



Safety Quality Control Manager Guidelines

Bid Item 090214
October 2025



Photograph Location: 21st Avenue undercrossing, State Route 99, Sacramento

Photograph Source: Caltrans

Safety Quality Control Manager Guidelines are prepared by the Office of Contract Administration in the Division of Construction for the project development team to determine if a safety quality control manager must be implemented on a contract and to estimate the cost for an associated bid item.



Questions or comments on the *Safety Quality Control Manager Guidelines* should be submitted to: Caltrans.Construction.Safety@dot.ca.gov

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SAFETY QUALITY CONTROL MANAGER

Guidelines

October 2025

Introduction

At the Department of Transportation (Caltrans), safety is our highest priority. Caltrans strives to provide a safe transportation system for highway workers and highway travelers. In order to achieve Caltrans' vision of zero fatalities and injuries, going above the minimum safety requirements in construction work zones is a top priority, and one of many improvements identified at various Caltrans safety events. Requiring a safety quality control manager (SQCM) on high-risk projects is one way to improve safety in construction work zones.

Purpose

This guidance was prepared by the Division of Construction to establish standardized practices for the use of an SQCM on Caltrans construction contracts when projects meet the criteria specified in the "SQCM Application," section of this guide.

Background

The SQCM is the primary contact for job safety and contract work, and makes sure that all work is performed safely and in accordance with the California Occupational Safety and Health Administration (Cal/OSHA) regulations. The SQCM also follows all Caltrans specifications, including standard provisions, special provisions, and any issued revisions. The SQCM is also responsible for conducting regular safety reviews, correcting deficiencies, reporting to the resident engineer, and has the authority to shut down contractor and subcontractor operations for any safety violations.

SQCM Application

The SQCM is a specially trained employee working for the prime contractor or subcontractor. The project development team must consider implementing the use of an SQCM on projects that meet the criteria outlined in the hidden text and instruction for the project engineer of Special Provision Section 5-1.14, "Safety Quality Control Manager," which states:

Use when the cost estimate (engineer's estimate) is greater than \$75 million and any of the project conditions listed below is anticipated. Before including this SSP, consult with the District Construction Safety Coordinator and District Construction Engineer to evaluate if such conditions necessitate an SQCM:

- 1. Major structures with falsework*
- 2. Tunneling*
- 3. Deep excavations*
- 4. Confined spaces*
- 5. Asbestos or hazardous material removal*
- 6. High profile project with substantial community or stakeholder involvement where local traffic will be impacted by construction work*

To include this SSP in projects not meeting the preceding condition, obtain concurrence from the following:

- 1. District Construction Safety Coordinator*
- 2. District Construction Engineer*
- 3. Headquarters Division of Construction*

*Use with bid item 090214 SAFETY QUALITY CONTROL MANAGER.
Do not use with SSP 5-1.15, SAFETY REPRESENTATIVE.*

Qualifications

According to Special Provision Section 5-1.14A (2)(c), "Qualifications," it states:

The SQCM must be a competent and qualified person, as defined by Cal/OSHA and provide safety oversight on the project. The SQCM must have:

- 1. At least 5 years of safety experience in heavy construction, heavy industrial, or oil and energy industry.*
- 2. Knowledge in the area of safety procedure for all types of work being performed on this project*
- 3. Knowledge of Caltrans specifications and plans, Cal/OSHA policy and procedures, and 8 CA Code of Regs safety requirements. safety requirements*

The SQCM must have completed safety training and maintain valid certifications for:

1. *First aid.*
2. *Cardiopulmonary resuscitation.*
3. *Confined space.*
4. *Fall protection.*

Responsibilities and Requirements

The SQCM is responsible for job safety and various other project-related duties. This includes:

