

GEOTECHNICAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION



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1. PURPOSE

This Manual provides direction for the accomplishment of work in the Geotechnical Section of the Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT). Specific tasks are described which relate to the geotechnical aspects of investigation, design and construction of roadways and roadway structures. General direction and policies are also included in this Manual. It is intended that areas covered herein will offer the new employee, particularly Geotechnical Engineers in the Geotechnical Section, a basic understanding of the Department, Division and Section, and most importantly, the general requirements to accomplish the assigned tasks.

This Manual can be useful for parties external to the Geotechnical Section. These parties may include other Divisions, other State employees, Consultants, contractors, and the public.

General requirements and directions are given to provide a framework of minimum expectations of Engineers in the Geotechnical Section. No attempt is made to provide comprehensive procedures and practices, a design handbook, or the scope of services for individual projects. This Manual is not intended in any way to limit the individual employee from exercising their valuable professional judgment and common sense, and should not be considered a standard to be met regardless of impacts.

This Manual was developed to help serve the very necessary function of facilitating accurate, timely and appropriate communication. This is important when considering the complexities of the many tasks in the Geotechnical Section. This Manual should be utilized to improve communication by providing an understanding of basic task components, functional relationships and Division requirements.

The title “Geotechnical Engineers” is used throughout this Manual. For the purpose of clarification, Geotechnical Engineers refers to Staff III Registered Professional Engineers, and any position under filling Staff III’s in the Geotechnical Section. Other titles commonly used in this Manual are Principal Geotechnical Engineer that refers to the Manager I, and Assistant Materials Engineer that refers to the Administrator I, both of the Geotechnical Section.

Any questions about the content of this Manual are to be referred to the Principal Geotechnical Engineer.

2. INTRODUCTION

This Manual is organized into chapters, which discuss various subjects of importance in the accomplishment of work for the Geotechnical Section. A Table of Contents, Appendices, and various Figures, are found in the chapters. Each chapter also includes descriptions of the sections of the chapter.

Each page contains the issue date in the lower left-hand corner and a page number in the upper right hand corner. Pages, figures and tables are numbered according to the chapter sections in the Manual.

Various materials and publications are noted as references, and often included as figures in the individual chapters. When publication dates are given, they are for reference purposes only, as revisions may have been made at a later date. The reader is responsible to verify the most recent material or publication is used.

3. HISTORY

The Department was created as the Nevada Department of Highways in 1917. Prior to this time, the State did not have a role in road improvements. However, in 1917 the Legislature mandated that the State Engineer would have general supervision of roadwork. This work was performed by convict labor when funds were made available.

Currently, the Department is a large department of the State government, having legislative authority and funding to maintain and improve Nevada's Highways. Information about the Department may be found on the Department website at <http://www.nevadadot.com>.

4. PHILOSOPHY, MISSIONS AND GOALS

The Department and Divisions have philosophies, missions, and goals; new hires and Consultants should contact the Administrative Assistant of the Materials Division to obtain the most current verbiage.

5. OVERVIEW

The Department has the responsibility for construction, operation and maintenance of the highways and bridges, which are part of the State highway system. The Department also oversees various allied projects. Included are projects ranging from the Adopt-A-Highway program to the maintenance of State Historical Markers.

The Department's headquarters, including most design divisions, is located in Carson City. The Department is organized into three districts for administrative purposes, as follows:

- **District 1** covers southern Nevada, with main offices in Las Vegas.
- **District 2** covers northwest Nevada, with main offices in Reno.
- **District 3** covers northeast Nevada, with main offices in Elko.

These districts supervise all State transportation activities within their local areas. Major maintenance stations are located in Ely, Tonopah and Winnemucca.

The Materials Division is a major organizational unit of the Department. Headquarters for the Materials Division is located at the Carson City Laboratory Facility. The Division also operates an auxiliary testing facility in Las Vegas. The Geotechnical Section is located within the Materials Division, Carson City.

6. EXCEPTIONS AND INTERPRETATIONS

This Manual is written to offer clear direction to the reader. However, it is recognized that policies and procedures may be subject to differing interpretations and that the Manual would be too lengthy for practical use if all areas were covered definitively. It is also understood that occasions will arise, which may warrant the consideration of exceptions to items described in this Manual. Any properly authorized exceptions to this Manual are to be considered as “one time only” changes, unless otherwise directed.

7. MANUAL UPDATES

Policies, procedures and practices will change from time to time. This Manual is updated as necessary and all users should assure themselves that they are using the latest version.

8. RESPONSIBILITY OF GEOTECHNICAL ENGINEERS

It is the responsibility of all Geotechnical Engineers to become familiar with the materials presented in this Manual and apply them appropriately while performing work for the Geotechnical Section.

9. TERMS, DEFINITIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Commonly used terms, definitions and abbreviations may be found in the Glossary.