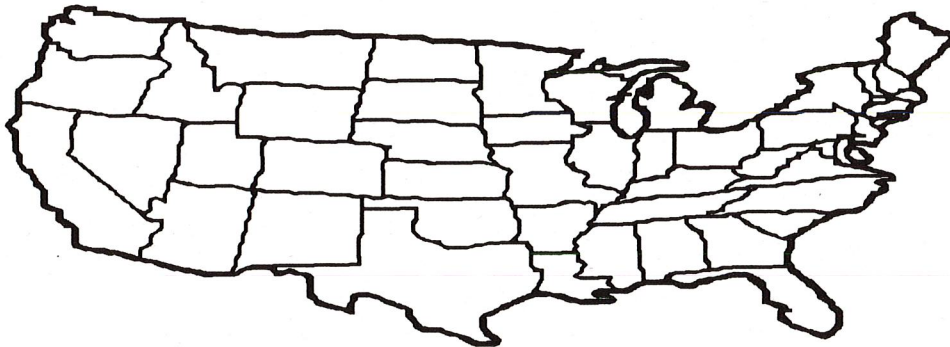


# BULLETIN

August 1992

Volume 6, Number 2



## *Special State of the States Edition*

*Where is the Rural Transit Assistance Program headed after five years? How has it changed the rural transit industry? This edition of the FTA RTAP National Program Bulletin provides a second snapshot of RTAP activities around the nation and reconfirms the findings of the National Program's 1990 benchmark study.*

### **Major Benefits**

Specific benefits that can be attributed to RTAP include:

- An increase in the skill levels and professionalism of rural transit system employees through increased training and technical assistance, especially in the area of safety.
- An improvement in the capacity of states to address the training and technical assistance needs of their rural operators, and to respond to new federal regulations in the areas of ADA, CDL and drug testing.
- An improvement in the functioning and useful life of rural transit system vehicles through an increased focus on procedures for vehicle procurement, vehicle inspection and inventory, and vehicle maintenance and repair.
- A reduction in the cost of insurance for rural transit systems through increased driver training and creation of statewide risk purchase programs.
- A heightened support for the coordination of public, private, and specialized and human service transportation services through increased creation of state-level coordinating councils, training in private sector initiatives, and rural connector assistance.
- An improvement in the overall effectiveness of rural transit systems through increased operations and management training, peer-to-peer exchanges, automation of management information systems, and peer performance reviews.

### **Program Activities**

RTAP still exhibits wide variations across states in terms of program activities and delivery mechanisms reflecting different needs, concerns and resources. Following are field reports from each of the fifty states that give an account of RTAP in the Spring/Summer of 1992.



*Arkansas contracts with the Arkansas Transit Association for the delivery of RTAP services to the state's community transportation systems. The association provides essential technical assistance and training.*

■ The **ALABAMA** RTAP advisory committee meets quarterly in different regions of the state. These meetings are combined with localized training sessions featuring local rural operators and resource people. In March, a regional workshop was held at the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa on working with boards of directors and procedures for vehicle maintenance. In addition, basic accounting and cost accounting workshops have been held to develop a statewide cost allocation formula. The formula, which has been implemented, has brought about improvements in coordination and recovery of costs. *Contact person: Bill Luckerson, Alabama Highway Department, 205/261-6083.*

■ **ALASKA** continues to conduct passenger assistance training and to fund Section 18 and 16(b)(2) operators to attend state, regional and national transit conferences. *Contact person: Bruce Wells, Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities, 907/465-2171.*

■ **ARIZONA** has recently issued a request for proposals for consultant services to prepare a comprehensive transit operations training manual and to develop accompanying training workshops on specific topics within the manual. An award is expected to be made by August. Also over the last year, Arizona has held regional workshops on various aspects of ADA compliance, conducted passenger assistance techniques workshops, and developed an electronic bulletin board system. *Contact person: Randy Overmyer, Arizona Department of Transportation, 602/255-8148.*

■ **ARKANSAS** contracts with the Arkansas Transit Association for the delivery of RTAP services to the state's community transportation systems. The association provides essential technical assistance and training. Its staff includes a full-time training coordinator devoted to this effort. A number of tailored training programs aimed at increasing managerial effectiveness and employee professionalism are available for transit and paratransit providers. Coordination and sponsorship of special training programs also is available through the association. An annual educational and networking conference is conducted to bring together federal, state and local public transportation officials, service providers and other interested individuals. *Contact person: Jim Gilbert, Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department, 501/569-2471.*

