

Transportation Professional Certification Board, Inc.

Affiliated with the Institute of Transportation Engineers

Winter Newsletter: March 4, 2014

Keeping Certification Current through Professional Development

Certification Renewal

Every 3 years, Professional Traffic Operations Engineer® (PTOE) and Professional Transportation Planner® (PTP) certificants must apply for renewal of their certification, showing they have met their Continuing Professional Development requirements by completing the required Professional Development Hours (PDH) of activities. This renewal process ensures that certificants maintain good standing in the transportation profession and continue to enhance their knowledge of the technology and scientific principles related to the certificate program. As part of a profession that is sustained through life-long learning, the professional development opportunities and options associated with meeting the continuing professional development requirements ensure that certificants are well equipped to meet the needs and challenges transportation professionals face in delivering public safety and mobility.

Earning Professional Development Hours

Understanding the criteria for PDH credits is the first step to preparing for certification renewal. The Transportation Professional Certification Board uses PDH criteria that has been defined by the National Council of Examiners for Engineering and Surveying (NCEES), a national nonprofit organization dedicated to advancing professional licensure for engineers and surveyors that develops, administers, and scores the examinations used for engineering and surveying licensure in the United States, such as the Professional Engineer (P.E.).

The NCEES *Continuing Professional Competency Guidelines* defines both what qualifies and does not qualify for PDH credit. The complete document can be downloaded [here](#).

PDH credits should meet the following criteria:

- The subject matter of the activity shall be of a professional level and within the scope of the domains of the certification program.
- The activity shall be educational in nature and have the clear purpose and objective of maintaining, improving or expanding professional skills and knowledge.
- The activity shall be in addition to activities of the certificate holder's normal work assignment.

NCEES provides the following examples to clarify further the definition of qualifying and non-qualifying activities:

Typical Qualifying Activities:

- Completing or attending courses, seminars, instruction, in-house programs, or training of engineering or surveying content related to the licensee's field of practice
- Attending technical or professional society meetings when an engineering/surveying topic is presented as a principal part of the program
- Teaching a course for the first time or teaching a course previously taught if substantial time was spent in updating material
- Attending satellite down-link video courses where attendance is verified and program material meets the requirements

- Completing computer software instructional courses that relate to the improvement of one's business or profession
- Completing management or ethics courses that relate to the improvement of one's business or profession
- Completing correspondence courses on an engineering/surveying topic where lessons are prepared and returned for correction and/or grading and where testing at the end of the course is required

Typical Non-qualifying Activities:

- Regular employment
- Self-study
- Personal self-improvement
- Service club meetings or activities
- Equipment demonstrations or trade show displays
- Topics not relevant to engineering or surveying professions
- Enrollment without attendance at courses, seminars, etc.
- Repetitive attendance or teaching of the same course
- Attending committee meetings or general business meetings of any organization

Opportunities for PDH Credits

There are a wide variety of webinars, seminars, conferences, and training courses that meet the requirements for qualified PDH credits, both including and beyond the opportunities offered by the Institute of Transportation Engineers [Professional Development Program](#). If you have any questions about PDH credits or the renewal process, contact Ann O'Neill at certification@tpcb.org.

What Does Certification Mean To You?

As part of an effort to share success stories of the Professional Traffic Operations Engineer® (PTOE) certification program, several public and private organizations with high numbers of PTOE certificants were asked questions about their support of the program and its certificants. Below is a selection from the initial responses.

"DKS Associates is committed to the certification of our professional staff. The PTOE and Professional Transportation Planner® (PTP) certification programs are one path to certification for some of our staff. We pay for the exam, refresher courses, and renewals. The number of certifications is limited, so staff select the ones they feel are most appropriate for themselves and the clients they support. We have achieved our goal of getting our staff certified in transportation. I believe there is a positive influence of the collective goal and commitment to certification that we have made.

To public agency employers, I would say hiring an individual with a PTOE or PTP certification assures you that the individual possesses a level of transportation competence that will translate into safety, efficiency, and mobility practices that will benefit your community. To a consultant, I would say that you do not exist if someone does not want to purchase your services. Certification tells customers that a level of competence has been achieved as a starting point-there is a commitment to the profession that they know they are buying when they secure your services."

Ransford (Randy) S. McCourt, P.E., PTOE
President, DKS Associates
Portland, Oregon, USA

"The Ada County Highway District pays for the PTOE exam and any associated fees, including renewals. We encourage a high degree of professionalism and expertise in traffic. We do not rotate people to roadway design, construction, or other parts of the organization, and with that we value employees' expertise and provide opportunities for training to keep their certification current and advance their expertise. One of the benefits of having many PTOE certificants is that we have a very professional environment with a lot of 'iron sharpening iron' in solving engineering problems and coming up with the best solution. There is a high degree of morale from being recognized and honored as a professional. While the PTOE is more of a byproduct of the professionalism and expertise development rather than a required ingredient, I believe the program is a great one and should be continued."

**Terry Little, P.E., PTOE
Manager, Traffic Services
Ada County Highway District
Boise, ID, USA**

"During my time with the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MNDOT), I found that our support of the PTOE program demonstrated our commitment to delivering quality service. MNDOT seeks high performers who are capable of serving the public in the best possible way, and the PTOE program supports the knowledge that is required to that end. When private sector qualifications are being evaluated, having PTOE certification provides a credibility that sets you apart from the very beginning, giving an edge in what can be a close decision. PTOE certification tells people you have the solid background necessary to support your opinions and advice. On a personal level, when you meet another transportation engineer with PTOE certification, you feel an immediate camaraderie knowing that the person has demonstrated the same technical knowledge as yourself."

**Bernard J. Arseneau, P.E., PTOE
Global Leader, Traffic Management Systems
HDR Engineering, Inc.
Minneapolis, MN, USA**

The TPCB newsletter will continue to share success stories. How has certification made a difference in your career? Send your stories to certification@tpcb.org.

The Transportation Professional Certification Board Inc. (TPCB), an autonomous certification body affiliated with the Institute of Transportation Engineers, offers the following certification programs: Professional Traffic Operations Engineer® (PTOE) and Professional Transportation Planner® (PTP). For more information, visit www.tpcb.org.