

Dr. BENSON. Mr. Chairman, that completes our presentation and if there are any other questions, we would be most pleased to try to answer them.

Mr. BLATNIK. An excellent presentation, Dean Benson. Thank you, all of you gentlemen, for the very orderly and concise manner in which you obviously gave a very thorough, representative sampling of the very intensive work you have done in this field. Mr. May, have you any questions on the presentation?

Mr. MAY. Mr. Chairman, I would like to express our appreciation to these gentlemen who have taken a lot of time over the past several months, and we would hope to maintain contact with them.

Thank you very much.

Mr. BLATNIK. Before you leave, Dean Benson, I am very interested in the joint cooperative effort between research institutions such as yours, Texas A. & M. University and Texas Transportation Institute, and operational agencies such as the Texas Highway Department and with the Federal Bureau of Public Roads.

The reason I raise that point is that apparently for years, day in and day out, over and over and over, all across the country, personnel in State highway departments themselves would see things happening. For instance, they would observe that certain signs were being hit much more frequently than others, but no one reported it, or perhaps it was reported and maybe it was not. At any rate, no one assessed or exaluated the situation as to why this was happening. The probabilities for impact were much higher, and since they were higher, even if they did not know why, in view of just the fact they knew the probability was very much higher, why was not something done about it?

We have seen that guardrails inadequately protected the driver from a concrete bridge abutment. After several accidents, some of which were fatal, the guardrails were reconstructed in exactly the same configuration as the original design called for. Someone was not learning.

Do you have any comment, any one of you gentlemen, from your experience? Obviously you have done much advanced work. What can or ought to be done to improve the lines of communication, which exist to some degree, and how do you go about creating them where they do not exist? How can you get your information, your knowledge out into the field and into practice and use?

Dr. KEESE. Well, Mr. Chairman, I would like to comment on that. I would like to preface my comments by the fact this year the Texas Highway Department will celebrate its 50th anniversary, and if you recall the progress that has been made in this 50 years, and the tremendous amount of demand that has been placed on them to keep up with the transportation facilities that are required for today's living, it is understandable that the responsibilities for the various parts of this system are going to be distributed and be segmented and played further and further down the line.

This has probably been our greatest challenge, to bring together the people who are responsible for the various segments of the problem and to try to bring about this mutual respect and understanding, and to find ways to disseminate information regardless of where it is developed across the country, disseminate this information to these people in such a manner that it can be and will be used.