



LADOTD OJT Program



October, 2019

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Greetings from the New LADOTD Compliance Programs Director

As the new Compliance Programs Director, I am excited to join the LADOTD Management Team under Deputy Secretary Dr. Eric Kalivoda. My goal is to greatly improve the participation of minorities and women for the LADOTD OJT Program. This means that the LADOTD aims to never again have a year in which there are zero trainees participating and/or completing the OJT Program. According to the US Census, over 30% of the population of the State of Louisiana is minorities. It should be easy for Contractors to recruit and enroll minorities and females to help meet the OJT Program requirements. As the Director, I am committing to provide any and all support to the Contractors for successful implementation.

The LAGC has previously expressed concerns that the OJT Program process and documentation are cumbersome. As with any governmental contracts, documentation is needed to show proof of successful participation and completion. For instance, Contractors must submit certifications to the

LADOTD Project Engineer to show proof that the materials are from approved sources. Similarly, Contractors must submit the OJT Program Enrollment Forms to show proof that the proposed trainees meet the eligibility requirements while striving to include minorities and females, as much as possible. While the OJT Program requires documentation from the Contractors, it is no different than any other aspects of construction contracts. The Compliance Programs Section is placing an emphasis on streamlining the process of the OJT Program documentation to help the Contractors. Quarterly, Contractors Forums are held at the various LADOTD District locations. At these Forums, the Contractors can learn about the OJT Program and how best to implement. I respectfully ask the Contractors to encourage the companies' Construction Project Managers, EEO Officers, Vice Presidents, HR Directors and others to attend the Forums. I assure you that your time will be well spent to learn about the OJT Program at the Forums.

Please provide your full support to the LADOTD to ensure compliance with the *23 Code of Federal Regulations, Part 230*. I look forward to meeting you at the Quarterly Contractor Forums. 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.

Ms. Paula Merrick Roddy

LADOTD Program Director
Compliance Programs Section

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Current Status of the OJT Program

A total of 24 trainees are in the various stages of the OJT Program. Nineteen trainees are Active, as shown on *Chart #1-Status of Trainees*. Two trainees have completed, to date, in the following classifications: A Backhoe Operator and a Front-End Loader Operator. Two African American males and one Caucasian male trainee were terminated.

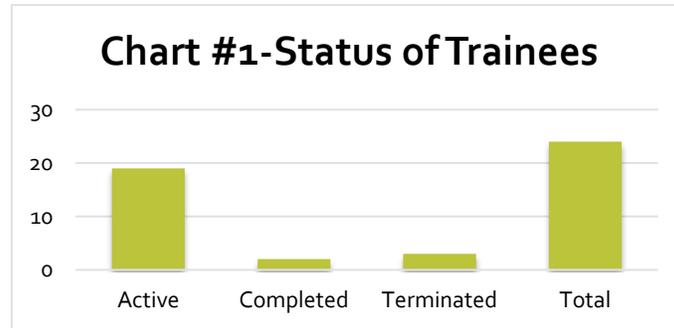
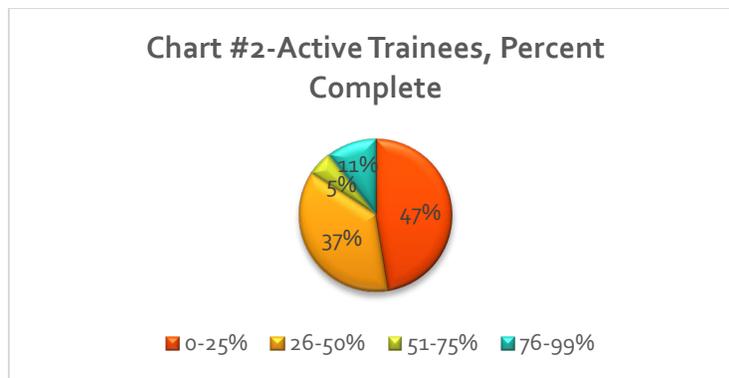
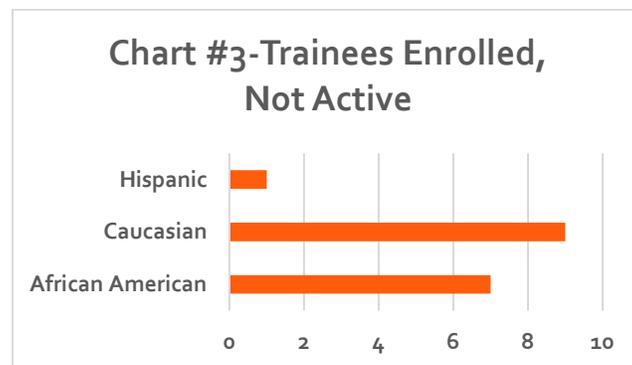


Chart #2-Active Trainees Percent Complete shows that almost half of the Active trainees have completed less than a quarter of the training programs. Over one third of Active trainees have achieved almost 50% of the training hours. About 10% of the Active trainees are almost completed. The Contractors are encouraged to ensure that the Active trainees progress through the training programs, particularly as the winter season approaches.



