PROPOSAL FOR THE FUNDATION OF A BRAZILIAN INTER-DISCIPLINARY TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT RESEARCH CENTER – CI BRAPTT

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INTRODUCTION

The aim of this proposal is to gather the various Brazilian institutes, companies and university workgroups dedicated to traffic and transport research. Without doubt, the final aim is the promotion of safe and friendly human traffic. As the international traffic and transport congresses in Birmingham, Braunschweig, Angers, Delft and Lisbon have emphasized, there is a need for interdisciplinary understanding in traffic and transport research. All researchers in the area of traffic can learn something from each other. In the same way, topics such as environment, ergonomics, and aging populations need to be studied by different professionals. Traffic has to be studied in its various interdisciplinary aspects. Even the most elementary analysis of traffic: such as road, vehicle and road user clearly shows that there is no profession that is able to deal with all the aspects of these elements.

The road may be perfect, the vehicle may be very well equipped, but the human road user with his inadequate behaviour goes on causing accidents. We know that completely automated traffic is possible but still a dream in the future. And also, it is possible that accidents that some time ago were seen as caused by human factors could be avoided by little engineering on the road, roundabouts, better signalization and better arrangements of visual space, but the human being will continue to be the main factor of traffic accidents.

ROUND TABLE PARTICIPANTS

Who are the professionals that can sit at a round table and contribute each one with his/her professional knowledge, respecting the knowledge of other specialists to come to better research orientation that can lead to more safe and human traffic? First the engineer who provides with architects, urbanists and ergonomists the whole infrastructure of the traffic just as he has constructed the infrastructure of human culture, cities, machines and many other things that makes human life and work easier and more efficient. The traffic physicians who contribute with preventive and remedial actions; many of hospital beds are taken by traffic injured persons, frequently submitted to risky neurological and complicated orthopedic surgeries.

Traffic Psychologist, who are working hard to make the psychological evaluation more efficient, with well elaborated interviews, reliable and valid tests for drivers and studying
the test results and the traffic behavior, are interested to know which are the psychological factors that lead to safe and unsafe traffic behaviour.

Pedagogues and traffic educators, who in Brazil unfortunately have no official space, because in spite of the traffic education Chapter in Brazilian Traffic Code, little is done to teach correct traffic behaviour in the schools. Sociologists and social psychologist study traffic as a social phenomenon of great complexity where current problems must be solved by a group of persons who never in the future will be in the same situation.

Jurists, lawyers and judges have to observe traffic behavior, propose more efficient laws and judge complicate traffic situations. Only few judges and lawyers specialized in traffic, and last year we lost one of the best: Octavio Cesar Valeixo. Many law schools do not even mention traffic laws. Criteria for classification of 266 traffic violations of CTB are not at all clear.

Statisticians who give us a numerical vision of the type of ways, the type of accidents, type of victims, showing the weak points in traffic but also efficient improvements.

Managers of the National Traffic System making up the rules on the base of statistical data, experimenting new models of traffic administration, promoting traffic education and establishing the standards for driver license.

Traffic officers who are directly in contact observing all kinds of road users and driver-behaviors in the cities and on the highways. Social workers who are in constant contact with the population of lower income, with special traffic problems so as the time schedule of the bus companies, and the very bad sidewalks due to a wrong municipal law: the owner of the plot has to provide the sidewalk.

Hospital personnel, who could help to have better statistics of injured and hospitalized persons. Nurses and hospital psychologists, who are involved in the treatment of poly-traumatic patients, may give more attention to the physical and psychological suffering of the injured persons.

WIDENING OF TRAFFIC CONCEPT

Besides the interdisciplinary treatment of traffic problems, another tendency is presented at the international traffic congresses. The tendency not to limit the research only to land transport and traffic problems, but include also other modalities such as sea and fluvial transport as well as railroad and air traffic. All those modalities have also their conflicts and accidents, frequently the quantity of fatal victims in airplane, railroad and boat disasters is very high and many persons are hurt and injured.

