

## **Subject: National Bridge Inspection Program Metrics**

### **Requirements for Local Bridge Owners**

#### **Metric 13 -Local Bridge Load Rating and Metric 15 - File/Document Maintenance**

The Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD) is responsible for ensuring compliance with all federal requirements related to public bridges in Louisiana, including off-system bridges on locally owned roads. DOTD assists local bridge owners in meeting federal requirements of bridge ownership by performing the required routine biannual compliance inspections on all locally owned, off-system bridges. DOTD also submits the results of these inspections, on behalf of local bridge owners, to the National Bridge Inventory (NBI) at the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). This effort relieves local agencies of the need to maintain or contract certified bridge inspectors to meet federal bridge inspection requirements and helps ensure consistency throughout the state. However, local bridge owners are required to administer all other bridge program management requirements such as, but not limited to, providing initial load rating of bridges, conducting interim or special inspections of posted bridges, maintaining and repairing bridges, adherence to bridge closure requirements, reevaluating bridge load ratings when conditions change and maintaining adequate bridge documentation.

In 2009, based on findings from the U.S. Office of the Inspector General, FHWA issued new oversight guidelines known as the National Bridge Inspection Program Metrics. These guidelines were subsequently incorporated into law and contain twenty-three specific metrics that outline the criteria by which each state's bridge program will be evaluated. Local bridge owners play a significant role in meeting the requirements of seven of the Bridge Inspection Program Metrics required by federal regulations and FHWA including Metric 11 – Frequency Criteria, Metric 13 – Load Rating, Metric 15 – Bridge Files, Metric 20 – Quality Assurance/Quality Control, Metric 21 – Critical Findings, Metric 22 – Inventory Preparation and Maintenance and Metric 23 – Timely Updating Inventory Data.

The most recent FHWA evaluation of Louisiana's bridge program required DOTD to develop and submit a Plan of Corrective Action regarding missing bridge information with a compliance goal of December 2017. DOTD subsequently developed a Plan of Corrective action and structured approach to compile the information required by FHWA. Failure to compile this information by the established deadline may result in the state being found in non-compliance with the federal bridge program, and a finding of non-compliance could have serious consequences, such as a loss or diversion of federal funding.

As part of the Plan of Corrective Action, DOTD has identified and prioritized bridges that lack sufficient load ratings and/or adequate files documenting the history, design and/or condition of bridges. DOTD has also completed a comprehensive review of all available information from our files and compiled this information into Attachment A and Attachment B. Attachment A contains a list of the highest priority bridges with missing information and identifies what information is needed for each bridge. Attachment B contains a master list of all bridges in the parish inventory, excluding bridges constructed of timber or pipe culverts, and also identifies information missing from some of the bridges shown in the attachment. Information missing from DOTD files and Attachments A & B may include confirmation of bridge ownership, missing file data, missing load ratings and/or verifying information on file.

All missing information identified in Attachment A is to be submitted to the local DOTD District Office by March 31, 2016, and all missing information identified in Attachment B is to be submitted to the local DOTD District Office by June 30, 2017. It is the parish's responsibility to confirm bridge ownership and disseminate the attached information to other bridge owners, such as a municipalities, and ensure the missing information is compiled for all bridges in the parish.

The FHWA metrics require bridge owners to conduct and report initial bridge ratings and to rerate bridges in poor condition, when conditions change. For all bridges in the attachments without load ratings, the parish is responsible to either provide documentation regarding the ratings or load rate the bridges. All load ratings must be calculated by a competent Professional Engineer according to the *LA DOTD Bridge Design and Evaluation Manual*, and DOTD will provide quality assurance oversight for all load ratings. Status updates are to be submitted to the local DOTD District Office every six months beginning in October 2015, as shown in the table below. In the event additional time is needed to compile the missing information or provide missing load ratings, an acceptable Plan of Corrective Action must be submitted to the local DOTD District Office prior to the deadlines noted below.

COMPLIANCE DEADLINES	
Information missing in Attachment A	March 31, 2016
Information missing in Attachment B	June 30, 2017
Submit Semi-Annual Status Reports	October 31, 2015
	April 30, 2016
	October 31, 2016
	April 30, 2017
	October 31, 2017

Due to the safety related nature of the bridge program, and the consequences of non-compliance for the state, a series of required meetings will be held at convenient locations throughout the state to provide information to persons in responsible charge of the bridge program in each parish. Attendance at one of these meetings is mandatory in order for the parish to remain in compliance with the off-system bridge program. Workshops will also be conducted in each DOTD District for all personnel involved in the bridge program, and these workshops will provide information and answer questions regarding this process. Additionally, DOTD, in cooperation with the Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP) and the Louisiana Police Jury Association, will provide opportunities for outreach and technical assistance throughout this process.

If you have any questions, please contact your local DOTD District office.