



Florida Department of Transportation

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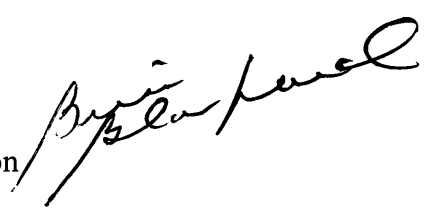
DENVER J. STUTLER, JR.
SECRETARY

July 21, 2006

This Memo Has Expired

DCE MEMORANDUM NO: 13-06
(FHWA APPROVED: 7-20-06)

TO: DISTRICT CONSTRUCTION ENGINEERS
DISTRICT BITUMINOUS ENGINEERS

FROM: Brian Blanchard, Director, Office of Construction 

COPIES: Bob Burluson, Jim Warren, David Sadler, Jim Musselman, Greg Schiess (FHWA)

SUBJECT: THE QUALITY OF 15-FOOT ROLLING STRAIGHTEDGE OPERATIONS

Presently the straightedge testing for asphalt pavements is the contractor's responsibility with verification by the Department's project personnel. Recently there have been several cases where the contractor's testing program has indicated few or no straightedge deficiencies existed when subsequent independent testing has determined otherwise. One example was a completed structural course with two straightedge deficiencies reported by the contractor's straightedge testing system with the independent testing subsequently reporting 116 deficiencies. Another example was a project with two deficiencies reported initially and the subsequent testing which was conducted with the same straightedge, discovered 23 deficiencies.

Specification 330-12, Section 11.2 of the CPAM, and Florida Test Method 5-509 combined outline the steps for calibration of the rolling straightedge, the contractor's testing, and the verification procedure to be accomplished. As illustrated above and in many other cases, the system of daily calibration, acceptance testing by the contractor and verification by project personnel has failed to produce the ride quality the specifications and procedures were developed to achieve. In fact, the overall ride quality as measured by the Department's annual pavement condition survey has been declining in the past three years.

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In order to improve the overall ride quality and specification compliance, the Districts are requested to evaluate the means and methods presently used in the District for ride acceptance. The results of the evaluation and the planned activities to improve the effectiveness of acceptance are to be provided to this office by August 4th. For example, the plan should include training of technicians on calibration of the device and proper testing procedures if that is determined to be the root cause. The plan might also include assigning the responsibility for verification of the contractor's system to a finite group of individuals to ensure consistency and proper administration of the contract.

If the Department determines that a technician is not performing calibration, conducting the testing or reporting the results in compliance with the requirements of Specification 330-12, Florida Test Method 5-507 and CPAM Section 11.2 and therefore demonstrating a "lack of proficiency", the technician shall be subject to the process of "1st Error" of his/her qualification in accordance with the procedures of CPAM Section 1.9.11 (Qualification Revocation Based on Lack of Proficiency).

Additionally please provide any suggested changes to the specifications, test methods, or the guidance provided in the CPAM to improve the acceptance system and the ride quality of roadway projects with design speed less than 50 miles per hour.

If you have any questions, please contact David Wang in the State Construction Office at (850) 414-4152 or SC 994-4152.

BB/ww