USNWG on Taximeters

Web-Meetings DRAFT Summary

August 18 – September 14, 2016

Following a face-to-face meeting of the USNWG in July 2016, the work group convened a series of web-meetings in order to finalize proposals for changes to NIST Handbook 44. These proposals had been drafted in recognition of alternative types of technologies being used in the transportation-for-hire industry. These alternative technologies (primarily location services such as GPS and software applications or “apps”) were being used in transportation services provided by transportation network companies (TNCs) which had substantially increased their presence in the U.S. recently. The TNCs were not only expanding the footprint of their services in the U.S. but were also competing with the more traditional-type taxi services in many areas.

Since there was no precedent for a regulatory standard to use in evaluating the transportation network measurement systems (TNMS), there was an urgent need for such a standard to be developed and, in doing so a number of challenges to address. One of the proposals recommended establishing a new section (or “code”) in NIST Handbook 44 (HB44) that would be intended for use in regulating transportation network measurement systems and the other proposal recommended making changes to the existing HB44 Taximeters Code.

The USNWG believed that the most expedient way to establish a useable standard for TNMS was to develop a separate HB44 code that would apply to these systems. The USNWG did however, consider incorporating TNMS into the existing HB44 Taximeters Code but the initial attempts at this proved to be problematic and unsuccessful. Recognizing that a new, separate TNMS Code could lead to some inequities in regulatory criteria and procedures based on the development of new requirements for TNMS, the work group also recognized the need to modify the existing Taximeters Code to mitigate any competitive advantage for either type of service.

During the face-to-face meeting in July 2016, the participating USNWG members were asked to review a draft for the proposal of a new TNMS Code developed by a small task group as well as proposed changes drafted to revise the existing Taximeters Code. The task group consisted of several TNCs and several regulatory officials and had been formed during a USNWG GPS Subcommittee meeting in January 2016. The task group held a series of meetings focused on the development of a proposal for a TNMS Code between March 2016 and August 2016 (see also Task Group Meetings Summary). The face-to-face meeting of the USNWG in July 2016 concluded without a final agreement on the drafts of either proposal so it was determined that, to meet a deadline for the submission of any proposed changes to HB44 a number of web-meetings were arranged to conclude the work needed on both of the proposals.

These meetings were sessions that were narrowly focused only on those issues that remained unresolved and were held on August 18th & 24th and September 1st & 14th and where the final deliberations of the USNWG members were heard on the two proposed changes to NIST HB44. Both meetings held in August 2016 were focused on the resolution of issues in the proposed TNMS Code developed by the task group. The items considered during the meeting held on September 1st addressed the final unresolved details of the proposed TNMS Code and also the consideration by the USNWG on the proposed changes to the existing Taximeters Code. And the meeting held on September 14th focused solely on the completion of the proposal to amend the HB44 Taximeters Code.

The USNWG members participating in these meetings could not reach a unanimous agreement on every item or issue related to the proposed changes. However, there was support from a majority of the work group which resulted in the submission of both proposals by the USNWG to the regional weights & measures association with a request that each be considered as voting items during the National Conference on Weights and Measures (NCWM) meetings in 2017.

The documents submitted as proposed changes to NIST HB44 can be viewed on the NCWM’s website in the section pertaining to the 2017 NCWM Interim Meeting titled “NCWM Publication 15: 2017 Edition.” At the present time, the specific documents can be accessed by using the following link: <https://www.ncwm.net/meetings/interim/publication-15>

To view the proposals, scroll down the web page to “Specifications and Tolerance Committee Agenda” and click on that link. The proposal to add a new TNMS Code is listed in this document under “Table A - Table of Contents” as number **3600-6** and the proposal to amend the Taximeters Code is listed as number **3504‑2**. The S&T Committee Agenda also includes background information regarding all of the proposals on the agenda in “Appendix A.”

Additional information regarding last minute submission of details for the TNMS proposal can also be found using the link above and scrolling down to “Taxi Code Revisions from USNWG” listed under the S&T Committee Agenda.