

# ACEC / NCDOT JOINT SUBCOMMITTEE ON CONSTRUCTION & MATERIALS

April 27, 2022  
Meeting Minutes

The meeting was held on April 27, 2022 at 1:30 PM; both an in-person and a virtual Teams Meeting option were offered. In attendance were:

NAME	REPRESENTING	EMAIL ADDRESS
Michael Davis	RS&H	michael.davis@rsandh.com
Jamal Atkins	Volkert	jamal.atkins@volkert.com
Christine Goins	RK&K	cgoins@rkk.com
Frank Gioscio	ESP Associates	fgioscio@espassociates.com
Kevin O'Dell	Summit	kevin.odell@summitde.net
Jack Cowser	ECS Limited	jcowsert@ecslimited.com
Todd Whittington	NCDOT – Materials and Tests Unit	twhittington@ncdot.gov
Brian Hunter	NCDOT – Materials and Tests Unit	bhunter@ncdot.gov
Boyd Tharrington	NCDOT – Construction Unit	btharrington@ncdot.gov
Maira Ibarra	NCDOT – Construction Unit	mibarra@ncdot.gov
Michelle Gaddy	NCDOT – Construction Unit	mhgaddy@ncdot.gov
Wiley Jones	NCDOT – Construction Unit	wwjones1@ncdot.gov
Brian Skeens	NCDOT – Construction Unit	bcskeens@ncdot.gov
Jason Salisbury	NCDOT – Division 6	jsalisbury@ncdot.gov
Thomas Payne	NCDOT – PSMU	tpayne@ncdot.gov

## ACEC Subcommittee Business

Minutes from the January 19, 2022 meeting were approved.

## Training

### o M&T Training Updates

- There are no major changes planned for 2022. Registration will continue to be offered on a quarterly basis, with the full calendar year schedule posted for planning purposes.
- In 2021, approximately 160 classes were offered. M&T plans to offer approximately 200 in 2022. They are hoping for 2,700 to 3,000 attendees.
- M&T continues to speak with Resident Engineers to identify needs.

## Discussion Items

### o Current Vehicle Costs and Availability

- Industry requested consideration of higher rates due to increased costs from current market conditions, including firms' needs to hold onto vehicles longer which increases maintenance costs. Truck repairs also take longer which impacts a firm's costs. In addition, the ability to obtain additional trucks is at a higher cost, due to both limited availability (supply and demand) and the need to purchase higher trim options due to

limited availability. One example was offered that the cost of leasing a new truck has increased by \$400/month, if the firm is even able to obtain.

- Last truck evaluation was performed in December 2021. Boyd has requested additional information to evaluate whether a truck reevaluation at this time is warranted.
  - Older project-specific contracts were mentioned with request for reimbursement reevaluation considered. This concern has been mentioned by multiple firms.
- Availability of Training Not Managed by M&T
    - Industry requested streamlined system between all NCDOT courses, specifically citing the Geotechnical Unit's Chemically Stabilized Subgrade course. The industry suggested that all courses follow M&T's current approach and registration process. The current approach makes it harder to schedule, with less availability of classes.
    - Todd Whittington will explore possibilities for streamlining.
  - CEI Interns to Assist in Industry Needs
    - NCDOT wants to encourage new people to come into the business, including young college students, and Boyd agrees that internships are a good way to do that. As a result, NCDOT is open to firms providing internship staff to projects.
    - To accomplish this, each Division will need to look at needs. Interns will only be brought on if they are filling an identified need, and the number of interns must be reasonable.
    - Importantly, NCDOT stated they are open to staff being put on projects and that the firms should be **reimbursed** for interns. To accomplish this, it was proposed for interns to enter as Technician Trainees, receiving entry-rate reimbursement, and receiving pay bumps if milestones are met. It was not clarified whether the milestones would occur at the standard 12 and 24-month marks.
    - Boyd would like to speak with DCEs prior to making any commitments to avoid an overwhelming number of college student resumes being provided to the Divisions.
    - Boyd tasked Maira and Wiley with putting DCE meeting on calendar early next week (week of 5/2/22).
  - Engineer's Rates in CRS
    - Prior discussions had indicated that a memo would be sent. For those who may have not received the memo, it is attached to these minutes.
  - Fixed Billable Rates (Small Work Group)
    - Discussions are being held internally at NCDOT on how to determine industry average overhead rate for usage under this billing approach: straight average, weighted average based on amount of work that firms are doing for the Department, etc.
    - The industry Small Group is awaiting an overhead average for the industry which is currently under development by NCDOT; once received, proposed parameters based on the South Carolina model will be distributed for comment.
  - Finalized Workload Projections
    - Finalized workload projections are attached to these minutes.
    - NCDOT is strategically trying to keep lettings consistent to avoid drop-offs.
    - Boyd noted that the outer years which are not included on graph are still subject to fluctuation.

