

Bridge Inspector User Group Meeting Minutes

11/4/2014 – Mason Street Field Office, Green Bay, WI

Agenda

- 0) **Highway Commissioner Meeting Update** - This meeting took place on 11/3/2014 in Portage, WI and Dave Genson highlighted some of the talking points of that discussion including an update from FHWA Reviews
- a. FHWA thought that there should be more rigid guidance on UW visual probe inspections as Joe noted some inspections that had 8 feet of water around substructure units, yet were still probed.
 - i. This concern will be addressed with UWVP policy that will be discussed later in this meeting.
 - b. FHWA was content with how we were doing on getting in our Load Posting Verification Forms.
 - c. Thoughts on how to handle changeover to new 12 month frequency for Routine Inspections on structures with NBI ≤ 4 or Load Posting.
 - i. Option 1 - Change all necessary inspections to 12 months and we track on our own for performance reporting.
 - ii. Option 2 - Send out list to everyone regarding which bridges will be changing to 12 month frequency in the next year (scheduling report of sorts). Set up a Flag to instruct inspector to change frequency upon completion of inspection. At year end Central Office will go back through data to ensure that all required bridges have the correct frequency.
 - iii. WisDOT should have a presence in helping the locals change the frequency to 12 months.
 - 1. Action Item 1
 - a. Assigned to: Central Office Staff
 - b. Develop a method to facilitate this changeover while ensuring that we can schedule appropriately, run performance data accurately, and keep the locals involved.
 - d. Overburden Change and using the Re-rate Flag
 - i. What is the threshold for checking this flag? Ex) 2" overlay on 12" existing is much different than 2" overlay on 1" existing.
 - ii. One thought is to require the Re-rate flag to be checked in order to change the overburden.
 - 1. Action Item 2
 - a. Assigned to: Central Office Staff
 - b. Come up with guidance on how to best proceed

- e. Scour POA Documents
 - i. These documents now need to include who authored the script, the date of next update, and the frequency of updating.
 - ii. General consensus seemed to indicate that including Scour POA as an activity was an acceptable method of inclusion. The required frequency also seemed to trend towards 48 months to track with SI&A Forms (24 months being too often; 72 months, not often enough; and odd years, inefficient).
 - iii. Document format of POA was also discussed as Word documents allow for revision but file type can become obsolete and unopenable while PDFs are stable through time but cannot be revised. Document type to be used is left to managing discretion. Central Office would advise using both formats.
 - iv. With all these activities and different types of inspections, desire was noted to include more detail of these required activities on the scheduling report.
 - 1. Action Item 3
 - a. Assigned to: Travis
 - b. Include activities on HSIS scheduling reports
- f. ADT Count and Year – FHWA wants to see this data be more up to date (within 6 years and 25%)
 - i. Being that this data is difficult to confirm in a field review, cumbersome for managing entities to collect, and usually insignificant for most structures, it seemed to be the consensus of the group to just update the ADT by changing the year to 2014.
 - ii. There is thought out there to increase ADT older than 5 years by 10% and then change the year to 2014 in order to simulate the growth since the last ADT year.
 - 1. Action Item 4
 - a. Assigned to: Dave G.
 - b. Come up with an acceptable method of updating ADT data.
- g. Quality inspections – FHWA is looking for the presence of Quality Control in inspection programs
 - i. What qualifies quality? How in depth does a review need to be and what needs to be checked to ensure quality?
 - ii. Further discussion of this topic covered later in the meeting.
- h. Procedures for special inspections (Fracture Critical, Lift, Movable)
 - i. FHWA is looking for the procedure used on special inspections to document how the structure is being inspected.
 - ii. What are FHWA's expectations? Is it supposed to be a prompt of every movement when on site, a general method of inspection (north to south), should it be changed every time the inspection is done a little differently?
 - 1. Action Item 5
 - a. Assigned to: Central Office Staff
 - b. Seek guidance from FHWA on specific expectations and/or an example to be used for other special inspections.

