

MCA – MDT Highway Technical Committee Meeting  
Montana Contractors Assoc. Offices  
12/18/2019

## **Discussion**

### **1. Specs**

MDT has no proposed specs for this meeting. Some preliminary specs were handed out by MDT and are attached as Ex. 2.

### **2. Partnering**

Dwane Kailey (MDT): We have worked with MCA to set up trainings in February and March 2020. Specs will start going into contracts requiring that main on the ground decision makers (foreman, superintendent) for contractors complete the trainings. The spec will say that training must occur or money will be retained (max \$25,000). The next part is periodic and pre-construction meetings that will be done, in part, with a facilitator. The goal is working toward the MDT and the contractor communication and working together better. Trying to resolve issues with better communication.

David Smith (MCA): Draft partnering guide book to be finalized Jan 10 and be presented to MCA members at the annual meeting.

Jake Goettle (MDT): we are discussing what projects the spec regarding partnering will be added. . . at some point in the near future, it will be a part of all contracts.

Duane Kailey (MDT): for jobs already bid, the partnering will be presented as change orders; MDT will request the change, but we will not force the issue. The spec will not be in anything let between now and Feb 13 (but may become a part of contract through change order). After Feb 13, it will likely be in all contracts.

### **3. Emergency projects**

MDT: East River Road (near Emigrant, Park County). A final plans package is forthcoming and the plans will be posted online soon. Jan 2 advertisement, Jan 9 bid letting. There are still issues with permitting and the early January dates may be pushed back. Construction date has not been determined.

### **4. Construction, Engineering, and Inspection (CEI) projects**

Goettle (MDT): There will be four CEI projects this year. This is where an outside consultant acts as MDT EPMs and inspectors.

Kailey (MDT): these will be pilot projects. This is about staffing. MDT cannot currently staff the jobs anymore. We have lost a lot of FTEs over the last several legislative sessions. The consultants acting in MDT's position will be required to go through partnering training as well as participate in partnering programs. Consultants will perform testing as well.

Goettle (MDT): District labs will still perform all the same functions. All that testing will still be done by district lab testing. The field crew testing is what the consultants will handle.

### **5. Water blasting paint removal.**

Jeremy Wilde (MDT): We are looking for additional tools to remove striping where there is no chip seal. We had some experience in Butte and Miles City and were happy with the results. Concerns with cold weather operation. We would like to use this in the future in the St. Regis area; testing concrete; and put into the contract on Higgins bridge (Missoula) as well. We are requesting feedback on the volume. We would like the larger self-contained unit. My question is where to draw the volume line so that we do not get any handheld units. Additionally, we are looking at trying to price water and grinding similarly.

Kerry Gray (MCA): We have wanted to do water for years but there should be no restriction on the size. Different jobs need different equipment. There is no purpose to artificially restricting what equipment can be used if that piece of equipment effectively accomplishes the goal and satisfies requirements. The real issue with pricing is that there needs to be differentiation between square footage and lineal feet applications.

Jeremy Wilde (MDT): we can take some of these suggestions and come back to you.

### **6. WipFrag App.**

Guy Slaybaugh (MCA): WipFrag App apparently has issues and is not giving accurate results.

Paul Jagoda (MDT): there were concerns about not having the correct riprap at critical locations. Gradation is only one part of riprap. This app allows us to analyze the gradations. We have been hearing internally that the riprap analysis is not accurate. We tested the WipFrag app in 2017 and it was working -- we are revisiting this. We used to accept or deny on visual inspection. We are finding that riprap that was visually ok is not actually to spec. We are looking for other methods to try to improve accuracy and this app is a part of that.

MCA: last we heard, it was only pilot. It has not been discussed in this (HTC) meeting to recollection.

MDT: it is a special provision now. We are using it quite a lot now. We are using drones as well.

MCA: what is happening where the app is denying the riprap? If the app denies the riprap, is the app result the recognized result.

MDT: we are letting the EPMs know that this app is one tool. It can still be inspected otherwise. If the EPM measures and determines it is acceptable, it is acceptable. We want to know where this system isn't working, so let us know.

Bob Warren (MCA): I have experience where physically measured perfect riprap will not be accepted by the app – the app seems problematic. And I am wondering what changed – why is MDT using this now? What was wrong before?

MDT: a lot of this comes from FHWA. They are particularly interested in riprap in critical areas.

MCA: Can we do any sort of pre-approval of riprap prior to installation?

MDT: for final acceptance, the riprap will need to be installed and in place. We recommend that riprap is measured in the stockpile before it is installed. We encourage MCA members to use this WipFrag as a tool.