■ The primary focus of **CALIFORNIA's** RTAP has been to provide training, technical assistance, and information sharing opportunities for the state's rural transit operators. This has been accomplished through workshops, conferences, scholarships, a quarterly newsletter, videos, brochures and an 800-number for California RTAP information. Three ADA workshops last December helped rural and small operators prepare their implementation plans. A special insert describing the state's RTAP was distributed to all California rural operators along with the national RTAP's new "Tap Into RTAP" brochure. Since 1990, about 70 RTAP scholarships have been awarded totalling over \$28,000, making it possible for rural transit personnel to attend maintenance workshops, safety instructor training, management courses, technical workshops, and national and state conferences. One of the earliest accomplishments of the California RTAP was the establishment and marketing of the Paratransit Insurance Corporation, which is a statewide vehicle liability insurance pool for nonprofit social service transportation providers. *Contact person: Helen Childs, California Department of Transportation, 916/323-0343.*

■ **COLORADO** contracts with its state transit association, CASTA, to administer its RTAP. CASTA provides training, a bi-monthly newsletter, scholarships, and technical assistance. This year, driver training sessions on defensive driving, wheelchair securement and passenger assistance techniques were held on a quarterly basis. The location of the sessions were rotated so operators throughout the state could attend sessions close to their operations. Over 70 individuals attended the most recent session. Two training sessions for management personnel are scheduled for the Fall and are geared toward obtaining transit management certification from CTAA. RTAP funds were used to train CDL third-party testers who agreed to test drivers from other rural agencies at a minimal cost. The state advisory committee with representatives from public, private non-profit and private for-profit operators meets several times each year to review the program's work plan and to offer suggestions for future training sessions. *Contact person: Ltz Van Lauwe, Colorado Department of Transportation, 303/757-9769.*

■ This year's emphasis areas for **CONNECTICUT's** RTAP are transit managerial training, its statewide driver rodeo, and its 16(b)(2) scholarship program. A series of eight managerial training courses will be delivered over the next two years on the subjects of foundations of transit management, planning for organizational success, developing operational policies, financial management for non-financial managers, cost allocation principles and procedures, evaluating system performance, marketing strategies for growth, and managing transit maintenance. The state's second annual driver rodeo was held in May, with approximately 50 drivers from rural, urban and specialized systems competing for prizes. A rural and a specialized operator represented the state in the national CTAA EXPO. Through the 16(b)(2) scholarship program, two private non-profit agencies were able to send representatives to the CTAA annual conference. Additional scholarships are expected to be granted for the July New England training conference. *Contact person: Jeanette Subach, Connecticut Department of Transportation, 203/566-7116.*

■ The major benefit from RTAP in **DELAWARE** has been increased professionalism and safety consciousness in drivers. In Delaware, the state has established an in-house training library and conducts CDL and safe driver training programs in conjunction with the state's division of motor vehicles and safety council. Additionally, RTAP funds are used to sponsor the state's annual driver safety rodeo. *Contact person: Kenneth Bock, Delaware Administration for Specialized Transportation, 302/739-3278.*

■ **FLORIDA** is reexamining its RTAP delivery mechanism and is considering contracting with a university for training and technical assistance services. It also is in the process of forming a new advisory committee to structure and guide program development. Once the new committee is formed, the state plans to distribute a questionnaire to help the committee determine the type and magnitude of existing training needs and to assign priorities to those needs. Over the last four years, numerous scholarships have been provided to Florida operators and an RTAP training library developed. *Contact person: Sally Dowlen, Florida Department of Transportation, 904/488-7774.*

■ Technical assistance programs in **GEORGIA** have been instrumental in assisting local areas upgrade financial, managerial and technical skills. The results of the state's RTAP is reflected in better service delivery to rural patrons, better administrative processing of purchase of service contracts and better maintenance of vehi-



*In Delaware, the state has established an in-house training library and conducts CDL and safe driver training programs in conjunction with the state's division of motor vehicles and safety council.*



*Idaho has sponsored collaborative efforts to coordinate human service and public transportation throughout the state.*

cle inventory. For the next cycle of programs, Georgia will enter into contracts with two state universities to expand the scope of subjects for technical assistance. The universities, using faculty from their schools of business, will develop new technical assistance workshops specially tailored to the needs that have been identified in Georgia. Workshops on cost allocation, marketing, contract management, routing and scheduling will be among the workshop topics. RTAP is an important element of quality assurance in Georgia's rural public transportation operations. *Contact person: Marta Fernandez, Georgia Department of Transportation, 404/651-9206.*

