

Approved:



Department of Transportation

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Office: Specifications and Estimates
Topic No.: 630-020-001-h

TRANSPORTATION PRODUCT EVALUATION

PURPOSE:

To establish internal guidelines for review and evaluation of transportation related manufactured products, submitted by applicants, for use by the Florida Department of Transportation (Department).

AUTHORITY:

Sections 20.23(4)(a) and 334.048(3), Florida Statutes (F.S.)

SCOPE:

The principal users of this document are Central and District Construction, Structures, Maintenance, Materials, and Design Offices.

REFERENCES:

Sections 316.0744 and 316.0745 Florida Statutes (F.S.)

GENERAL:

Transportation related manufactured products are introduced to the Department from a variety of sources. This procedure addresses the processes used to evaluate those products for potential use on the State and Federal Highway System.

Traffic signal equipment, some electronic Maintenance of Traffic (MOT) devices, and related hardware are not included in this procedure. Those products are processed in accordance with **Chapter 7, Section 1 of the Traffic Engineering Manual (Topic No. 750-000-005), Certification and Approval of Traffic Control Signals and ITS Devices.**

With the exception of traffic signal equipment, MOT devices, and related hardware, products related to transportation are processed through the Product Evaluation Section of the Department's Specifications and Estimates Office. This procedure establishes the processes used for the initial submittal, introduction, review, and evaluation of these products. For products requiring evaluation and approval in

accordance with the specifications of the Department, this procedure establishes the processes used to create and maintain a Qualified Products List (QPL), including criteria applicable for QPL requalification and removal of products from the QPL.

A Product Evaluator will act as a coordinator for applicants seeking to introduce manufactured products to the Department, and provide guidance on the appropriate process to follow for further action.

Transportation related manufactured products will generally fall into one of three categories, and will be evaluated accordingly:

1. When the Department has established specific requirements for manufactured products in implemented Specifications, Design Standards or other Department standards, the method of acceptance will be identified. One of the methods of acceptance is the QPL. Product types accepted by this method require applicants to submit an application for evaluation and potential listing on the QPL. This process is known as the Qualified Product Submittal Process.
2. When the Department does not have specific requirements for manufactured products in implemented Specifications, Design Standards, or other Department standards and the product is to be used on a roadway or structure, products can be submitted for consideration and evaluation of their potential use on the State Highway System. This process is known as the New Product Submittal Process.
3. When products are not permanently installed into the roadway or structures, and are not identified or otherwise utilized in Department standards and specifications, the product may be used and evaluation by the Department is not necessary.

Based on the information received from the applicant, a Product Evaluator will determine which category is appropriate and assist the applicant in the process as necessary.

1. QUALIFIED PRODUCT SUBMITTAL PROCESS

1.1 PRODUCT EVALUATION APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS

- 1.1.1 For applicants requesting one of their products to be listed on the QPL, a Product Evaluator will assist the applicant in submitting a complete **Product Evaluation Application, Form No. 630-020-04**, with appropriate certifications, test data, material safety data sheets (also known as MSDS), product drawings and other

information required by Department Specifications and Standards. In accordance with instructions contained on the ***Product Evaluation Application***, applicants must indicate any method of process, production, or manufacture they assert is exempt from Florida's public records laws.

- 1.1.2** If the applicant submits an alternative or a modification to any test method(s) and/or product certifications in support of, or in lieu of, implemented requirements the applicant must provide supporting documentation. The Product Evaluation Administrator, in consultation with appropriate Department personnel, will be responsible for the review and acceptance of all alternatives and modifications on behalf of the Department to ensure the submitted alternative or modification is in compliance with implemented Specifications, Design Standards, or other Department standards.

