Meet Volpe

The National Transportation Systems Center

Advancing Transportation Innovation for the Public Good

U.S. Department of Transportation
John A. Volpe National Transportation Systems Center

Public Service. Innovative Solutions.

Volpe, The National Transportation Systems Center, is located at 55 Broadway in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Our campus is situated in the heart of Kendall Square, one of the nation's fastest growing innovation hubs.

Professional Excellence. Collaboration and Partnering.

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Powered by transportation thought leaders, driven by tough challenges, dedicated to making a better transportation system, and committed to the public good.

Meet Volpe

Volpe has been helping the transportation community navigate the most challenging problems for more than 45 years. As the National Transportation Systems Center, our mission is to advance transportation innovation for the public good.

Part of the U.S. Department of Transportation, Volpe is a unique federal agency that is 100 percent funded by sponsor projects. We partner with public and private organizations to assess the needs of the transportation community, evaluate research and development endeavors, assist in the deployment of state-of-the-art transportation technologies, and inform decision and policy making through our comprehensive analyses.

Home to renowned multidisciplinary expertise in all modes of transportation, we serve our sponsors with advanced technologies, research, and programs to ensure a fast, safe, efficient, accessible, and convenient transportation system that enhances the quality of life for the traveling public, today and into the future.

Multimodal, Cross-Disciplinary Expertise

Volpe's research, technical, and program professionals help sponsors thrive by applying best practices culled from more than 45 years of solving problems for multiple modes. We undertake new research to address emerging issues and advance innovation in transportation.

When we sit at our sponsors' planning tables, our technical, policy, and research experts listen and propose the most effective ways to meet their needs. We match their needs with a multi-disciplinary team that internalizes their missions.

Our multimodal experience enables us to consider unique approaches and champion ideas that make our sponsors' processes more efficient, their work more effective, and their solutions more fully realized.

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Measuring Aviation's Environmental Footprint

The Aviation Environmental Design Tool (AEDT) is used to model aviation-related noise, emissions, and fuel burn at local, national, and global levels. Developed by Volpe for the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and initially released in 2012, AEDT has helped the industry understand the effects of aircraft weight, performance characteristics, and weather conditions on resulting noise, air quality, greenhouse gas emissions, and fuel burn. AEDT is helping government, industry, and academia make important decisions about flight routing and runways. This tool has the potential to serve as the basis for environmental assessment across the transportation enterprise.

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The Relentless Pursuit of Safety

Our multimodal safety management expertise enables us to leverage proven practices from one mode to improve safety in others. Multidisciplinary teams supporting the Compliance, Safety, Accountability program for motor carriers, the Safety Assurance System for aviation, and the Confidential Close Call Reporting System for rail help sponsors be innovative in their approaches to reducing deaths, injuries, and property damage caused by incidents. Volpe helps design, develop, and support many tools and methodologies used by U.S. DOT modal administrations to provide oversight of transportation operations. Whether we are developing an IT system for inspectors, creating a methodology to identify risk, or developing insights from analysis of inspection and crash data, we are relentless in our effort to help U.S. DOT achieve its primary goal: transportation safety.

Scenario Planning Helps Regions Address Climate Change and Growth

Planning for a rapidly growing region like Central New Mexico means addressing congestion, energy consumption, vehicle use, and water scarcity—all of which can be exacerbated by climate change. Volpe is using scenario planning to facilitate stakeholder dialog about ways to manage these intertwined challenges. This work is helping the Central New Mexico region assess the impacts of growth, evaluate the costs and benefits of various approaches to transportation and land use, and identify strategies to reduce carbon pollution.

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Transportation Planning at National Parks Improves Visitor Experience

