in both developed and developing countries. With respect to developing countries, it supports its mission through a scholarship fund that subsidizes conference attendance, and through the donation of conference publications, such as this, to developing-country libraries.

A professional volunteer organization, the ISCTSC, has a rich legacy of past conferences and publications that began in the late 1970s with a small invitational conference in Eibsee, Germany, organized by Werner Brög and colleagues. Subsequent conferences were held in Hungerford Hill, Australia in 1983 (Ampt, Richardson, & Brög, 1985), Washington, DC in 1990 (Ampt, Richardson, & Meyburg, 1992), Steeple Aston, England in 1996 (Bonsall & Ampt, 1996), Eibsee, Germany in 1997 (TRB, 2000), Kruger Park, South Africa in 2001 (Stopher & Jones, 2003), Playa Herradura, Costa Rica in 2004 (Stopher & Stecher, 2006), and Annecy, France in 2008 (Bonnell, Lee-Gosselin, Zmud, & Madre, 2009).

With the publication of this book, and under a recent constitutional change that provides for overlapping cochair terms, we pass the ISCTSC baton to the recently elected cochairs. They are: Marcela Munizaga, who so ably coled the Local Organizing Committee for the Chile Conference (for a two-conference term); and the return of Tony Richardson, who provided much inspiration for the series as one of its "founding mothers and fathers" (for one conference). We sign off knowing that they will benefit, as have we, from the extraordinary goodwill that sustains the ISCTSC around the world, and confident that the future of the series is in excellent hands.

Johanna Zmud
Martin Lee-Gosselin
October 2012

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For the period leading up to the conference through to the completion of the book the ISCTSC members were:

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