1.2 PRODUCT TESTING

- 1.2.1** When implemented Specifications, Design Standards, or other Department standards include requirements related to product testing by the Department, the Department will require the applicant to provide the shipping, material and disposal for product laboratory testing; and the MOT, labor, material, and installation of the product on the test deck.
- 1.2.2** The Product Evaluator Administrator, in consultation with the Manager of the Specifications and Estimates Office, will be responsible for selecting the testing location(s). The Manager of the Specifications and Estimates Office will be responsible for the final approval of the location(s) to ensure it is in compliance with implemented Specifications, Design Standards, or other Department standards.
- 1.2.3** A Product Evaluator will be responsible for facilitating the applicant's installation of the product on the test deck, conducting the testing, and providing initial, interim, and final product test reports.
- 1.2.4** The Product Evaluation Administrator, in consultation with the Manager of the Specifications and Estimates Office, may permit other Department personnel to conduct product testing activities. When this occurs, the Department personnel must ensure the product testing and reporting, as well as all associated activities, are in compliance with implemented Specifications, Design Standards, or other Department standards. A product testing protocol, report format, schedule for initial, interim, and/or final product test reports will be submitted to the Product Evaluation Administrator for review and acceptance.
- 1.2.5** After each test report, a Product Evaluator will review the data and determine if the continuation of testing is recommended based on compliance with all

materials and performance requirements of the applicable implemented Specifications, Design Standards, or other Department standards. The Product Evaluation Administrator will review and approve all recommendations. After the final test report, the Manager of the Specifications and Estimates Office will be responsible for final review and acceptance of products on behalf of the Department, in consultation with the Product Evaluation Administrator and other Department personnel, to ensure the results are in compliance with implemented Specifications, Design Standards, or other Department standards. The approval will include any comments and limitations on usage related to the approval and include any conditions of approval related to warranties as described in **Section 1.3**.

1.3 CONDITIONAL QPL APPROVAL PROCESS

- 1.3.1** When implemented Specifications, Design Standards, or other Department standards include requirements related to product testing on a Department test deck or other situations, the Department may allow the product to have Conditional Approval on the QPL at the request of the applicant. The Manager of the Specifications and Estimates Office will be responsible for the final review and acceptance of the request on behalf of the Department, in consultation with the Product Evaluation Administrator and other Department personnel, to ensure the Conditional QPL Approval is in compliance with implemented Specifications, Design Standards, or other Department standards.
- 1.3.2** The Department may require an acceptable full field replacement warranty for the performance of products installed on projects during the specified time period. The terms and conditions of the warranty must be acceptable to the Department, and the warranty must remain in effect until the actual performance of the product can be monitored over the specified period.

1.4 FINAL QPL APPROVAL PROCESS

A Product Evaluator will review all information and testing results to determine whether a product should be recommended for approval as a qualified product. The Product Evaluator will submit his or her recommendation to the Product Evaluation Administrator for review. If the Product Evaluation Administrator concurs with the recommendations, the Manager of the Specifications and Estimates Office will make the final review and approval determination. If the determination is made that a product does not meet Department requirements for manufactured products established in implemented Specifications, Design Standards, or other Department standards, the Product Evaluator will notify the applicant's contact. If the determination is made that a product does meet Department requirements for manufactured products established in implemented

Specifications, Design Standards, or other Department standards, the Product Evaluator will notify the applicant's contact, and the product will be added to the QPL, in accordance with **Section 3** of this procedure.

2. NEW PRODUCT SUBMITTAL PROCESS

- 2.1** A Product Evaluator will assist the applicant in submitting a complete **New Product Submittal, Form No. 630-020-03**, with appropriate product and contact information.
- 2.2** The Product Evaluation Administrator, in consultation with appropriate Department personnel, will conduct an initial evaluation and provide a recommendation for potential use and implementation on the State Highway system.
- 2.3** When the product is to be further evaluated for potential State Highway System use, the Product Evaluation Administrator will assign the product evaluation to a Project Manager selected from Department personnel. The Project Manager will be selected from an appropriate office related to product use and have the person selected approved by the Section Manager. The Project Manager is responsible for selecting the appropriate Department process to evaluate the product and make a final determination of use or rejection.