■ **HAWAII** has created the Hawaii Rural Transportation Association (HRTA), which is composed of the state's rural counties and the DOT. The HRTA meets semi-annually to discuss common problems and issues. Updates on the national RTAP and the FTA Section 18 program are presented to the HRTA. Training is provided to transit operators on the mainland via "train-the-trainer" courses, and an annual statewide bus maintenance symposium is held for all rural county employees. Other areas being explored are transportation systems management measures such as rideshare programs to work with transit systems to reduce traffic congestion. *Contact person: Steve Takashima, Hawaii Department of Transportation, 808/587-1842.*

■ **IDAHO** has developed seven RTAP libraries throughout the state, where training and technical assistance information can be accessed. Each library is equipped with video recorders, training videos and audiotapes, publications, and other reference materials. Idaho continuously sponsors training in defensive driving, passenger assistance techniques, governing board roles, and CDL, and offers scholarships for provider staff to attend a variety of conferences and seminars. It has sponsored transportation studies in two planning districts that have resulted in the consolidation of two transportation providers in North Idaho and the start-up of a new specialized system in Southwest Idaho. It has sponsored collaborative efforts to coordinate human service and public transportation throughout the state, including special conferences. Activities supported by RTAP and the program's advisory group has resulted in a major piece of state legislation that provides direction to the state and the DOT for continued development of public transportation in the state. *Contact person: Linda Collins, Idaho Transportation Department, 208/334-8286.*

■ The **ILLINOIS** RTAP is housed at Western Illinois University in Macomb, Illinois, and serves as an information clearinghouse for rural transit issues. The main emphasis of the program is the provision of planning and technical assistance to rural transit providers in Illinois. The program publishes a quarterly newsletter, sponsors regional and statewide training programs, responds to information requests on an 800-hotline and conducts planning projects for transit providers. It also houses an information library with more than 1,200 documents and 80 training videotapes. *Contact person: Troy Gregor, Western Illinois University, 800/526-9943.*

■ The **INDIANA** RTAP continues to grow and serve the needs of its rural, small urban and specialized transportation providers. The program's emphasis, training and information, has been carried out in a number of different ways including a widely-used resource library and training scholarship program. On-site training programs, such as the Indiana driver training program, have been developed with particular driver training needs in mind. The program has been integral to the development of a statewide passenger assistance techniques training network. Special projects, from service planning to maintenance information, have been tailored to

meet individual agency needs. In addition, the program has helped to establish the state's first paratransit rodeo with the winner receiving an all-expense paid trip to the national rodeo during CTAA's EXPO. The transit operators in Indiana have come to look to the RTAP program as a valuable resource when they have information and training needs. *Contact person: Rebecca Rowley, Indiana Institute for Urban Transportation, 812/855-8143.*

■ **IOWA** has undertaken a series of major projects under RTAP. Nationally recognized is a video entitled "Iowa's Coordination Pledge," which promotes transit coordination. Iowa regularly funds training fellowships to access training courses and conferences in and out-of-state (150 in FY 1992). Other projects have included the development of a manager's handbook for Iowa's transit managers, planners and providers; development and organization of workshops on ADA and passenger assistance techniques; and the provision of technical assistance to boards of supervisors in a ten-county region facing the creation of a new transit system. *Contact person: Brenda Schumann, Iowa Department of Transportation, 515/287-7731.*

■ The **KANSAS** RTAP was established in 1987 as a joint effort between the Kansas University Transportation Center and the Kansas Department of Transportation to provide service to rural and specialized transit agencies in the state. The Transportation Center under contract to KDOT provides a wide range of training and technical assistance services including a quarterly technical newsletter, fact sheets, a video and publications lending library, training scholarships, driver and manager training, a toll-free hotline, and on-site technical assistance on a variety of topics. Notable activities have included: writing legislation to establish coordinated transit districts in the state; establishing a statewide anti-drug consortium that will provide an employee assistance program with drug testing to meet FTA requirements; providing assistance with implementation of the state's CDL program; and establishing a statewide risk purchase group. Activities of the Kansas RTAP are guided by a project advisory committee made up of operators throughout the state. Key elements of the program's success have been the cooperative relationship among the state, university, public transit association, and providers to develop relevant programs. In addition, the training and technical assistance is taken out to the field whenever possible, recognizing the travel limitations of most rural transit agencies. *Contact person: Patricia Weaver, Kansas University Transportation Center, 913/864-5658.*

■ The overall effectiveness of **KENTUCKY's** rural transit systems has shown dramatic improvement since the inception of RTAP. Kentucky systems are transporting more passengers more effectively due to management training and automated information systems. All Kentucky transit systems have been able to access training opportunities and technical assistance through RTAP. Driver training has improved driver skills and the quality of rural transit service, and vehicle maintenance training has helped operators to put safer and better-running vehicles on the road. *Contact person: Vickie Bourne, Kentucky Transportation Cabinet, 502/564-7433.*

