



Michigan  
*Office of the Auditor General*  
**REPORT SUMMARY**

*Performance Audit*

Report Number:  
591-0169-08

*Bridge Inspection Program*

*Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT)*

Released:  
May 2010

*MDOT must inspect, or cause to be inspected, all State-owned and locally owned highway bridges that are at least 20 feet long and located on public roads in accordance with various State and federal requirements. MDOT staff inspect State-owned bridges. MDOT delegated responsibility for inspecting locally owned bridges to their respective owners, including cities, villages, townships, and counties. As of March 28, 2010, MDOT records reflected that there were 4,404 State-owned bridges and 6,356 locally owned bridges requiring inspections at least every two years.*

This is our reissued report on the performance audit of the Bridge Inspection Program, Michigan Department of Transportation. This report contains updated unaudited information on the overall condition ratings of bridges in Michigan (as of March 28, 2010) in Exhibits 2, 3, 4, and 5 but does not change any of the audit's objectives, conclusions, findings, or recommendations.

***Audit Objective:***

To assess the effectiveness of MDOT's efforts to ensure that bridge inspections and load ratings are completed in compliance with selected State and federal requirements.

***Audit Conclusion:***

We concluded that MDOT was not effective in ensuring that bridge inspections and load ratings were completed in compliance with selected State and federal requirements. We noted three material conditions (Findings 1 through 3) and one reportable condition (Finding 4).

***Material Conditions:***

MDOT did not complete or ensure the completion of all scour evaluations and plans of action for scour critical bridges (Finding 1).

MDOT did not ensure that local bridge owners and MDOT regional offices completed some routine bridge inspections and inspections of the underwater structural elements of bridges in a timely manner. In addition, MDOT often did not document its follow-up activity or the rationale for its lack of follow-up activity related to late or potentially late bridge inspections. (Finding 2)

MDOT did not ensure that qualified team leaders (QTLs) complied with MDOT's bridge inspection frequency guidelines at all times. Also, MDOT did not regularly monitor the appropriateness of the bridge inspection frequencies and load ratings for bridges experiencing significant deterioration. In addition, MDOT did not ensure that QTLs adequately described the physical deterioration of poorly rated

bridges in the Michigan Bridge Inspection System (MBIS). (Finding 3)

**Reportable Condition:**

MDOT did not inspect the underside of some bridges with false decking nor did its procedures require this inspection. Also, MDOT did not ensure that all bridges with false decking were correctly identified in MBIS. In addition, MDOT did not ensure that its QTLs correctly reported their inspection results for bridges with false decking into MBIS. (Finding 4)

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**Audit Objective:**

To assess the effectiveness of MDOT's efforts to ensure that bridge inspections are completed by qualified persons.

**Audit Conclusion:**

We concluded that MDOT was moderately effective in ensuring that bridge inspections were completed by qualified persons. We noted one reportable condition (Finding 5).

**Reportable Condition:**

MDOT did not ensure that some inspection team leaders met State and federal QTL requirements (Finding 5).

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**Agency Response:**

Our audit report contains 5 findings and 10 corresponding recommendations. MDOT's preliminary responses indicate that it concurs with all 10 of the recommendations.

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A copy of the full report can be obtained by calling 517.334.8050 or by visiting our Web site at: <http://audgen.michigan.gov>



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