

# **GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION NEW PRODUCTS EVALUATION COMMITTEE GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES**

## **I. GENERAL:**

The purpose of the New Products Evaluation Program is to provide a well defined and organized system within the Department to handle requests from various sources for consideration of new products developed for use in road and bridge construction or maintenance. To provide such a system the Department has established a New Products Evaluation Committee, which will operate in accordance with the following stated guidelines and procedures.

## **II. POLICY:**

The Department will evaluate only those new products which have the potential to fulfill a real need, economically provide a satisfactory level of service, and are not covered by existing specifications. It is the burden of the vendor to demonstrate that a need for a new product exists and that their product has a good potential for satisfying this need. Vendor proposals that attempt to place the Department with the responsibility for developing the application for a product being offered will not be considered. The Department will consider for evaluation only those products adequately developed, screened, and tested by the manufacturers.

## **III. ORGANIZATION:**

The New Products Evaluation Committee will act as a clearing house where the proposals of manufacturers, producers, vendors, and others promoting new items for highway use can be reviewed and given proper consideration and disposal. The Committee shall be composed of members from different Offices within the Department with sufficient expertise in their areas of responsibility to properly evaluate the merits of products proposed for use.

The Committee shall consist of a representative, selected by the Office Head, from each of the following offices:

**Bridge Design**  
**Construction**  
**Maintenance**  
**Materials and Research**  
**Road Design**  
**Traffic Operations**  
**Urban Design**  
**Utilities**  
**Environmental Compliance**  
**Transportation Data**  
**Georgia Soil and Water Conservation Commission Representative**

The representative from the Office of Materials and Research will serve as Chairman of the Committee. The Chairman will provide administrative support as may be required for proper operation of the Committee. The Chairman shall appoint a Secretary who will arrange meetings, take and publish minutes of meetings, maintain files and records pertaining to the business of the Committee, and maintain a list of all new products with the status of review or actions taken on each product.

Prior to each meeting, the Secretary will provide Committee members with an agenda, listing products to be presented and the names of members presenting the products. Each product on the agenda will be given a file number.

**IV. OPERATING PROCEDURES:**

Meetings of the New Products Evaluation Committee will be scheduled quarterly. At the discretion of the Chairman, additional meetings may be scheduled as necessary to provide reasonable response time to vendors and to maintain the effectiveness of the Committee. If a Committee member believes that a product's use is urgent because it could offer substantial savings on a soon to be awarded project or for other appropriate reasons, that member should contact the Chairman and request a special meeting of the Committee.

All new products presented to the Department will be assigned to the Committee member in whose work the product would be used. That committee member will present the product to the full Committee with a recommendation of accepted, rejected, additional information needed, lab and/or field evaluation needed, or no action necessary. The full Committee may recommend to the Department's Research Advisory Committee that a full scale Research Project (RP) or a Special Research Study (SRS) be conducted.

The Committee may immediately adopt a product for use if it is evident that the product would economically meet a need of the Department or if other conditions warrant immediate use of a new product. The Committee may also reject a product that evidently would not be useful in the Department's work, would not be cost effective, or for other valid reasons. If immediate adoption or rejection of a product is not appropriate, the Committee will decide on what course of action is necessary to be able to make a final decision on the use of the product. When a unanimous agreement cannot be reached by the committee members on actions to take on final disposition of a product, a vote will be taken. A quorum of five members must be present for a vote to be taken. A simple majority of the Committee members present will rule.

Actions taken by the Committee will result in each product being assigned one of the following status classifications:

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| "Accepted"        | Classifying a product as "accepted" does not obligate the Department in any way to use or specify the product. Even though a product is accepted by the New Products Evaluation Committee, final acceptance by the New Products Evaluation Committee will be made by the appropriate Office head. Use of a product is limited to the applications for which it is "accepted" only if there is a Department need, if the product meets that need, and if the department is willing to draft a specification or special provision for the product. |
| "Rejected"        | A product is usually rejected for one or more of the following reasons: (1) product cost is prohibitive; (2) product does not perform as claimed by the manufacturer; or (3) the product does not perform in a way to meet the Department's needs.   |
| "Field Test"      | The product is under evaluation. Field-testing is planned or in progress in order to obtain more information.  |
| "Laboratory Test" | The product is under evaluation. Laboratory testing is planned or in progress in order to obtain more information.   |

"Action Pending"	Classification of the product is being delayed until additional information can be obtained from the manufacturer, supplier, other states, etc.
"No Application"	In the opinion of the Committee, the Department has no need or application for the product.
"Withdrawn"	Withdrawn from consideration at the request of the manufacturer.
"Withdrawn/No Action"	Withdrawn from consideration at the request of the New Products Evaluation Committee because of no contact from the manufacturer for a period of at least one year. Once withdrawn, the product must be resubmitted for future evaluation.
"Project to Project"	In the opinion of the Committee, the Department needs to review this product per project due to the product's special use. Use of a product is limited to the applications for which the product meets the specification or special provision.
"Allow the Use"	Classifying a product as "allow the use" does not obligate the Department or contractor in any way to use or specify the product. When it is recommended to "allow the use" of this product on Department projects at the discretion of the contractor, the product is approved as a non-pay item. Use of a product is limited to the applications for which it is allowed.
"Meets Specifications"	There is a Department need and it has been identified that the product meets a specification or special provision.

