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1-001 Purpose

When applying Caltrans policy to the administration of construction contracts, knowing how to interpret contract documents and plans, and how to apply engineering experience and judgment is important. The *Construction Manual* provides guidance for the administration of construction contracts and is not a replacement but rather a supplement to engineering experience and judgment, as well as personnel training and development.

Caltrans intends that this manual be used as a resource to provide procedural guidance for personnel engaged in contract administration. This manual is a guide, not a compilation of mandatory instructions. Unless guiding language is explicitly mandatory, personnel are expected to perform in accordance with the guidance in this manual within the resources allotted for construction contract administration. The resident engineer has a primary role of contract administration and is in responsible charge for administration of the contract. The assistant resident engineer (inspector) has a primary role of field inspection of contractor quality of work. The resident engineer coordinates with inspectors to determine appropriate priorities for testing and inspection of work quality based on contractor-proposed order of work for the shift. A contract may have one or more inspectors assigned and each may have one or more activities to inspect as part of their daily responsibilities. There is no contractual requirement to provide full time inspection of any activity; inspectors may not be on site from start to end of contractor operations, and they may be required, due to staffing levels, to rotate inspection activities among their assigned work areas during the work shift or as work progresses. The provisions herein for contract inspection are only applicable when the inspector is present and observing a particular contractor operation and recognizes the issue as it develops or after completion of the work.

The manual establishes policies and procedures for the construction phase of Caltrans projects. However, this manual is not a contract document. It imposes no obligations or requirements on contractors. Resident engineers and other Caltrans personnel who administer Caltrans contracts must never use the manual as a substitute or supplement to the specifications and other contract requirements. Similarly, the guidance in this manual does not relieve contractors from their obligation and responsibility for their means and methods, quality control, and compliance with contract requirements.

1-002 Scope

This manual covers topics in two general areas:

1. Policies and procedures related to Caltrans Construction personnel. This topic includes internal policies and procedures for the following areas:

- Safety
 - Training
 - Acquiring and using resources
 - Public relations
 - Coordinating with other Caltrans units and outside agencies and organizations
2. Construction contract administration. This topic includes the following areas:
- Making timely and accurate contract payments
 - Inspection, testing, and documenting the contractor's compliance with contract requirements

The manual uses the *Standard Specifications* and some of the more frequently used special provisions as the basis for contract administration instructions and guidelines. Before attempting to apply these instructions and guidelines, the engineer working in the field must have a thorough understanding of the specifications and other contract requirements. Although this manual provides policies and procedures related to engineering projects, it is not a substitute for engineering knowledge, experience, or judgment.

The manual contains many references to other publications and documents, including other Caltrans manuals and publications. However, we have made a concerted effort to minimize any repetition of information found in other publications. Some of the references found in this chapter have hyperlinks that connect to Caltrans intranet pages that are not displayable to the general public. Until the specific reference becomes available on the internet, the non-Caltrans user will have to contact their district liaison, Caltrans project manager, or the appropriate Headquarters division to inquire about the availability of the reference.

Federal and state statutes and regulations, Caltrans' Director's Policy Memoranda and Deputy Directives establish the legal requirements and policies used by Caltrans to administer contracts until their date of acceptance. This manual is not intended to impose legal requirements different from, or in addition to, those imposed by law.

This manual is not designed to establish a legal standard of care. It is published solely for the information and guidance of the employees of Caltrans. Also, it is not intended that any standard of conduct or duty toward the public shall be created or imposed by the publication of this manual. Each chapter in this manual is subject to modifications as conditions warrant.

1-003 Format

The manual has been carefully organized to reflect, as much as possible, the general organization of the *Standard Specifications*. Chapters are organized to logically lead the user through the general process of contract administration. For

quick reference, an outline of many sections is included at the beginning of those sections.

1-004 Changes

The Division of Construction issues Manual Change Transmittals to announce changes of information, guidance, or instruction in the manual.

New or revised specifications that may affect the current manual guidelines for contract administration will be reflected as soon as possible in updated manual sections. As specifications, practices, procedures, and policies change, revisions will be made to the manual posted at:

<https://dot.ca.gov/programs/construction/construction-manual>

If a policy contained in this manual is unclear or has been superseded, use the following procedure to recommend a manual change:

Complete Form CEM-9001, "Construction Manual Proposed Change." Explain the reason for the proposed change, get your supervisor's approval, and attach a draft of the proposed revision. Send it to Construction.Publications@dot.ca.gov.

The Division of Construction will review the proposed change and make a decision regarding future revision.