



# Illinois Department of Transportation

2300 South Dirksen Parkway / Springfield, Illinois / 62764

November 19, 2007

## CIRCULAR LETTER 2007-19

### NBIS PERSONNEL QUALIFICATIONS

COUNTY ENGINEERS/SUPERINTENDENTS OF HIGHWAYS  
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATIONS – DIRECTORS  
MUNICIPAL ENGINEERS/DIRECTORS OF PUBLIC WORKS  
CONSULTING ENGINEERS

On January 13, 2005, new rules became effective for the National Bridge Inspection Standards (NBIS), as provided in Title 23, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 650, Subpart C, dated December 14, 2004, which included new requirements for qualifications of bridge inspection personnel. The rules are located at the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) website at <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/bridge/nbis.htm>.

The Bureau of Bridges and Structures (BBS) worked with the FHWA to resolve issues regarding interpretation of the new rules, and on October 31, 2005, the BBS and the Bureau of Local Roads and Streets (BLRS) jointly issued BLRS Procedure Memorandum 2005-07, "NBIS Rules Changes - Qualifications for Bridge Inspection Personnel". This Procedure Memorandum may be found, starting on page 93, at <http://www.dot.il.gov/blr/manuals/ProcedureMemo.pdf>.

**Program Manager (PM).** Procedure Memorandum 2005-07 delineates the lines of delegation for Program Manager responsibilities within the state. The memorandum advises that all local agencies (LAs) having responsibility for a structure in the NBI must designate a Program Manager (PM) to ensure compliance with the NBIS and to provide guidance and management of their bridge inventory.

In addition, to comply with the NBIS rules, the department and the State Program Manager must ensure that all NBI structures have a designated PM to ensure compliance with the NBIS. As required by the NBIS, the department has established a database to track approval of PM (and Team Leader) qualifications.

To assist the department in documenting the qualifications and experience of Local Agency Program Managers, we are now asking that all agencies with a structure in the NBI provide the name of their approved Program Manager to

the District BLRS by no later than **February 29, 2008**. The district will then compile the submittals for their district and provide a summary to the State Program Manager by March 31, 2008. If an LA does not have an employee who is qualified, they may retain an approved PM, such as a consultant, to serve as their Program Manager.

**Program Manager Contingent Approvals.** Procedure Memorandum 2005-07 provided the following: “Although not mandatory at this time, all licensed Professional Engineers who were functioning as an agency’s PM prior to January 13, 2005, but have not had formal training, such as that provided by the 10-day National Highway Institute (NHI) course titled Safety Inspection of In-Service Bridges, are strongly encouraged to attend the 3-day NHI course titled Bridge Inspection Refresher Training, which is a condensed version of the 10-day course.”

Many individuals have been approved as Program Managers under this policy contingent on the individual completing the 3-day Bridge Inspection Refresher Training within a “reasonable period of time.” However, due to the indeterminate nature of this approval, those approved on a contingent basis are now being approved contingent on their acquiring the necessary training within **one year of the approval date**.

Individuals who are approved by the State Program Manager contingent on acquiring the necessary training within one year of the approval date will be given priority for NHI training classes in Illinois. Those who were approved contingent on the individual completing the 3-day Bridge Inspection Refresher Training within a “reasonable period of time” should also continue to register for training. They will be admitted to classes in Illinois as space is available. An individual who is approved by the State Program Manager to function as a local agency PM is also qualified to function as a Team Leader.

The department is investigating and pursuing avenues to provide additional training that will satisfy this requirement, as well as to provide continuing education in the future.

**Training.** To assist the local agencies and consultants in achieving the required NBIS training, the following is the schedule for the NBIS inspection course dates currently scheduled in Illinois for next year:

**FHWA-NHI-130053 - 3 day - Bridge Inspection Refresher Training.**  
March 11 – 13, 2008 in Schaumburg  
March 25 – 27, 2008 in Springfield

**FHWA-NHI-130078 - Fracture Critical.** Note: This class is not required, but is recommended for individuals performing Fracture Critical Inspections. January 29 – February 1, 2008 in Springfield

**FHWA-NHI-130055 - 10 day - Safety Inspection of In-Service Bridges**  
January 7 – 18, 2008 in Collinsville (Consultant hosted)  
February 25 – March 6, 2008 in Chicago (Chicago Transit hosted)  
March 3 – 14, 2008 in Schaumburg (Requested; not yet confirmed)

The contact at IDOT for enrollment is Brad Risinger; he may be contacted at:

Brad Risinger, Technical Training Manager  
Training and Educational Development  
(217) 782-3708  
[brad.risinger@illinois.gov](mailto:brad.risinger@illinois.gov)

We encourage interested parties to enroll as soon as possible, as space will be limited. Additional class locations in other states may be found at the following website: <http://www.nhi.fhwa.dot.gov/home.aspx>.

Also, on July 2, 2007, the Bureau of Local Roads and Streets issued Circular Letter 2007-09, "Eligible Funds for Bridge Inspection and Bridge Training." This Circular Letter outlines state and federal funding sources that may be used for both bridge inspection and bridge inspection training. The Circular Letter may be found at the following website:  
<http://www.dot.il.gov/blr/manuals/infocirculars/CL2007-09.pdf>.

**IDOT Inspection Personnel.** Please note that as of June 30, 2007, IDOT personnel no longer perform NBIS inspections for local agencies. In addition, personnel employed by IDOT may not be retained by outside agencies to act as Program Manager, to serve as a Team Leader, or to participate as part of the inspection team.

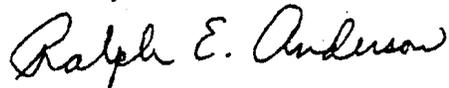
**Inspections and Inventory Information Current.** We recommend that all owners take this opportunity to verify that all Routine NBIS Inspections, Fracture Critical Inspections, Underwater Inspections and Special Feature Inspections for structures under their jurisdiction are up-to-date, that all NBI data is correct, and that the structure files are in order.

**Note that all inspections must be completed within the designated inspection interval.** Inspections for local agency structures are currently allowed 180 days to be entered into the Illinois Structure Information System (ISIS). This time may not be used to extend the inspection interval.

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If you have any questions regarding this Circular Letter or the qualification requirements of National Bridge Inspection Standards, please contact Mr. James Klein in the Bureau of Bridges and Structures at (217) 782-5928 or [james.klein@illinois.gov](mailto:james.klein@illinois.gov).

Sincerely,



Ralph E. Anderson, P.E., S.E.  
Engineer of Bridges and Structures



Charles J. Ingersoll, P.E.  
Engineer of Local Roads and Streets

cc: FHWA, Illinois Division Attn: Dan Brydl  
Illinois Department of Natural Resources Attn: Dale Brockamp  
Illinois State Toll Highway Authority  
Township Highway Commissioners of Illinois Attn: Ron Johnson  
Township Officials of Illinois Attn: Bryan Smith (Kane Co./St. Charles Twp.)