

October 7, 1991

TO: ASSISTANT CHIEF HIGHWAY ENGINEER
ALL H.Q. DIRECTORS: Prof. Services, Planning & Major Projects
ALL REGIONAL MANAGERS Prof. Services, Planning & Operations
ALL DISTRICT HIGHWAYS MANAGERS

SUBJECT: NEW PRODUCT EVALUATION STANDING COMMITTEE

PURPOSE:

To ensure effective evaluation and assessment of new products being offered for Ministry works.

BACKGROUND:

Each year, Ministry employees receive representations from salespeople and through advertisements for new products claiming improvements to design, construction or maintenance. The claims for improvement may be economical, or be related to greater safety, durability or constructability. The Ministry has always taken a very cautious approach before actively specifying and introducing new products into its operations. At the same time, it must avail itself of new products being offered in the market place but in a manner which ensures that public and workers safety is maintained at all times.

Although a good product eventually finds itself into general Ministry use, the process of evaluation and consideration leading up to its adoption is usually long and arduous. The process used by the Ministry to date has suffered from two flaws tending to make the introduction of new products into the Ministry rather haphazard. On the one hand, there is a danger that the Ministry wastes its scarce research dollars on evaluating and testing of products which only marginally improve its operations. On the other hand, the Ministry sometimes is not active enough to vigorously pursue the evaluation and trials of those products having great improvement potential.

It has been decided that the Ministry should have a more organized way of dealing with the evaluation and approval of new products. Without it, the main risks are premature or inappropriate use of "wonder" products; an inadequate or delayed use of good new products and wasteful activities to recognize the difference.

PROCEDURE:

A New Products Standing Committee has been established to serve as the Ministry's primary focus for the preliminary evaluation and assessment of new products applicable to Ministry works. Reporting to the Chief Highway Engineer, the Committee has six Headquarters and Regional members who are knowledgeable and experienced in the areas of materials, structural and general highway engineering. Its primary duties and responsibilities are listed in the attached Terms of Reference.

In general, the Committee will recommend and facilitate useful research and field trials being undertaken by others inside the Ministry. Initiatives for innovation and new product trials are encouraged throughout the Ministry; proponents should advise the Committee at an early stage for guidance and protection. Offers of new products should be referred or copied to the Committee using the prescribed form, copy attached.

CONTACT:

R.C. Dick, P. Eng.
Manager, Materials Engineering & Technical Services
Phone: 387-5859



E. A. Lund, P. Eng.
Chief Highway Engineer

c.c. A.D.M. Highways Operations
c.c. A.D.M. Planning & Major Projects
c.c. All Regional Directors

NEW PRODUCTS STANDING COMMITTEE

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. GENERAL:

- 1.0 The New Products Standing Committee has been established to serve as the primary focus within the Ministry of Transportation and Highways for the preliminary evaluation and assessment of new products applicable to Ministry works.
- 1.1 The Committee will have six members, consisting of a Chairman, a Secretary and four Engineers and/or Technicians who are knowledgeable and experienced in the areas of materials, structural and general highway engineering. At least one member will be a Regional employee.
- 1.2 The Chairman and Secretary are the Manager and a Senior Laboratory Scientist respectively of the Ministry's Central Laboratory who will be permanent Committee members. The normal term for the other Committee members is two years which may be extended by mutual consent.
- 1.3 The Committee reports to the Chief Highway Engineer, normally through the Director of Geotechnical and Materials Engineering.
- 1.4 The Committee will meet at least four times a year and produce an annual report.
- 1.5 The cost of the Committee's activities will be borne as follows:
 - 1.5.1 Salaries and expenses of Committee members and of other technical reviewers as may be necessary from time to time, by their normal place of employment.
 - 1.5.2 Administrative costs and preliminary testing or evaluation through the Central Laboratory by the Geotechnical and Materials Engineering Branch.
 - 1.5.3 Costs of technical reviews outside the Ministry, and costs of the implementation of experiments or trials by funded Projects.
 - 1.5.4 Costs of private testing agencies, and limited topping up costs of Project trials and experiments may be accepted by the Committee out of funds which are allocated to the Committee from time to time.

2.0 DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- 2.1 Make a preliminary evaluation and assessment of new products by having regard to:
- 2.1.1 Its current or potential usefulness to the Ministry;
 - 2.1.2 The availability and reliability of product data, particularly with respect to the function, safety and environmental risks, practicality of application and general cost benefit characteristics;
 - 2.1.3 The extent and cost of additional tests and trials deemed necessary before the Ministry should accept the product as a tentative or proven one.
- 2.2 Maintain the Ministry's Recognized Products List by:
- 2.2.1 Establishing a format which makes the list informative and easy to update.
 - 2.2.2 Adding and deleting products to and from the Proven Category and the Tentative Category using primarily the results of the conclusions reached by following Section 2.1
- 2.3 Determine the scope and outline of additional tests and/or trials to be undertaken by others.
- 2.4 Identify, contact and co-operate with others undertaking tests and/or trials for the Ministry.
- 2.5 Review and reassess the results of tests and/or trials.
- 2.6 Communicate activities and results periodically throughout the Ministry by using such mechanisms as Technical Circulars, Technical Updates, Meetings and the Annual Report.

APPROVED:


Chief Highway Engineer

DATE:

Aug. 12, 1991