- Conducting the onsite new project orientation for each worker assigned to the project.
- Confirming each worker's compliance with the drug testing requirements on the project.
- Developing a site-specific safety program.
- Reviewing the construction work plans for each subcontractor before starting work.
- Conducting or attending pre-planning sessions for high hazard work, such as excavations, demolition, confined space entry, falsework, and crane hoisting.
- Conducting weekly job site safety meetings.
- Reviewing subcontractors' work schedules to review adequacy of job hazard analyses and address all safety concerns and issues.
- Making sure safety data sheets are available onsite for all materials and have a hazard communication program for informing workers of material hazards.
- Conducting daily safety inspections of the project site for hazards and compliance with safety requirements in the *Standard Specifications* and California Code of Regulations Title 8.
- Documenting safety inspections at every location where construction activity is active using inspection checklists.
- Making sure that the lane closure traffic control daily report is completed by the traffic control technicians and the traffic daily review report is completed by the traffic control supervisor, but only when a traffic control supervisor is required.
- Reviewing the lane closure traffic control daily reports and traffic control daily review reports for any work-zone-related safety issues.
- Revising the site-specific safety program to include procedures to overcome hazardous situations identified by construction site safety inspections, lane closure traffic control daily reports, and traffic control daily review reports.
- Investigating any near miss or reported incidents in a timely manner and taking appropriate action to prevent similar incidents in the future.
- Reporting all incidents and accidents to the resident engineer immediately, including the investigation of any close calls.
- Submitting daily safety status reports to the contractor's onsite superintendent for submittal to the engineer.

Implementation

Non-Standard Special Provision 5—1.14_N05-05-25__2024 was issued as a revision to Section 5-1.14, “Safety Quality Control Manager.” This Non-Standard Special Provision is anticipated to be published in April 2026 and become Standard Special Provision 5—1.14 “Safety Quality Control Manager.”

Cost Estimate

Compensation for an SQCM is measured and paid for by a lump sum per day, based on an estimated number of project workdays. This excludes periods of work suspension, plant establishment and erosion control establishment phases.

Bid Item

090214 SAFETY QUALITY CONTROL MANAGER (Lump Sum)

Published rates are subject to change so make sure to review the Department of Industrial Relations, Director’s General Prevailing Wage Determinations webpage at:

<https://www.dir.ca.gov/oprl/dprevwagedetermination.htm>

The project development team must abide by the following instructions to estimate the prevailing wage and the cost of a work vehicle for an SQCM on a Caltrans contract:

1. Go to: <https://www.dir.ca.gov/oprl/dprevwagedetermination.htm>
2. Select: “2025-2 General prevailing wage determinations menu (journeyman)”
3. Choose your project location (Northern or Southern California)
4. Select: “Building/Construction Inspector and Field Soils and Material Tester”
5. Select the relevant locality table and determine the hourly rate for Group 2 using the Total Hourly Rate as the standard.
6. Apply the rate for a vehicle from the Labor Surcharge and Equipment Rental rates Publication under “Light Trucks.” Reference the Equipment Rental Rates and Labor Surcharge webpage at:

<https://dot.ca.gov/programs/construction/equipment-rental-rates-and-labor-surcharge>

Example

The following is an example showing the estimated lump sum per day cost for an SQCM on an assumed project in Santa Cruz County calculated in September 2025:

Total Hourly Rate: \$95.99
Total Daily Rate: \$95.99 x 8 ≈ \$768

Hourly Rate for Light Truck: \$35.85
Daily Rate for Light Truck: \$35.85 x 8 ≈ \$287

Total daily cost: \$768 + \$287 = \$1,055

Total number of working days (excluding plant establishment): 425

Table 1. Example Engineer's Estimate

Item Code	Item Description	Unit Measure	Total Number of Working Days	Unit Price	Estimated Amount
090214	Safety Quality Control Manager	Lump Sum	425	\$1,055	\$448,375

References

- Non-Standard Special Provision 5—1.14_N05-05-25__2024, “Safety Quality Control Manager”
- Standard Special Provision 5-1.14, “Safety Quality Control Manager,” anticipated publication: April 2026
- Bid Item 090214, “Safety Quality Control Manager”
- Department of Industrial Relations
<https://www.dir.ca.gov/oprl/dprevagedetermination.htm>
- Caltrans Equipment Rental Rates and Labor Surcharge
<https://dot.ca.gov/programs/construction/equipment-rental-rates-and-labor-surcharge>