

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION NEW PRODUCTS EVALUATION COMMITTEE GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES

I. GENERAL:

The purpose of the New Products Evaluation Program is to provide a well defined and organized system within the Department to handle requests from various sources for consideration of new products developed for use in road and bridge construction or maintenance. To provide such a system the Department has established a New Products Evaluation Committee, which will operate in accordance with the following stated guidelines and procedures.

II. POLICY:

The Department will evaluate only those new products which have the potential to fulfill a real need, economically provide a satisfactory level of service, and are not covered by existing specifications. It is the burden of the vendor to demonstrate that a need for a new product exists and that their product has a good potential for satisfying this need. Vendor proposals that attempt to place the Department with the responsibility for developing the application for a product being offered will not be considered. The Department will consider for evaluation only those products adequately developed, screened, and tested by the manufacturers.

III. ORGANIZATION:

The New Products Evaluation Committee will act as a clearing house where the proposals of manufacturers, producers, vendors, and others promoting new items for highway use can be reviewed and given proper consideration and disposal. The Committee shall be composed of members from different Offices within the Department with sufficient expertise in their areas of responsibility to properly evaluate the merits of products proposed for use.

The Committee shall consist of a representative, selected by the Office Head, from each of the following offices:

Bridge Design
Construction
Maintenance
Materials and Research
Road Design
Traffic Operations
Urban Design
Utilities
Environmental Compliance
Transportation Data
Georgia Soil and Water Conservation Commission Representative

The representative from the Office of Materials and Research will serve as Chairman of the Committee. The Chairman will provide administrative support as may be required for proper operation of the Committee. The Chairman shall appoint a Secretary who will arrange meetings, take and publish minutes of meetings, maintain files and records pertaining to the business of the Committee, and maintain a list of all new products with the status of review or actions taken on each product.

Prior to each meeting, the Secretary will provide Committee members with an agenda, listing products to be presented and the names of members presenting the products. Each product on the agenda will be given a file number.

IV. OPERATING PROCEDURES:

Meetings of the New Products Evaluation Committee will be scheduled quarterly. At the discretion of the Chairman, additional meetings may be scheduled as necessary to provide reasonable response time to vendors and to maintain the effectiveness of the Committee. If a Committee member believes that a product's use is urgent because it could offer substantial savings on a soon to be awarded project or for other appropriate reasons, that member should contact the Chairman and request a special meeting of the Committee.

All new products presented to the Department will be assigned to the Committee member in whose work the product would be used. That committee member will present the product and New Product Evaluation Assignment form to the full Committee with a recommendation of accepted, rejected, additional information needed, lab and/or field evaluation needed, or no action necessary. The full Committee may recommend to the Department's management for further investigation as noted in Section VI, E.

The Committee may immediately adopt a product for use if it is evident that the product would economically meet a need of the Department or if other conditions warrant immediate use of a new product. The Committee may also reject a product that evidently would not be useful in the Department's work, would not be cost effective, or for other valid reasons. If immediate adoption or rejection of a product is not appropriate, the Committee will decide on what course of action is necessary to be able to make a final decision on the use of the product. When a unanimous agreement cannot be reached by the committee members on actions to take on final disposition of a product, a vote will be taken. A quorum of six members including the New Product Evaluation's assigned Committee member must be present for a vote to be taken. A simple majority of the Committee members present will rule.

Within two weeks of the meeting a letter will be sent to the submitter to identify the action assigned at the meeting. ~~Within two weeks of the meeting a letter will be sent to the submitter to identify the action assigned at the meeting.~~ Actions taken by the Committee will result in each product being assigned one of the following status classifications:

- "Accepted" Classifying a product as "accepted" does not obligate the Department in any way to use or specify the product. Even though a product is accepted by the New Products Evaluation Committee, final acceptance by the New Products Evaluation Committee will be made by the appropriate Office head. Use of a product is limited to the applications for which it is "accepted" only if there is a Department need, if the product meets that need, and if the department is willing to draft a specification or special provision for the product.
- "Rejected" A product is usually rejected for one or more of the following reasons: (1) product cost is prohibitive; (2) product does not perform as claimed by the manufacturer; or (3) the product does not perform in a way to meet the Department's needs.
- "Field Test" The product is under evaluation. Field-testing is planned or in progress in order to obtain more information.

