

Memorandum

To: DEPUTY DIRECTORS
DIVISION CHIEFS
DISTRICT DIRECTORS

Date: April 12, 2022

From: DONNA BERRY
Acting Chief Engineer



For Donna Berry

Subject: **SEAL, SIGNATURE, AND ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF REGISTERED/LICENSED PROFESSIONALS ON PROJECT PLANS, SPECIFICATIONS, AND REPORTS**

Purpose

The purpose of this memorandum is to outline/clarify existing policy regarding the roles and responsibilities of the project engineer and to specify the registered/licensed individual (registered civil engineer, electrical engineer, licensed landscape architect, etc.) responsible for the integration, quality, and signing and sealing of Plans, Specifications & Estimate (PS&E) packages. This memorandum supersedes all prior written notification of project plans instructions regarding utilization of the registered/licensed professional seal and signature on the title sheet of project plans and serves to rescind the following memorandums:

- Project Engineer Responsibilities, dated February 4, 1998
- Registered Engineer's Seal and Signature on Project Plans, Specifications, and Reports, dated May 5, 1989
- Registered Engineer's Seal and Signature on Project Plans and Specifications, dated February 23, 1989

Project Engineer

The project engineer is the lowest-level registered civil engineer in "responsible charge" of appropriate project development documents (project study report, project report, etc.) and project design. The project engineer is responsible for the integration of all engineering elements needed to assemble a complete and comprehensive, quality PS&E package. The project engineer is a member of the project development team (PDT).

Contract Components Seal and Signature

Project Plans

It is the intent of the California Business and Professions Code that the seal and signature applied to project plans, calculations, specifications, and reports be by a fully competent and proficient registered/licensed professional that has the

technical expertise and is responsible for the content of that document. The law also provides that a professional engineer may sign plans which include engineering work in areas where they are not fully competent if the plans were prepared by a competent person. The term "responsible charge" relates to engineering decisions within the purview of the Professional Engineers Act and does not refer to management control in a hierarchy of professional engineers, except as each of the individuals in the hierarchy exercises independent engineering judgement and thus responsible charge. The professional engineer who signs engineering documents must be capable of answering questions asked by equally qualified engineers. These questions would be relevant to the engineering decisions made during the individual's participation in the project, and in sufficient detail to leave little question as to the engineer's technical knowledge of the work performed. It is not necessary to defend decisions as in an adversarial situation, but only to demonstrate that the individual (in responsible charge) made them and possessed sufficient knowledge of the project to make them. A "civil engineer" registered after January 1, 1982, is not authorized to seal and sign survey-related project plan sheets. A "traffic engineer" category license is not authorized for seal and signature on engineering elements of PS&E packages.

Only one license number, seal and signature shall be placed upon a project plan; however, where appropriate, printed names and signatures of other individuals directly involved in developing and reviewing the project plan may be placed on the project plans without a license number, seal, or professional designation. Except for structure plans, any additional names and signatures shall be placed along the left margin of individual plan sheets. On structure plans, additional names and signatures shall be placed in the spaces provided along the bottom of the individual plan sheets.

Title Sheet

The title sheet of a PS&E package serves as a cover sheet for the project to identify the location(s) where work will occur and is not considered an engineering document, as no item of work is to be shown on the title sheet. As such, the title sheet shall include the seal and signature of the lowest classification registered/licensed professional delegated general responsibility for coordinating the effort to produce a complete and comprehensive, quality PS&E package.

Depending on the project scope, a licensed landscape architect or other registered/licensed professional may be tasked with coordinating the effort to produce a complete PS&E package for construction on projects that may contain engineering elements. It is understood that this registered/licensed professional may not be directly involved in every element of the work needed to

complete the PS&E package (e.g. roadway, hydraulics, electrical, landscape, structure, signing and striping) and individual plan sheets are to be signed by the registered/licensed professional who has the technical expertise and is responsible for the content of that sheet.

Title Sheet by Consultant or Local Agency

On the title sheet of projects developed by consultants or local agencies, the Caltrans individual providing design oversight approval shall have their printed name, signature, license number, license expiration date, and date of signature included in the block space located in the left margin of the title sheet. Where a permittee or local agency finances and prepares the entire PS&E, their name and address shall be placed in the lower right-hand corner of the title sheet. A consultant that prepares the entire PS&E shall place their company name and address in the same location. Logos, telephone numbers, or artwork are not permitted.

Standard Plans & Revised Standard Plans

Standard Plans & Revised Standard Plans shall include the seal and signature of the licensed/registered owner of each specific Standard Plan or Revised Standard Plan.

Standard Specifications and Standard Special Provisions

Standard Specification editions and Standard Special Provisions (SSPs) are published by the Office of Construction Contract Standards. Standard Specifications editions and Standard SSPs are to be retained in the files of the Office of Construction Contract Standards.

Special Provisions

Each project's Special Provisions are to be prepared by the appropriate registered/licensed disciplinary professional. The seal and signature of each registered/licensed professional that prepared special provision sheets or directed their preparation shall be included in the Special Provisions. Appropriate designated disciplines may include roadway, traffic, landscape, electrical (highway), electrical (structures), structures, mechanical, and architecture. The Special Provisions signature and seal sheets shall have the contract number at the top and specify that, *"The Special Provisions contained herein have been prepared by or under the direction of the following Registered /Licensed Professionals."*

If the Division of Engineering Services prepares a portion of a project Special Provisions, they shall submit a signature and seal sheet to the District with their

proposed final project Special Provisions. The District Office Engineer (OE) Unit will combine the project Special Provisions and submit, as part of the PS&E package, both the Division of Engineering Services and District signature and seal sheets to Office of Office Engineer for inserting in the Notice to Bidders and Special Provisions.

Changes to Plans and Specifications

All changes in plans and specifications that were added after the original responsible charge registered/licensed professional's seal and signature will be covered by an additional seal and signature of the appropriate registered/licensed professional in responsible charge for developing the change.

Project Plans by Permittee or Local Agency

Where the work shown on an individual plan sheet is to be financed by a permittee or local agency, the permittee or local agency shall place their name and address immediately below the signature block located in the upper right-hand corner of the individual plan sheet or structure general plan sheet.

Project-Related Reports

All final reports or documents shall be prepared by, or under the responsible charge of, a registered/licensed professional and must bear the signature, seal, license number, and expiration date of the registered/licensed professional that has the technical expertise and is responsible for the content of the report. Project-related reports requiring engineering decisions/recommendations shall have the appropriate seal and signature of the registered civil engineer in responsible charge on the title sheet of the report.

c: Division of Design
Division of Engineering Services
Project Delivery Coordinators
Office of Standards and Procedures