

TO:

# ENGINEERING INSTRUCTION

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NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

**SUBJECT: MAINTAINING SCHEDULES FOR CRITICAL  
ACTIVITIES IN THE DESIGN PROCESS**

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A recent review of the Department's right-of-way (ROW) acquisition process by the Division of Budget pointed out instances where better coordination of design/ROW activities could have prevented a project from slipping to a later letting. For example, on projects where R.O.W. acquisition is on the critical path, the preparation of an abstract request map (ARM) is an activity to be completed during the Phase I thru IV process, as soon as the affected properties have been identified. (This work should not be put aside until slope limits are defined or until the number of spans in a replacement structure has been determined). As better information becomes available, ARM's can always be revised as necessary.

When the date to begin the preparation of R.O.W. acquisition maps approaches, the Real Estate Division can establish whether or not the Department of Law is expected to deliver the results of title searches on time. If this information will not be available, the Region should obtain the data on their own.

Each Region should periodically review project schedules with the R.O.W. situation in mind and keep their liaison person in Regional Real Estate abreast of what is going on. If a contract engineer is designated for design, but that firm does not yet have a signed agreement, the region should use their own staff or make use of a term agreement surveyor to start the R.O.W. activities on time.

As discussed at the Regional Design Engineers' Meeting last May, any overload in your R.O.W. Mapping Section can be handled through Term Agreements for Survey Services. These firms can compile ARM's, perform deed searches, prepare R.O.W. plans, etc... in addition to the preparation of acquisition maps. Any contract engineer doing design work on a project can also perform these activities, or they can be told to hire a qualified subconsultant if their staff has insufficient experience in this area.

In summary, if a project schedule dictates the beginning of the R.O.W. process, arrangements to start should be made. If the in-house staff is busy on other projects and there is no design firm on board for the project, contact the Design Bureau for assistance through a Term Agreement.

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