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| "Laboratory Test" | The product is under evaluation. Laboratory testing is planned or in progress in order to obtain more information. |
| "Action Pending" | Classification of the product is being delayed until additional information can be obtained from the manufacturer, supplier, other states, etc. |
| "No Application" | In the opinion of the Committee, the Department has no need or application for the product. |
| "Withdrawn" | Withdrawn from consideration at the request of the manufacturer. |
| "Withdrawn/No Action" | Withdrawn from consideration at the request of the New Products Evaluation Committee because of no contact from the manufacturer for a period of at least one year. Once withdrawn, the product must be resubmitted for future evaluation. |
| "Project to Project" | In the opinion of the Committee, the Department needs to review this product per project due to the product's special use. Use of a product is limited to the applications for which the product meets the specification or special provision. |
| "Allow the Use" | Classifying a product as "allow the use" does not obligate the Department or contractor in any way to use or specify the product. When it is recommended to "allow the use" of this product on Department projects at the discretion of the contractor, the product is approved as a non-pay item. Use of a product is limited to the applications for which it is allowed. |
| "Meets Specifications" | There is a Department need and it has been identified that the product meets a specification or special provision. |

V. REQUEST PROCEDURES:

All manufacturers, vendors, contractors, etc. requesting an evaluation of a new product will be required to complete a New Products Evaluation Form. All of those promoting products not previously used or approved should be advised of the Department's policy and procedures relative to new products. The vendor is to be advised that the evaluation of their product is not a commitment to purchase, recommend, or specify their product, and that the data developed is public information.

Normally vendors should contact the New Products Evaluation Committee Chairman with new products, but if the vendor contacts a committee member whose routine work assignment involves the type product presented, that member should obtain all information available and provide the vendor with a New Products Evaluation Form to complete and return. If a vendor initially contacts the Department personnel other than a Committee member, then the vendor should be referred to a committee member or the Chairman of the Committee.

A submittal fee of **\$100.00** is required for each New Product Evaluation. This fee should be forwarded along with 11 completed copies of the New Products Evaluation Form and additional information or 2 completed and 1 electronic copy of the New Product Evaluation Form and additional information to the address on page 3. Checks should be made payable to the **Georgia Department of Transportation**.

VI. EVALUATION PROCEDURES:

A. Preliminary Review

The committee member handling a particular product presented shall review all data furnished. It is important at this stage to contact those highway authorities and other agencies which the vendor claims are using the product. In performing the preliminary review, the following should be considered: Does the documentation received from others indicate that (1) the product will perform as stated; (2) a true need exists for the product; (3) the product will be economically competitive. Also, consider the willingness of the vendor to furnish the product free for evaluation and willingness to participate if the product is used for evaluation purposes.

B. Evaluation

After the preliminary review, the Committee member, in collaboration with other technical experts in his or her field, shall decide to: accept, reject, or, if no decision can be made, the member may present the product to the full Committee at an upcoming regularly scheduled meeting.

C. Committee Evaluation

If no decision is reached during the initial evaluation of a product, the full Committee shall evaluate the product at a regularly scheduled meeting. The appropriate Committee member shall present the product to the Committee with a recommendation, if possible, on the disposition of the product. Upon reviewing the information and the member's recommendation, the Committee shall decide if the product will be immediately accepted, rejected, or evaluated, and by what means. If the Committee cannot make a decision due to lack of sufficient information on a product, the Chairman may request that the Committee member presenting the product obtain additional information as appropriate.

At the discretion of the responsible member and with approval of the Chairman, the vendor may make a presentation to the Committee. If deemed more appropriate, the presentation may be made to others in the Department involved in the use of the product. Recommendations pertaining to the possible benefits of the product to the Department's work would then be obtained from those attending and considered by the Committee.