A total of 17 trainees have been Enrolled but are not in the Active status of accomplishing any hours, as shown on *Chart #3-Trainees Enrolled, Not Active*. Enrolling the trainees is not enough; the trainees must be actively learning their approved training programs such as Operators, Carpenters, etc. LADOTD encourages the Contractors to work diligently to begin the trainings for all Approved/Enrolled trainees.



OJT Program Champions in Companies

Which types of Contractors have been successful in implementing the OJT Program and what are their best practices considering that the successful Contractors have been large, medium and small in size? It appears to not be the sizes of the companies that ensure results; instead, it is the people within the company. So, what are the distinguishing factors of the persons that ensure success? The success factors are simply finding the champions at the right levels within the companies, such as Construction Project Managers, Vice Presidents, and perhaps even Owners. This means that the construction Project Managers, Vice Presidents and others should encourage the enrolling of trainees to the project management staff.

Seek out the champion in your company. It may be beneficial for the Presidents and Vice Presidents of companies to make calls to the staffs and seek out that one person who can work through the OJT Program process and is interested in enhancing diversity.

The right person in the company seems to be that person who wishes to either comply with the *OJT Supplemental Specifications* or is willing to champion diversity in the company's workforce. Many Project Managers do take the time to ensure that the enrollments and completions of trainees is occurring. This is although the PMs are working on many activities, such as submittals for products, updating construction schedules, supervising the construction itself and the subcontractors' works. What makes the PMs more successful in implementing the OJT Program is that they know the constitutions of their crews and can best determine

if a current employee or a new minority or female employee would benefit. Another person that could ensure success for the OJT Program could be the VP of areas even such as Sales, Marketing, Estimating, etc. It could also be the Administrative Assistant who has a pulse on the company's crew make-up.

The Contractors who are still sitting on the fence about the OJT Program may want to reconsider. The wave in the LADOTD, particularly under the new leadership of Ms. Roddy is to enroll trainees, have them actively participate and complete the hours of the approved program classifications, and to show results to the FHWA. Considering that more than likely every company has a diversity advocate, enrolling minorities and women should be simple to accomplish. Choosing the appropriate OJT Program champion is the key to the successful implementation of the OJT Program.



Upcoming Contractors' OJT Program 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 next OJT Program Contractor's Forum will be held on Wednesday, October 16, 2019 from 10:30-11:30 am at the LADOTD District 07 Training Room, 5827

US Highway 90 E, Lake Charles, LA. 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

A Discussion: Where Does it Say That the OJT Program is a Requirement for the LADOTD?

The LADOTD's responsibility for the OJT Program, at the federal-aid level, is to *Prepare/Review On-the-Job Training Goals and Accomplishments*. Further, the LADOTD states that the Compliance Programs Director will submit these Goals and Accomplishments to the FHWA's Civil Rights Specialist, annually, as stated in the *FHWA and LADOTD Stewardship and Oversight Agreement* (Agreement). The FHWA Division's Civil Rights Office will review the information and provide comments. The Agreement further states that...*The intent and purpose of the Agreement is to document the roles and responsibilities...and to document the methods of oversight which will be used to efficiently and effectively deliver the Federal-Aid Highway Program* (FAHP).

The OJT Program requirement in the Agreement is similar to many others stipulated in the *Program Responsibility Matrix*, such as: *Approval of Pavement Design Policy or Approval of Quality Assurance Program*. In other words, the responsibility to comply with the requirements for the OJT Program is the same as the others, in fact, no more or no less. Keep in mind that

the FHWA Division Administration and the Secretary of the LADOTD sign the Agreement. This means that the Compliance Programs Director is responsible for ensuring that the OJT Program is accomplished to show compliance with the Agreement.

The Contractors are very important to the LADOTD to provide support in the accomplishments of the OJT Program Goals. The LADOTD wants to show that it has methods of oversight to effectively deliver all portions of the FAHP, including the OJT Program. However, it cannot show compliance without the collaboration of the LAGC, Contractors, LADOTD Project Engineers and the Compliance Programs Section.

What can those playing the important roles do to support the LADOTD in showing its effectiveness for the OJT Program as per the FAHP? First of all, the Contractors must aim to enroll the number of trainees stipulated in the construction contracts in an effort to increase diversity, pure and simple. Similarly, the construction Project Engineers can encourage the Contractors to be successful. The



LAGC can continue to speak loudly about the Program. The OJT Program Specialist and the Contract Compliance Manager can continue the current push being pursued to enroll and train the approved trainees, with the assistance of the OJT Supportive Services. The Compliance Programs Director's continued commitment will be the driving force for accomplishing the OJT Goal to ensure compliance for the FAHP. All those responsible can contribute to the OJT Program's success, knowing that the Agreement states it! So, yes, the stipulation that the OJT Program is a requirement as a component of the contract exists and it is in the Agreement. Let us strive to make the LADOTD OJT Program a win-win for both the LADOTD and all highway Contractors.

OJT Program Contacts

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