■ In **LOUISIANA**, RTAP has focussed on providing training to its rural transit system employees. It has established an on-going driver training program through train-the-trainer workshops, passenger assistance techniques certification workshops, and a lending library of training materials. Last year, Louisiana held its first bus rodeo and paid the winner's expenses to compete in the national bus rodeo at CTAA's EXPO in Kansas City. The program has provided "core" management workshops at two different levels for system managers. These workshops have



*Kentucky systems are transporting more passengers more effectively due to management training and automated information systems.*



*Michigan is developing a rural transit manager curriculum, consisting of six separate courses under a contract with Central Michigan University.*

improved managerial professionalism by increasing skill levels and confidence. Workshops and conferences also have been conducted to provide training and technical assistance on new federal regulations such as ADA and CDL requirements. The program also has provided scholarships to enable operators to attend conferences at the national level. In progress is a project to enhance the state's reporting information system and to provide a computerized means for performance review. *Contact person: Jeanie Boyd, Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development, 504/379-1436.*

■ During the past twelve months, MAINE's RTAP has undertaken several important projects. Foremost among its projects has been an ADA training workshop to assist its operators in the preparation of their complementary paratransit plans. It also has continued to conduct transit marketing audits around the state towards the development of a statewide marketing program. The development of a statewide transit guide that includes route maps, operating data and service information has been another important accomplishment. Other projects have included: scholarships for operators to attend training workshops in and out of the state, joint activities with New Hampshire and Vermont in preparation for the New England training conference, and support for the third annual state of Maine bus/van rodeo. *Contact person: Donald Craig, Maine Department of Transportation, 207/287-3318.*

■ MARYLAND has set up a video training library over the past year. The training library was established to provide both local and statewide training resources. Local transit operators in each county are given a copy of each of the national RTAP training packages for their use and to share with other operators. Additional training materials, e.g., STARTS and Advanced Driving Skills, also have been purchased and are available for loan from the statewide transportation programs training library. *Contact person: Diane Ratchff, Maryland Mass Transit Administration, 410/333-2993.*

■ In its efforts to institutionalize a statewide driver training program, MASSACHUSETTS has developed a curriculum which consists of defensive driving, emergency and accident procedures, passenger assistance techniques, passenger sensitivity, stress management and substance abuse. The state's peer-to-peer program is available for a variety of technical assistance projects. In addition, Massachusetts is designing a statewide transit management training program, with a strong risk management component. The state actively disseminates national RTAP materials by duplicating copies of new materials for its regional transit authorities, its 16(b)(2) agencies, and its private bus operators. *Contact person: Susan Bell, Massachusetts Executive Office of Transportation and Construction, 617/973-7024.*

■ MICHIGAN's grant/scholarship program is the largest component of the state's RTAP. Michigan is also undertaking risk management studies and preparing materials to assist Michigan operators achieve better insurance coverage and rates and ensure safer operations. Finally, under a contract with Central Michigan University, it is developing a rural transit manager curriculum, consisting of six separate courses (transportation law, accounting for managers, transit management, safety and risk management, human relations, and transit operations and maintenance). Once developed, the courses will be made available to public transit personnel in the same manner as other "extended education" courses. *Contact person: Jack Hayes, Michigan Department of Transportation, 517/335-2541.*

■ **MINNESOTA's** RTAP has been delivering passenger assistance techniques workshops around the state through a cooperative arrangement with the state's vocational technical schools. Approximately 100 drivers and managers have taken this course since the beginning of the year. Minnesota also is working with the state's safety council in presenting "coaching the van driver" defensive driving workshops. Over 130 individuals around the state have participated in these workshops. *Contact person: Dale Maul, Minnesota Department of Transportation, 612/296-1610.*

■ **MISSISSIPPI's** RTAP has focussed on training and technical assistance projects to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of its rural, small urban and specialized transportation services. The program has supported numerous workshops in areas such as passenger assistance, operator sensitivity, and vehicle maintenance, and provided over 50 scholarships to local transportation providers to take advantage of regional and national training opportunities. Major successes under RTAP include the state's vehicle repair and refurbishing project, its commercial driver's license training program (sponsored jointly with the state's Head Start association), and its statewide transit marketing and promotion plan. RTAP also has allowed the state to participate in the Region IV Transportation Consortium, to compile an extensive training materials/reference library for public and private providers, and to develop a transit operator training and management certification program through Jackson State University's Technology Transfer Center. *Contact person: Charles Carr, Mississippi Department of Economic and Community Development, 601/359-6600.*

