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July 20, 2017

Attn: Isaac L. Howard, PhD, PE
Civil and Environmental Engineering Department
Mississippi State University
501 Hardy Road, 235F Walker Hall
Mississippi State, MS, 39762

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter serves as official notice that the Mississippi State University (MSU) Civil and Environmental Engineering (CEE) laboratories utilized by the Construction Materials Research Center (CMRC) are certified to perform work for the Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT) for all activities where Isaac L. Howard serves as principal investigator (PI) during the 2017, 2018, and 2019 calendar years. This certification is up for renewal in the January to April of 2020 timeframe and remains in effect up to April 30, 2020 so long as re-certification arrangements/processes are in progress prior to the end of January of 2020. The remainder of this document describes the rationale for the aforementioned certification from the MDOT Materials Division.

In January of 2017, MDOT Materials Division representatives visited the MSU campus to evaluate the suitability of facilities (and competence of personnel) related to State Study 276. This inspection process led to approval to conduct soil and soil-cement testing related to State Study 276. This certification satisfies MDOT Task 5 and applicable parts of consultant Task 9 as outlined in research proposal documents for State Study 276. Table 1 summarizes test methods certified during this process.

Table 1. Certification for State Study 276

Certified Technician	Test Methods
CMRC Laboratories	R18
Isaac L. Howard	MT-7, R58, T2, T11, T27, T99, T180, T265, T311, PM Device, C469, D1633, Indirect tensile, coring
Brad Hansen	MT-7, R58, T2, T11, T27, T99, T180, T265, T311, PM Device, C469, D1633, Indirect tensile, coring

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Once the certification for State Study 276 had been established, an overall laboratory and program competence assessment was performed over the next six months (Jan-June of 2017). During this period, Materials Division employee(s) were on the campus for extended periods, and observed the overall laboratory structure, and in some cases, directly participated in laboratory activities (asphalt/binders/emulsion, cement/concrete, additives, and soil testing are example activities observed). Over this time, Materials Division employees were able to witness the manner in which research and testing services are conducted by CMRC, which goes beyond calibrated equipment and personnel capable of following standard test methods. CMRC under Isaac L. Howard's direction maintains external equipment calibration (records were reviewed), has an active safety program (records were reviewed), has an active data organization and management program (example data handling processes were observed and reviewed), and has a successful track record of work for MDOT, other comparable agencies, and industry sponsors. CMRC is equipped to conduct high volume testing and subsequent data handling/analysis in a proper and responsible manner. For these reasons, the aforementioned certification was granted.

Please contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

Jeff Curtis, PE
State Materials Engineer
MDOT Materials Division

Cc: Research Division (Smith)
Lab File (Guth)