



LADOTD OJT Program



April, 2020

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Success of Trainees in 2020

The LADOTD has a robust construction program of approximately \$1 billion for 2020. Once the Coronavirus shutdowns are removed, construction will resume, to fix the roads for the motorists of Louisiana. More Contractors' crews will return to work. Maximizing the good weather days to construct projects will be key to accomplishing construction. Along with that, maximizing construction to enroll trainees will be key to accomplishing the OJT Program, which is one of the requirements of the federal Equal Employment Opportunity objectives.

The Contractors continue to assist the LADOTD by enrolling and providing training to the minorities, women and the disadvantaged individuals of Louisiana. The status of the OJT Program implementation is that it continues to improve, though it is not sufficient. The LADOTD has executed contracts for projects costing millions, in particular, for mega projects of up to almost \$100 million. It is imperative that the Contractors with such large contracts enroll as many trainees as possible that

are stipulated on the contracts. These mega projects typically have sufficient timeframes to enable the trainees to start and complete the training programs, according to the classifications' training programs.

The efforts to enroll trainees should be discussed beginning at the Preconstruction Conference and continuing thereafter at each of the Progress Meetings. Even though the OJT Program is indeed voluntary for the Contractors to implement, the LAGC has committed its member Contractors to training 20 trainees per year. This is in an effort to avoid making the OJT Program a mandatory requirement in the construction contracts in Louisiana. Keep in mind that the Compliance Programs Section is responsible for overseeing, monitoring and reporting the accomplishment of the OJT Program. If the goals set for the OJT Program of 20 trainees per year per Contracting company are not accomplished, the entire construction program could be jeopardized. Let's work together to avoid any ramifications of non-

accomplishment of the OJT Program on the construction program federal funds. Please attend the Quarterly Contractor Forums in which information about how to successfully implement the OJT Program is shared. (Please refer to page 3 for more information). In the meantime, please don't hesitate to reach out to me by phone at (225) 379-1382, or by email at Paula.Roddy@la.gov. My staff and I are committed to helping all Contractors achieve success with the OJT Program.

Ms. Paula Merrick Roddy
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Current Status of the OJT Program

A total of 27 males and one female were Active, for a total of 28 trainees, as shown on *Chart #1-Ethnicity, Active Trainees*. Among the males, 24 minority and three non-minority male trainees were active. One Caucasian female was active. Since the OJT Program is an equal opportunity program, the Contractors could aim for enrolling more minorities and females, and in particular, minority females.

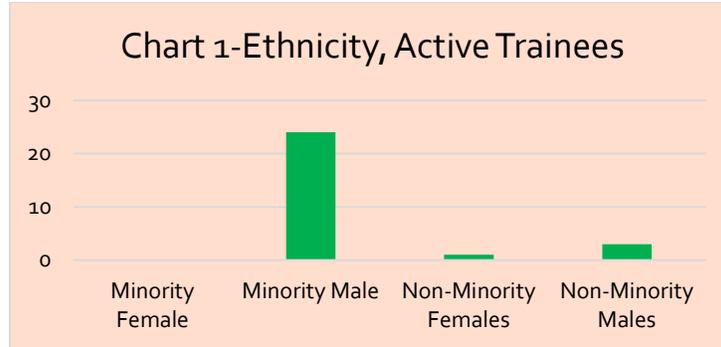


Chart #2-Status of Trainees shows that 28 trainees were Active and nine trainees were Not Active. One African American male resigned from the OJT Program. Additionally, one African American male was terminated. The Contractors could ensure that the enrolled trainees accomplish the training hours on continuous bases until completions.

