

Implementing the New Rules

Attendees learn about the 2005 revisions to the Uniform Relocation Act

BY TRACY PETERSON

Over 400 right of way enthusiasts from around the U.S. — and as far away as Guam — gathered in Anaheim, CA, on Nov. 7-9, 2005, to learn all about the regulations implementing the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 as amended.

This event, co-sponsored by the Federal Highway Administration and the International Right of Way Association (IRWA), was devoted to the 2005 Final Rule revising 49 CFR Part 24, the regulation that implements the Uniform Act. Symposium attendees were given the opportunity to hear about how the changes impact the day-to-day practice from the industry experts.

Education First

Attendees were submersed in three full days of educational sessions, featuring 19 different transportation workshops, 20 workshops focusing on relocation, nine valuation and eight local public agency workshops; some of these sessions were repeated to give participants multiple chances to attend.

The more than 70 sessions were lead by industry experts from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Caltrans, Los Angeles World Airports, Port of Long Beach, State Departments of Transportation, Federal Transit Administration, Federal Aviation Administration, and the Federal Highway Administration. Some of the time-sensitive topics focused on Eminent Domain for Public Use vs. Public Purpose; Eminent Domain Issues for Appraisers and Attorneys; Valuation of Airports and Airport Properties; Noise Easements Acquired for Airport Noise Mitigation; How the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach Cooperate on Real Estate Issues; and Handling Displaced Undocumented Aliens. More than 18 federal agencies must adhere to the rules and regulations in the implementation of their projects as well as state and local governmental entities when federal funds are used.



Attendees were able to choose from more than 70 workshops during the three-day Symposium.

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Learning with a Twist



Willie Patterson and Clyde Johnson, SR/WA, teamed up during DC Squares, entertaining the crowd while trying to sway the contestants.

DC Squares, the IRWA's version of Hollywood Squares, was a fun way for the panel of experts to quiz the contestants on what they had learned following three days of educational sessions. Volunteers

from the audience served as the lucky contestants and were eligible to receive cash prizes.

Contestants relied on the knowledge and experience of 10 panelists including Clyde Johnson, SR/WA, Federal Highway Administration (Retired); Willie Patterson, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; Christina Currier, Federal Highway Administration; Ann Catlin, Federal Transit Administration (Retired); Pat Seppi, Environmental Protection Agency; Joan Morgan, HUD; Jan Kuykendall, General Services Administration; Ron Fannin, Federal Transit Administration; Bill Todd, Federal Highway Administration, California; and Rick Etter, Federal Aviation Administration. Lee Satterfield Hamre, R/W-RAC, facilitated the evening event.

Taking Advantage of Recertification Credit

IRWA members registered for the Symposium were eligible for 24 hours of recertification credit. There were also several educational courses offered the weekend prior to the Symposium, giving IRWA members an ideal opportunity to gain credit toward certification and recertification. Symposium attendees chose from a one-day class, Course 409: Integrating Appraisal Standards, or two-day classes, Course 501: Residential Relocation Assistance or Course 502: Business Relocation.



Lisa Harrison, SR/WA, R/W-RAC, left, presented two checks on behalf of Pinnacle Consulting Group. Accepting the checks on behalf of the education foundations were Jim Struble, SR/WA, Jim Finnegan, SR/WA, and Faith Roland, SR/WA.

Pinnacle Consulting Management Group showed their support for continuing education by contributing \$16,720 to the Canadian Right of Way Education Foundation and \$18,225 to the Right of Way International Education Foundation.

Value-Added Benefits

Participants were offered an opportunity to obtain high-level training in Uniform Act-related activities, as well as an invaluable chance at networking with like-minded professionals.

"I enjoyed gleaning information through the workshops and

interaction with attendees about projects, processes, successes and failures," said one Symposium attendee.

The benefits for symposium attendees extended beyond their three days of education in Anaheim. They also received exclusive access to PowerPoint presentations and handouts from sessions they might have missed. In addition, some of the sessions were taped for use as part of a series of online seminars IRWA will be launching.

"I liked the fact that all the presentations will be available online, since it was impossible to see all the sessions in person. I also liked that most sessions had multiple speakers and appealed to more people," said another participant.

According to survey results, 81% of the attendees responded that their employer (or agency) paid for 100% of the registration fees for the event. More than 60% of those surveyed after the symposium said they would be likely to attend an annual "Federal Week" in partnership with U.S. federal agencies involved in right of way issues with a structure similar to that in Anaheim, CA.

IRWA members and non-members interested in learning about other regulatory changes are encouraged to attend the Federal Agency Update held every January in Washington, DC. This one-day meeting is a unique chance to meet and network with the leaders of federal agencies.



George Lovett, Cheryl Bennett, SR/WA and Donnie Sherwood, SR/WA, lead a workshop called Determining Trade Fixture of Personal Property — Coordinating the Appraisal Process with Relocation.



IRWA's Barbara Billitzer and Valerie Fries discussed membership benefits and other educational opportunities with attendees.

THANKS TO THE 2005 UAS SPONSORS



THANKS TO THE UAS EXHIBITORS

Uniform Act Symposium attendees were given the opportunity to network, check out the latest products from participating companies and discuss best practices with the leading experts in the industry.



Joe Magdaleno, William Tannenbaum, SR/WA, and Larry Castellanos, SR/WA



Richard Hodges



Fred Clark, SR/WA, Joe Currie and Julie Blackman



David Leighow, Christina Currier, Linda Beyer and Victor Otero



David Schinneer and Christina Pearce



Cynthia Colburn and Jerry Colburn



William Von Klug, SR/WA, R/W-RAC, Kimberly Gonzales and Steven Stelpflug



Linda Kitchen-Peck, SR/WA, Tami Benson, SR/WA, Leslie Benckendorf, SR/WA and John Dutch