

Bridge, Overhead Sign Structures and High Mast Light Poles Damage Assessment Review Guidelines

These guidelines are provided to clarify Asset Maintenance Contractor (AMC) responsibilities for damage assessment of bridges, overhead signs structures and high mast light poles.

General:

FHWA ER Manual states that: “Costs such as a general overall assessment of damage, general supervision, contract administration other than construction engineering, and project planning and scheduling are considered administrative costs that are not eligible for reimbursement because they relate to the overall responsibilities of an agency to manage and operate a highway system rather than to the design and construction of an individual repair project.”

Therefore, “general overall assessment of damage”, including structure safety inspection right after hurricane (called “post-event safety survey”) is not eligible for ER funds.

If an initial damage assessment (“post-event safety survey”) shows that an emergency repair is needed, and if further in-depth inspections are necessary to provide detailed damage information for the purpose of design and/or construction, the subsequent inspections are eligible for ER funds because they are for the ER design and/or construction. However, the damage assessment itself (“post-event safety survey”) is not eligible for ER funds regardless whether or not a structure needs to be ER repaired.

Consequently, where the Asset Maintenance Scope of Services states that the AMC shall “Assist the Department in performing damage assessment reviews” after Governor Declared Emergencies, the AMC’s responsibilities for bridges, overhead sign structures and high mast light poles are clarified by the following Guidelines:

Guidelines:

- The AMC shall perform “post-event safety surveys” as coordinated by the District. These safety surveys will be limited in scope to what is NOT federally reimbursable with ER funds.
- If maintenance of bridges, overhead sign structures and high mast light poles are not included in the AM Contract, the AMC is not responsible for performing safety surveys for the structures not included in the contract.

- Establish qualifications of survey senior Team Leader in accordance with Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan.
- Boats, inspection vehicles, and other specialized equipment may be needed for safety surveys. The AMC must ensure necessary equipment is readily available.
- Specific requirements of safety surveys should be detailed in District's Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan.
- The Districts shall coordinate the sequence of bridge safety surveys (i.e. District will instruct AMC to perform safety survey of bridge "A" first and on bridge "B" second). If desired, the District may elect to allow the AMC to determine the safety survey sequence of all structures within their geographical area.
- AMC is to use sound engineering judgment to determine what needs to be done to perform a thorough safety survey.
- For each structure (bridges, overhead signs, and high mast light poles), the AMC shall submit a signed report of their safety survey. The report shall state either that no damage was identified or that a detailed inspection is needed. If a detailed inspection is needed, the safety survey report shall give a brief statement of damage and a suggested safety action.
- The Department and AMC shall exchange information identifying primary contact personnel with contact phone numbers.

The following recommended checklist for safety surveys is a partial list of items that may be used during the safety assessment.

- Has the bridge/structure been damaged?
- Are emergency repairs required?
- Can bridge remain open or should it be closed?
- Should sign structure be immediately taken down?
- Should there be traffic restrictions on the bridge/corridor?
- Can pre-event conditions be distinguished from event-caused damage? Ensure pre-event conditions are noted so that they will not be confused with event-caused damage.

- If damage is found, has a written statement of damage and suggested safety action been submitted to the Department?
- If damage was not identified, has a safety assessment report been signed stating such?