- High Level Financial Status Report
  - \$2B Central letting excluding resurfacing, \$90M additional funding for bridge projects over coming 5 years. Formula funds being reauthorized due to IJA.
  - NCDOT is currently going through process of redoing STIP.
  - Schedules are sliding drastically due to being overprogrammed as a Department.
  - Extra money is great to have, but it's primarily helping NCDOT to hold projects rather than adding projects
  - Cash Balance is approximately \$2.1B
  - Messaging from NCDOT: It's high now but there are a lot of commitments on the books. Cash balance is a function of commitments; money is planned to be spent.
  - Continue to work on finding "Sweet Spot"
  - Will achieve by keeping lettings consistent
  - This construction season, 500 projects are anticipated (\$2.9B in overall projects)
  - Boyd will share presentation that he shared at AGC Conferences
  
- Future COVID-19 Guidance
  - As of March 1, 2022, NCDOT is no longer requiring masks.
  - Weekly testing continues as a requirement, but at home rapid tests are now allowed.
  - Industry made point that CEI staff are primarily project and vehicle based, but NCDOT could not provide an estimated end date to weekly testing, noting that the decision is out of NCDOT's hands.
  
- Division Changing Salary Calculator Rate based on Missing Certifications
  - The industry reported that some Divisions are altering salary calculator values if approved staff do not have certifications. This is being done without any specific guidelines.
  - Boyd acknowledged the industry's need to re-establish workforce numbers and stated that once a hiring decision has been made, the Division should provide rate based on salary calculator. Pay rates should not be reduced due to lack of certifications; once years of experience are agreed upon, that determines salary. PEFs should work towards having new technicians certified within a reasonable timeframe after hire/placement.
  - Boyd will communicate this to Divisions during next DCE meeting.
  
- Upcoming Projects
  - A list of anticipated CEI project-specific advertisements can be found at the following link:  
<https://connect.ncdot.gov/letting/ProfessionalServices/Pages/anticipatedadverts.aspx>
  
- NCDOT/PEF Partnership
  - Boyd reiterated thanks to PEF for partnership and contributions to help deliver NCDOT's program.

Next NCDOT/ACEC Meeting: Wednesday, July 27, 2022 at 1:30 pm.



STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

ROY COOPER  
GOVERNOR

J. ERIC BOYETTE  
SECRETARY

DATE: February 2, 2022

TO: Division Engineers

FROM: R. L. Keeter, PE  
Chief Engineer

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. L. Keeter", written over the printed name.

SUBJECT: Guidance for CEI Engineer Usage

The Department uses Private Engineering Firm (PEF) engineers to provide CEI services for various activities. This memorandum provides guidance for the request, quality-based selection, and the reimbursement for PEF engineers.

The Division may request the services of a PEF engineer through Project Specific contract advertisement or and On-Call purchase orders. The Division must submit a written request to the Chief Engineer to utilize a Resident Engineer and receive approval prior to notifying private engineering firms. When requesting the services of an engineer from a PEF, the Division should specify the level of engineer and experience required for the assignment.

When the PEF's submit resumes for the request for services through an On-Call purchase order, the Department personnel shall review for a quality-based selection based on the candidate's credentials as related to the needs of the assignments. This selection should consider the size and complexity of the project(s) for which services will be required, any scope of work that requires specialized knowledge, delivery method of project (i.e. Design Build), and other factors unique to the assignment. In the case of Project Specific contracts, the selection of the firm through the Department's procurement process would indicate the selection of any proposed PEF engineering staff.

Once the selection has been made, the reimbursement rate for the engineer is the rate approved listed in the Consultant Rate Schedule (CRS). These rates are the actual certified rates paid by the firm as verified by the Office of the Inspector General. Any requests to deviate from the CRS rate must receive the approval of the Construction Unit.

