

## Guidelines for Examinations for Recertification of Department and non-Department Inspectors and Technicians

The regulation for Quality Assurance procedures for Construction was published as 23 CFR 637 on June 29, 1995. This regulation established a deadline of June 29, 2000 for having all sampling and testing used in the acceptance decisions for Federal-aid projects performed by qualified technicians. Louisiana's compliance with all requirements will be complete with the implementation of a "requalification" program which will begin in January, 2006.

While flexibility for technician qualification program format has been allowed, a recommended element for each program was requalification at 2 to 3 year intervals. Verbal agreement was made with FHWA to extend Louisiana's requalification period to 5 years. This 5 year certification program was implemented in January, 2001. Prior to this period, department certifications did not expire and non-department certifications were valid for 2 years, with recertification requiring only 6 months experience during the 2 years in the certification area. Because the federal guidelines stated that grandfathering or lifetime qualification was not considered appropriate criteria for achieving or maintaining qualification status, department certifications now expire after 5 years also.

Starting in January, 2006, the first of the 5 year certifications will begin to expire. In order to comply with federal guidelines and after discussion with the Certification Committee, it was decided that anyone wishing to keep their certification valid will be required to take a recertification exam. These exams consist of twenty-five multiple choice questions based on core competencies needed by inspector/technicians working on federal-aid projects. These tests were developed by the LTRC Construction and Materials Training Program and the District Training Specialists. The exams were validated by the District Training Specialists in August, 2005 and have been approved by Mr. Rick Holm and Mr. Doug Hood for implementation. Four versions of exams for each of the five construction certifications have been sent to the District Training Specialists under separate cover.

The following guidelines will apply to the administration and processing of these examinations.

- The exams will be administered and graded by the District Training Specialists. LTRC will enter the scores into the ETRN computer database and distribute updated certification cards.
- The exams will have a passing score of eighty percent and will be open-book. Three attempts at passing will be allowed with 7 days between failed attempts. After the third attempt, a waiting period of ninety days will be required before being allowed another attempt.
- Department and Non-department personnel with 2006 expiration dates must make a first attempt take the recertification exam within ninety days of the expiration of their certifications. Department personnel with indefinite certifications can take the exams at anytime during the period from January 1, 2006 to December 31, 2006, however, they must be successfully completed by December 31 to retain certification status. For those with more than three certifications, the last three sentences of the following bullet will apply.

- Department personnel will be required to recertify in as many areas as is dictated by their Structured Training Program. Any certifications that are not renewed will become Specialty Areas in Structured Training. In order to have the certification renewed after December, 2006, it will be necessary to take the performance evaluation for the certification area. However, if anyone is certified in more than the three areas required for Structured Training and wishes to retain certification in all of their areas, they must complete the three certifications required for structured training by December 31, 2006. They will be given until June 1, 2007 to complete the remaining recertification tests. If they are not complete at that time, they will be converted to Specialty Areas.
- Department personnel with 2006 retirement dates and expiration dates for certifications must make a first attempt take the recertification exam within ninety days of the expiration of their certifications. If this expiration date is after their retirement date, this is still valid. Department personnel with indefinite certifications can take the exams at anytime during the period from January 1, 2006 to December 31, 2006, regardless of their retirement date. However, they must be successfully completed by December 31 to retain certification status. For those with more than three certifications, the last three sentences of the following bullet will apply.
- Department personnel with retirement dates in 2006 will be allowed to recertify in as many areas as they wish. Any certifications that are not renewed by the end of 2006 will be expired. In order to have the certification renewed after December, 2006, it will be necessary to take the performance evaluation for the certification area. However, if anyone is certified in more than the three areas and wishes to retain certification in all of their areas, they must complete three certifications by December 31, 2006. They will be given until June 1, 2007 to complete the remaining recertification tests. If they are not complete at that time, they will be expired.

Testing will begin in January, 2006.