

Inspector Training and Certification Meeting Summary Notes

Meeting Date: Monday, August 22, 2022, 10:00 am – 11:00 am

Location: DOTD TTEC Conference Room

Purpose of Meeting: Partnering with DOTD to improve inspection certification process for both DOTD and consultant employees.

ATTENDEES

Sam Cooper, LTRC

Tyson Rupnow, LTRC

Kirk Wales, LTRC

Barker Dirmann, ACEC

Bob Boagni, GPI (ACEC)

Sherri LeBas, GEC (ACEC)

Brian Buckel, GEC (ACEC)

Terry Cormier, Gotech (ACEC)

MEETING SUMMARY NOTES

The agenda is attached.

Meeting summary notes follow the agenda items numbered 1-5.

Sherri opened up the meeting by discussing the additional federal and state funding for transportation infrastructure and the need to train and certify inspectors in order to be ready to supply the work force needed for this increased transportation program. She explained that our goal is to work in partnership with DOTD to improve the process of inspector training and certification for both DOTD and non-DOTD employees.

1. Training materials are outdated. References in the study courses refer to test or procedures no longer used.
2. Classes are held infrequently (once a year) and only covers one certification area. They are often only held in Baton Rouge, requiring travel time and at times hotel cost.
3. Cost:
 - a. \$800 for training material plus time away from work for class.
 - b. Time away from work on a project for 6 months to get the experience required which may entail going to another company's project site, if you don't have a project with the

specific certification operations. By going to another company's project site, the employee is not billable.

The following meeting notes cover agenda items 1 through 3 above.

- Terry explained that the training material is outdated and that both DOTD & non-DOTD employees receive the same training material. The goal is to have well certified inspectors. Terry outlined the current process of when someone wants to be certified. The current process is as follows:
 - There are 5 major areas for certification: asphaltic paving, structural concrete, portland cement concrete paving, base course & embankment inspection and asphalt plant.
 - For each area of certification, training books are purchased from LTRC. (approx.. \$800 for training material per area of certification.)
 - If the trainee would like to take a class for a particular area of certification, the trainee must spend a week at LTRC in training. (Expense is hotel and food cost for a week; consultant either doesn't pay the trainee during this time or it is on the consultant's overhead.) Note: classes are not mandatory but helpful. In general, a class for one of the areas of certification is taught per year.
 - Once the trainee has passed the test for a particular training course, the trainee must get field experience for that type of work in order to get certified. This is a challenge. For example there are few concrete paving projects under construction. Trainee must go to another consultant's job site for this training if the company that the trainee works for doesn't happen to have a project under construction with the particular area of certification that is needed. This costs money and time for the consultant.
- Tyson said that DOTD allows ACI certification for paving inspection. Tyson asked if there are other ACI certifications.
- Training manuals:
 - Status of training manuals:
 - Sam handed out the status of the training manuals. (see attachment)
 - Three of the courses are being update now. They are:
 - Asphaltic Concrete Paving Inspection Volume I and II
 - Portland Cement Concrete (PCC) Paving Inspection
 - Portland Cement Concrete (PCC) Mix Design
 - The 3 most important as per Brian & Terry are:
 - Excavation & Emb.
 - Asphaltic Concrete Paving Inspection Volume I and II
 - Portland Cement Concrete (PCC) Paving Inspection
 - Least important as per Brian & Terry is:
 - Basic Asphaltic Concrete Plant Inspection
 - Brian explained that this is no longer being performed by the inspector. Asphalt plant inspection has moved to certification of the plant with the DOTD having 2-3 asphalt specialist per District

that randomly inspect plants and verify they are meeting the requirements.

- The group brainstormed ideas for improving the training classes. A synopsis of this discussion included:
 - Provide the class on line (video training class)
 - DOTD stated that users would not be able to access DOTD's network remotely to take the class. The state OTS will not allow this.
 - Discussed allowing users to use the computers in TTEC's training room to take the class.
 - Sherri asked if DOTD could develop the training class and then allow trainees to take the class through or at CAAL, LAPA or AGC. Therefore, users would not have to access DOTD's computers.
 - It was discussed and all agreed that the certification test would still take place at DOTD as is currently administered.
 - Sherri asked if there was any special money from grants, research funds or other funds available for developing course material and video training.
- 4. How do the inspectors get the field experience (6 months) needed for the certification, if your firm does not have active projects in specific operations?
 - The group brainstormed ideas for improving the field training and testing. A synopsis of this discussion included:
 - Brian suggested using ALF as the field training ground.
 - Terry asked if someone can be qualified but not certified. That way the person can be listed in a proposal as qualified. This person has passed the written test, but hasn't gotten the 6 months of field experience needed for certification. A trainee must work with a certified inspector for 6 months and then take the performance test in the field. The District sends someone to watch the person who is taking the performance test in the field.
- 5. Other discussion
 - Design Build: Brian commented that the QC for the contractor is not working well. He predicts there may come a time when the contractor will need his own quality inspectors.
 - The group discussed other areas of training needed for future employees, not just inspection. They are:
 - Plan reading
 - Specifications
 - The Department has an Introduction to Pile Driving Inspection developed. The group discussed that a training class has never been developed for a drilled shaft class.
 - Brian suggested and it was discussed a review of other State on line training options. TxDOT uses the Texas HMAAC for online training for asphalt and base course.

