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# Communities of Practice Gain Traction

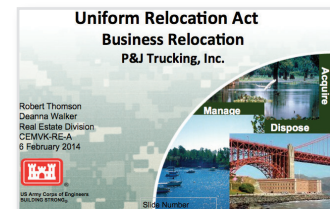
New interactive meetings attract a global audience

**MARK RIECK, IRWA EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT**



Last fall, the Association's leadership made two significant moves that were designed to enhance member value and industry relevance. First, committees were realigned to better serve our four key industry segments: Electric & Utilities, Local Public Agencies, Oil & Gas Pipeline and Transportation. Secondly, we created Discipline Communities of Practice (CoPs) for Asset Management, Environment, Relocation Assistance, Survey & Engineering and Valuation. This has proved to be a great success, as many of these communities are gaining traction as members join our CoPs and form other Industry Discussion Groups through the IRWA Member Network.

A strong case in point is the Relocation Assistance CoP meeting held in February in New Orleans, Louisiana in conjunction with the Region 2 forum. An email blast invited all IRWA members to attend, in person, webinar or by teleconference. The 25 on-site members were joined by another 43 attending via Webex and teleconference. To encourage discussion, Robert Thomson and Deanna Walker of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers presented a business relocation case study, which led to an interactive discussion among all participants.



"The meeting was a great success and illustrated how much members can learn from each other and their experiences," said Chair of the Relocation Assistance CoP Janet Cruppi, SR/WA. "We received positive feedback and generated a great deal of interest in future discussions. The bottom line is that the Relocation CoP is ready, willing, and able to provide advisory assistance based on the lessons-learned during our first meeting. And we welcome ideas for future meetings."

In the past, these types of discussions were limited by geography. But now members can engage across chapters, regions, and even countries to discuss issues and opportunities facing their particular discipline - in real time.

Get connected by joining a CoP discussion group. Click on the Member Network icon in the upper right hand corner of the IRWA website homepage to get started.



Communities of Practice (CoPs) bring together professionals who share a common interest in discipline standards and best practices, problem-solving and information sharing.