

**TO THE ATTENTION OF DIVISION ADMINISTRATORS, ASSISTANT DIVISION ADMINISTRATORS,
AND FEDERAL LANDS DIRECTORS**

DUE DATE: EFFECTIVE November 12, 2015

The FHWA published the Final Rule to Title 23 Code of Federal Regulations Part 625 (attached) in the Federal Register on October 13, 2015 [[Docket No. FHWA-2015-0003](#) or <https://federalregister.gov/a/2015-25931>].

Background: The rule modifies regulations governing new construction, reconstruction, resurfacing (except for maintenance resurfacing), restoration, and rehabilitation projects on the NHS (including the Interstate system), by incorporating by reference the current versions of design standards and standard specifications previously adopted and incorporated by reference under 23 CFR 625.4, and removing the outdated or superseded versions of these standards and specifications. Several of these design standards and standard specifications were established by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) and the American Welding Society (AWS) and were previously adopted by FHWA through rulemaking.

The revisions include referencing current versions of:

- AASHTO A Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets (Green Book, 2011 edition)
 - *Note that deviations from criteria contained in the standards for projects on the NHS, but which are not one of the thirteen controlling criteria, should be documented by the STA in accordance with State laws, regulations, directives, and safety standards.*
- AASHTO's Load and Resistance Factor Design (LRFD) Bridge Design Specifications
- LRFD Movable Highway Bridge Design Specifications
- Standard Specifications for Structural Supports of Highway Signs, Luminaires and Traffic Signals
- AWS Bridge Welding Code and the Structural Welding Code—Reinforcing Steel

Please note that FHWA is currently soliciting public comments on a proposal to revise the Thirteen Controlling Criteria for Design in a Notice in the Federal Register [<https://federalregister.gov/a/2015-25526>]. The Notice also clarifies when design exceptions would be required and the documentation that is expected to support such requests. The comment period on the Notice closes on December 7, 2015. Any changes to the Thirteen Controlling would not be anticipated until after the closing date.

Should you or your staff have questions, please contact Michael Matzke, Design Program Manager, 202-366-4658, Michael.Matzke@dot.gov.

Tom

Thomas D. Everett, P.E. | FHWA
Director, Office of Program Administration