3. QUALIFIED PRODUCTS LIST (QPL)

3.1 QUALIFIED PRODUCTS LIST (QPL) APPROVAL

- 3.1.1** Products approved in accordance with the Qualified Products Submittal Process in **Section 1** are placed on the QPL and the listing is maintained by the Product Evaluation Section. The QPL provides assurance to contractors, consultants, designers, and the Department that a product has been pre-approved and may be relied upon as meeting implemented Specifications, Design Standards, or other Department standards. Listing and inclusion of a product on the QPL is not to be considered as an endorsement by the Department.
- 3.1.2** Listing of products on the QPL is subject to conditions of approval and warranties (as described in **Section 1.3**) and/or comments and limitations related to the approval (as described in **Section 1.4**).
- 3.1.3** When indicated in implemented Specifications, Design Standards, or other Department standards, acceptance of QPL products on a project is also subject to certification by approved suppliers and/or contractors; additional sampling and/or testing of individual lots, batches or shipments made to construction

projects or maintenance purchases; or other acceptance requirements contained in the **Contract Documents**.

3.1.4 The Product Evaluation Administrator will establish and maintain QPL approval categories indexed to the Specification Section, Design Standard, or other Department standard established as the basis of QPL approval.

3.1.5 The Engineer of Record (EOR) identified in Department Specifications and revisions thereto will ensure proper acceptance and/or certification of QPL products on the project site in accordance with Contract requirements. In each case, the EOR should consult the **Contract Documents** and the **Materials Sampling, Testing, and Reporting Guide (Section 5.2, Materials Manual, Topic No. 675-000-000)** for the mode of acceptance, frequency of sampling, certification requirements, and other acceptance requirements.

3.2 REMOVAL OF PRODUCT/MATERIALS FROM THE QPL

3.2.1 Materials must perform satisfactorily in the field and meet implemented Specifications, Design Standards, or other Department standards to remain on the QPL. The Product Evaluation Administrator will be responsible for reviewing recommendations by Department personnel to remove a product from the QPL when it is not performing satisfactorily, in accordance with the following:

- (a) Alleged deficiencies will be documented by Department personnel on **Notification of Alleged Deficiency, Transportation Products - Qualified Products List (QPL), Form No. 630-020-01**, and forwarded to the Product Evaluation Section for review and investigation in conjunction with other Department offices. The Product Evaluation Administrator will notify the approved supplier of the affected product in writing of the Department's intent to investigate an alleged deficiency.
- (b) When directed by the Product Evaluation Administrator, a Product Evaluator, in consultation with Department personnel, will investigate products with alleged deficiencies by field measurements, field sampling, field testing, laboratory testing and/or other methods deemed necessary by the Department to determine if the product is performing in accordance with the requirements of implemented Specifications, Design Standards, or other Department standards. If such investigation results in a determination by the Department the product performance is deficient, such determination will be considered sufficient evidence the product is not in compliance with implemented Specifications, Design Standards, or other Department standards, and is subject to removal from the QPL.
- (c) The Product Evaluation Administrator will notify the approved supplier of

the affected product, by certified letter, of the Department's intent to remove the product from the QPL. If the affected product is subject to an unexpired warranty related to a conditional approval, the approved supplier will be responsible to the Department to satisfy the terms and conditions of the warranty.

- (d) Products removed from the QPL will remain off the list for a period of one (1) year. The Department reserves the right to extend or to reduce the time period depending on the product type, the nature of the deficiency, and/or the effect on the Department. Approved suppliers whose products are removed from the QPL, and who wish to have the product returned to the list, will be required to reapply in accordance with **Section 1, Qualified Product Submittal Process**.

3.2.2 From time to time the Department modifies the Specifications or Standards used as the basis of approval to use a product from the QPL by the statewide implementation of revised Specifications, Design Standards, or other Department standards. The Department will notify currently approved product approved suppliers of affected products on the QPL in advance of its intended action, including the date when the expiring Specification or Standard will no longer be effective. Approved suppliers must re-apply for product approval under the revised Specifications or Standards in accordance with **Section 1, Qualified Product Submittal Process**.

3.2.3 When the approved supplier of a QPL product fails to satisfy requalification requirements contained in **Section 4**, the Department will remove that product from the QPL.

3.2.4 Only products that accurately reflect the product identified in the approval notification may be allowed to use that QPL number. Misrepresentation of a QPL approved product includes, but is not limited to, using a QPL number for a non QPL approved product, using an approved QPL product that has been modified by the approved supplier that was not approved by the Department, or fabricating a QPL number for a product that is not approved.

