



# RESEARCH PROJECT CAPSULE [18-6SS]

January 2019

TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER PROGRAM

## An Assessment of DOTD's Consultant Plan Development and Performance Rating Process

### JUST THE FACTS:

**Start Date:**  
September 24, 2018

**Duration:**  
14 months

**End Date:**  
November 23, 2019

**Funding:**  
SPR: TT-Fed/TT-Reg

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### POINTS OF INTEREST:

*Problem Addressed / Objective of  
Research / Methodology Used /  
Implementation Potential*

### PROBLEM

State transportation departments often contract with consultants for plan development. High-quality engineering plans are essential. Errors and omissions in design plans have implications on public safety, construction delays, cost overruns, and potential liabilities.

The Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD) is undertaking an assessment of consultant plan development in an effort to improve the quality of its construction plans.

### OBJECTIVE

The objectives of this project are to identify best practices among other state DOTs for the evaluation of consultant plan deliverables and performance rating systems; conduct a thorough review and assessment of the current DOTD consultant plan delivery process; and evaluate the effectiveness and subjectivity of the current DOTD consultant performance rating system.

### METHODOLOGY

The first phase of this research will be a comprehensive search of available information sources to identify and assess potentially relevant literature. Interviews with key stakeholders will be conducted, including DOTD (senior leadership, design project managers, consultant services managers); FHWA; and the American Council of Engineering Companies of Louisiana (ACEC/L).

A questionnaire survey of selected peer states will be prepared and distributed in an effort to further identify best practices of state DOTs regarding project delivery and quality. Follow-up interviews with the contact person from responding agencies will allow for better understanding of their current policies, procedures, and practices.

In addition to reviewing DOTD's internal documents describing its plan delivery processes, analysis of internal data will help frame the magnitude and scope of consultant plan quality issues. Using this information with that obtained during interviews, DOTD's current consultant plan delivery processes and rating systems will be evaluated.

### IMPLEMENTATION POTENTIAL

The value to be derived from this research will be the success with which the project outcomes are implemented to help DOTD improve its consultant management processes and systems. A detailed plan will be provided for implementation of project recommendations, including an assessment of benefits and costs, identification of obstacles or impediments with potential solutions, and selection of performance measures for tracking and gauging success over time.

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