

APPENDIX B

Traffic Assignment Model

APPENDIX B: TRAFFIC ASSIGNMENT MODEL

This section describes the integrated trip assignment and distribution model named TRAD that is expressly designed for use in analyzing evacuation scenarios. This model employs equilibrium traffic assignment principles and is one of the models of the IDYNEV System.

To apply TRAD, the analyst must specify the highway network, link capacity information, the volume of traffic generated at all origin centroids, a set of accessible candidate destination nodes on the periphery of the EPZ for each origin, and the capacity (i.e., “attraction”) of each destination node. TRAD calculates the optimal trip distribution and the optimal trip assignment (i.e., routing) of the traffic generated at each origin node, traveling to the associated set of candidate destination nodes, so as to minimize evacuee travel times.

Overview of Integrated Distribution and Assignment Model

The underlying premise is that the selection of destinations and routes is intrinsically coupled in an evacuation scenario. That is, people in vehicles seek to travel out of an area of potential risk as rapidly as possible by selecting the “best” route. The model is designed to identify these “best” routes in a manner that distributes vehicles from origins to destinations and routes them over the highway network, in a consistent and optimal manner.

The approach we adopt is to extend the basic equilibrium assignment methodology to embrace the distribution process, as well. That is, the selection of destination nodes by travelers from each origin node, and the selection of the connecting paths of travel, are both determined by the integrated model. This determination is subject to specified capacity constraints, so as to satisfy the stated objective function. This objective function is the statement of the User Optimization Principle by Wardrop¹.

To accomplish this integration, we leave the equilibrium assignment model intact, changing only the form of the objective function. It will also be necessary to create a “fictional” augmentation of the highway network. This augmentation will consist of Pseudo-Links and Pseudo-Nodes, so configured as to embed an equilibrium Distribution Model within the fabric of the Assignment Model.

¹ Wardrop, J.G., 1952. Some Theoretical Aspects of Road Traffic Research, *Proceedings, Institute of Civil Engineers*, Part II, Vol. 1, pp. 325-378.

Specification of TRAD Model Inputs

The user must specify, for each origin node, the average hourly traffic volume generated, as well as a set of candidate accessible destinations. A destination is “accessible” to traffic originating at an origin node if there is at least one path connecting the origin to the destination node. There must be at least one destination node specified for each origin centroid. The number of trips generated at the origin node, which are distributed to each specified, accessible destination node within this set, is determined by the model in a way as to satisfy the network-wide objective function (Wardrop's Principle).

The user must also specify the total number of trips which can be accommodated by each destination node. This value reflects the capacities of the road(s) immediately servicing the destination node. We call this number of trips, the "attraction" of the destination node, consistent with conventional practice. Clearly, we require that the total number of trips traveling to a destination, j , from all origin nodes, i , cannot exceed the attraction of destination node, j . By summing over all destination nodes, this constraint also states that the total trips generated at all origin nodes must not exceed the total capacity to accommodate these trips at all of the specified destinations.

In summary, the user must specify the total trips generated at each of the origin nodes, the maximum number of trips that can be accommodated by each of the specified destination nodes and the highway network attributes which include the traffic control tactics. The TRAD model includes a function which expresses travel time on each network link in terms of traffic volume and link capacity. This function drives the underlying trip distribution and trip assignment decision-making process. Thus, the TRAD model satisfies the objectives of evacuees to select destination nodes and travel paths to minimize evacuation travel time. As such, this integrated model is classified as a behavioral model.

At the outset, it may appear that we have an intractable problem:

- If TRAD retains the basic assignment algorithm, it must be provided a Trip Table as input.
- On the other hand, if the distribution model is embedded within the assignment model, rather than preceding it, a Trip Table is not available as input.

The resolution of this problem is as follows:

1. We construct an "augmentation" network that allows the user to specify only the volume for each origin node. The allocation of trips from the origin node to each candidate destination node, is not specified and will be determined internally by the model.
2. We construct pseudo-links which enforce the specified values of attraction, A_j , for all destination nodes, j , by suitably calibrating the relationship of the travel time vs. volume and capacity.

This augmented network is comprised of three subnetworks:

1. The highway subnetwork, which consists of "Class I" Links and Nodes.
2. A subnetwork of "Class II" Pseudo-Links which acts as an interface between the highway subnetwork and the network augmentation.
3. The subnetwork of "Class III" Pseudo-Links and Nodes which comprises the network augmentation described above.

The need for these Class II links will become clear later. The classifications are described below:

Class I Links and Nodes

These links and nodes represent the physical highway network: sections of highway and intersections. Trips generated at each Origin [Centroid] Node are assigned to a specified Class I link via a "connector" link. These connector links are transparent to the user and offer no impedance to the traveler; they represent the aggregation of local streets which service the centroidal generated trips and feed them onto the highway network. The real-world destination nodes are part of this network. The immediate approaches to these destination nodes are Class I links.

