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Technical Circular T-2/97
Date: May 12, 1997

TO: All HQ Directors, Operations, Planning and Major Projects
All Regional Directors
All District Highways Managers

SUBJECT:

Technical Circulars and Technical Bulletins

PURPOSE:

Clarification on the purpose and use of Technical Circulars and Technical Bulletins.

BACKGROUND:

Until recently, the Ministry typically used one General Policy and Procedures Manual as a single source document for policy, procedure and technical documentation. The Ministry now relies on a number of specialized technical and administrative documents that outline policy, procedures and standards used in various program areas and centres of expertise in the Highways Operations and Planning and Major Projects Departments.

The Manual of Policy and Procedure served as the Ministry's general technical and administrative manual. The manual was kept current through the use of General Circulars which provided "approved" changes or new documentation. These General Circulars were circulated throughout the Ministry and consolidated into the Manual on a regular basis. Since 1990 Technical Circulars have been used by Highways Operations and Planning and Major Projects Departments to provide general policy and program information. These Technical Circulars are to be consolidated into an updated Highway Operations Policy and Procedures Manual.

No consistent format has been adopted to update the technical and administrative manuals developed in the Highways Operations or Planning and Major Projects Departments. Several of these manuals including the Electrical Standards Manual and Geometric Design Manual have adopted the use of Technical Bulletins that provide interim manual updates. This information is consolidated into the manual as part of the annual/bi-annual update. Technical Bulletins are circulated to holders of those manuals only.

NEW POLICY

The following procedures are to be used to provide consistent and timely notification on changes in Ministry policy, programs and procedures. Administrative procedures for Technical Circulars and Technical Bulletins apply to both the Highways Operations and Planning and Major Projects Department.

Technical Circulars

Technical Circulars will continue to be used to provide general information on changes in operational policy and programs. These circulars will form the basis for updating a Highway Operations Policy and Procedure Manual. The following administrative procedures apply.

- Technical Circulars typically introduce approved policy and program changes which may have application or is required information for a wider Ministry audience. Technical and/or administrative details may be cited but alternative distribution such as Technical Bulletins are encouraged where the information applies to a more specific audience.
- The Section Manager or Branch Director will be responsible for the preparation and approval of the Technical Circular.
- The Technical Circular will be approved and signed off by the appropriate sponsor which will either be the member of Executive representing the Department or the Branch Director.
- The Manager, Operations Policy is responsible for assigning a Technical Circular reference number and the distribution of the Technical Circular.
- The Manager of Operations Policy will be responsible for the consolidation of Technical Circulars into a revamped Highway Operations Policy and Procedure Manual.
- The primary audience for Technical Circulars is Ministry personnel in the Highways Operations Department and the Planning and Major Projects Department.

Technical Bulletins

Technical Bulletins are to be used wherever possible to provide interim updates to Highways Operations and Planning and Major Projects technical and administrative manuals that have been adopted and supported by Branches or Sections within the Departments. The following administrative procedures apply.

- The Section/Branch that has ownership of the manual will be responsible for the preparation, approval and distribution of the Technical Bulletin.

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- Technical Bulletins would generally cover changes in procedures, standards, guidelines, etc. within the subject matter covered in the related Manual.
 - Technical Bulletins will be provide interim changes or updates for supported Branch or Section manuals. Supported manuals are updated on a regular basis to include information contained in the Bulletins.
 - Technical Bulletins typically require the approval of the Section or Program Manager or Branch Director.
 - Distribution of Technical Bulletins is typically limited to holders of the intended technical/administrative manual (in and outside Ministry).


Ministry Policy Manual

The purpose of the Ministry Policy Manual is to provide corporate level information on Ministry mandate, organization and programs. The Manager of Operations Policy is responsible for ensuring sections related to the Highways Operations Department and the Planning and Major Projects Department are accurate and up to date. The Manager, Financial Policy is responsible for sections related to the Management Services Department.

- The Ministry Policy Manual will be revised and updated to reflect current Ministry organization.
- Changes to this document generally require Executive Committee approval.

CONTACT:

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