■ **MISSOURI** offers training courses in defensive driving, CPR and first aid, passenger assistance techniques and emergency procedures. Technical assistance is offered in the areas of vehicle procurement and maintenance. During FY 1991-92 there were 80 on-site driver training programs offered involving approximately 1,050 drivers. *Contact person: John Rice, Missouri Highway and Transportation Department, 314/751-2523.*

■ Through its RTAP scholarship program, **MONTANA** transit operators have received training from the state's advanced defensive driving course. In previous years, one day of training was dedicated exclusively for 12 transit drivers. Because of the success and interest in the program, three days of training, allowing 36 drivers to attend, will be offered beginning this year. Other training under Montana's RTAP has included passenger assistance techniques and courses designed around the national RTAP modules. Technical assistance has been provided to operators through on-site visits, which have included vehicle safety inspections. To date, management reviews have been conducted with 39 Section 18 and 16(b)(2) recipients. Planned is a statewide roдео. Montana's RTAP advisory committee continues to coordinate with the Montana Transit Association to formulate new ideas for technical assistance and training for the state's transit personnel. *Contact person: Michael Davis, Montana Department of Transportation, 406/444-3423.*

■ The **NEBRASKA** RTAP focuses its activities on training. For system managers, it subsidizes expenses to attend national workshops and conferences, and for drivers, it conducts passenger assistance training, CPR and defensive driver training. Currently, it is coordinating workshops and training activities with Kansas, for which it covers all participant expenses. A new effort involves providing financial assistance for the marketing of a new statewide intercity bus operation. RTAP funds are also used to put on the annual statewide transit workshop, to publish a transit newslet-



*Mississippi's successes under RTAP include the state's vehicle repair and refurbishing project, its commercial driver's license training program and its statewide transit marketing and promotion plan.*



*Nevada held its first Native American rural transportation conference in June. Tribes and colonies in eleven western states were invited.*

ter and annual directory of public transportation services, and to cover a portion of the salary for an executive director for the Nebraska Association of Transportation Providers. Twenty centers have been established across the state for the distribution of RTAP materials. *Contact person: Larry Brown, Nebraska Department of Roads, 402/479-4518.*

■ **NEVADA** held its first Native American rural transportation conference in June. Tribes and colonies in eleven western states were invited; topics covered included ISTEA regulations, federal and state transportation programs, coordination/cooperation, and sovereignty/self determination. RTAP has helped Nevada's rural transit operators to improve their understanding of FTA's Section 16(b)(2) and 18 programs, to upgrade their skill levels in the area of passenger assistance training, and to increase their system efficiency and effectiveness. *Contact person: Sandi McGrew, Nevada Department of Transportation, 702/687-3466.*

■ This year, **NEW HAMPSHIRE** has conducted two major RTAP activities through a contract with the New Hampshire Transit Association. The association has produced a booklet that promotes public transit and paratransit and invites participation in a transit coalition. A special marketing workshop was the culmination of this first activity. The second activity has been the development of a transit management training conference, scheduled for July in North Conway, New Hampshire, along with Vermont and Maine. The state RTAP also has continued to offer training courses, principally in defensive driving, and to provide scholarships for training opportunities offered by organizations such as the Vermont RTAP and CTAA. *Contact person: Christopher Morgan, New Hampshire Department of Transportation, 603/271-2564.*

■ **NEW JERSEY's** RTAP employs a vehicle for regular on-going driver and management training. A variety of approaches are used to train and provide technical assistance to managers, dispatchers, mechanics and other support staff. The program also undertakes research projects, conducts information sharing, provides peer-to-peer counseling and publishes a monthly newsletter. Quarterly seminars and technical training workshops introduce transit managers to new techniques and areas of systems operations. New Jersey's RTAP is open to all small transit operators receiving FTA Section 18 or Section 16(b)(2) funding including private operators under contract to funding recipients. Also eligible are operators receiving funding through the state's senior citizen and disabled resident transportation assistance program. *Contact person: Jim Holman, New Jersey Transit, 201/491-7377.*

■ **NEW MEXICO** has developed a guidebook for planning small urban and rural transportation programs, copies of which are available through the U.S. DOT Technology Sharing Program. This guidebook has assisted existing Section 18 operators to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of their services, and potential operators to develop new services. The state also reimburses providers for driver training expenses, and provides scholarships (over 50 to date) for transit supervisory personnel to attend conferences in and out-of-state. It has purchased computers, modems, printers and software for its Section 18 operators, and in conjunction with the New Mexico State University provided 30 hours of computer instruction. The state's 1992 conference covered time management, personnel management, marketing, computer applications, stress management, vehicle maintenance, CPR, lift use, and sensitivity training. Over one-hundred grantees, management and oper-