Class II Links

These pseudo-links are constructed so as to connect each specified destination node with its Class III Pseudo-Node (P-N) counterpart on a one-to-one basis. The capacities of these Class II links are set equal to the capacities at their respective destination nodes.

Class III Links and Nodes

Class III links and nodes form the augmentation to the basic network. These Pseudo-Links provide paths from the Class II links servicing traffic traveling from the specified [real] destination nodes, to the Super-Nodes which represent the user-specified set of destination nodes associated with each origin node.

Each Class of links provides a different function:

- Class I links represent the physical highway network. As such, each link has a finite capacity, a finite length and an estimated travel time for free-flowing vehicles. The nodes generally represent intersections, interchanges and, possibly, changes in link geometry. The topology of the Class I network represents that of the physical highway system.
- The Class II links represent the interface between the real highway subnetwork and the augmentation subnetwork. These pseudo-links are needed to represent the specified "attractions" of each destination node, i.e.,

the maximum number of vehicles that can be accommodated by each destination node. Instead of explicitly assigning a capacity limitation to the destination nodes, we assign this capacity limitation of the Class II Pseudo-Links. This approach is much more suitable, computationally.

- The topology of the network augmentation (i.e., Class III Links and Nodes) is designed so that all traffic from an origin node can only travel to the single “Super-Node” by flowing through its set of real destination nodes, thence along the links of the augmented network.

The Class II Pseudo-Links and the network augmentation of Class III Pseudo-Nodes and Links represent logical constructs of fictitious links created internally by the model, that allows the user to specify the identity of all destination nodes in each origin-based set, without specifying the distribution of traffic volumes from the origin to each destination node in that set.

Calculation of Capacities and Impedances

Each class of links exhibits different properties. Specifically, the relationship between travel impedance (which is expressed in terms of travel time) and both volume and capacity will differ:

- For Class I links, the capacity represents the physical limitation of the highway sections. Travel impedance is functionally expressed by relating travel time with respect to the traffic volume-link capacity relationship.
- For Class II links, link capacity represents the maximum number of vehicles that can be accommodated at the [real] destination nodes that form the upstream nodes of each Class II link. Since Class II links are Pseudo-Links, there should be virtually no difference in impedance to traffic along Class II links when the assigned traffic volume on these links is below their respective capacities. That is, the assignment of traffic should not be influenced by differences in travel impedance on those Class II links where the assigned volumes do not exceed their respective capacities.
- For Class III links, both capacity and impedance have no meaning. Since the Class II links limit the number of vehicles entering the Class III subnetwork at all entry points (i.e., at the Class II Pseudo-Nodes) and since all these links are Pseudo-Links, it follows that the Class III network is, by definition, an uncapacitated network.

Specification of the Objective Function

It is computationally convenient to be able to specify a single impedance (or "cost") function relating the travel time on a link, to its capacity and assigned traffic volume, for all classes of links. To achieve this, we will adopt the following form based on the original "BPR Formula"²:

$$T = T_o \{ \alpha [1 + a_1 (\frac{V}{C})^{b_1}] + \beta [1 + a_2 (\frac{V}{C})^{b_2}] \} + I$$

Where, as for the present traffic assignment model in TRAD,

T	=	Link travel time, sec.
T _o	=	Unimpeded link travel time, sec.
V	=	Traffic volume on the link, veh/hr
C	=	Link capacity, veh/hr
a _i , b _i	=	Calibration parameters
α, β	=	Coefficients defined below
I	=	Impedance term, expressed in seconds, which could represent turning penalties or any other factor which is justified in the user's opinion

The assignment of coefficients varies according to the Class in which a link belongs:

Class	α	β	T _o
I	1	0	L/U _f
II	0	1	W
III	0	0	1

Here, L is a highway link length and U_f is the free-flow speed of traffic on a highway link. The values of a₁ and b₁, which are applicable only for Class I links, are based on experimental data:

$$a_1 = 0.8 \qquad b_1 = 5.0$$

The values of a₂ and b₂, which are applicable for each Class II link, are based upon the absolute requirement that the upstream destination node can service no more traffic than the user-specified value of the maximum "attraction". In addition, these parameters must be chosen so that these Pseudo-Links all offer the same impedance to traffic when their assigned volumes are less than their respective specified maximum attractions.

The weighting factor, W, is computed internally by the software.

² Bureau of Public Roads (1964). Traffic Assignment Manual. U.S. Dept. of Commerce, Urban Planning Division, Washington D.C.

Of course, it is still possible for the assignment algorithm within TRAD to distribute more traffic to a destination node than that node can accommodate. For emergency planning purposes, this is a desirable model feature. Such a result will be flagged by the model to alert the user to the fact that some factor is strongly motivating travelers to move to that destination node, despite its capacity limitations. This factor can take many forms: inadequate highway capacity to other destinations, improper specification of candidate destinations for some of the origins, or some other design inadequacy. The planner can respond by modifying the control tactics, changing the origin-destination distribution pattern, providing more capacity at the overloaded destinations, etc.