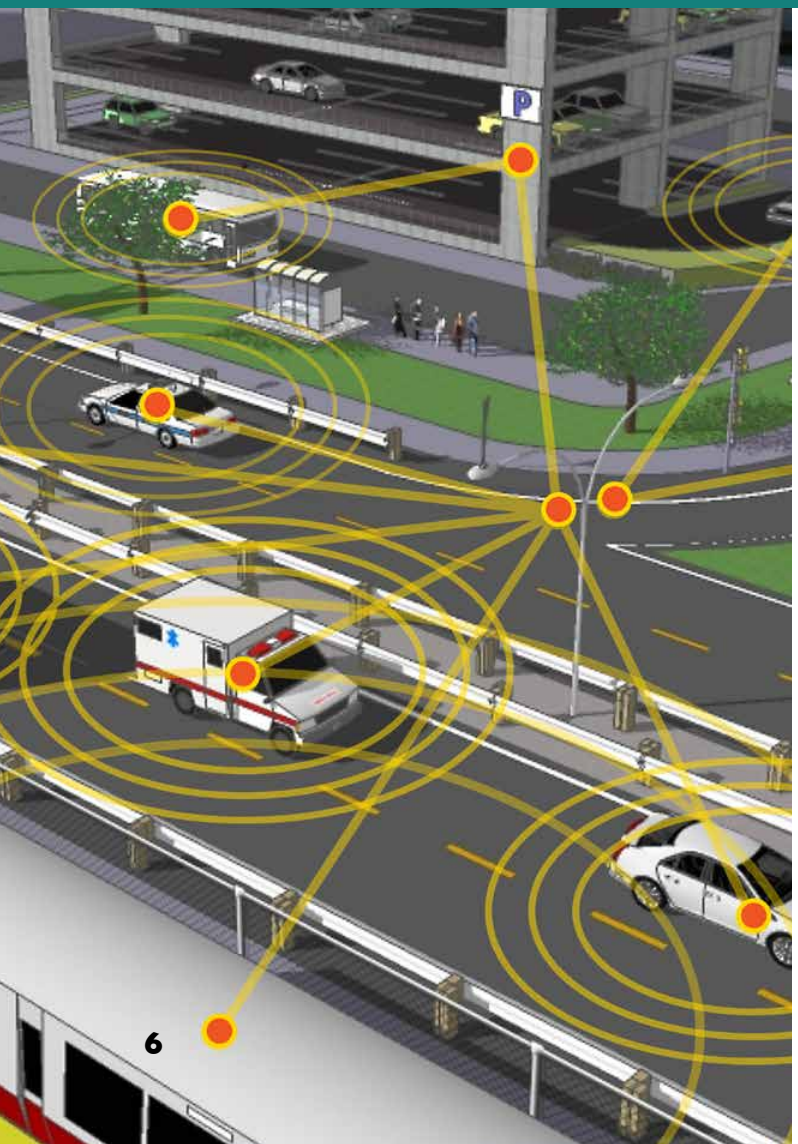
For over 15 years, Volpe has partnered with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and federal land management agencies to develop transportation programs and solutions that improve visitors' experiences and mitigate environmental impacts on public lands. Each project draws from the expertise of Volpe's diverse team of engineers, planners, economists, and policy analysts. Volpe provides federal land managers with the knowledge to make informed decisions, whether it is the introduction of shuttle bus services or alternative fuel vehicles, enhanced bicycling and pedestrian routes, or relocated parking facilities or visitor entrances.

Transformative Solutions

Volpe is a proven leader in global transportation systems research and applications. We have responded to significant transportation challenges, including the need to modernize air-traffic management systems, address critical multimodal safety issues, guide implementation of connected vehicle technologies, meet energy and environmental challenges, and strengthen global maritime domain awareness.

Volpe has successfully contributed to major programs such as the following:

- Federal Railroad Administration's (FRA) highway-rail grade crossing safety effort
- Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration's (FMCSA) Compliance, Safety, Accountability (CSA) program
- National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA) Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) standards



Reducing Vehicle Crashes—At the Nexus of Policy and Technology

Through engineering prowess and policy analysis expertise, Volpe is helping U.S. DOT agencies reduce motor vehicle crashes that result in deaths, injuries, and property damage. Volpe designs and conducts experiments and analyzes naturalisticdriving data to evaluate how drivers respond to crash-avoidance systems.

Results of Volpe's work inform rulemaking, federal guidelines, and investment decisions on crash-avoidance technologies, such as those based on emerging vehicle-to-vehicle communications. Volpe's analysts examine effective policy options relating to crash-avoidance technologies and evaluate alternatives for policy makers and decision makers.

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VOLPE AWARDS

Advancing Safety at Highway-Rail Grade Crossings

More than 95 percent of all fatalities and injuries on the national railroad system are caused by accidents at grade crossings and by trains striking trespassers. Decades of FRA-funded research—much of it conducted by Volpe—have been devoted to addressing this problem, resulting in a nearly 80 percent drop in injuries and fatalities at highway-rail grade crossings over the past 36 years. Volpe researchers study the root causes of incidents, assess and engineer leading-edge technologies, identify corrective actions and countermeasures, pioneer relationships with communities and industry, create and deploy solutions, and help FRA develop rail safety standards. Volpe has published more than 70 papers and reports on grade crossing safety and trespass prevention, making key research widely available to help stakeholders eliminate risks and save lives.

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Anne Aylward Honored with 2016 Leadership Award

The Women's Transportation Seminar-Boston honored Volpe Director Anne Aylward for her more than 30-year career as a transportation leader. Aylward has helped progress the careers of women in transportation and has advanced a broad range of U.S. DOT priorities.

Luisa Paiewonsky Receives Award for Leadership in Infrastructure Revitalization

The Engineering Center Education Trust honored Luisa Paiewonsky, director of Infrastructure Systems and Technology at Volpe, with its Leadership in Infrastructure Revitalization Award for her success in improving our nation's surface transportation system.

