

Chapter 2

ADMINISTRATIVE POLICES AND PROCEDURES

MDT ENVIRONMENTAL MANUAL

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Chapter 2

ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

2.1 CORRESPONDENCE

2.1.1 In-House Memoranda

2.1.1.1 General

Memoranda are used by MDT to provide written, interdepartmental information between the various Bureaus, Sections, Districts, etc. They are used to distribute project reports, process approval requests, request project information, submit project information, distribute policies and for informational purposes. Each Bureau and Section has established its own policies for circulating incoming mail. In general for the Environmental Services Bureau (ESB), Administrative Support reviews incoming memoranda to determine the appropriate distribution. The Distributions within ESB Process shown in [Appendix C](#) of this *Manual* describes the process used to track documents within ESB.

2.1.1.2 Format

Prepare all memoranda using approved templates or format. For each project memorandum, the preparer should fully complete the heading including the project number, project name and uniform project number. For non-project reports, the subject line should provide a brief but informative title of the memorandum's purpose.

2.1.1.3 Signatures

For outgoing memoranda, the Environmental Services Bureau Chief (ESBC) has established the following signature requirements:

1. ESB comments on project reports, system impact requests and Bureau-wide general information, require the ESBC's signature.
2. The supervisors of the Environmental Engineering Section, Environmental Resources Section and Hazardous Waste Section determine signature authority for all other memoranda on a case-by-case basis. This includes general information distributed within the Sections, general project correspondence, project information requests and other general day-to-day forms.
3. In the absence of the person that ordinarily would sign a particular type of memorandum, other individuals may be given discretionary signature authority. When the name and title of the person that normally signs is printed on a document, designated employees should sign their own name, with the word "for" preceding the printed name or title. The person that ordinarily signs the documents should have an opportunity to review those signed by other individuals before they are filed.

2.1.1.4 Distribution

In general, the ESB Document Distribution Matrix identifies who in ESB should be included in the distribution and, as applicable, who will be the Document Champion. In general, consider the following guidelines for distribution of outgoing memoranda:

- the project file receives the green stamped “original” copy,
- the person that signs the memorandum receives a copy,
- always consider District Administrators for inclusion on the distribution list,
- always include a copy to the ESBC,
- include the appropriate Section Supervisor on the distribution list, and
- provide a copy to all contributors to an ESB comment memorandum.

2.1.2 Outside Correspondence

2.1.2.1 General

Prepare all written materials for sources outside of the Department on the current MDT letterhead. However, letters for the Governor’s signature will be on Governor’s letterhead. Written materials prepared for the Director or Governor’s signature must be coordinated through the ESBC and Director’s Office.

2.1.2.2 Signatures

In general, all letters are forwarded through the chain of command to the individual signing the correspondence. The following presents the Department’s policy for signing all outgoing letters:

1. Letters to US Congressmen, the Governor and legislators are signed by the Director.
2. Letters responding to citizen inquiries are signed by the ESBC or a higher level, depending on who initially received the letter. The ESBC also signs EA/FONSI/EIS/ROD distribution letters, responses to non-compliance or violation notifications, all storm water permit notices, self-reporting violations and non-routine or critical agency correspondence.
3. Information requested by the news media should be directed to the Public Information Officer (PIO).
4. Non-routine or critical information to Federal, Tribal, State and local agencies, AASHTO, TRB, other State DOT’s, etc., should be signed by the ESBC.
5. Routine project information submitted to Federal, Tribal, State and local agencies, consultants, contractors, suppliers, etc., should be signed by appropriate staff-level personnel or the appropriate Section Supervisor.
6. In the absence of the person that ordinarily signs a particular type of correspondence, designated individuals may be given discretionary signature authority. Where the name and title of the person that normally signs is printed on a document, designated employees should sign their own name, with the word “for” preceding the printed name

or title. The person that ordinarily signs the correspondence should have an opportunity to review documents signed by other individuals before they are filed.

2.1.2.3 Distribution

Distribution of an outside letter will vary according to the information in the letter. Consider the following guidelines for distribution of outgoing letters:

- the project file receives the green stamped copy,
- the original signed letter is sent to the recipient,
- the person that signs the letter receives a copy,
- always consider District Administrators for inclusion on the distribution list,
- always include a copy to the ESBC, and
- always include the appropriate Section Supervisor on the distribution list.

2.1.3 Legislature and Media Contacts

Direct all legislative and media contacts to the PIO. The PIO may seek input from staff in responding to the requests. For legislative contacts, complete the Legislative Contact Form.

2.1.4 Electronic Communications

2.1.4.1 General

MDT staff is encouraged to use email, the internet and the intranet to accomplish their duties. However, access to electronic communication imposes certain responsibilities on the user. MDT must not be exposed to undue legal liabilities. Users may be subject to limitation on their use of electronic communication as determined by the ESBC. Use of computer systems is subject to the MDT computer use policy. In general, the policies and procedures that apply to hard-copy communication also apply to electronic communication. Assume that every email will become public knowledge. If there is litigation, the law makes no distinction between hardcopy and electronic communication.

It is the goal of ESB to increase the use of electronic handling of documents and correspondence to increase efficiency and productivity. This will continue to progress and new procedures to handle electronic media are expected to be developed in the future as electronic media becomes more prevalent.

2.1.4.2 Project File

The *MDT Managing Electronic Files and Email* publication presents Department-wide policies, guidelines, etc., on managing the use of the electronic filing system for design projects. The Document Champions are responsible for setting up and maintaining an electronic file folder for all electronic project-related documents. As appropriate, project-related email correspondence should be copied to the project's e-folder within the ESB share drive.

Generally, emails should contain the project number, project name and uniform project number. In general, use the uniform project number in the subject along with the subject of the email.

2.2 RECORDS AND FILES

2.2.1 Project Files

Both hard copy and electronic project files will contain relevant environmental information to provide a history of the project and to provide two sources of environmental information on the project. The hard copy file will usually be maintained by the Administrative Assistant in the ESB master files until completion of the design. The electronic file will be placed on the share drive and maintained by the Document Champion. Identify each design file by its uniform project number and project number. The environmental project files will typically include the following:

- MDT project programming information;
- copy of all environmental reports;
- all project correspondence including emails;
- results of evaluations, studies and analyses;
- design notes and calculations;
- design drawings;
- lab test results; and
- any other applicable information related to the project.

Draft copies of memorandum or other information should not be kept and should be discarded once a final version is completed. Where practical, the Document Champion should convert the electronic files to a PDF format for easier retrieval of information.

2.2.2 File Retention

All project files will be retained in the ESB Office until construction has been completed, or later if necessary. Once construction is completed, the files will be moved to the basement and retained pursuant to MDT's document retention policy.

2.2.3 MDT Document Management System

The Document Management System is used to track documents for preliminary surveys, preliminary field reviews, plan and specification development, pre-bid and preconstruction conferences and as-built plans. The Document Management System, in conjunction with SiteManager, is used to track and manage project correspondence, letters, pay estimates, photographs, diaries, change orders, project meeting minutes and other similar documents during construction.