## **7. Bid letting timeliness.**

Mike Meredith (MCA): we are having issues with long lead procurement issues. Supplies are in a pinch when a project is let in January and the culvert needs to be installed in April. There isn't enough time to get the steel or put it together. We would like to see these long procurement items noticed sooner so that raw materials can be procured earlier. Another solution is to have MDT purchase and supply the materials ahead of time. Is anyone at MDT looking at or for these long lead items? Boxes are the real problems. Big pipe (over 6 feet). Lightpoles, signal poles, signal heads are all about 4 months procurement time.

Kailey (MDT): we can do this better if we know what has a lot of lead time. Also, with the lack of federal funds, MDT does not currently have the budget capacity to self-source. Another potential option is to have a flexible notice to proceed.

MCA: a delayed notice to proceed would be a problem. Nobody bids at a price and then waits a year for the prices to actually go up. Another helpful part would be preliminary bid packages. It seems that sometimes preliminary bid packages are light on specifics.

MDT: bring a list of materials with long procurement to Darren Reynolds or Jake Goettle and we will try to address these issues.

### **8. Anti strip.**

Anthony Butcher (MCA): we would like a spec allowing the use of liquid anti-strip in certain situations instead of lime.

MDT: some of the anti-strip doesn't work. Lime always works. We need to do additional research to see if anti-strip may work. We need to look at the TSRs and minimum tensile strength. This will need to go through the mix design verification.

MCA: anti-strip is added to oil to help the oil and the rock bond in asphalt. It's a wet product instead of a dry lime product. (asphalt production process). The lime process is frustrating. Lime doesn't feed all that well. The liquid has advantages.

MDT: lets add it to the asphalt industry meeting next year. There will need to be a lot of mix testing. We are not going to say that any liquid anti-strip will work in all applications. Last time we looked into it, the anti-strip mix testing results were not consistent. Lime is consistent and works all the time. We are open to looking into it. What are the thoughts on the warm mix? Lowering production and compaction temps to increase haul distances and seasons? We are curious. Warm mix is a big deal in other areas of the country.

Bob Warren (MCA): we have done it. We didn't actually lower our temperatures. If you would want to allow it, we would give it a go. The FAA uses it on airports all the time.

### **9. 10-day time frame for rumble strips.**

MCA: We previously discussed that rumble strips do not need to be sealed within 10 days if chip sealing in same year. We see the 10-day requirement is still in the spec book.

MDT: We are going to remove that spec. We are going to require fog sealing if left over the winter and implement a penalty if it is not fog sealed. That will be out for comment in April or May.

### **10. CAC Gradation Tests.**

Warren (MCA): We have a problem where the timeframe between tests and receipt of test results can be weeks. There are situations where we may be able to do something about it if we can get results sooner. We would like to get test results in a week or so.

MDT: (surprised it happened this year) – let us know whenever that happens so that we can get that to the correct people. The results should not be taking weeks.

### **11. Digital spec book.**

MDT: First page of the contract will link you to the correct spec book. Will be live tomorrow. Updates quarterly. For supplementals to the spec book, we are trying to figure out how to best get supplementals out to you. You will have comparisons, but it will always be a new book. We are also going to keep a “track changes” book available as well (unofficial version). If you have ideas regarding the E spec book and supplementals, we are very open to suggestions.

### **12. 2020 Dates for HTC**

2/19

4/15\* 3pm

6/10

10/14

12/9

### **13. CMGC**

Jake Goettle (MDT): we did our first CMGC process near Trout creek. A second one is planned in Billings. We are working through a few design issues. Salmon lake will be our third one. Fourth project will be bridges project in the Billings district.

### **14. Interstate Crossovers**

Slaybaugh (MCA): is there any update here?

Paul Jagoda (MDT): we are moving in the direction of using them more often. They obviously increase highway construction zone safety. We are working internally on this.

### **15. Barrels.**

Wilde (MDT): We are going to implement an April 2021 deadline (interstate only) for 6-inch reflective strips. We will do a unit procurement for 21 barrels. By April 2022, all barrels will need 6-inch reflectors on the barrels. It will go back to market rate in April 2022. Part of the reason is autonomous cars. They are already here and they want to test in work zones. Main goal is safety.

**16. Traffic control summit.**

Wilde (MDT) February in Bozeman. Half day. Get me topics on that.

**17. Comment on Higgins Bridge in Missoula**

Kailey (MDT): City of Missoula wanted the tight timings. We advised Missoula otherwise, they were insistent. We will ask that that bid be rejected. We didn't go into this blindly and we are cognizant of the problems with tight schedules. We hate rejecting bids . . . we hate wasting our time and your time when you put bids together.