

MoDOT Policy Change Regarding Contracted Research Projects Frequently Asked Questions

September 2, 2010

Will MoDOT require research to be performed under the immediate supervision of a professional engineer licensed in the state of Missouri?

Yes, MoDOT has determined that research which rises to the level of “professional engineering services” should be conducted in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 327 RSMo.

Guidance for the determination of when research has risen to “professional engineering services” is provided in the document entitled “Research Project Criteria.” Prior to posting any Research Request for Proposals (RFPs), each individual research project will be evaluated based on the criteria above to determine whether “professional engineering services” are required.

Will MoDOT require final Research Reports and any recommended specifications to be signed and sealed by a Missouri licensed professional engineer?

Yes; we have determined that when a research project meets the criteria of “professional engineering services” it will be conducted in accordance with Chapter 327 RSMo. Within the statute, it requires any final report or recommended specifications developed as a deliverable of that project to be signed and sealed by a Missouri licensed Professional Engineer.

Will MoDOT allow Co-Principal Investigators to be involved in a project? If yes, will both Co-Principal Investigators be required to meet the requirements of Chapter 327 RSMo?

Yes, MoDOT policy does allow for Principal Investigator responsibilities to be split between two (2) professionals.

MoDOT will require at least one of the Co-Principal Investigators to be a licensed Professional Engineer (PE) in the state of Missouri. The licensed Co-Principal Investigator will be considered the engineer of responsibility and therefore required to sign and seal all reports and any recommended specifications in accordance with Section 327.411(1) RSMo.

If a researcher has a PE certification in another state and is in the process of obtaining their PE license in the state of Missouri, will they be allowed to be a lead on a project prior to receiving full PE certification in Missouri?

Yes, MoDOT will allow a “grace period” until January 1, 2011, for those seeking to be the lead on a research project and making a “good faith effort” to obtain Missouri PE certification through the comity process with the Missouri Board of Architects, Professional Engineers, Professional Land Surveyors and Landscape Architects.

After January 1, 2011, all submitted proposals regarding research projects determined to be “professional engineering services,” will be required to be led and sealed by a licensed Professional Engineer in the state of Missouri.

How will MoDOT verify that a researcher is certified as a Licensed Professional Engineer in the state of Missouri?

MoDOT will require the lead Principal Investigator to provide, within their proposal, documentation through the Missouri Board of Architects, Professional Engineers, Professional Land Surveyors and Landscape Architects that they are licensed in the state of Missouri. This can be in the form of a copy of their PE certificate or PE registration number.

Until January 1, 2011, MoDOT will allow anyone to be the lead on a MoDOT research project that is licensed as a PE in another state and seeking application of a Missouri license by comity through the Missouri Board of Architects, Professional Engineers, Professional Land Surveyors and Landscape Architects.

Why don't other research organizations such as Transportation Research Board (TRB), National Science Foundation (NSF), Mid-America Transportation Center (MATC) require a licensed Missouri PE?

These organizations are not funded by MoDOT and do not have the same requirements. MoDOT is bound by the provisions of Chapter 327 RSMo and therefore must require these provisions.

Is there a certain percentage of the Research Team that will be required by MoDOT to be a Professional Engineer licensed in the state of Missouri?

There is no percentage requirement associated with the research team members as long as the research team is led by a Professional Engineer licensed in the state of Missouri.

How will MoDOT manage these requirements within Transportation Pooled Funds?

Transportation pooled fund projects in which MoDOT is the lead agency will be managed by a licensed Professional Engineer in the state of Missouri. MoDOT is involved with several other transportation pooled fund projects that are led by other states or government agencies. Those pooled funds are not bound by the provisions of Chapter 327 RSMo.

Will these new requirements be mandated only on future Request for Proposals?

Yes. Research projects currently under contract will continue under the requirements of their executed contractual agreements. Future research projects will include language in the RFP and contract that is in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 327 RSMo.

When will these new research requirements go into effect?

September 15, 2010.

Will MoDOT conduct research that would not be bound by the provisions of Chapter 327 RSMo?

Yes, there are research areas where MoDOT may decide not to seek “professional engineering services.” These areas include but are not limited to the following:

- Business Policy Reviews
- Market Research
- Legislative Reviews
- Public Opinion Surveys
- Economic Impact Studies

Where can someone go to offer comments, suggestions, or questions regarding these new requirements or about MoDOT’s research program?

Please send comments, suggestions, or questions to RDTcomments@modot.mo.gov