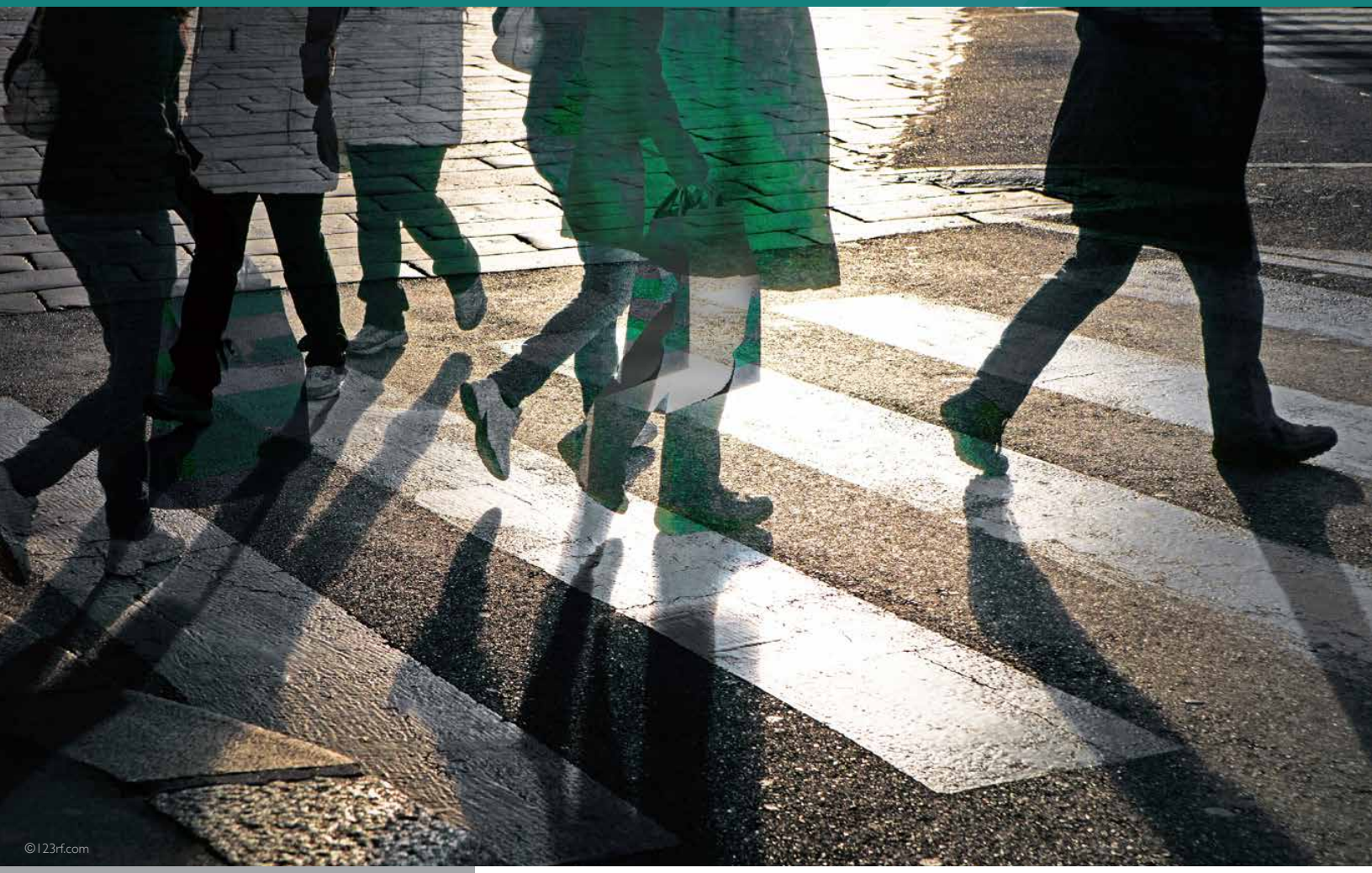
Side Guards Safety Work Nets National Technology Transfer Award

A Volpe team that investigated and promoted life-saving truck side guards won a national 2016 Federal Laboratory Consortium Excellence in Technology Transfer award for outstanding work in bringing truck side guard technology to local governments. Team members include Andrew H. Breck, Coralie L. Cooper, Alexander K. Epstein, Sean R. Peirce, and Eran Segev.

Best Paper Award for Young Professional: George J. Noel

The Air & Waste Management Association honored George J. Noel for his paper Methodology for Using AEDT and MOVES for Airport Air Quality Analyses.

Transformative Solutions



Volpe also assists small businesses in accelerating commercialization of their innovations.

Accelerating Small Business Innovation

For over 30 years, Volpe has administered the U.S. DOT Small Business Innovation Research Program (SBIR), a competitive program aimed at developing technological innovation from the small business community. Volpe administers the program and conducts outreach to small businesses. Volpe also assists small businesses in accelerating commercialization of their innovations. Recent innovations include tools for assessing rail track condition and detecting corrosion and other damage in pipelines. The program is also supporting the use of solar-powered road panels as part of the Solar Roadways Phase II research project. Visit **www.volpe.dot.gov/sbir** to learn more.