---

ational staff, received hands-on training. *Contact person: Barbara Brown, New Mexico Highway and Transportation Department, 505/827-0410.*

■ The **NEW YORK** RTAP held a two-day conference in June that attracted close to 100 participants. New York's program currently is focusing on five training modules that are being developed for delivery in the state. Relying heavily on existing training programs and materials, the modules will cover performance evaluation and improvement, financial and other record-keeping, vehicle maintenance, driver/dispatcher sensitivity, and defensive driving. Other services available through New York's program include: a toll-free hotline, a lending library of national and state materials, a quarterly newsletter, a peer-to-peer exchange program, conferences/statewide training sessions and follow-up technical assistance in the five training areas. *Contact person: Sue Knapp, Ecosometrics Incorporated, 301/652-2414.*

■ RTAP has touched nearly every part of **NORTH CAROLINA's** rural transit technical assistance and training efforts. Local operator attendance at national conferences and symposia, THE BUS — a mobile training facility, computer training and support for local operators, as well as several workshop series would not have existed without RTAP funding. Starting last year, RTAP funding has been coordinated with funds from a statewide Section 10 Managerial Training Grant to make training available to a wider audience. During FY 1991-92, the state's RTAP has provided training opportunities for rural and specialized transit employees in effective supervisory practices, effective management practices (through the University of North Carolina Institute of Government), image building for transit, passenger assistance techniques, CDL and safe driving habits, and first aid and CPR (delivery through local community colleges). The state is currently in the process of assessing local system training deficiencies to determine training priorities for FY'93. *Contact person: Peter Albrecht, North Carolina Department of Transportation, 919/733-4713.*

■ **NORTH DAKOTA's** RTAP works to improve bus driver and system manager skills through various training approaches, including special training sessions and bus driver roadeos. Special studies have been conducted: a statewide transit service inventory, an operational efficiency study, and a vehicle insurance study. To facilitate communication and dissemination of information among transit systems, the program funds a statewide newsletter. It also has joined with the South Dakota Department of Transportation to provide financial support for the Dakota Transit Association, which works towards the promotion and improvement of transit services for the two states. *Contact person: Bill Wetmer, North Dakota Department of Transportation, 701/224-2194.*

■ **OHIO's** RTAP has produced a statewide drug testing and training program and a handbook for coordinating transportation services that are being used nationwide. Its passenger assistance techniques (PAT) train-the-trainer course has increased the number of PAT trainers statewide by 44. In addition, Ohio has developed technical assistance and training programs in the areas of dispatching and scheduling, fare analysis, transit development and financial capacity. Finally, it has established a scholarship program for national and local conferences, reinstated a management evaluation program for its rural and small urban systems, and developed a statewide newsletter. *Contact person: Rosamary Amler, Ohio Department of Transportation, 614/466-8955.*



*Ohio's RTAP has produced a statewide drug testing and training program and a handbook for coordinating transportation services.*



*Oklahoma has purchased computer systems for its rural operators, automated their trip statistics and financial reporting systems, and developed a computerized system for tracking vehicle maintenance.*

■ **OKLAHOMA's** RTAP provides scholarships for transit managers, drivers, and other transit operations personnel to attend vocational/technical instruction, workshops and conferences. It has provided training for drivers who need to meet the commercial motor vehicle licensing requirements. With RTAP funds, the state also has purchased computer systems for its rural operators, automated their trip statistics and financial reporting systems, and developed a computerized system for tracking vehicle maintenance. Additionally, the state has developed video programs for each of its rural transit operators to use in community relations, fundraising, and marketing, as well as a video for the state's transit administration section. A portion of the state's RTAP funds have been committed to develop a statewide drug testing program for transit operations in rural areas. *Contact person: Ken LaRue, Oklahoma Department of Transportation, 405/521-2584.*

■ In 1992, **OREGON** has emphasized improving services, with the start-up of a statewide training program. This program expands the state's training activities to include risk management, safety and driver policies, defensive driving and customer service. The state continues to offer training on passenger assistance and good trainer skills. With the addition of an RTAP assistant, the state has increased technical assistance to cope with changing regulations and to encourage higher standards for system operations. Its scholarship program and networking meeting continue to facilitate coordination and peer-to-peer assistance. Oregon participates in sharing RTAP resources and ideas with its neighboring states to complement and expand its offerings, which are promoted by its state advisory committee. *Contact person: Jont Reid, Oregon Department of Transportation, 503/298-2341.*