Division Engineers  
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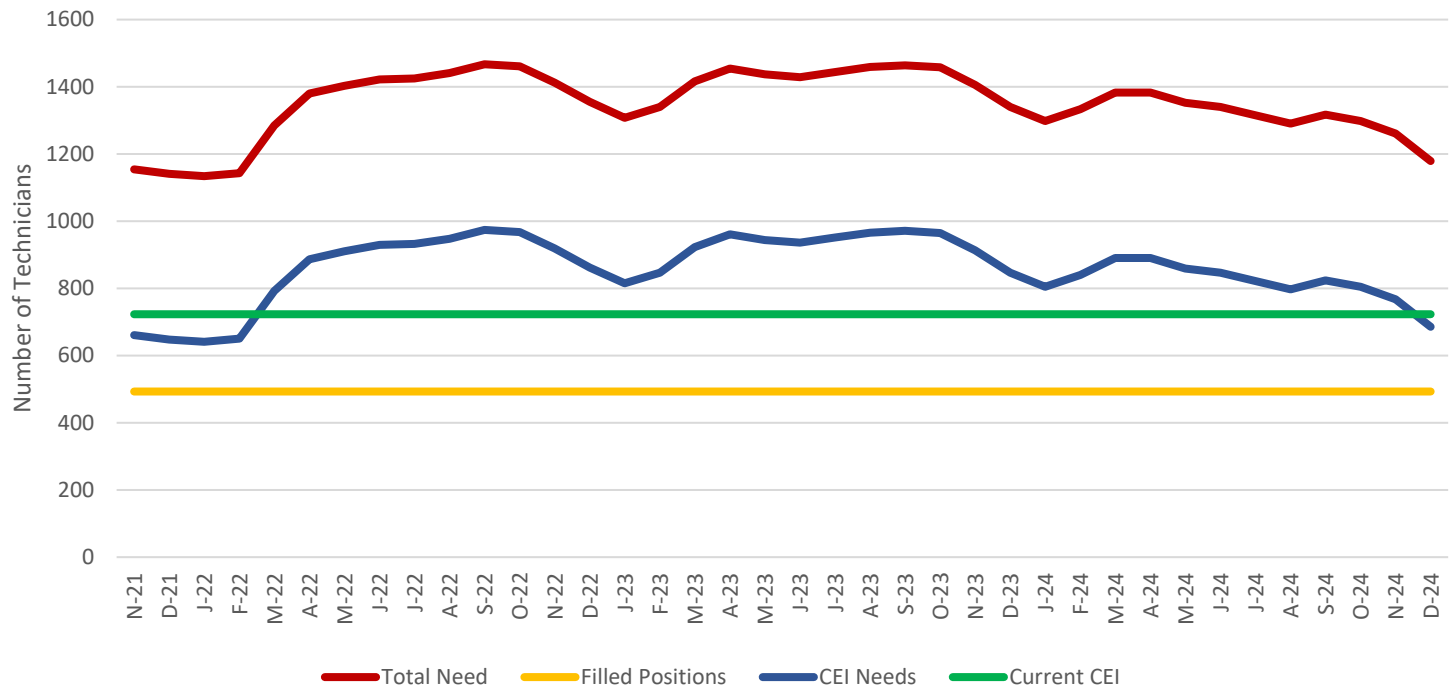
Effective for work performed on or after, March 1, 2022, any current PEF engineering staff being provided through On-Call or Project Specific contracts should be reimbursed at the CRS rate. This guidance does not apply to any Technician positions as the established pay ranges will continue to apply.

Please contact Mr. Boyd Tharrington, PE of the Construction Unit if you have any questions or concerns.