Crush Zone Research: Making Rail Travel Safer for Passengers

Protecting passengers in the event of a collision or derailment is an ongoing area of investment for FRA. FRA relies on Volpe engineers to improve its understanding of the factors involved in passenger protection and impact absorption, focusing on the type of structural modifications that can prevent rail cars from crushing. Volpe experts have investigated severe passenger-train accidents, staged impact tests, analyzed car-crush zones, and studied train and occupant dynamics to improve accident survivability. Volpe's crashworthiness research is being applied to FRA regulations and new industry standards.

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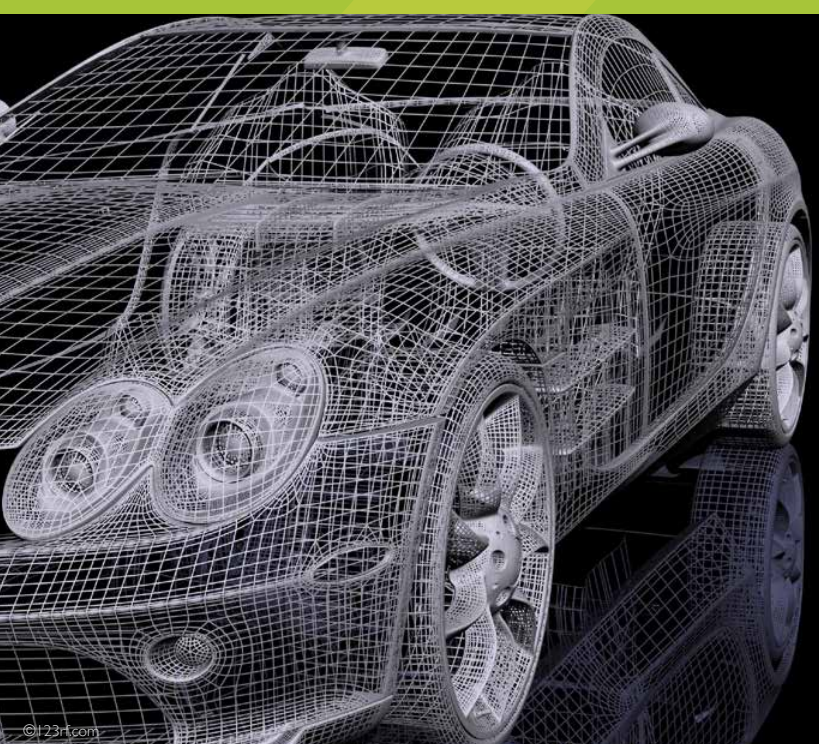
Transforming the National Airspace

FAA tapped into Volpe's expertise in program management and system engineering to help create a highly accurate and reliable system for tracking aircraft, called Automatic Dependent Surveillance-Broadcast (ADS-B). ADS-B-equipped planes broadcast their locations to ground stations and surrounding planes using global positioning systems in lieu of en-route radar. ADS-B is a critical component of FAA's Next Generation Air Transportation System (NextGen). NextGen is increasing airspace capacity, decreasing congestion, improving safety, and mitigating environmental impacts. Based on decades of proven experience with aviation systems, FAA looks to Volpe for help in developing, testing, and managing the deployment of NextGen.

Entrepreneurial, Objective, Efficient

Volpe is a unique federal agency because it is 100 percent funded by sponsor projects. We receive no direct appropriations from Congress, ensuring that we are efficient in our work, agile in our approach, and entrepreneurial in our nature. **Working with Volpe offers the accessibility and collaboration of an in-house resource with the flexibility and responsiveness of a consultant.**



As a vital partner and objective advisor that is fully fluent in federal practices and protocols, Volpe often serves as an extension of staff. We internalize sponsors' goals to deliver technologies and systems that support the global transportation mission.

Volpe serves agency and public interest with a highly educated and creative team.

Researching the Impacts of Congestion Pricing

In addition to raising revenues for maintenance and improvements, congestion pricing schemes significantly impact everyday travelers, particularly on stretches of road that were once toll-less. Volpe's experts in travel survey methods conducted before-and-after household travel surveys to assess congestion pricing efforts on Interstate 85 in Atlanta, Georgia, and on the SR-520 bridge in Seattle, Washington. These surveys capture a dynamic picture of how congestion pricing shapes travel choices for households and how these impacts vary across income levels.