■ **PENNSYLVANIA** has delivered 27 training workshops on subjects including defensive driving, financial management, safety, maintenance, management, insurance and risk management, service evaluation, board training, and scheduling and dispatching. It also has provided on-site technical assistance in the areas of service evaluation, route changes, computerization, and maintenance facility construction. The state recently has contracted with a transit operator to manage its RTAP project. The current top priority is to solicit professional training companies to provide 40 workshops that would be presented from the Summer of 1992 through the Spring of 1994 in a wide range of topic areas. In July, the state RTAP hosted a presentation of the national RTAP's essential skills for trainers workshop and co-sponsored the state's annual vehicle and equipment fair. The program continues to develop an in-state peer-to-peer network, bulletins and newsletters, and a resource library. *Contact person: Michael Noel, Pennsylvania Transportation Resource and Information Network, 412/465-2140.*

■ **RHODE ISLAND** is in the process of establishing a statewide RTAP training program. A scope of work has been developed with input from rural transit operators, and proposals sought from qualified companies to design and implement training, informational and technical assistance programs that would assist the operators with day-to-day operations. RTAP funding also is being used for training of paratransit operators associated with the state's coordinated paratransit brokerage project or "RIDE" program that currently operates in two counties but will be expanded to two more in the near future. *Contact person: David Martone, Rhode Island Department of Transportation, 401/277-2694.*

■ **SOUTH CAROLINA's** RTAP continues to successfully meet the training and technical assistance needs of rural transportation providers statewide. RTAP in South

Carolina has meant growth and opportunity to the rural providers it serves. In 1991, South Carolina undertook a wide variety of activities. It conducted major workshops to increase skills of local transportation personnel and governing board members focusing on implementing the ADA, employee relations, roles and responsibilities of governing board members, CDL requirements, and preventive maintenance training. Over 250 persons attended. It awarded 175 scholarships to local transportation personnel who deliver services to the general public, elderly, and passengers with disabilities. The program has sharpened the skills of local transportation management, drivers, mechanics, and governing board members — equipping them with greater tools for providing safe and improved transportation services to the public and increasing productivity. *Contact person: Karen Ross Grant, South Carolina Department of Highways and Public Transportation, 803/737-1280.*

■ A major accomplishment of the SOUTH DAKOTA RTAP has been to document statewide public and specialized transit needs. As a result of this effort, the state legislature has authorized the first state funding for public transportation. The program also has conducted performance reviews. The reviews have allowed Section 18 properties to reexamine and redesign their management structures. Other accomplishments have included providing technical assistance on ADA to Section 18 governing boards and initiating bus driver training for Section 16(b)(2) agencies and other public and private, nonprofit agencies serving the elderly and disabled communities. *Contact person: Lowell Richards, South Dakota Department of Transportation, 605/773-4831.*

■ TENNESSEE contracts with the University of Tennessee Transportation Center to provide RTAP training programs for its Section 18 and 16(b)(2) drivers and managers. Through this process, the state has provided workshops on 17 different topics for its managers, and provided approximately 75 sections of driver workshops around the state on topics such as defensive driving, passenger assistance, vehicle maintenance, emergency rescue and evacuation of passengers, and ADA issues. During the next year, the state will be developing a statewide marketing video for its Section 18 program. Tennessee believes that RTAP has contributed to improved efficiencies for its transit managers and to a greater focus on safety issues for its drivers. *Contact person: Kathy Dannenbold, Tennessee Department of Transportation, 615/741-2781.*

■ So far this year, the TEXAS RTAP has provided \$38,000 worth of commercial driver's license training to 435 students. It has conducted a three-day train-the-trainer course using national RTAP materials and held five regional van rodeos. The top two winners at each roдео were awarded RTAP scholarships towards competition at the state roдео. A statewide consumer education "buddy" program has been initiated as a mentoring effort between the metropolitan transit authorities (MTAs) and selected rural operators to carry out local marketing projects. Under this program, the state DOT covers the costs for travel and materials, while the MTAs donate staff time. "Buddy" marketing projects involve developing informational brochures, newspaper advertisements, billboard campaigns and bus signage. Finally, during the Spring, the Texas DOT undertook a three-week media blitz to promote rural transportation in Texas. Twenty-eight TV stations and 57 radio stations aired commercials at least 10 times per week during the campaign. *Contact person: Ed Collins, Texas DOT, 512/483-3653.*

