This memorandum is being issued to incorporate the New Products Committee Purpose, Structure, Processes and procedures for the evaluation of new and innovative products proposed for use in construction or maintenance programs into the Materials Division’s Manual of Instruction Chapter I Section 117. The New Products Committee was first established on May 4, 1983 by the Chief Engineer.

Add a new Section 117 New Products Evaluation Process to Chapter I the Manual of Instructions

Section 117 New Products Evaluation Committee Process

**Section 117.01 Purpose/Mission:**
The intent of the New Products Committee is to accomplish the following:

a) Route vendors to a single authority thus improving uniformity and control of new products and reducing or eliminating work interruptions.

b) Provide appropriate, consistent and fair evaluation of all new products.

c) Provide centralized responsibility for evaluation, timely publication of results and establishment of a data bank.

**Section 117.02 Definition of New Product:**
A *New product* is defined as an innovative product that will add value, improve quality, and/or increase performance and that is not covered by specifications, plans, special provisions or other departmental standards. A new product is not a product that simply costs less than a currently used material or will save the Department money without meeting or exceeding current engineering and/or
quality standards. Generally the committee will limit the scope of its review to materials, which will become a temporary or permanent part of the highway system. Equipment, fuel, lubricants and other related items are not considered by this committee as new products and will be referred to the Equipment Engineer. Similarly, Computer software programs will not be evaluated by the New Products Committee but will be referred to ITD. Office supplies and related items will be referred to Administrative Services Division.

Section 117.03 Structure:
The composition of the New Products Committee to at least one representative appointed by the Division Administrator from each division of the following discipline: Materials (chairman), Maintenance, Construction, Structure and Bridge, Research Council, Environmental, Location and Design, and Traffic Engineering.

The chairman has regularly scheduled meetings twice a year in April and October. Additional meetings will be scheduled as necessary.

Section 117.04 Process and Procedures:
The evaluation process follows the six basic steps:

1) Initial Screening - All vendors wishing to have their product considered must submit a New Products Application/Evaluation form to the chairman. The application may be found online at:


   The chairman, will recruit a subject matter expert or form a subcommittee to perform initial investigation of the new product evaluation requests. The subcommittee will screen the product and determine if the product meets the definition of a new product and make a recommendation for further review or rejection to the full committee. These subcommittee recommendations will be presented to the New Products Committee at the regularly scheduled meeting. The full committee will decide upon further review or rejection of the product as appropriate.

2) Preliminary Examination – The vendor at his/her option may appear before the committee to present any additional information or visual aids. The vendor may also schedule and provide a field demonstration through a member of the committee/subcommittee.
   The committee will consider any laboratory data made available by the vendor or secured from other sources during step 1 and 2. A product will not be evaluated until a valid Material Safety Data Sheet is provided.

3) Detailed Evaluation (Laboratory & Field) – When a New Product has passed the preliminary examination phase and approved by the committee, it shall be submitted for laboratory and/or field for testing. Generally the vendor will be expected to furnish samples at his cost for laboratory testing and the Department will purchase materials for field installations. The Department’s laboratory and/or field results will be the deciding factor for acceptance of the product. The entire committee will have input into the evaluation process.
4) **Writing Specifications, Procedures, etc.** – After laboratory and/or field tests are completed and evaluated and the committee approves the product, the chairman will have appropriate acceptance requirements and procedures written and the product will be added to the Special Products Evaluation List (SPEL).

5) **Assembly and Dissemination of Information** – The chairman will be responsible for establishing a new products data bank and keeping the information up-dated. Additionally, the committee will publish an updated Special Products Evaluation List (SPEL) at least annually.

6) **Performance Evaluation** – When the Department uses a new product, it is mandatory that the committee be notified of its use by submission of a Performance Evaluation Form furnished by the committee. ***

*** The largest problem facing the New Products Committee is failure to notify and include the committee during field installations so a proper documented evaluation can be performed.

The procedures established for utilizing a new product on specific projects/schedules without processing through the New Products Committee are outlined below:

1) A designer/engineer may provide, for the use of a new product in a contract on an optional basis, provided the Division/District Administrator approves such use prior to advertisement. This practice should be limited in scope and number of installations to those necessary to provide meaningful evaluation. The use of a new product by a designer/engineer must be reported to the New Products Committee so that the committee may have input to the evaluation effort and include the product in its process.

2) A contractor may introduce a new product under Section 105.05 of the Road & Bridge Specifications with approval of the Engineer. Further Section 104.02 sets forth a procedure whereby the contractor may submit a value-engineering proposal, which could involve the use of a new product. The use of a new product by a contractor must be reported to the New Products Committee in order that the committee may have input to the evaluation effort and include the product in its process.
Vendor Submits New Product Application to New Products Committee (NPC)

Chair NPC

Recommends

No

Yes

Rejection Letter to Vendor (6 weeks)

Notify Vendor Received NPA (2 Weeks)

Notify Vendor Considered at Next New Prod. Meeting (6 weeks)

Subject Matter Expert

Reject Letter to Vendor (6 weeks)

Notify Vendor Accepted for Trial (two weeks after NP Meeting)

Yes

No

New Products Committee

Notify Vendor Accepted for Trial (two weeks after NP Meeting)

NPC-SME
Develop Evaluation Plan-Specs

Placed on SPEL “Pending”

Field and Lab Evaluation

Placed on SPEL as “Rejected”

New Products Committee

Placed on SPEL as “Accepted”
cc:  Commissioner  Virginia Center for Transportation Innovation and Research
     Chief Engineer
     Deputy Chief Engineer Virginia Ready-Mixed Concrete Association
     Division Administrators Precast Concrete Association of Virginia
     Residency Administrators Virginia Transportation Construction Alliance
     District Materials Engineers Virginia Dept. of Minority Business Enterprise
     District Construction Engineers Federal Highway Administration
     District Maintenance Engineers American Concrete Paving Association
     Area Construction Engineers NE Chapter, Southern Region
     Virginia Asphalt Association Old Dominion Highway Contractors Association