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SafetyHAT: A Technology Transfer Success Story

Volpe developed a new, publicly available software tool to assist transportation professionals in conducting hazard analyses. The Safety Hazard Analysis Tool (SafetyHAT) is software that facilitates System Theoretic Process Analysis (STPA), a hazard identification method based on a top-down system engineering approach and control systems theory. It provides a guided analysis process that identifies the causes of system hazards, including hardware component failures, software errors, complex system interactions, human errors, and inadequate organization management, policy, and procedures. SafetyHAT received the Federal Lab Consortium's 2014 Excellence in Technology Transfer Award for the northeast region.

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Applying SHRP2 Solutions to Transportation Challenges

Volpe supports FHWA as it deploys more than 65 innovations developed by the second Strategic Highway Research Program (SHRP2)—including software, guidelines, decision-making protocols, and other technologies—that improve how transportation professionals plan, operate, preserve, and maintain safety on America's roadways. Volpe developed and executed an outreach strategy to foster the rapid implementation of these products and helped identify options for long-term stewardship and ownership of the 2 petabytes of data collected as part of SHRP2's naturalistic driving study. Volpe also conducts implementation analysis and planning activities, including organizing stakeholder workshops.

Saving Lives with Side Guards

Side guards are panels installed below trucks to prevent bicyclists, pedestrians, and motorcyclists from being swept underneath and killed. Passionate about safety, Volpe independently researched the impact of side guards in Europe. Its findings: After this technology became required on most heavy-duty vehicles in the United Kingdom, there was a 61 percent drop in fatalities for bicyclists and a 20 percent drop in fatalities for pedestrians who collided with the side of a truck. Volpe broadcast this research in an effort to make truck fleets safer. Communities responded with interest, including New York City, where collisions with trucks, which comprise less than 4 percent of vehicles, account for 12.3 percent of pedestrian fatalities and 32 percent of bicyclist fatalities. Working with Volpe, New York City became the largest municipal fleet in the nation to install truck side guards, and the City of Boston crafted the nation's first ordinance requiring side guards on trucks. The impact of this work continues as additional communities work with Volpe to make their vehicles—and their citizens—safer.

A Dynamic, World-Class Resource

Volpe enables sponsors to harness the collective power of hundreds of transportation experts with a shared vision of success.

We are powered by transportation thought leaders, driven by tough challenges, dedicated to making a better transportation system, and committed to the public good.

Volpe is a world-class transportation resource with broad technical and institutional expertise not replicated elsewhere. As dedicated public servants, we have devoted our careers to advancing a better transportation system. Whether we're providing new ideas or helping implement our sponsors' programs, we consistently deliver transformative transportation solutions.

Wake Turbulence Insights Boost Air Traffic Capacity

Planes cause disruptions in the air—known as wakes—that can be dangerous to trailing aircraft. Many of the foremost wake turbulence experts work at Volpe. Since Volpe's inception in 1970, our engineers have studied wake dynamics for FAA to understand the factors involved in their creation and dissipation. Volpe's work in characterizing wake behavior has enabled FAA to reduce the spacing between some heavy aircraft at a growing number of airports around the United States, which cuts the time an aircraft spends idling on the runway or making an airport approach, thereby increasing the capacity of the airspace and reducing aviation's energy footprint.

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CAFE Analysis Helps Cut Fuel Consumption and Emissions

NHTSA turned to Volpe for critical analytical support to develop standards to regulate and increase the average fuel economy of cars and light trucks sold in the United States. The Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) standards help reduce the nation's energy consumption by requiring manufacturers to increase the average fuel economy of vehicles. Volpe's world-class experts in mechanical engineering, environmental science, physics, economics, computer science, and operations research have played a significant role in CAFE over the past 40 years, conducting detailed analyses and modeling to help determine the feasibility of such far-reaching standards.

VOLPE AWARDS

Volpe Maritime Tools Recognized for Enhancing Safety, Stability on Global Seas

In a letter to U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry, U.S. Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter expressed his appreciation for the Sea Scout Initiative, which combats illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing. Secretary Carter highlighted the contributions of SeaVision and the Maritime Safety and Security Information System (MSSIS): two unclassified, multinational vessel information sharing systems, developed by Volpe for the U.S. Navy. These tools are the cornerstones of the Department of Defense's maritime domain awareness initiatives.

Distinguished Achievement Award: Michael J. Scarpino

The Department of Energy (DOE) recognized Michael J. Scarpino for his contributions to the agency's Clean Cities deployment program and strengthening DOE and DOT collaboration.

