

# **Chapter 1                      Caltrans Construction Organization**

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# **Chapter 1                      Caltrans Construction Organization**

## **Section 3 Personnel Development**

### **1-301      General**

Personnel development is essential for successfully implementing Caltrans' mission, vision, goals, and strategic priorities. Moreover, most Construction employees want to learn new job skills. A comprehensive training and development program helps in recruiting and retaining new Construction staff. It is in the best interests of Caltrans to train staff early in their careers, reinforce that training as time passes, and update staff job skills as changes in policy and technology affect the way Caltrans conducts business and serves its stakeholders.

Base staff development needs on Caltrans' fundamental goals and objectives. Design each training and development activity to produce Construction personnel who are prepared to perform their essential job duties.

### **1-302      District Role**

District Construction will do the following:

- Identify training needs based on the following:
  1. The employee's current knowledge and skills.
  2. Additional job skills necessary for the employee's success in the current job assignment.
  3. Skills the employee will need for future job assignments.
- Include training and development planning in each employee's yearly individual development plan.
- Provide each employee with adequate training and development opportunities that fulfill the employee's training and development plan.
- For each Construction employee, maintain a record of completed training and development sufficient to enable a supervisor to evaluate the employee's construction knowledge and skill level.

### **1-303      Supervisor Role**

Supervisors will do the following:

- Verify that each employee under their direct supervision is capable of performing the assigned duties.
- Periodically review subordinates' qualifications and use that information when making decisions about new job assignments.
- When evaluating staffing needs and planning job assignments, carefully consider cross-training opportunities for all staff, if collective bargaining agreements and

memorandums of understanding allow such opportunities. Effective cross-training adds:

1. More flexibility in completing a job
  2. More ability to collaborate
  3. Stronger ability to adjust to changing project conditions
- Establish a succession plan, indicating who will assume the duties of the supervisor and the employees when they are absent. Update the plan each year based on staff performance and anticipation of planned staff training and development needs.
  - Take immediate action to correct any known deficiency in an employee's capability to perform currently assigned tasks.
  - Encourage the professional career development of subordinates, and foster a working environment in which employees are encouraged to learn new job skills.
  - Assist employee participation in external training opportunities they request. Such training must benefit the employees' professional career development. Make sure the training schedule does not have a significant negative effect on the employees' work. This training must also conform to current departmental guidelines for career-related training.

### **1-304 Individual Duties**

Each employee will do the following:

- As directed by the supervisor, attend training activities and learn the skills and acquire the knowledge necessary to meet the standards for satisfactorily completing job assignments. Information related to training classes is available on the Division of Construction Training Unit intranet page.
- Assistant resident engineers are encouraged to complete necessary training classes to obtain their Resident Engineer Certificate. Certificate completion requirements are available on the Division of Construction's Resident Engineer Certificate intranet page.
- Upon completing the necessary training classes to receive the certificate, work with your training coordinator to submit the certificate program completion form to headquarters.
- Attend a classroom-based training when scheduled to do so; complete online training within the established timeframe.
- Evaluate their ability to perform the essential job duties for each task they are asked to perform. Notify their supervisor if more training is required to execute a specific job task.
- In the planning of activities for training and development, consider future promotional opportunities. Planning for training and development requires the employee to maintain a basic level of knowledge necessary to efficiently perform

current job duties, and it requires the employee to expand knowledge to include job duties for the next position on the individual's career path.

- Obtain approval from the supervisor before attending a training activity.
- Accurately report training expenditures, including filling out the "G" number column on the time reporting system. In addition, employees are to follow the procedures for requesting and documenting training detailed in the Learning Management System on Caltrans' intranet.

### **1-305 Resources and Budgeting**

Individual Construction employees will devote regularly scheduled work time to "in-service occupational training" as determined by the employee's supervisor. This occupational training is in addition to other mandatory training as required by Caltrans' policies, and will be executed within the district's training and development plan.

### **1-306 Subject Matter, Trainees, and Instructors**

The district construction administration must assure the completeness and accuracy of the information disseminated through training and development activities. The Division of Construction, Office of Construction Training and Environmental Compliance, will support, coordinate, and assist the district to the full extent of its abilities and resources.

Instructional subject matter for a course should be sufficiently broad to encompass all aspects of an operation or area of activity to which a person may be assigned. Occupational instruction should be offered close to the time when personnel will be required to use the job skills.

Personnel and consultant trainers who prepare and conduct training must be qualified in the subject matter and in the theory and techniques of training. Assistance for determining training expertise and training for trainers is available through the Division of Construction.

### **1-307 Just-in-Time Training**

Some contract special provisions provide for "just-in-time training," which is joint training with industry and Construction staff. This training should include all contractor and Caltrans staff who are directly involved in the construction operation. The objective of this training is to introduce new practices, improve work and product quality, and to provide current and timely training to the people performing the work.

### **1-308 Training Methods**

Depending on the particular subject, varying instruction methods may be appropriate for in-service training. In all instances, encourage instructors to use teaching techniques that involve their students rather than transmitting information through lecture. Whenever possible, students should be provided with the opportunity to perform a task shortly after receiving instruction and watching a demonstration.

Classes for inspectors, either in the classroom or online training, should be participatory and include “guided discussions” that encourage and promote an exchange of ideas and experiences among participants.

Caltrans Construction uses the following basic training references:

- *Construction Manual*
- *Standard Specifications*
- *Standard Plans*
- Chapter 12, “Construction Surveys,” of the *Surveys Manual*
- *Highway Construction Checklists*
- *California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices*
- *Maintenance Manual*
- California Tests
- Other technical publications

A highly effective method of industrial training and development is on-the-job training and mentoring by pairing less experienced staff with seasoned Construction personnel. The supervisor must be careful to pair individuals with compatible personalities. The mentor should be knowledgeable and well-versed in current Caltrans standards. The student can enhance the effectiveness of this training technique by respecting the experience of the mentor, being genuinely interested, and being actively involved in the training process.

Occupational training must be accomplished as an organized effort followed by on-the-job experience. No substitute exists for experience, and often a well-regulated, on-the-job training program is an excellent method for spreading knowledge.

The districts must make every effort to coordinate their training activities with the other districts. For example, each of 3 districts may have only 2 or 3 people in need of training in a specific subject. It is preferable, therefore, to combine employees from the 3 districts to create 1 class. The districts and Structure Construction can also exchange qualified instructors.