Action Items in preparation for the next meeting that will be held on **September 19, 2022.**

1. DOTD will continue updating the training material and provide a status of the training material.

2. DOTD will research means and methods for producing video training materials.
3. ACEC will meet with LAPA, CAAL and AGC:
 - a. Discuss what thoughts they may have of how to provide DOTD produced on line training courses to people seeking to become certified inspectors.
 - b. Inquire about their knowledge or suggestions regarding other States' on line training options and what states should be contacted for further information. (TxDOT uses the Texas HMAC for online training for asphalt and base course.)
4. Allowing consultant's to list inspectors that are qualified but not certified on project org charts in project proposals will be discussed at the next meeting allowing time for internal discussions to be held for input and feedback.

Meeting adjourned

Attachments

- ❖ Agenda
- ❖ DOTD's status of training materials

ACEC DOTD Meeting

August 22, 2022

Purpose: Partnering with DOTD to improve inspection certification process for both DOTD and consultant employees.

AGENDA

1. Training materials are outdated. References in the study courses refer to test or procedures no longer used.
2. Classes are held infrequently (once a year) and only covers one certification area. They are often only held in Baton Rouge, requiring travel time and at times hotel cost.
3. Cost:
 - a. \$800 for training material plus time away from work for class.
 - b. Time away from work on a project for 6 months to get the experience required which may entail going to another company's project site, if you don't have a project with the specific certification operations. By going to another company's project site, the employee is not billable.
4. How do the inspectors get the field experience (6 months) needed for the certification, if your firm does not have active projects in specific operations?

Proposed Recommendations:

1. Update training material and move the majority on line for easier access and future updates.
2. Allow for and hold virtual classes and/or develop training videos to allow students to interact and work within the material.
3. Consider integrating the DOTD Certifications with LAPA, CAAL and AGC to include some national training.
4. Research other State training programs to see if there is options that the DOTD could adapt (TxDOT and FDOT).

Christopher Wales

From: Christopher Wales
Sent: Monday, August 22, 2022 8:13 AM
To: Samuel Cooper; Tyson Rupnow
Cc: MaryLeah Coco
Subject: FW: Out Sick

Good morning, Gents. This is the current status of our manuals that MLC referenced below.

Asphaltic Concrete Paving Inspection Volume I and II	2008 (updating both volumes now)	
Structural Concrete Volume I	1983	
Structural Concrete Volume II	1985	
Basic Asphaltic Concrete Plant Inspection	Updated 2021	
Base Course Inspection	2009	
Portland Cement Concrete (PCC) Paving Inspection	1993 (updating now)	
Portland Cement Concrete (PCC) Mix Design	1994 (updating now)	
Excavation & Embankment Inspection	2008	

Draft available next week.

We're making progress more rapidly than I had hoped for. Dimetrie has been working on Asphalt Paving for a while now and is making the final adjustments before we send to publications for review. John and Dimetrie are working PCC Inspection and PCC Mix and are making those final adjustments this week. Patrick updated Asphalt Plant in 2021 as one of his last official DCL responsibilities before taking over Maintenance. Once we close these items out, we'll move on to the Structural Concrete and Base Course and Embankment. All in all we're in a much better position that I realized.

I can support the meeting if ya'll would like me to. Just let me know time and location.

R/
Kirk

From: MaryLeah Coco <MaryLeah.Coco@LA.GOV>
Sent: Monday, August 22, 2022 5:29 AM
To: Samuel Cooper <Samuel.Cooper@LA.GOV>
Cc: Melissa Neyland <Melissa.Neyland@LA.GOV>; Tyson Rupnow <Tyson.Rupnow@LA.GOV>; Christopher Wales <Christopher.Wales@la.gov>
Subject: Out Sick

Sam,

Good morning. I am requesting a sick day. I have been sick since yesterday and was hoping to be better by the time I woke up this morning. In fact, I am not and did not sleep much. I apologize for the morning notice.

Today is the meeting with Sherri and others, and I am copying Kirk on this message so he can also attend. He has the timeline on dates and certification information ready to go.