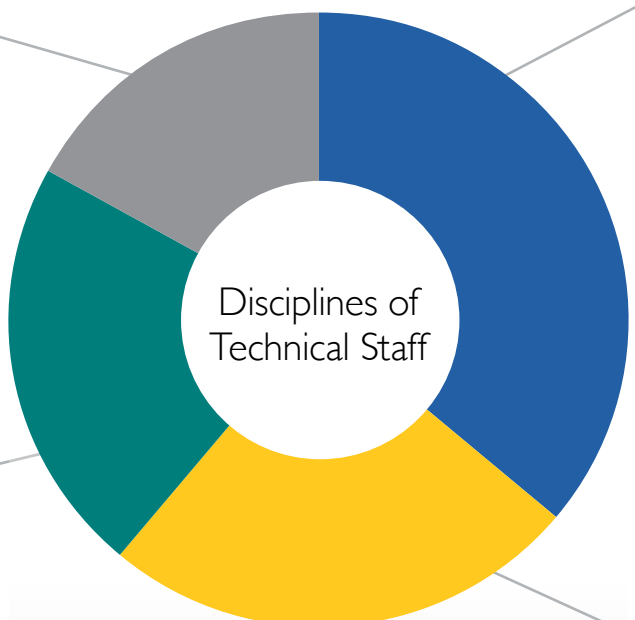
Award for Outstanding Creativity and Innovation: "Moving Volpe Forward" Team

The Greater Boston Federal Executive Board recognized the "Moving Volpe Forward" team, which advanced a strategic planning initiative designed and led by Volpe staff to improve the organization. Team members include Andrew H. Breck, Susan M. Connors, Aaron Jette, Stephen M. Popkin, and Rachel H. Winkeller.

Our Team

575+
Federal Employees

400+
On-Site Contractors



15%
IT Specialists

35%
Engineers

- Aerospace Engineers
- Chemical Engineers
- Civil Engineers
- Computer Engineers
- Electrical Engineers
- Electronics Engineers
- Environmental Engineers
- Fire Protection Engineers
- Industrial Engineers
- Marine Engineers
- Mechanical Engineers

25%
Planners/Scientists

- Economists
- Environmental Scientists
- Human Factors Specialists
- Psychologists
- Transportation and Urban Planners

25%
Analysts

- Geographic Information System Specialists
- Operations Research Analysts
- Organizational Development Specialists
- Program Analysts
- Security Specialists
- Transportation Analysts

Staff with Advanced Degrees

13%
Doctorates

36%
Masters

Fueled by Innovative Ideas

The Volpe Innovation Challenge:

Encouraging Unique Solutions to Emerging Transportation Issues

Volpe initiated a staff competition in 2012 to inspire the development of fresh ideas that address emerging transportation issues. The Innovation Challenge is an event that encourages multidisciplinary staff teams to develop and pitch creative ideas to improve some aspect of the transportation enterprise. Teams spend several weeks developing proposals that are pitched to a panel of judges composed of senior-level U.S. DOT leaders. The pitches include a description of the proposal, the potential impact, market size, and financial viability. Teams must also explain how to transition their concepts into solutions that can improve the state of transportation.

A winning team is selected to receive innovation funding to further its idea. While only one winner is selected, several of the ideas that are pitched often evolve into sponsor-funded projects.

Volpe teams compete for seed funding before a panel of senior-level U.S. DOT leaders (at right). Judges from Volpe's 2015 Innovation Challenge included (front row, left to right) FMCSA Associate Administrator Larry Minor, SLSDC Deputy Administrator Craig Middlebrook, FHWA Associate Administrator Jeff Lindley, FAA Deputy Assistant Administrator Pam Whitley, (back row, left to right) PHMSA Assistant Administrator and Chief Safety Officer Stephen Domotor, FTA Executive Director Matt Welbes, and (not pictured) Assistant Secretary for Research and Technology Greg Winfree.

Our Sponsors

U.S. Department of Transportation

- Federal Aviation Administration
- Federal Highway Administration
- Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration
- Federal Railroad Administration
- Federal Transit Administration
- Intelligent Transportation Systems Joint Program Office
- Maritime Administration
- National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
- Office of the Secretary of Transportation
- Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration
- Saint Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation

Federal Agencies

- Department of Agriculture
  - U.S. Forest Service
- Department of Commerce
  - National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
- Department of Defense
  - Defense Threat Reduction Agency
  - Office of the Secretary of Defense
  - U.S. Africa Command
  - U.S. Air Force
  - U.S. Army
  - U.S. Naval Forces Europe
  - U.S. Navy
  - U.S. Transportation Command
- Department of Energy
- Department of Homeland Security
  - Federal Emergency Management Agency
  - Transportation Security Administration
  - U.S. Coast Guard
- Department of the Interior
  - Bureau of Land Management
  - National Park Service
  - U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Environmental Protection Agency
- Millennium Challenge Corporation
- National Aeronautics and Space Administration
- U.S. Capitol Police

State and Local

- City of New York
- Florida DOT
- Massachusetts DOT
- Orange County Transportation Authority
- State of Arizona
- University of Florida
- University of Wisconsin
- Washington Metro Area Transit Authority

International

- International Civil Aviation Organization
- United Kingdom Ministry of Defence
- World Bank

Other

- BNSF Railway
- Columbia River Pilots
- General Motors
- Illingworth & Rodkin, Inc.
- National Academy of Sciences
- Wyle Laboratories, Inc.
- Zamurs and Associates

