



TECHNICAL TRAINING & CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

GENERAL

The purpose of the Technical Training & Certification Program is to ensure Quality Control (QC)/Quality Assurance (QA) and Acceptance of Aggregates, Hot Mix Asphalt (HMA), Portland Cement Concrete (PCC), Grade Inspection, Precast and Prestressed Concrete, and Pavement Profiles and to ensure proper documentation of quality control/quality assurance and acceptance procedures and test results by industry and Contracting Authority personnel.

This Instructional Memorandum (IM) explains the requirements to become certified and to remain certified to perform inspection and testing in the State of Iowa. This IM also describes the duties, responsibilities and the authority of persons assigned the position of Certified Technician in any of the above areas for construction or maintenance projects. Appendix C of this IM lists what tests and procedures the technician is qualified to perform for each level of certification they obtain.

Through a cooperative program of training, study, and examination, personnel of the construction industry, State DOT, and other Contracting Authorities will be able to provide quality management and certified inspection. Quality control/quality assurance and acceptance sampling, testing and inspection will be performed by certified personnel and documented in accordance with the IMs.

A technician who is qualified and holds a valid certification(s) shall perform quality control/quality assurance and acceptance at a production site, proportioning plant, or project site. Responsibilities cannot be delegated to non-certified technicians. The duties of a Certified Technician may be assigned to one or more additional Certified Technicians.

The Technical Training & Certification Program will be carried out in accordance with general policy guidelines established or approved by the Highway Division Director. A Board of Certification composed of the following members will advise the Director:

- Director – Office of Materials
- Director – Office of Construction
- Representative of District Materials Engineers**
- Representative of District Construction Engineers**
- Representative of Associated General Contractors (AGC of Iowa)
- Representative of Iowa Concrete Paving Association (ICPA)
- Representative of Asphalt Paving Association of Iowa (APAI)
- Representative of Iowa Ready Mixed Concrete Association (IRMCA)
- Representative of Iowa Limestone Producers Association (ILPA)
- Representative of County Engineers
- Coordinator of Technical Training & Certification Program**

** Appointed by Program Director

The Director of the Office of Materials will be the Program Director. Coordinators will be appointed by the Program Director to assist in administration of the program and to handle such planning, administration, and coordinating functions as may be needed.

TRAINING

The Iowa DOT will provide the training necessary to become certified or an agency approved by the Program Director. Producers/Contractors are encouraged to conduct their own pretraining program. A complete listing of training opportunities is available in the Technical Training & Certification Program's Information and Registration Booklet or at the Technical Training & Certification Program website, www.iowa.gov/dot/materials/training.htm. This book is available at any of the Iowa DOT Materials Offices. They may also be obtained from the ICPA, IRMCA, ILPA, and APAI.

CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

1. A candidate must attend instruction and pass the examination(s) for all levels of certification prepared and presented by the Program Director or someone designated by the Program Director. If the new candidate fails the examination, they will have one opportunity to retake the examination. The retake must be completed within six months of the original exam. If they fail the retake of the examination, they will need to attend the training again before taking the examination the third time. If an individual is recertifying they will have only one opportunity to take the examination. If they fail the examination they must take the applicable training before retaking the examination.
2. All prerequisites shall be met before the applicant may attend the next level of training for the certification desired. A listing of certification levels and prerequisites is located in Appendix A.
3. Once the candidate has met all the criteria and has received certification, it is recommended the Certified Technician work under the supervision of an experienced technician until they become efficient in the inspection and testing methods they will be performing.

An individual requesting to become certified as a Precast/Prestress Concrete Technician is required to obtain forty hours of experience assisting in quality control inspection at an approved plant before certification will be issued. The experience must be documented and shall be approved by the District Materials Engineer. This experience must be completed within two years from the date the individual attended the training.

4. Registered Professional Engineers, engineering graduates, and geology graduates from accredited institutions will be exempt from the training requirement in the areas they have had instruction. In order to obtain certification for any technical level, these persons must pass all applicable tests for the level of certification they wish to obtain. All certificates issued in accordance with these requirements will be subject to the same regulations concerning expiration, recertification, etc., as applies to certificates obtained via training and examinations.

Out-of-state technicians will be issued certifications when the following criteria are met:

1. The applicant must be certified in another state or shall have received equivalent training, if the state does not have a certification program, in each level of certification they are requesting.
2. The applicant must pass an examination for each level of certification desired, which will be administered by the Iowa Department of Transportation. Failure of the examination shall require the applicant to take the applicable schooling before they can retake the exam.
3. The applicant must follow the prerequisite requirements of the Technical Training & Certification Program.

Out-of-state applications should be submitted to the District Materials Office closest to the home location of the applicant. Copies of all the applicant's certifications must accompany the application.

CERTIFICATION

Upon successfully completing the requirements for certification, the Program Director will issue a certificate and a pocket certification card. This certification is not transferable. A certification shall be valid for five years.

CERTIFICATION IDENTIFICATION

The certificate will contain letters that identify the District of record, the certificate holder, certification number, the level of certification, and the expiration date of each level.

The assigned certification number may change if the certificate holder changes their residence.

