

2013 Industry Test Turnaround Time Survey - comment field responses

Question #1 – *Has your company or plant experienced denial or delay in annual aggregate certification? (If yes, please indicate the Caltrans District numbers).*

The Regional Lab requires a project RE to request the lab run annual aggregate certifications. Many REs are not willing to do this.

Districts 7, 8 & 12. Some districts require this and others do not. However, we see this becoming an issue with all districts in the future. In most cases the RE does not want to accept the expense associated with the testing needed to get the aggregate certified.

District 4.

District 7 and 12

District 5

District 10

Question #2 – *If “yes” above, did the denial or delay of the annual aggregate certification affect a concrete mix design.*

The mix design is not certified due to the aggregates not being certified even though the strength requirements are met.

Delayed placement

Question #3 - *Has your company or plant experienced denial or delay in asphalt mix design verification? (If you answer "yes," please indicate the Caltrans district number(s) in the comment box.)*

District 11

District 10, District 3

Every other JMF verification will be delayed, both districts 4 and 5; district 4 has more delays recently.

Most delay experiences have occurred from test results that play a role on the HMA Volumetric, mainly VMA. Specific Gravity test results have varied from producer to Caltrans. Due to this variance, JMF verification and Start Up Evaluations have failed. Caltrans test method 207 is currently under review and needs to be corrected ASAP, either by coming to an agreement on the changes to the current test method or by allowing the producers to provide historical test results and using the average.

District 4

District 4

District 4

District 3

District 3

Dist. 4, cannot get past the Richmond Field Lab, they always fail the material on something

District 3 will not verify mixes on lower tonnage projects.

Question #4 - *Has your company or plant experienced denial or delay in plant MPQP certification? (If you answer "yes," please indicate what Caltrans district number(s) in the comment box).*

Districts 7, 8, & 12

Caltrans requires this to be done during the week where production is lost. Why can't we opt to pay for the overtime and do in the afternoon or weekend?

District 4

District 3

District 3

Question #5 – *If you answered “yes” to any of the above, how long has the average delay been (in working days)?*

Sometimes this was because the paper review of the JMF took longer than required per the spec. Dense Graded mixes, the timeframe was typically met by Caltrans for JMF Verification, on RHMA-G mixes, the timeframe was never met for JMF Verification.

Question # 6 – *If you answered “yes” to any question above, was the denial or delay for a Caltrans project or a project led by a local/regional agency (please indicate the Caltrans district numbers)?*

District 11

District 10

Caltrans District 4 won't even come to certify our lab if the plant where the lab locates has no Caltrans jobs. Good try to certify a mix without a Caltrans job.

We have experienced this from both Caltrans and Local / Regional-Led projects. Districts 7, 8, 11 & 12

Both Caltrans and Local / Regional-led project

District 3.

**Question # 7 - What has been the reason for the denial or delay of the testing request?
Responses to "other."**

Lost samples, too busy, etc...

Slow review of JMF submittal, Staffing issues at District lab

Both of the above have been reason for denial and delays

lab issues

Poor testing practices and slow responses

Waiting for testing to be complete

Staffing

too busy, I believe

None given

staffing

Question # 8 – What is the typical "turnaround time" for QA results from Caltrans (please identify material type and Caltrans district numbers)?

This varies greatly depending on the Resident Engineer. Some areas in District 11 have a turn around time of 1 day. Average is 11-30 days and the most extreme has been up to a year. Big Problem on QA/QC Projects with Bonuses/Deducts

asphalt compaction results - Dist. 7,8, and 11

District 10 - Hot Mix Asphalt - AC Content, S-Value, Relative Compaction. On average, it typically takes about 30 days to receive test data once requested through the RE. A few times we didn't receive any QA data until the project was complete and all of the HMA was placed and we received the final HMA Pay programs. This prevents any ability to investigate why test data does not match.

Asphalt JMF verification will be done within any where between 20 days and 60 days, hit or miss. Usually if the RE is following up then the JMF verification results can be returned faster

annual concrete aggregate certs

We have experienced this mostly on QC/QA projects. Test results from contractor QC meets specifications and later (up to 6 months) we receive the QA results from Caltrans the do not verify. This causes time delays with dispute resolution and is very time consuming and costly.

District 4

District 4 asphalt mix design verification

One time it was late by 11-30 days. The other project was 52 days late.

HMA

HMA

HMA – District 3

HMA – District 5

District 10 Stockton - HMA

District 6 Fresno – HMA

Core results

Question # 9 (optional) – *Regarding the QA delay question above, is there any specific information about the project(s) that can be provided to help Caltrans research this issue?*

Communication between the RE and the district lab manager is not very good. Many times, days or weeks go by without anything happening and nobody seems to be able to provide an answer as to why. The lab manager should be held accountable to the RE or Caltrans should face the same penalties as the contractor for not providing timely results.

bad lab techniques, non-sensical lab results/sloppy procedures

No. They need to learn how to run tests accurately.

We need to find a method to record the QA test turn around time without putting the contractor on the spot. The relationship with the local Caltrans laboratory is vital to the contractor/material supplier thus making it very difficult to call Caltrans on the carpet for their lack of accountability.

Caltrans needs to:

1. Understand what the test turn-around time is
2. Recognize that this is a problem
3. Identify the reasons for the problem
4. Take steps to correct the problem

I think the real problem is Caltrans does not believe this is something they need to be concerned

with. It is at the bottom of the list of priorities. The FHWA has told Caltrans they should have QA test result in the contractor's hands with 2-3 days after sampling.