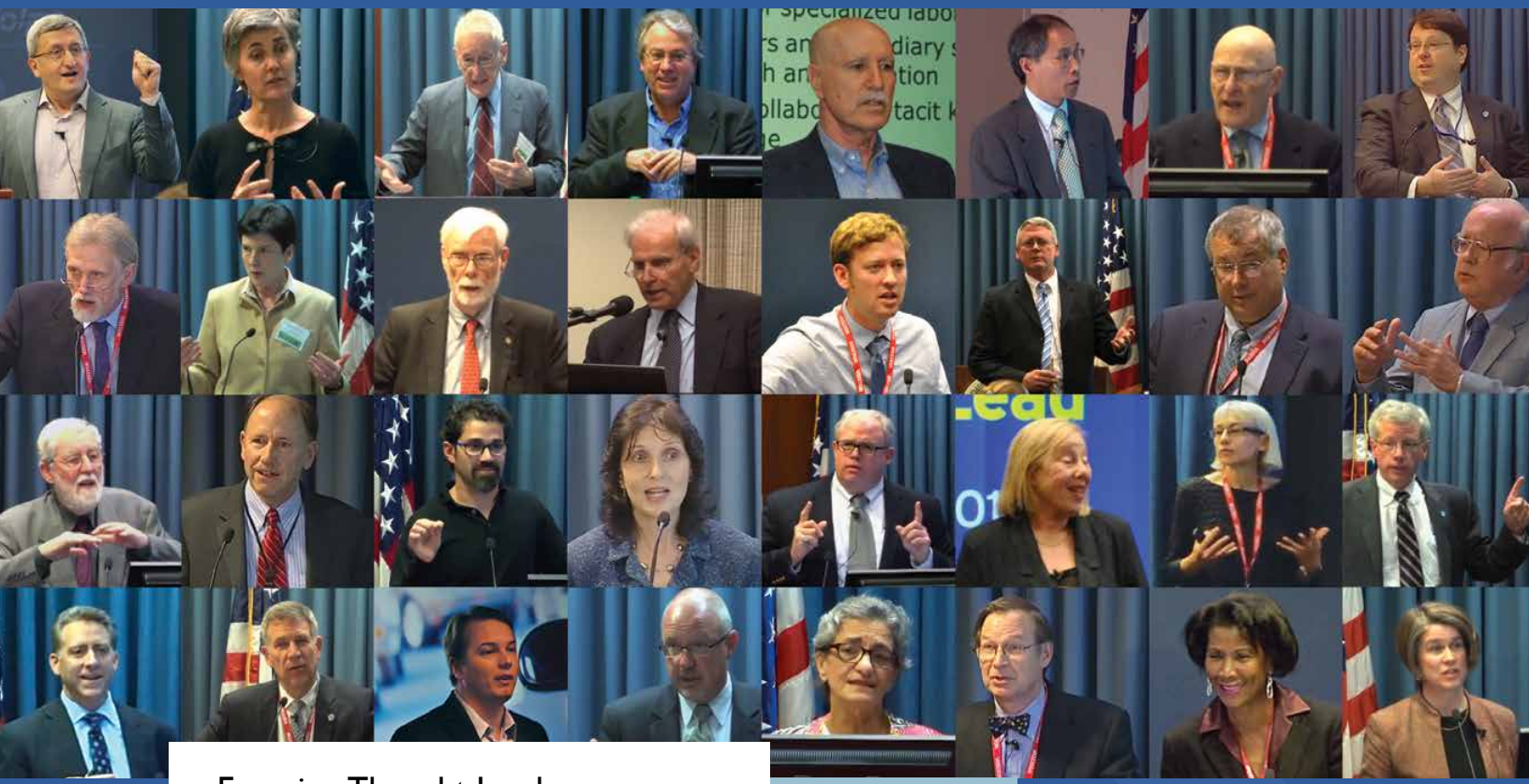
Our History

Volpe, The National Transportation Systems Center, was established in 1970 to provide analytical, scientific, and engineering support to the newly established U.S. Department of Transportation. From the beginning, Volpe was envisioned as a place where a broad range of skills could be focused on major issues that cut across the traditional modal structure of the transportation enterprise.

Housed on the campus of NASA's former Electronics Research Center, our organization opened as the "Transportation Systems Center." In 1990, our organization was renamed in honor of former Transportation Secretary John A. Volpe.

A distinguished civic leader, federal administrator, and public servant, John A. Volpe served as the first Federal Highway Administrator from 1956 to 1957 and was elected Governor of Massachusetts in 1960. In 1969, Volpe became the second U.S. Secretary of Transportation.