RENEWAL OF CERTIFICATION

A certification shall be valid through December 31st of the fifth year. A 90-day grace period will be allowed. If the individual has not renewed their certification within the 90-day grace period, they are automatically decertified. The individual may obtain certification by taking the examination for the level of certification they are requesting. If the individual does not take the examination within one year after their certification(s) expire, i.e., 12/31/expiration year, they must retake all applicable schooling and pass the examinations. If an applicant becomes decertified in any level of certification and that certification is a prerequisite for other levels of certification the applicant will also be decertified in those related levels of certification.

All certified technicians will be required to pass an examination in each level of certification they hold before recertification will be issued. Failure of any level shall require the applicant to retake the applicable schooling and pass the test.

The certificate holder shall be responsible for applying for certification renewal and for maintaining a current address on file with the appropriate District Materials Office.

Technicians certified as Level I HMA and/or Level II PCC shall attend a minimum of two update classes each in the five-year period between certification and each recertification. The Iowa DOT or an agency or organization approved by the TTCP will hold these classes. These update classes will be listed in the Technical Training & Certification Program Booklet and on the program website, or the certified technician may contact the Iowa DOT for information. If an individual does not attend the two update classes required before their certification expires, they must take the entire schooling and pass the examination for the certification required.

The certified technician will not receive credit for the following:

1. More than one update per training season in each level of certification.
2. An update taken during the same training season in which the individual recertified.

UNSATISFACTORY PERFORMANCE NOTICE

A certified technician failing to perform the required specified duties or inadequately performing these duties, will receive an Unsatisfactory Notice (Office of Materials IM 213, Appendix B). The notice will be from the District Materials Engineer in the District where the failure occurred. This notice and all supporting documentation will be placed in the technician's permanent file with the District Materials Office in which the technician resides. The notice will also be placed on the statewide computer file.

SUSPENSION & DECERTIFICATION

A three-month suspension will be given upon receipt of two Unsatisfactory Performance Notices. Technicians that are suspended shall not perform any duties of the applicable certification, including any duties for which the affected certification is a prerequisite.

Technicians are eligible to be reinstated after the three-month suspension and successful completion of the applicable recertification test(s).

Technicians are subject to decertification when they receive a third Unsatisfactory Performance Notice.

Certified Technicians will be decertified for any of the following reasons:

The certificate will become invalid for the following reasons:

1. Failure of the certificate holder to renew the certificate prior to regular expiration as described above.
2. Use of false or fraudulent information to secure or renew the certificate.
3. Use of false or fraudulent actions or documentation by the certificate holder.
4. Not performing tests and technician duties properly and in accordance to specifications.

Action will be effective on the date the Program Director issues the suspension or decertification notice.

Technicians that are decertified shall not perform any duties requiring certification. Technicians may request reinstatement after one year.

Appeals and reinstatement requests shall be submitted in writing to the Program Director. Appeals and reinstatement requests will be considered by the Certification Board.

If reinstatement is authorized, the applicant must attend and successfully complete the applicable certification courses.

FUNCTIONS & RESPONSIBILITIES

A certificate holder at each production site, project site, proportioning plant, or laboratory will perform duties. The certified technician shall perform quality control testing in accordance with specified frequencies and submit designated reports and records.

The specification requirement for materials testing by a certified technician does not change the supplier's responsibilities to furnish materials compliant with the specification requirements.

The District Materials Engineer and/or Project Engineer will be responsible for monitoring the sampling, testing, production inspection activities and quality control performed by the contractor. A monitor shall have satisfactorily completed the training and be certified for the level of technician they are monitoring.

The District Materials Engineer and/or Project Engineer will have authority and responsibility to question and where necessary, require changes in operations and quality control to ensure specification requirements are met.

QUALITY CONTROL, TESTING, & DOCUMENTATION

The QC Technician shall be present whenever construction work related to production activity, such as stockpiling or other preparatory work, requires record development and/or documentation is in progress. The QC Technician's presence is normally required on a continuing basis beginning one or more days before plant operation begins and ending after plant shut down at the completion of the project. The work shall be performed in a timely manner and at the established frequencies.

The QC Technician's presence is not normally required during temporary plant shut downs caused by conditions, such as material shortages, equipment failures, or inclement weather.

All quality control activities and records shall be available and open for observation and review by representatives of the contracting authority.

Reports, records, and diaries developed during progress of construction activities will be filed as directed by the Contracting Authority and will become the property of the Contracting Authority.

Quality control activities, testing, and records will be monitored regularly by Contracting Authority representatives. The Project Engineer or District Materials Engineer will assign personnel for this function.

Monitor activities will be reported and filed at prescribed intervals with the Project Engineer, District Materials Engineer, producer, contractor, and the contractor's designated producer.

At no time will the monitor inspector issue directions to the contractor, or to the QC Technician. However, the monitor inspector will have the authority and responsibility to question, and where necessary, reject any operation or completed product, which is not in compliance with contract requirements.

ACCEPTANCE

Completed work will be accepted on the basis of specification compliance documented by acceptance test records, and monitor inspection records. Specification noncompliance will require corrective action by the producer, contractor, or by the contractor's designated producer, and review of events and results associated with noncompliance by the Project Engineer.