Expires – December 31, 2009

INDEPENDENT ASSURANCE SERVICES FOR LOCAL AGENCIES

I. BACKGROUND

In the past, Caltrans certified local agency or consultant material laboratories in California Test Methods only if the local agency had a Federal-aid project on the National Highway System (NHS). In a recent process review, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) identified a need for increased oversight of local agency materials laboratories, samplers, and testers for Federal-aid projects off the NHS. As a result, five positions were added to Caltrans Materials Engineering and Testing Services (METS) to perform "Independent Assurance" services for local agencies with Federal-aid projects off the NHS. The "Independent Assurance" services will include certification of local agency and consultant laboratories, samplers, and testers in California Test Methods.

II. POLICY

To increase oversight of local agencies with Federal-aid projects, Caltrans (METS) will perform "Independent Assurance" services, which include certification of local agency and consultant material laboratories, samplers, and testers using California Test Methods for all local agency Federal-aid projects.

III. PROCEDURE

Local agencies that have a Federal-aid project off the NHS and desire to have either their own, or their material consultant's laboratories, samplers, and testers certified in California Test Methods are to contact METS (Cathrina Barros, 916 227-7181; or Nahid Hosseinzadeh, 916 227-7322) with their request. METS requires that each local agency or consultant laboratory using California Test Methods be a participant in the Caltrans Reference Sample Program and have a Quality Assurance Program (QAP), three copies of which will need to be provided to METS at the time of the request. In addition to providing Independent Assurance services, which include certification of local agency and material laboratories, samplers, and testers; METS will review the local agency's or consultant's submitted QAP and provide constructive review comments to the local agency, material consultant, and the Caltrans District Local Assistance Engineer (DLAE). METS will also provide the DLAE with one copy of the local agency's or material consultant's QAP with their constructive review comments.

IV. APPLICABILITY/IMPACTS

This increased oversight is applicable to local agencies that have Federal-aid projects off the NHS and have material laboratories or material consultants using California Test Methods. The impact is that these local agencies with material laboratories and/or their material consultants will now be able to get their QAP reviewed and their laboratories, samplers, and testers certified in California Test Methods by Caltrans provided the local agencies have Federal-aid projects.

Recommended: Cathrina B. Barros — 3/5/09
Committee Chair – Materials Quality Assurance — Date

Approved: [signature] — 3-5-09
Office Chief — Date