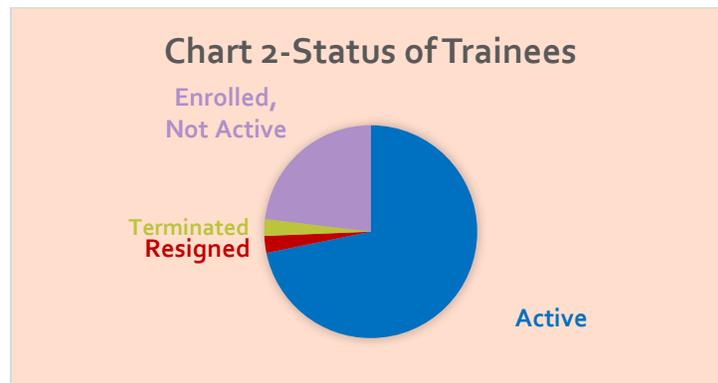
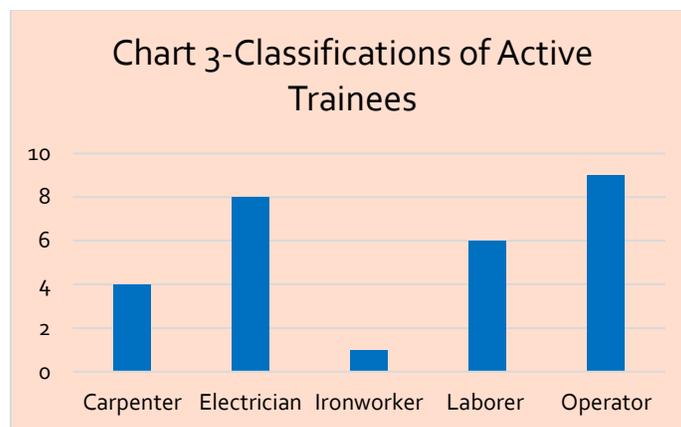


Chart #3-Classifications of Active Trainees shows that approximately 60% of the Active trainees are Electricians and Operators. Approximately 20% are Laborers, such as Concrete Finishers and Pipe Layers. The remaining Active Trainees are Carpenters and one Ironworker. One female Caucasian Trainee is an Electrician. The Contractors can continue to enroll trainees in all the various highway craft classifications, particularly those that are approved in the *OJT Construction Classifications Manual*.



The Field is the Answer...

The field is the answer, but what is the question? The question is...How does a Contractor be successful in enrolling trainees and having the trainees complete the training programs? The On-the-Job Training Program is just that, a training program. Therefore, it is natural that many Contractors assign the OJT Program implementation to the Human Resources Training Managers, for after all, that is what the name connotes. However, success seems to occur only when the construction field managers deploy the OJT Program.

The Contractors' HR Training areas are wonderful at understanding the aspects of training itself, in technical terms. Training involves a specific Training Process. The steps in the Training Process are: *Needs Assessment, Setting Objectives, Designing, Implementation and Evaluation*. The Training expert in HR, typically, has the expertise in deploying these steps of training. However, what is missed is the understanding that all but one of these training steps have already been accomplished by the LADOTD.

The LADOTD has already completed the first step, *Needs Assessment*. In other words, the LADOTD Design Engineers evaluate the project for its ability to support trainees. As per the *23 Code of Federal Regulation Part 230.111(c)*, the Design Engineer evaluates the availability of minorities, women and the disadvantaged for training, duration and cost of the contract, the potential for effective training, etc. The Design Engineer also completes the second step, *Setting Objectives* step by assigning the number of trainees to the projects. Next, the third step, *Design*, has been completed for the training. The *LADOTD OJT Program Classifications Manual* includes the stipulations for various classifications such as Carpenter, Operator, Ironworker, etc. The Classification Pages for these classifications include the design of the trainings in the *Job Description, Wage Structure, and Training Breakdown* components.

The LADOTD expects the Contractors to conduct only the fourth step, *Implementation*, by enrolling current or new crew members for training classifications and providing the

trainings on the approved classifications. It is the Contractor's field Project Managers who can take the lead and identify the crew members to train. Therefore, success seems to occur when the HR Manager aids the field Project Manager, and not vice versa. The OJT Program is a stipulation in the construction contract. It has a specific Item Number like all the other construction pay items. It is typically the Contractor's Project Manager who understands the nature of a construction contract Item and how to obtain the payment of \$3.00 per hour reimbursement from the LADOTD Project Engineer, similar to all of the other construction pay Items. Lastly, the LADOTD completes the last step of the Training Process, *Evaluation*. The Compliance Programs Section evaluates the effectiveness of the OJT Program and provides an annual report to the FHWA.