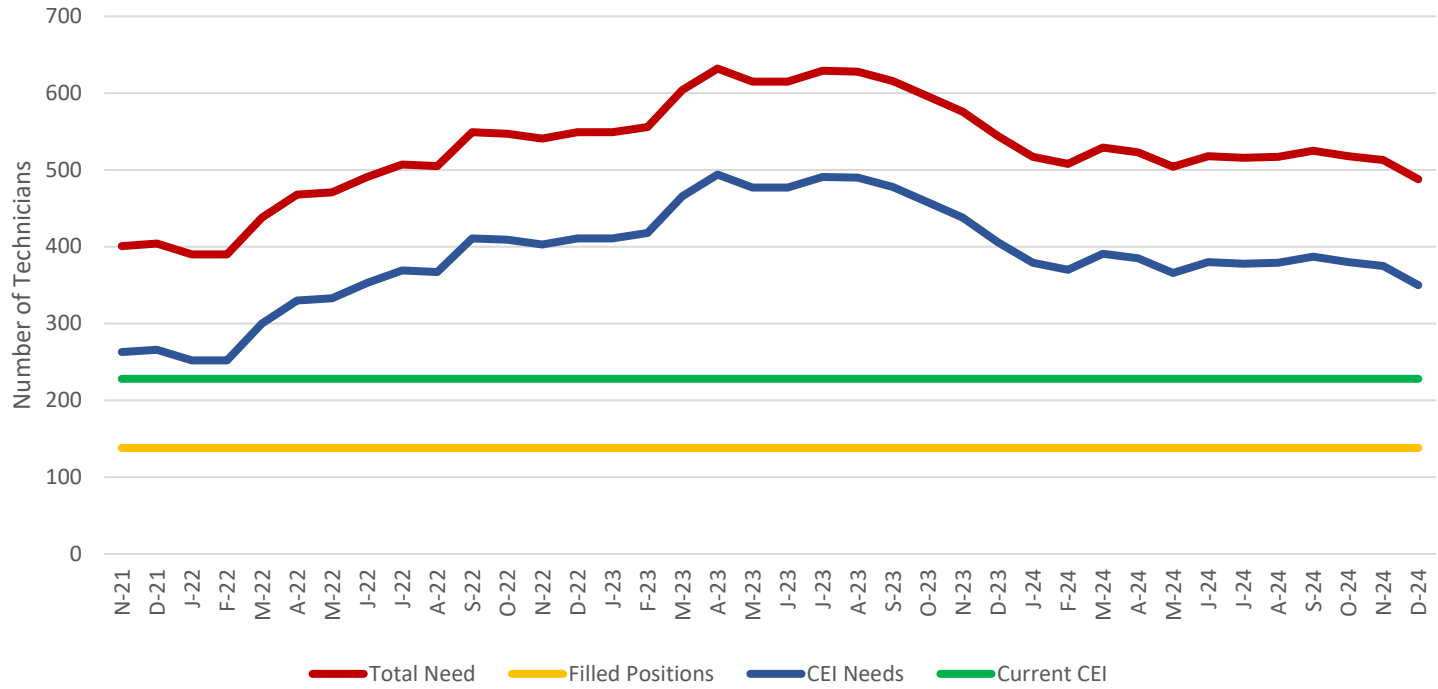
RLK/bs

cc: Mr. C.A. Peoples, PE  
Mr. M. L. Sylvester, PE  
Mr. Brian Burch, PE  
Mr. Greg Burns, PE  
Division Construction Engineers  
Resident Engineers  
Mr. R. J. Stroup, PE  
Ms. Lonnetta Raynor  
Mr. E.B. Tharrington, PE  
Ms. S. R. Williams

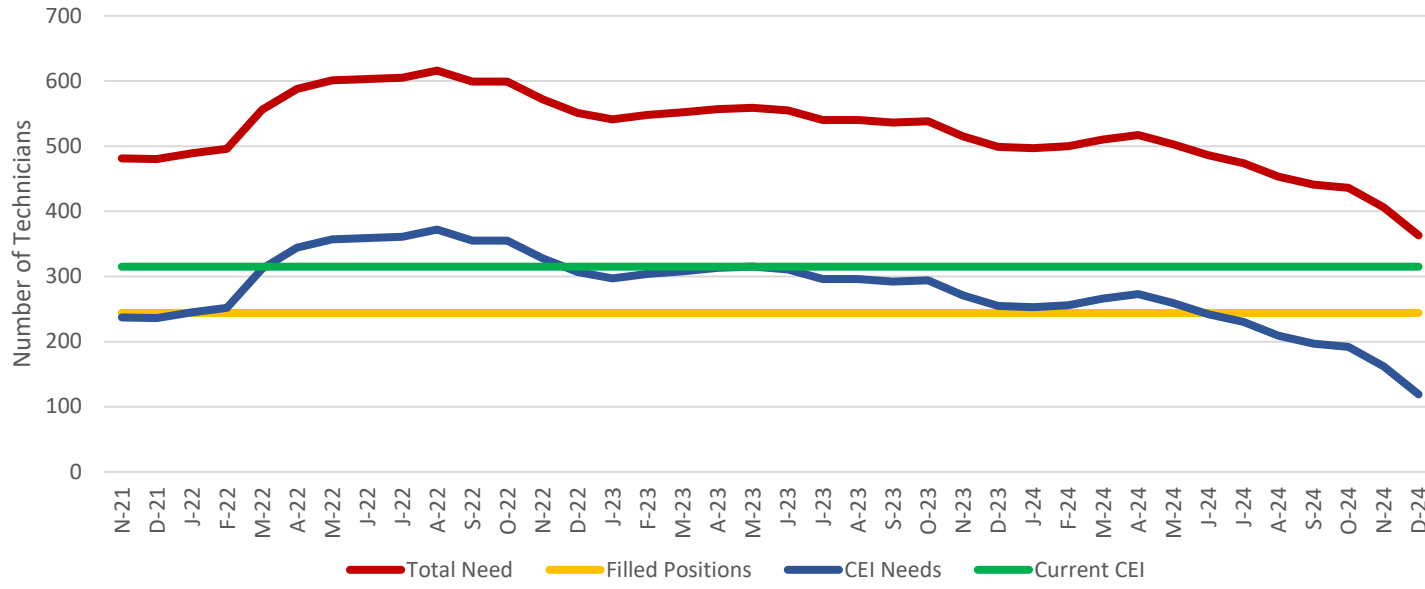
### Statewide November 2021 - December 2024



### Region 1 (Div 1-4, 6) November 2021 - December 2024



### Region 2 (Div 5, 7-10) November 2021 - December 2024





### Region 3 (Division 11-14) November 2021 - December 2024