1) Previous Action Items

- a. "Effectiveness" defect language to be updated – Preservation policy team
 - i. Ongoing work on that definition assigned to Shiv and the preservation team
- b. Feedback on inspections, elements/defects, forms, etc
 - i. Would like to have the ability to put inspection photos in a desired order on the inspection form so that it can show the process/sequence of inspection
 - ii. More font options for Elements (bold text) and notes (fonts, colors, bold, underline). This can be done in HSIS already. A Quick User Guide is already on the extranet site with a step-by-step on how to do this.
 - iii. Fix PDF formatting issues with having an element on two pages.
 - iv. Should there be a defect for a closed joint? Girder touching a back wall?
 - v. Allow PDF attachments to print out with PDF inspection form
 - vi. Provide a better template inspection form for initial inspections
 - vii. Some initial inspections for just built structures have little to no information uploaded. This information should be entered with the submission of Structure Inventory Report. Central Office to follow up.
 - viii. Possibly allow for the Regions to update the construction history instead of having that go through Central Office as it does now.
 - ix. There is a desire to be updated when the vertical clearance is changed on a structure. There was talk of being able to upload the Vertical Clearance Sheet to the Clearance Tab in HSIS. This form can be uploaded in the mean time under the "other" category during an inspection
 - x. HSIS is missing some expansion joints in structures that have them (i.e. in units of the Hoan Bridge)
 - 1. Action Item 6
 - a. Assigned to: Travis
 - b. Follow up on the above concerns to be addressed at next User Group meeting
- c. Steel Reinforcement Protective System – required to be in inspection data but not rated.
 - i. This item can now be hidden on the Test Mode version of HSIS and will be pushed to Production by the end of the year.
- d. Scour defect for culvert elements
 - i. This defect was added in HSIS and needs to be updated in the next version of the Field Manual
- e. Wearing surfaces for deck materials other than concrete
 - i. Field Manual directs to use Wearing Surface (Bare) regardless of deck material when no overlay exists.
 - ii. For PS box girders, Elements 15/16 Concrete Top Flange is treated as the "Deck". If there is a wearing surface that can be added to the top flange element but also restricts inspectors from being able to assess that element because it cannot be visually inspected

- iii. If an overlay were to cover a delam would that delam area be put in CS2 for “patched” or CS1 because there is a new course on top. This delam can still be picked up with IR/GPR methods. What if the delam is sufficiently milled before the overlay?

- 1. Action Item 7

- a. Assigned to: Dave G.

- b. Come up with guidance on how to code

- f. Digital Signatures

- i. No procedure has been drafted yet

- ii. The digital signature will be checked like inspector qualifications. Qualified inspectors will have to sign off that their inspection ID can be digitally signed. HSIS will then “sign” the inspection upon completion making note of who “signed” the inspection, what WAMS login ID was used, and the date.

- g. Load Posting Verification Form DT 2122

- i. Just a reminder that forms for all state and local posted bridges need to be submitted by 12/31/14

- h. Critical Findings process and form

- i. Looking for comments from RBPMs to finalize this draft

- ii. What qualifies as a critical finding? NBI of 2 or less? Anything that goes through RIMC?

- iii. If it goes through RIMC then maybe we shouldn't be documenting it too since there already exists a system of documentation.

- iv. Should the Critical Findings form look that similar to the RIMC form? It could become hard to differentiate. Bridge number should be near top of form.

- v. Could a Damage and Interim inspection be used to document critical finding and its resolution?

- vi. How to address a call from the public that the bridge is about to fall? If it turns out to be nothing should it still be a “critical” finding?

- vii. This draft will be finalized by Central Office prior to next User Group Meeting

- i. Inspection Manual update

- i. It is currently being drafted still.

- ii. There was desire by some RBPMs to have even the draft manual during the inspection season so that continual revisions can be made as concerns/thoughts arise. BOS is looking into getting regions access to the draft.

- j. Policy Memos

- i. Posted on Extranet site – seems that there are no concerns with these memos

- k. Field Manual Updates

- i. Central Office will have corrections by late January. A small, new printing will go out to a select portion of inspectors.

2) Concerns regarding changes to UWVP

- a. If the Probe inspection is not done within a reasonably close time frame from Routine inspection it should be entered as an Interim inspection with the appropriate elements checked.
- b. Central Office is looking into appropriate interval to use (1 week, 1 month, 2 months?)

3) Bridge Plan Stenciling Sheet

- a. Julie Brooks, SE Region, has begun to develop some policy on this topic and has met some resistance. There are numerous issues including location, numbering scheme, inclusion thresholds, size, color, and repainting frequency.
 - 1. Action Item 8
 - a. Assigned to: Ben
 - b. Follow up with Julie Brooks and continue forward with process

