



Florida Department of Transportation

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ANANTH PRASAD
SECRETARY

ROADWAY DESIGN BULLETIN 13-08

DATE: June 5, 2013

TO: District Directors of Transportation Operations, District Directors of Transportation Development, District Design Engineers, District Structures Design Engineers, District Consultant Management Engineers, District Construction Engineers

FROM: Michael Shepard, P.E., State Roadway Design Engineer

COPIES: Tom Byron, Brian Blanchard, Duane Brautigam, David A. Sadler, Bob Crim, Tim Lattner, Mark Wilson, Bruce Dana, John Krause, Monica Gouridine (FHWA)

SUBJECT: Design Variation Approval Requirements

This bulletin revises the Department's policy for the approval of Design Variations.

REQUIREMENTS

Replace *Plans Preparation Manual, Volume 1, Section 23.8* with the following:

23.8 Design Variation Approval

Design Variations only require District approval unless identified as requiring Central Office approval in **Section 23.3** (see Exhibit 23-B). Design Variations requiring Central Office approval from the Chief Engineer, State Roadway Design Engineer, and/or the State Structures Design Engineer follow the processes in **Sections 23.4-23.7**. Design Variations approved solely in the District may be submitted as a formal Design Variation or as a Design Memorandum.

A formal Design Variation is required for any design criteria impacting clear zones, sight distance, or Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance. The Responsible Engineer or Professional attaches a Submittal Approval Letter (**Exhibit 23-A**) to a sealed report and submits them to the District or Turnpike Design Engineer. The District or Turnpike Design Engineer then approves or denies the request and notifies the Responsible Engineer or Professional.

District approval of all other Design Variations, not requiring approval by the Central Office, may be submitted as a signed and sealed Design Memorandum and approved by the District or Turnpike Design Engineer. Supporting documentation may be provided through other formal documents such as, but not limited to, Bridge Hydraulic Reports, Typical Section Packages or Pavement Design Reports.

At a minimum, all Design Variations must address the following items in the submittal:

1. Design criteria versus proposed criteria.
2. Reason the design criteria are not appropriate.
3. Justification for the proposed criteria.
4. Review and evaluation of the most recent certified 5 years of crash history for Central Office approved Design Variations, formal District Design Variations, and for any others as requested by the District.
5. Any background information which documents or justifies the request.

BACKGROUND

The Office of Design, District Offices and industry partners have been evaluating different ways to provide cost savings during the design process. One of the recommendations is a reduction in the analysis and the documentation requirements associated with Design Variations. This will also bring more consistency, predictability and repeatability to the way Design Variations are developed and processed across the state.

IMPLEMENTATION

This change allows additional flexibility in the Design Variation process. Implement this policy on all Design Variations that have not yet been submitted for approval.

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