

South Carolina Department of Transportation
Engineering Directive Memorandum

Number: 36

Primary Department: Preconstruction

Referrals: None

Subject: Public Notification of Bridge Replacement Projects

On bridge replacement projects and bridges being closed for repair or replacement by maintenance forces, appropriate staff shall notify the public, elected officials, school districts, emergency response personnel, and others who may be directly affected by the projects.

Preconstruction

To inform legislators and other governmental officials of pending bridge replacements, letters, press releases, and other notifications shall be sent out at various times during the preconstruction process. With the assistance of the district engineering administrator (DEA) or his/her designee, the project manager shall determine the elected officials who may be interested in the particular bridge replacement project.

First Communication – When the eminent domain notice is drafted and sent to the Environmental Office for distribution to the media, the project manager shall distribute a copy of the eminent domain notice to government officials whose districts are affected by the project. A cover letter for the director of preconstruction's signature shall be prepared by the appropriate regional production engineer. Signature authority for the letter may not be delegated. A site location map indicating the location of the bridge, along with the proposed detour if applicable, shall be included with the letter and eminent domain notice. Distribution of the cover letter, eminent domain notice, and site location map shall be as follows:

South Carolina State Senator(s) and Representative(s)

The following individuals shall receive courtesy copies:

SCDOT District Commissioner
Deputy Secretary for Engineering

The following individuals shall receive blind courtesy copies:

Chief Engineer for Planning, Location, and Design
Chief Engineer for Operations
Director of Construction

Director of Maintenance
District Engineering Administrator
Director of Administration
Regional Production Engineer

Second Communication – A second letter shall be prepared for distribution after the design field review is conducted. The letter shall be for the director of preconstruction's signature; signature authority may not be delegated. The letter shall be prepared for all bridge replacement projects, regardless of whether traffic is maintained on-site or detoured off-site during construction. A site location map indicating the location of the bridge, along with the proposed detour if applicable, shall be included with the letter. The letter shall be prepared by the appropriate regional production engineer and shall briefly describe the project. At a minimum, the letter shall contain the following information:

- 1) County name.
- 2) Route designation and local road name.
- 3) Description of crossing and approximate location.
- 4) Tentative decision regarding whether the bridge is to be closed to traffic during construction or whether traffic will be maintained at the site (explain if traffic will be maintained by off alignment, detour bridge, or staging). Also advise that this is the preliminary alignment and it is subject to change.
- 5) Approximate date of letting. Also advise that this date is tentative and subject to change.
- 6) Anticipated length of construction time.

Distribution shall be the same as for the first communication.

If a public information meeting has not been conducted for the project and a public hearing is not planned, a blind courtesy copy of the second communication shall be sent to the Communications Office. Within ten business days after the second communication is mailed, the Communications Office shall send a press release to the following:

Local Newspaper(s)/Media Outlets
City, County and/or Regional Chambers of Commerce

If a public information meeting has been conducted or a public hearing is planned, the press release announcing the meeting(s) will serve as the press release for the second communication. After the second communication is mailed, the DEA shall notify the following with the same project information as above:

COG and MPO Representatives (as appropriate)
Chairman of the County Council
County Administrator/Manager
County Planner
City Mayor (as appropriate)
City Manager (as appropriate)

Emergency Response Personnel
School District
Post Office

Third Communication (if required) – A third communication shall be prepared if the road is to be closed and traffic will be detoured during construction. In this case, the third communication shall be distributed approximately one to two months prior to the construction obligation. The third communication shall be distributed in the same manner as the second communication described above. Additionally, press releases shall be distributed by the Communications Office and the DEA shall make notifications in the same manner as the second communication described above.

Construction

Once a project has been successfully awarded to a contractor and a construction start date and anticipated completion date have been established, the DEA shall prepare a letter for his/her signature. Signature authority for the letter may not be delegated. Items to be included in the letter are

- 1) County name.
- 2) Route designation and local road name.
- 3) Description of crossing and approximate location.
- 4) Whether or not the bridge is to be closed to traffic during construction or whether traffic will be maintained at the site (explain if traffic will be maintained by off-alignment, detour bridge, or staging).
- 5) Detour route and length if the road is to be closed during construction.
- 6) Anticipated start date for construction.
- 7) Anticipated completion date for construction.

Distribution of the letter shall be as follows:

State Senator(s) and Representative(s)
COG and MPO Representatives (as appropriate)
Chairman of the County Council
County Administrator/Manager
County Planner
City Mayor (as appropriate)
City Manager (as appropriate)
Emergency Response Personnel
School District
Post Office

The following individuals shall receive courtesy copies:

SCDOT District Commissioner
Deputy Secretary for Engineering

The following individuals shall receive blind carbon copies:

Chief Engineer for Planning, Location, and Design
Chief Engineer for Operations
Director of Preconstruction
Director of Construction
Director of Maintenance
Director of Communications
Director of Administration
Project Manager

Once the preconstruction conference is held and the construction start date has been determined, the DEA shall issue (through the Communications Office) or require the contractor to issue a press release to the following, specifying the anticipated start and end dates of construction:

Local Newspaper(s)/Media Outlets
City, County, and/or Regional Chambers of Commerce

Maintenance

When a bridge is being closed for repairs or replacement by Department maintenance forces and it is a non-emergency situation, the DEA shall prepare letters for his/her signature to the appropriate elected officials as soon as the decision to perform the project is made. Signature authority for the letters may not be delegated. A copy of the letter and notice of demolition should be sent to the state bridge maintenance engineer, along with a work start letter, prior to commencement of any work. The Communications Office, along with interested parties, should also be notified using the distribution list as described above in the section entitled "Construction." Fifteen days prior to closing the bridge structure, a bridge closing sign stating the date of the proposed bridge closure shall be placed at each end of the structure.

If a bridge is closed for emergency conditions, the DEA shall prepare letters as soon as possible. Signature authority for the letters may not be delegated. The DEA shall also notify the Communications Office and other interested parties as soon as practical, using the distribution list as described above in the section entitled "Construction." In addition to written notifications, the DEA shall notify by telephone or personal meeting all affected area representatives, senators, and commissioners as soon as possible when a bridge closure is required.

The following information shall be included in the notification:

1. County, route, and crossing.
2. Local road name and/or local bridge name.
3. Whether the bridge is to be closed or if traffic will be maintained during construction (explain if traffic will be maintained by off-alignment, detour bridge, or staging).
4. Detour route and length if traffic will be detoured.

5. Businesses that may be affected by closure (for inclusion in letter but not news release).
6. Date of expected closure.
7. Approximate length of closure and/or completion date.

Other methods of notifying the public may also be utilized on a case-by-case basis, such as signs, letters to property owners, etc.

Submitted by: Robert I. Pratt
Director of Preconstruction

Submitted by: D. R. Shealy
Director of Construction

Recommended by: John V. Walsh
Chief Engineer for Planning, Location, and Design

Submitted by: James J. Feda
Director of Maintenance

Recommended by: J. C. Watson
Chief Engineer for Operations

Approved by: Tony L. Chapman
Deputy Secretary for Engineering

Effective Date: June 4, 2008

Original signed by Deputy Secretary for Engineering Tony L. Chapman, P.E. June 4, 2008. All original engineering directives maintained by the Office of the Deputy Secretary for Engineering.

PUBLIC NOTIFICATION FOR
BRIDGE REPLACEMENT PROJECTS
FLOWCHART