Thought Leadership



Engaging Thought Leaders,

Promoting Dialog to Address Global Issues

Volpe has a long history of bringing together thought leaders, decision makers, and stakeholders from across the global transportation enterprise to anticipate future transportation trends, generate fresh approaches to emerging issues, and inform decision making. As a part of this tradition, Volpe convenes experts to share their perspectives on emerging and future transportation issues. Recent thought leadership series include *The Future of Transportation: Safety, Opportunity, and Innovation*; and *Beyond Traffic 2045: Reimagining Transportation*. Visit **www.volpe.dot.gov/events** to learn more.

Our events, which are available to the public, have attracted more than 4,000 transportation professionals since 2011.

Committees and Conferences

- Transportation Research Board
  - Policy and Organization Group Executive Board: *Emeritus member*
  - Standing Committee on Intelligent Transportation Systems: *Chair*
  - Standing Committee on Rail: *Chair*
  - Subcommittee on Research: *Chair*
  - Standing Committee on Simulation and Measurement of Vehicle and Operator Performance: *Chair*
  - Standing Committee on Urban Freight Transportation: *Vice chair*
  - 54 committees: *Member*
  - 2015 Annual Meeting: *Chaired 12 sessions and delivered 18 presentations*
- National Transportation Safety Board: *Panelists*
  - Awake, Alert, Alive: Overcoming the Dangers of Drowsy Driving
  - Investigative Hearing: Railroad Accident Investigation Involving Two Freight Trains
  - Investigative Hearing: Two Metro-North Rail Accidents in Connecticut
  - Rail Safety Forum: Transportation of Crude Oil and Ethanol
- International Commission on Occupational Health, Shiftwork, and Working Time: *Secretary*
- United Nations
  - Economic Commission for Europe, Workshop on Intelligent Transport Systems: *Keynote speaker*
  - International Committee on Global Navigation Satellite System: *DOT lead*
- AARP National Older Driver Safety Expert Panel: *Member*
- Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation, Transportation Working Group: *Co-chair of the Global Navigation Satellite System Implementation Team*
- Marine Board: *Member of the Committee on Marine Safety and Human Factors*
- Institute for Navigation: *Council member*
- 21st World Congress on Intelligent Transportation Systems:
  - *DOT representative to the Connected Vehicle Safety Technology Demonstration*
  - *Program committee member and session organizer*
- International Civil Aviation Organization: *Co-chair of committee on Aviation Environmental Protection, Modeling, and Databases Group Meetings*
- Road Vehicle Automation Symposium 2014: *Co-chair*
- Fifth Symposium on Railroad Tank Cars: *Keynote presentation*
- International wake turbulence research groups: *Convener, organizer, presenter*
- International Conference on Human-Computer Interaction in Aerospace (HCI-Aero 2014): *Program committee members*
- Women's Transportation Seminar—Boston: *President*
- 2014 Energy Information Administration Energy Conference: *Presenter*
- 2014 Joint Rail Conference: *Track session organizer, sessions planner*
- American Society of Mechanical Engineers 2013 Rail Transportation Division Conference: *Session co-organizers*

Our Leaders

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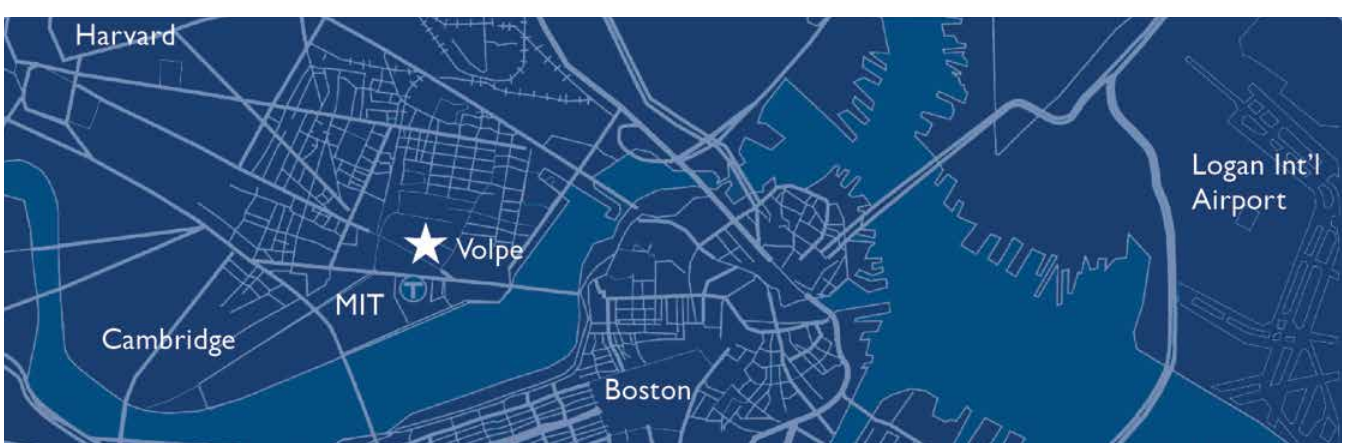

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