D. In-house Lab or Field Evaluation

If the Committee decides that a product merits in-house lab or field investigation, then an additional **\$500** fee will be required to continue the evaluation of the product and has to be received within 1 month of receiving the Official Georgia Department of Transportation Letter. Checks should be made payable to the **Georgia Department of Transportation**. Once this fee is received, then a study will be conducted by the appropriate section or sections designated by the Committee. Such investigations will be conducted consistent with the availability of resources (personnel, time, funds) within the Department at that time. The results of such investigations will be presented to the Committee for a final decision on the use of the product.

Lab/Field Evaluation Procedures:

Lab Evaluation:

On some products laboratory test must be performed to evaluate product performance before a field test will be considered. The vendor

is responsible for providing the material in the amount and method required, at no cost to the Department, for the laboratory testing.

The vendor will be provided a copy of the laboratory results.

Field Evaluation:

1) Georgia Department of Transportation Proposed Pilot

Vendor/Contractor shall submit the field test eligibility criteria form for a potential Georgia Department of Transportation project to the New Product Evaluation Chairman for review and acceptance with the following information: project contractor, project ID, location specifics, and photos of the test site.

~~2) Vendor / Contractor Proposed Pilot~~

~~Vendor may elect to use a private field test site location, which may also include local government sites. The vendor shall submit the field test eligibility criteria form for a suitable project to the New Product Evaluation Chairman for review and acceptance that includes the following information: project contractor, project ID, location specifics, and photos of the test site.~~

~~3) Vendor may request that the Department assist in identifying a~~

2) potential GDOT project to use as a test site.

Once the field test site is accepted, then the installation date will be determined and coordinated with the vendor, contractor, and GDOT representatives. The Office of Materials and Research New Product Evaluation Engineer must be contacted so that a representative from the GDOT OMR office can be present at installation for making a record of the event to be placed in the manufacturer's New Product Evaluation file. A "Product/Method Assessment Report" will be completed and photos taken are placed in a New Product Evaluation Computer Folder and a Power Point Presentation with the photos will be placed in the folder.

After successful completion of the installation of the test site the classification of the product may be changed from "Field Test" to "Allow for Use". Any additional projects placed after this time may be included in the NPE analysis.

Depending on the product and the proposed application, a schedule is set up for review of the site / product. Once the product has completed the field test evaluation, then the

committee reviews the New Product at the next quarterly meeting for a possible change in classification.

E. GDOT Pilot Test Sections

When the Committee, or the majority vote of its quorum, determines a proposed new product possesses sufficient merit to expend GDOT funds in order to facilitate a working field test of a product, the Chairman shall prepare a request for considerations to be submitted to the State Materials and Research Engineer. The request shall include a brief summary of the stated or anticipated benefits the product may offer GDOT, the known and potential risks of utilizing the product in a test section and a unit cost of the product.

The State Materials and Research Engineer, or their designee, shall prepare a written justification to expend State funds to the Director of Construction. The justification shall also include a listing of laboratory and/or field tests to be performed by GDOT or its consultants in support of efforts to examine the product for future approval. The justification shall also include any identified active, or soon to be active, project suitable for incorporation.

The Director of Construction shall have 14 days to consider the justification and make further recommendation of approval to the Chief Engineer.

Upon the Chief Engineer's approval the justification bearing the Chief Engineering's approval shall be routed to the appropriate Office overseeing the project and the State Construction Engineer. In the event a contract modification is necessary the State Construction Engineer shall oversee its preparation and timely execution.

VII. FINAL DISPOSITION:

When the Committee makes a final decision on the disposition of a product, the Committee Chairman shall notify the vendor in writing of the decision. If the Committee decision is to accept a product based on information furnished or based on the results of a Department evaluation, the approval must be signed by the appropriate Office Head. The Chairman of the New Products Evaluation Committee will notify the vendor in writing of the decision.

VIII. FILES:

The New Products Evaluation Committee Secretary will maintain files on new products. A file folder with file number will be maintained on each new product and will contain as a minimum: a copy of the New Products Evaluation Form, any test reports, a copy of the final report if a product is evaluated by a research study, documentation of the Committee's final decision on the use of the product, a copy of the specification written to cover the product, and any other information pertinent to the product.