**V. REQUEST PROCEDURES:**

All manufacturers, vendors, contractors, etc. requesting an evaluation of a new product will be required to complete a New Products Evaluation Form. All of those promoting products not previously used or approved should be advised of the Department's policy and procedures relative to

new products. The vendor is to be advised that the evaluation of their product is not a commitment to purchase, recommend, or specify their product, and that the data developed is public information.

Normally vendors should contact the New Products Evaluation Committee Chairman with new products, but if the vendor contacts a committee member whose routine work assignment involves the type product presented, that member should obtain all information available and provide the vendor with a New Products Evaluation Form to complete and return. If a vendor initially contacts the Department personnel other than a Committee member, then the vendor should be referred to a committee member or the Chairman of the Committee.

A submittal fee of **\$100.00** is required for each New Product Evaluation. This fee should be forwarded along with 11 completed copies of the New Products Evaluation Form and additional information or 2 completed and 1 electronic copy of the New Product Evaluation Form and additional information to the address on page 3. Checks should be made payable to the **Georgia Department of Transportation**.

## **VI. EVALUATION PROCEDURES:**

### A. Preliminary Review

The committee member handling a particular product presented shall review all data furnished. It is important at this stage to contact those highway authorities and other agencies which the vendor claims are using the product. In performing the preliminary review, the following should be considered: Does the documentation received from others indicate that (1) the product will perform as stated; (2) a true need exists for the product; (3) the product will be economically competitive. Also, consider the willingness of the vendor to furnish the product free for evaluation and willingness to participate if the product is used for evaluation purposes.

### B. Evaluation

After the preliminary review, the Committee member, in collaboration with other technical experts in his or her field, shall decide to: accept, reject, or, if no decision can be made, the member may present the product to the full Committee at an upcoming regularly scheduled meeting.

### C. Committee Evaluation

If no decision is reached during the initial evaluation of a product, the full Committee shall evaluate the product at a regularly scheduled meeting. The appropriate Committee member shall present the product to the Committee with a recommendation, if possible, on the disposition of the product. Upon reviewing the information and the member's recommendation, the Committee shall decide if the product will be immediately accepted, rejected, or evaluated, and by what means. If the Committee cannot make a decision due to lack of sufficient information on a product, the Chairman may request that the Committee member presenting the product obtain additional information as appropriate.

At the discretion of the responsible member and with approval of the Chairman, the vendor may make a presentation to the Committee. If deemed more appropriate, the presentation may be made to others in the Department involved in the use of the product. Recommendations pertaining to the possible benefits of the product to the Department's work would then be obtained from those attending and considered by the Committee.

### D. Lab or Field Evaluation

If the Committee decides that a product merits in-house lab or field investigation, then a study will be conducted by the appropriate section or sections designated by the Committee. Such investigations will be conducted consistent with the availability of resources (personnel, time, funds) within the Department at that time. The results of such investigations will be presented to the Committee for a final decision on the use of the product.

### E. Federally Funded Research Project

If the Committee decides that a product merits further investigation but the investigation is beyond the capability of the Department with current resources, the Chairman may recommend to the Research Advisory Committee that a Research Project or State Research Study project be conducted to evaluate the product (assuming the resulting project meets Federal requirements for inclusion in the Research Project Program). Other Federally Funded programs, such as the Experimental Projects Program, are also available to evaluate certain types of products and may be used at the discretion of the Chairman as appropriate. The results obtained from such projects will be presented to the New Products Evaluation Committee for the final decision on the use of the product.

**VII. FINAL DISPOSITION:**

When the Committee makes a final decision on the disposition of a product, the Committee Chairman shall notify the vendor in writing of the decision. If the Committee decision is to accept a product based on information furnished or based on the results of a Department evaluation, the approval must be signed by the appropriate Office Head. The Chairman of the New Products Evaluation Committee will notify the vendor in writing of the decision.

**VIII. FILES:**

The New Products Evaluation Committee Secretary will maintain files on new products. A file folder with file number will be maintained on each new product and will contain as a minimum: a copy of the New Products Evaluation Form, any test reports, a copy of the final report if a product is evaluated by a research study, documentation of the Committee's final decision on the use of the product, a copy of the specification written to cover the product, and any other information pertinent to the product.