

# EXPANDING IRWA'S INT

## GLOBAL • DELEGATES

### IRWA Joins with FHWA and Virginia DOT to Host Japanese Delegation

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This past June, Woodrow W. Pemberton Jr., SR/WA traveled to Japan where he represented the Association as International President at the Japanese National Right of Way Measures Symposium. The Japanese Ministry of Construction hosted the function.

During his stay in Japan, Woody addressed a gathering in Tokyo and a second group in Osaka. He was able to

develop a number of personal alliances with members of the Japan Compensation Consultant Association.

The JCCA is a professional association, similar in some ways to IRWA. Association members are regularly employees (often ranking officials) in private companies. Such companies are licensed by the Japanese Government to establish compensation amounts to be paid to property owners impacted by transportation or utility projects.

Sixteen members of the JCCA, along with the group's interpreter, attended the 44th Annual IRWA International Education Seminar in Minneapolis. Prior to the delegation's arrival, they asked Woody if he could arrange to have a right-of-way program put together for the group, if it could be worked into their itinerary. They specifically asked for a presentation on a major transportation project in the Washington DC area.

A flurry of phone calls, e-mails and faxes ensued involving Woody; Wayne Kennedy, SR/WA; Executive Vice President Ray Rosenberg and Mike Jones (Potomac Chapter 14 member and Realty Specialist at the Federal Highway Administration). As a result, IRWA teamed up with FHWA's Office of Real

Estate Services (ORES) to host the Japanese delegation. IRWA defrayed the cost of the working luncheon. ORES handled the logistics, coordinated the program and provided the visitors with commemorative gifts. ORES selected the Woodrow Wilson Memorial Bridge project as a subject and planning quickly got underway.

The Woodrow Wilson Bridge is located just outside of our nation's capital. It is the only drawbridge on the interstate system that is owned by the FHWA. It is designated as both I-95 and I-495 (Washington Beltway). The structure spans the Potomac River, linking Maryland and Virginia. Long overdue for replacement, the crossing has become a traffic nightmare for Washington commuters and other motorists traveling the I-95 corridor. The daily traffic volume in 1997 stood at 190,000 vehicles, nearly to three times the original design capacity of 75,000 vehicles. Projections are that the daily volume will reach 300,000 by the year 2020.

This is an incredibly complex transportation improvement project. It involves four jurisdictions (federal government, Virginia, Maryland and the District of Columbia) and more than 60 agencies. In



Katsushige Murayama, JCCA's interpreter (center) translates comments made by FHWA's Wilson Bridge Project Manager, John Gerner (right). Assisting in the presentation is Chris Reed (left), VDOT's Project Manager.



Members of the Japan Compensation Consultant Association (JCCA) tour the site of the Woodrow Wilson Memorial Bridge. Hunting Towers Apartments are visible in the background. One or two residential towers may have to be demolished in conjunction with the bridge replacement.



Mr. Murayama, (center) translates details of the project design process into Japanese. Also pictured are Cindy Burbank, Director of FHWA's Office of Real Estate Services (left) and Richard Moeller ORES (right).

# INTERNATIONAL Potential

addition to the bridge itself, four new interchanges are going to be built. Federal funding was approved in the recently enacted Transportation Enhancement Act for the 21st Century, (known as TEA 21) and the project is currently in the design phase. Construction is tentatively scheduled to begin in 2001-02 and is expected to take five to six years to complete.

Prior to the group's arrival in America, the JCCA members submitted a list of numerous technical questions about right-of-way procedures, processes and regulations that exist in the United States. Written responses to these questions were prepared by the ORES national headquarters staff. The responses were delivered to the delegation in Minneapolis. This gave the JCCA members a chance to study them prior to the trip to Washington, DC.

Early on the morning of July 2, vans carried both the delegation and the ORES staffers to Alexandria, Virginia for a first-hand view of the bridge. Following the site visit, ORES and VDOT gave a joint presentation. Several IRWA members were involved in the ORES portion of the program. Mike Jones (Chapter 14) and John Burney (Chapter 40) were presenters. Arnold Feldman (Chapter 14) and Deborah Leete (Chapter 52) also partici-

pated. ORES gave a history and overview of the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, widely known as the Uniform Act.

VDOT's right-of-way manager explained Virginia's right-of-way process. He also outlined some of the sensitive right-of-way issues faced by VDOT. For example, the bridge touches down within the city of Alexandria, a community with deep historical significance. The town dates to America's colonial period and contains numerous historic features. Some pre-date the founding of the nation. The area also is historically significant

due to Virginia's central role during the Civil War. Other sensitive social and environmental issues were outlined as well.

Possibly the most intriguing right-of-way aspect of the project concerns the Hunting Towers Apartments located in Alexandria, just south of the western terminus of the bridge. The Hunting Towers complex consists of

three separate residential high-rise buildings, each one containing approximately 265 residential units. At present it appears certain that one tower must be demolished to accommodate the replacement bridge. It is yet to be determined, but a second tower may be impacted as well. This property alone presents daunting appraisal, acquisition and relocation assistance problems for VDOT.

At the program's conclusion, Mr. Hiroshi Tategata, Managing Director of the JCCA and the group's leader, expressed their collective gratitude for the opportunity to exchange ideas and get answers to their questions. The JCCA delegation appeared genuinely impressed with IRWA and the Minneapolis Seminar. We may see a similar group next year in Albuquerque. This type of interaction can develop into a mutually beneficial relationship between IRWA and JCCA. ■



The Japanese Compensation Consultant Association delegation and the FHWA staff that took part in the dual presentation on the Uniform Act and the Woodrow Wilson Memorial Bridge project gather for a group photograph. Along the back row (beginning fourth from left) are the participating IRWA members: Deborah Leete of Chapter 52, Arnold Feldman of Chapter 14, John Burney of Chapter 40 and Mike Jones of Chapter 14.



JCCA members listen to the translated response to one of their questions regarding right-of-way acquisition in the United States. Standing at right is Cindy Burbank, ORES.



A member of the JCCA delegation poses a question to be translated into English by Mr. Murayama (far right). Supporting structures of the Wilson Bridge are visible in the background.