4) Inspector/Inspection QC

- a. To be covered with Item 6 on the Agenda

5) HSIS Upgrades

- a. Scour POAs, UWVPs, and Critical Findings will become activities
- b. FCM diagrams have become part of the PDF merge feature in HSIS and will include them in PDF printouts of the inspection form
- c. UW Profiles can be produced straight into HSIS
 - i. These plots would be capable of capturing a certain fraction of the inventory we cover. The format is uniform but not exhaustive; consistent but not flexible.
 - ii. This could be a good tool for locals to use. It seemed the consensus that this feature could be included as an option for those who choose to enter the Profiles in such a manner. It also seemed prudent to set a guideline for number of data points per span to help ensure accuracy of the profile.
 - iii. There was also a concern that this feature has its limitations in correctly displaying freeboard.
 - iv. Due to the lukewarm response and other major issues in HSIS, this feature will not be pursued at this time. It may be picked up at a future date.
- d. PDF Merge – a tool in HSIS that will automatically merge attached documents to the PDF inspection form.
 - i. This tool is having trouble with some word documents as of now
- e. Column Sets – this tool is still in Test mode but it will allow you to select a custom set of columns for a subset of bridges obtained from an assist search. Essentially, after you run an assist search you will be able to change the columns to display the data you want
- f. Sufficiency Number calculation has been fixed
- g. Internet Explorer error has been fixed
- h. Eric and Travis are working on adding/implementing a historical frequency for inspections
- i. There is a desire to eliminate the “Initial” inspection type as it creates some problems behind the scenes. Initials would just be entered instead as the first Routine inspection.
 - i. General consensus agreed to these changes
- j. There was desire to get the maintenance cost box back onto the inspection form

- i. Travis/Eric will get it added back on
 - k. There is a desire to get the monthly scheduling and performance reports in the newest Excel file format.
 - i. It is kept on the old file type because some counties don't have the capabilities to open the newest format.
 - l. Schedule and Performance reporting
 - i. Should the County Highway Commissioner also be included on the Performance reports that get sent out on the 15th and 28th of each month?
 - ii. What is the threshold for too many reports? Should scheduling only be sent out quarterly with the next 6 month's worth of inspections? Are the performance reports even being looked at? What is the most appropriate frequency?
 - 1. Action Item 9
 - a. Assigned to: Central Office Staff
 - b. In finalizing the Program Manager Responsibilities Memo, come up with an appropriate frequency of each report and an adequate list of recipients.
 - m. Border Bridges effecting our Performance Measures
 - i. For UW Dive inspections, it might be prudent to include in the contract with the consultant that they will fill out the inspection forms for both states since the firms that do Dive inspections are familiar with both systems.
 - ii. Routine inspections could be run in a separate performance report (similar to how it might be done in the future with the 12 month Routine versus the 24 month Routine)
 - iii. Any other comments or concerns??
- 6) Program Manager Responsibilities Memo
 - a. Current verbiage states that if a County Commissioner does not meet the qualifications for being CBPM then he/she shall make a formal written agreement with a qualified individual to serve as CBPM. It goes on to state that this agreement shall be kept on file with the Bureau of Structures
 - i. RBPMs voiced concern that these documents would be hard to get as it is a contract between two non-state entities
 - ii. There is an authorization letter that documents this process. Would this be sufficient instead of the signed agreement?
 - b. Current verbiage states that the RBPM has authority over all state-owned, county, city, (village), and township bridges in their geographic area.
 - i. There is concern from certain parties that question how this responsibility is authorized, as there is little solid legal doctrine to back it up. Under Trans 212, it seems to be that the County and Local owners have legal responsibility over their own inspections.
 - c. There is ambiguity in the memo as to how Quality Control is defined/attained.
 - i. Is just a "look-over" of the report sufficient? Should we check by quantity and Condition State? Just for completeness? Only Check when there is an NBI

change? Only look at maintenance items? Check to make sure there is proper documentation (notes, pictures, diagrams, etc.)? A combination of the above?

1. Action Item 10

- a. Assigned to: RBPMs
- b. Come up with comments on this memo and thoughts on how we should be defining our Quality Control. Try to get response to Dave G. or Ben by November 14, 2014.
- c. Central Office will finalize draft prior to next meeting

d. Next year we are anticipating that we will need to write another Plan of Corrective Action.

i. This memo will be part of that PCA

ii. Another aspect of the PCA will be on how to address local oversight of inspections. For example, in the 2013 data that FHWA is currently looking at, 1 bridge in ≈14,000 was completed over 4 months late which throws the entire program into non-compliance. How can we avoid something like this from happening in the future?

- 1. While WisDOT has implemented a 28 day submission requirement, this is not being adhered to due to time constraints. Are there other means to get data a little sooner?
- 2. In the same thread, will WisDOT include the 28 day submission requirement in its new version of the Structures Inspection Manual

7) Inspection Procedures for special inspections

a. This item was discussed previously

8) Tracking Late Reasons for Inspection

a. Are there late reasons we aren't including?

b. Are the late reasons we have appropriate?

1. Action Item 11

- a. Assigned to: RBPMs
- b. Think of any more late reasons to include or thoughts on how best to incorporate them with performance measures