The Department will randomly evaluate products used on projects. If such evaluation results in a determination by the Department that the product is not the same as the approved product listed on the QPL, such determination will be considered sufficient evidence that the product is not in compliance with implemented Specifications, Design Standards, or other Department standards.

4. QUALITY ASSURANCE AND REQUALIFICATION CRITERIA

4.1 All Products included on the QPL are subject to periodic requalification by the

approved supplier. Requalification involves submittal of information the Department has determined is necessary to ensure continued compliance with implemented Specifications, Design Standards, and other Department standards. The Product Evaluation Administrator will establish and publish criteria for requalification of QPL products, in consultation with Department offices.

- 4.2** Requalification criteria established and published by the Product Evaluation Administrator will include a requalification frequency schedule by QPL category. The approved supplier of each QPL product is solely responsible for submittal of information necessary for requalification in accordance with that schedule, in terms of both timeliness and completeness, of the required submittal information. Specific types of submittal data necessary to satisfy requalification criteria will be published by QPL category, and will include any or all of the following:
- a) A notarized certification, signed by a representative of the approved supplier who has knowledge, certifying the product has not been altered in any way, in terms of material composition or product design, since its original approval by the Department, or since its last requalification with the Department.
 - b) A notarized certification, signed by a representative of the approved supplier who has knowledge, certifying product conformance with all requirements of implemented Specifications, Design Standards, and other Department standards. The certification must indicate the specific version of the Specification and/or Standard applicable to the product.
 - c) Complete test reports from an independent testing laboratory, showing the product conforms to the material testing requirements of the applicable Specifications, Design Standards and other Department standards. Complete test reports must be representative of the current technology of the product, and in no case may they be older than the last test requalification date. The Product Evaluation Section may accept alternative test methods, product certifications, and/or approved supplier's laboratory test reports in lieu of specifically identified implemented requirements in accordance with **Section 1.1.2**.
- 4.3** The approved supplier shall be solely responsible for submittal of all requalification criteria data and information to the Department on or before the date identified in the requalification schedule established.
- 4.4** The failure of an approved supplier to satisfy requalification requirements in accordance with this procedure will result in notification by certified letter that the affected product is being removed from the QPL.

5. APPROVED SUPPLIER OBLIGATIONS REGARDING NOTIFICATION OF CHANGES

- 5.1 The Product Evaluation Administrator will correspond with approved suppliers and provide notifications related to this procedure using company names, contact names, addresses, and telephone numbers on file with the Department and listed on the QPL. However, it is the sole responsibility of the approved supplier to notify the Department of any change to their contact information within 30 days of such a change.
- 5.2 It is the responsibility of the approved supplier to notify, and seek approval from, the Product Evaluation Administrator for all modifications to the material, method of process, production, and/or manufacture of any product listed on the QPL. At the direction of the Product Evaluation Administrator, a Product Evaluator, in consultation with appropriate Department personnel, will determine if the modified product is still in compliance with implemented Specifications, Design Standards, and/or other Department standards and/or if the product is sufficiently changed to require a new application submittal in accordance with **Section 1, Qualified Product Submittal Process**. If the approved supplier does not satisfy these requirements, the product will be removed from the QPL. The approved supplier will be notified by certified letter that the affected product is being removed from the QPL. The Department will consider failure to notify the Department of changes sufficient evidence that the properties of the product have changed, and the Department will remove the product from the QPL.
- 5.3 It is the responsibility of the approved supplier to remain current with implemented changes to Specifications, Design Standards, and/or other Department standards affecting their products listed on the QPL, and to notify the Department of any compliance issues.

6. TRAINING

There is no training required for this procedure.

7. FORMS

The following forms are available from the Department's Forms Library:

- 630-020-01 Notification of Alleged Deficiency Transportation Products - Qualified Products List (QPL)
- 630-020-02 Certification to Field Installation of Materials to the Departments Test Deck

- 630-020-03 New Product Submittals
- 630-020-04 Product Evaluation Application