The OJT Program seems to be successful only when the field construction managers are leading the effort and the HR Managers assist. The Contractor company's natural reaction is to assign the OJT Program to the HR Training Managers. It is highly encouraged, however, for the companies to re-think that urge and instead assign the field Project Managers to be responsible for it. The OJT Supportive Services has seen that companies which assign the lead of the OJT Program deployment to the HR areas are not as successful as those in which the field Project Managers lead the effort. In fact, those companies which started with the HR area eventually had to shift the lead to the field, thus making the *field the answer to a successful OJT Program implementation*.



Upcoming Contractors' Forum

Quarterly, the LADOTD will conduct Contractor's Forums to discuss the OJT Forums. In these forums, come learn about the OJT Program. Get an overview, information on how to implement, provide input on the OJT Program and ask questions. Interact with the LADOTD staff to ensure meeting the OJT goals.

The date of the next OJT Program Contractor's Forum will be announced. You will receive an email invitation for the Contractors' Forum. Please accept the invitation and come join us. Please contact Ms. Joyce Brignac with any questions at (225) 379-1364 or joyce.brignac@la.gov.

Profit and the OJT Program

Construction Contractors are private businesses driven to make profits and to continue to exist in business, to serve the LADOTD. The LADOTD needs the Contractors to build the projects for the motorists and the Contractors need the LADOTD to be the stewards of the tax dollars for the transportation projects in Louisiana. How does the OJT Program fit into the needs of both the LADOTD and the Contractor companies, in terms of profits?

The LADOTD through the federal *Stewardship and Oversight Agreement with the FHWA* commits to constructing the highway construction projects in Louisiana, in accordance with the FHWA Agreement. The 23 CFR Part 230.101 *Purpose* states that...*it is to prescribe the policies, procedures, and guides relative to the implementation of an equal employment opportunity program on Federal projects.* The OJT Program is a part of the EEO program. The LADOTD is responsible for meeting the federal requirements of the OJT Program.



The Contractors sometimes complain that implementing the OJT Program cuts into the companies' profits. Naturally, this is not acceptable for the Contractors and the LADOTD. The \$3.00 per hour of reimbursement, as some Contractors state, is insufficient to cover the costs of training minorities, women and the disadvantaged individuals of Louisiana. Understanding what is and is not included in the \$3.00 per hour may be helpful to both the LADOTD and the Contractors.

Let's look at a construction Pay Item, *Item 502-01-00100 Asphalt Concrete*, as an example to better understand the cost implications. This Item is paid in the unit of measure of *Ton*. According to the *LADOTD Standard Specifications, Section 102.05*, *the contract unit price for a scheduled item shall include all direct costs, all overhead, any profit and all indirect, incidental, and subsidiary costs necessary to complete the item.* Constructing the Asphalt Concrete Item could require labor with the classifications of Asphalt Paving Machine Operator, Asphalt Plant Operator, Asphalt Roller Operator, etc. The Contractor estimates the number of workers needed with these classifications and the rates of pay with benefits for accomplishing the Pay Item. The Item costs must also include material costs, equipment costs, overhead, profit and others. The Contractor bids a unit cost per ton inclusive of all costs, including labor.

An *Asphalt Roller Operator Trainees'* labor cost itself is already included in the unit price of the Pay Item, *Item 502-01-00100 Asphalt Concrete*. The Trainees Pay Item, therefore, should not include the labor cost of the trainee. Instead, the Trainees Pay Item, with a predetermined cost of \$3.00 per hour is for the reimbursement of not the trainee's time, but the administrative costs of completing the paperwork for the OJT Program. This means that, per each trainee on the average for a 1,000-hour program, the Contractor receives \$3,000 to cover the administrative costs. Therefore, together with the trainees' labor costs included in the *Item 502-01-00100 Asphalt Concrete* and the administrative costs under the Trainees Pay Item, it should not negatively impact Contractor profits.

The understanding of the trainees' costs may alleviate concerns of loss of profit due to the OJT Program. The Compliance Programs Section, however, continues to work on streamlining the documentation process to further assist the Contractors in reducing the administrative effort necessary to implement the OJT Program.

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