AIMS OF CEBRAPTT

The aims of the Brazilian Interdisciplinary Traffic and Transport Research Center (CEBRAPTT) are;

1) Gather the traffic specialists and researchers of different professional areas; 2) Survey important traffic problems in urban, highway and regional traffic; 3) Define special traffic problems and the ways in which researchers have tried to solve them; 4) Discuss about the most difficult traffic problems and the effective methodologies to study them from several points of view; 5) Contact traffic research centers in the world, like ICTCT and active
participation of CIBRAPTT members in national and international traffic congresses with special attention to problem solutions feasible in Brazil; 6) Contact institutions of other modalities of transport and their research centers: sea and fluvial transport, railway and air transport; 7) Organize traffic research Internet site with worldwide literature information; 8) Gather efforts to promote the creation of more interdisciplinary traffic workgroups at the universities and provide the equipments necessary to specific traffic research; 9) Promote the introduction and/or improvement of the study of traffic laws in law schools; 10) Create an e-mail group of different research centers; 11) Study how to convince politicians to implement the results of research for the improvement of traffic and transport; 12) Create a traffic research journal, may be an Internet journal with subscription and password; suggestion for the title “Science and Traffic”; 13) Conduct periodical meetings for presentation and discussion of research papers and other activities.

CHARACTERISTICS AND INDEPENDENCY

The CIBRAPTT is planned as a democratic, open, not authoritarian group of traffic researchers and specialists, not dependent on governmental instances, thought as a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO), whose existence does not depend on political influences. The Center is not proposed as a governmental department, because the simple lack of interest of an authority can destroy it. Brazilian political authorities many times do not like to continue what their antecessors created and invent something new that shows their logotype. An example of authoritarian decision is what happened recently in São Paulo where the last major sold the building of the Traffic Engineering Company after much work done by it to improve collective transport in this metropolis.

STEERING BOARD

The steering board may be simple and constituted by researchers all over the country, connected by E-mail. It will have a president, a vice-president, a first and second secretary a first and second treasurer, a organizer of the meetings, and a fiscal commission of three members (demand of Brazil). Without doubt, it will be necessary that they have a straight contact with the National Traffic System.

STAGES OF CONSTITUTION

Some stages for the effective constitution of this Brazilian Interdisciplinary traffic and transport research center may be: 1. A survey to identify the existing institutions interested in traffic and transport research. 2. Obtain the historical data of these institutions, laboratories, companies or graduate university centers with their publications; 3. Obtain the list of their principal members linked directly to the traffic research; 4. Verify which of these institutions or who of the researchers would like to take part in the Center; 5. Verify with the financial research supporting agencies the possibility for basic financial support As institutionalized Center it will be easier to obtain grants and funds of enterprises interested
in promoting traffic research in Brazil such as ANFAVEA, SHELL, PETROBRAS, VOLKSWAGEN, ANTP, FINEP, CNPq, FAPESP and others; 6. Propose a commission of five volunteer for the elaboration of the Statutes of CIBRAPTT with at least one jurist and one engineer; this commission may even change the name of the center but not its interdisciplinary character;

7. Propose individual candidates or a list of candidates who volunteer to be a member of the steering board;

8. Conduct a general assembly for approval of the Statutes, election of the steering board members and inscription of individual researchers or institutes as members of the Center. 9. Register officially the statutes and of the steering board members, the expenses of the registration will be paid by the contribution of the members of the Center; 10. Survey the most urgent traffic problems with collaboration of all the members as well as representatives of federal, state and municipality National Traffic System, to be published on the site of CIBRAPPT.

11. Study the priority of the most urgent problems in the professional areas and the research projects aiming to solve these problems; CIBRAPPTT will be open for all kinds of traffic and transport problems.

12. Organize annual meetings to present the research results, and to visit the capitals of various states.

13. Edit on the Internet the traffic research journal “Science and Traffic”.

14. Exchange and affiliate to ICTCT and other international traffic organizations.

FUNCTIONING

As it is clear by itself, the functioning of CIBRAPPTT will depend on the functioning of all of its members, intensifying the research in various areas of traffic and transport. The results of the studies will be presented to the various levels of traffic administration: federal, state and municipal for the effective use in benefiting the increase in safety and humanization of our traffic.

The good solutions of problems such as public transport, rapid rescue of traffic victims, improvement of transport for poor populations, valid and reliable tests for the selection and diagnosis of drivers, studies of high-risk points and their possible solutions must be disseminated to all the official traffic instances. With these strategies, as well as by the survey of traffic problems and their solution, CIBRAPPTT must maintain a straight contact with the National Traffic System in the municipalities, the states and the federation.

REFERENCES


ICTCT – Statutes, www.ictct.org


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