■ UTAH continues to sponsor training workshops in defensive driving, driver sen-



*Texas has initiated a statewide consumer education "buddy" program as a mentoring effort between the metropolitan transit authorities and selected rural operators to carry out local marketing projects.*



*Washington has hired a training coordinator to develop and implement a statewide training program designed to address the needs of its rural transit agencies.*

sitivity, passenger assistance and vehicle safety. It is making arrangements for the Eleventh National Conference on Rural Public Transportation, which will be held in the Fall of 1992 in Park City. *Contact person: Lowell Elmer, Utah Department of Transportation, 801/965-4134.*

■ **VERMONT** contracts with the Vermont Public Transportation Association to provide training and technical assistance to transit providers statewide. Earlier projects included the development and implementation of initiatives in the areas of management training, alcohol and drug abuse, unified cost accounting, and driver training. Initiatives currently underway include the development of a computer software package to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of transit providers statewide; development of a pool of trainers for transit personnel including drivers and direct supervisory personnel; and management training for private, public, and human service transportation providers. A task force to examine the barriers and incentives to coordination and cooperation in the human services and public transportation areas also is being created. *Contact person: Clay Potras, Vermont Agency of Transportation, 802/828-2702.*

■ **VIRGINIA** uses the J. Sargent Reynolds Community College to provide training for drivers in pre-trip inspection/emergency repairs, elements of defensive driving, and passenger relations/emergency evacuation procedures. Over 500 drivers have completed these courses. For other transportation professionals, it provides scholarships to attend national courses put on by groups such as the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and CTAA, and sponsors workshops/forums/courses, e.g., on ADA requirements, drug testing procedures/substance abuse awareness, maintenance (in cooperation with North Carolina), and management. It has developed a rural ADA model planning handbook, initiated quarterly peer-to-peer meetings for managers, conducted on-site consultant maintenance reviews, and purchased computer modems for operators to access the national electronic bulletin board service. Recent accomplishments have included: providing on-site consultant services to review insurance policies and recommend improvements; purchasing new resources such as computer software in accounting, scheduling, and maintenance; and initiating an internship program. *Contact person: Darrel Feasel, Virginia Department of Transportation, 804/786-7450.*

■ This year, **WASHINGTON** hired a specialized training coordinator to develop and implement a statewide training program designed to address the needs of its rural transit agencies. Additionally, Washington provides scholarships for training opportunities, conducts peer reviews, coordinates evaluations of operator management structures, and has consultants under contract to assist in comprehensive planning. These efforts have worked to improve the ability of Washington's rural transit systems to provide the best possible service to their customers. *Contact person: Pam Hughley, Washington State Department of Transportation, 206/586-1229.*

■ A major benefit of **WEST VIRGINIA's** RTAP has been to make training and professional development accessible and affordable to all transit personnel in the state through its scholarship program. It also has increased passenger, vehicle and system safety through the development of a training program, with new resource materials and workshops. Other benefits have been to: promote and advance public and specialized transportation services through the development of an on-going marketing and transit education program; improve operating efficiency and effec-

---

tiveness through service evaluations; and assist transit personnel in solving problems through a resource lending library. *Contact person: Cindy Fish, West Virginia Department of Transportation, 304/558-0428.*

■ This year in WISCONSIN over 30 persons have attended the train-the-trainer course on passenger assistance conducted by the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. Another 20 are expected to attend a July session, which will mean that trainers will be located throughout all areas of the state. A Wisconsin RTAP brochure with a new logo has been produced. Complementing the new national RTAP promotional kit, the two-color informational brochure describes the state's basic projects and will be distributed at conferences and meetings where rural transportation is on the agenda. Since they were first awarded three years ago, over 350 RTAP scholarships have been approved. These training opportunities valued at more than \$50,000 have increased the skills and professionalism of Wisconsin's rural and small urban transit system employees. In upcoming months, the state plans to offer workshops on developing a safety plan and policies and increasing organizational effectiveness. It also plans to expand its peer-to-peer network by including individuals with expertise in vehicle specifications and drawing on resources available from the Center for Rehabilitation Technology at the University of Wisconsin-Stout. *Contact person: Ron Morse, Wisconsin Department of Transportation, 608/266-9637.*

■ WYOMING is working on final arrangements for its 1992 rodeo and conference scheduled for August in Riverton. Conference attendees will learn about new regulations, innovative financing options, and transportation planning. *Contact person: John Black, Wyoming Department of Transportation, 307/777-4181.*



*West Virginia has increased passenger, vehicle and system safety through the development of a training program, with new resource materials and workshops.*

---

*For all the latest news on RTAP call the RTAP National Resource Center at 800/527-8279.*

