
Developmental Specifications

Design Manual

Chapter 1

General Information

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Developmental Specifications (DSs) are most commonly used with experimental products or procedures. They may also be used with special materials or processes unique to a region of the state. As a product or process is evaluated over time, the DS associated with it may change.

The DOT has developed many DSs in response to commonly occurring Special Provisions (SPs) and other special situations. The intent of DSs is similar to that of SPs as they are both project-specific. However, unlike SPs, DSs can be re-used on multiple projects without being reviewed and approved each time.

Checking the Specification List

Before drafting a new specification, check PSS to see if a DS already exists that suits the needs of the project.

- Start PSS and navigate to the “Projects” screen of the particular project.
- Click on the “Specifications” button on the right side of the screen.
- The “Specifications Titles” screen appears and a list of available specifications is shown on the “Titles” tab in the middle part of the screen.
- The list can be sorted by number, description, status, effective date, expiration date, or controller by double-clicking on the desired heading.
- The history of changes made to a specification can be viewed by clicking the “History” tab.
- DSs can be viewed in their entirety at the following website:

http://www.dot.state.ia.us/specifications/Developmental_Specs.htm

Using an Existing Developmental Specification

- If a DS is found that will satisfactorily cover work on the project:
 - Select the specification by clicking on its row in the list.
 - The row highlights and the “Update” button at the bottom of the page becomes active.
 - Click the “Update” button to add the highlighted specification to the list of titles at the top of the screen.

Many DSs have a controller that reviews requests to use the DS and determines if the requested use is appropriate. If the selected DS has a controller, an email is automatically sent to the controller and to the Specifications Section asking permission to use it. If the selected DS does not have a controller, no emails are sent and the designer is free to use the DS without any further approval.

- If a DS that will satisfactorily cover work on the project cannot be found, the designer must write an SP or use an existing SP. Refer to Section 1C-5 for guidance.

Submitting a New Developmental Specification

New DSs must be approved by the spec committee. Since the committee meets only once a month, it is preferable to submit the proposed DS at least six months prior to plan turn-in. This provides plenty of time to process and resubmit any changes that may be requested by the committee.

- Open the [Specification Revision Submittal Form.doc](#) file from the following directory:
`W:\Highway\Specifications\User Forms & Information\`
- Fill out the pertinent information on the form and save a copy of the file in a convenient location.
- Following the guidelines in Section 1C-6, draft the DS using a document template or another DS as a guide.
- Save the proposed DS as a .doc file in a convenient location.
- Send an email to the appropriate spec committee representative (the representative for the Office of Design is the Methods Engineer). Attach a copy of the Specification Revision Submittal Form and the proposed DS to the email.
- The spec committee representative will forward the information to the Specifications Section for inclusion on the next spec committee agenda.
- The spec committee will meet and decide whether the proposed DS will be implemented.
- Once approved by the committee, the Specifications Section will assign a number to the DS and enter its information into PSS.
- To add the new DS to the project, follow the steps outlined in “Using an Existing Developmental Specification,” above.