



# Illinois Department of Transportation

2300 South Dirksen Parkway / Springfield, Illinois / 62764

April 29, 2019

## CIRCULAR LETTER 2019-11

### NBIP INSPECTION FREQUENCY AND PROCEDURES

COUNTY ENGINEERS / SUPERINTENDENTS OF HIGHWAYS  
MUNICIPAL ENGINEERS / DIRECTORS OF PUBLIC WORKS / MAYORS  
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATIONS – DIRECTORS  
TOWNSHIP HIGHWAY COMMISSIONERS  
CONSULTING ENGINEERS

The purpose of this Circular Letter is to provide information to Local Public Agencies in an effort to improve the State of Illinois compliance with the National Bridge Inspection Program (NBIP).

A recent FHWA review of the bridge inspection program in the State revealed deficiencies in our program that must be addressed.

To help the Department fulfill the requirements of the FHWA 23 Metrics of the National Bridge Inspection Program (NBIP), please review the items listed below and incorporate those applicable to your agency's bridge inspection program as soon as possible. References to the Structural Services Manual may be found at <http://www.idot.illinois.gov/Assets/uploads/files/Doing-Business/Manuals-Guides-&-Handbooks/Highways/Bridges/Inspection/Structural%20Services%20Manual.pdf>.

#### 1. **Inspection Frequency: Inspection Tracking** (NBIP Metrics - Action Items 6.1, 7.1, 8.1 & 10.1)

All Local Public Agency bridge inspections should be entered into the Inspection Date Notification (IDN) tracking system within 30 days of being completed. While IDOT policy states Structure Inventory and Appraisal (SI&A) data must be entered into the Illinois Structure Information System (ISIS) within 90 days of the inspection, every effort should be made to have this information submitted as soon as possible. A new internet-based Bridge Inspection System (BIS), which will allow direct entry of inspections by the Local Public Agencies, is currently under development by the Department. More information regarding BIS will be forthcoming.

#### 2. **Inspection Frequency: Delinquent Inspections** (NBIP Metrics - Action Items 6.3, 7.3, 8.3 & 10.3)

Delinquent bridge inspections are an ongoing issue in Illinois. Per *Structural Services Manual* Section 3.4.1, "For rare and unusual circumstances, such as extreme flooding, the Statewide Program Manager through coordination with the FHWA Division Office may preapprove an inspection delay when the situation is expected to cause a delinquency greater than one month.

Bridge inspection delay requests shall be sent via email by the Program Manager to: [DOT.BBS.BridgeMgmt@illinois.gov](mailto:DOT.BBS.BridgeMgmt@illinois.gov). The email shall document the original inspection due date, the reason for the delay, and an estimated date for inspection completion. A copy of the response approving the delay shall be kept in the bridge file.”

**3. Quality Inspections (NBIP Metrics - Action Item 12.1)**

Per *Structural Services Manual* Section 3.9.3, as part of their Quality Control program, NBIP Program Managers must review all bridge inspection reports to verify proper documentation exists before approving the report. Per *Structural Services Manual* Section 3.3.3, ‘A concise description of deficiencies must be included for all condition ratings of “5” (Fair) or less and should be included for condition ratings of “6” (Satisfactory). Deficiencies must also be documented with photographs for condition ratings of “4” (Poor) or less.’ Photographs shall be kept in the Bridge File or in a location indicated on the Bridge File Checklist. Inspection reports without the aforementioned documentation are not to be accepted.

**4. Inspection Procedures – Bridge Files: Channel Cross-Sections (NBIP Metrics - Action Item 15.3)**

For structures over waterways, per *Structural Services Manual* Section 3.3.3.1, “Channel cross-sections, along the upstream and downstream fascias shall be taken for comparison with Initial Inspection baseline cross-sections at a maximum interval of every 5 years and after significant storm events as documented by an alert from BridgeWatch specified in Section 3.7.6. Additional cross-sections should be taken when conditions indicate significant changes from original construction or previous inspections.” The channel cross-sections shall be kept in the Bridge File or in a location indicated on the Bridge File Checklist.

A copy of the most recent channel cross-sections must be submitted to the Bridge Management and Inspection Unit. If channel cross-sections have not been completed, we suggest the information be obtained during the next Routine Inspection. A standard IDOT form, along with further guidance, is currently under development for channel cross-sections and will be distributed once completed.

Submit channel cross-sections to: [DOT.BBS.BridgeMgmt@illinois.gov](mailto:DOT.BBS.BridgeMgmt@illinois.gov).

**5. Inspection Procedures - Fracture Critical Members: Fracture Critical Member Inspection Plan (NBIP Metrics - Action Item 16.2)**

Per *Structural Services Manual* Section 3.3.5, “As described in AASHTO *The Manual for Bridge Evaluation*, a Fracture Critical Member Inspection should include development of a plan for inspecting such members. IDOT requires that a Fracture Critical Member Inspection Plan be included in the Bridge File for every fracture critical bridge.

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A Fracture Critical Member Inspection Plan template is available in Appendix A-5 to aid in the development of the Fracture Critical Member Inspection Plan. It is the responsibility of the District/Area or Agency Program Manager to ensure that the Fracture Critical Member Inspection Plan is developed, included in the Bridge File, and updated as needed.”

A copy of the most recent Fracture Critical Member Inspection Plan must be submitted to the Bridge Management and Inspection Unit. If a Fracture Critical Member Inspection Plan is not currently on file, complete and submit as soon as possible.

Submit Fracture Critical Member Inspection Plans to:

[DOT.BBS.BridgeMgmt@illinois.gov](mailto:DOT.BBS.BridgeMgmt@illinois.gov).

Questions regarding this circular letter may be directed to the Bridge Management and Inspection Unit by telephone at (217) 785-4537 or by email at [DOT.BBS.BridgeMgmt@illinois.gov](mailto:DOT.BBS.BridgeMgmt@illinois.gov).

Sincerely,



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Acting Engineer of Local Roads and Streets



D. Carl Puzey, P.E., S.E.  
Engineer of Bridges and Structures

JK/

cc: Dan Brydl, FHWA - Illinois Division  
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