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This chapter contains a description of the organizational structure that exists in the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), promulgated in some cases by other authority. Statements regarding areas of authority and responsibility outside of Engineering and Regional Operations Division are included only to provide continuity of the concepts discussed. In those cases, such statements do not constitute an assignment of authority or responsibility.

2-1 Department Organization

Refer to www.wsdot.wa.gov/about/ExecOrgChart.htm to see the Agency Organization Chart.

2-1.2 Responsibility and Authority

2-1.2.1 Washington State Transportation Commission

Refer to www.wstc.wa.gov/ for information about the Washington State Transportation Commission.

2-1.2.2 Executive Officers

The Secretary of Transportation is the chief executive officer for WSDOT and is appointed by the Governor of the state of Washington. The Secretary carries out the Governor's orders, policies, and direction in a manner sensitive to the needs of all Washington State citizens.

The Deputy Secretary is the Chief Operating Officer for WSDOT and assists the Secretary with high-level legislative, legal, policy, and human resources issues, along with high-level engineering, environmental, construction, and planning issues.

2-2 Headquarters Real Estate Services Office Table of Organization

2-2.1 Headquarters Real Estate Services Manager (HQ RESM)

- A. Administers statewide the operation of Real Estate Services; manages the Headquarters Real Estate Services Office which is the repository of the official records of all real property functions; is the chief branch policy-maker and coordinator of functions of the seven region RESMs in their relationship with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Attorney General Office, Public Transportation and Construction

Divisions' employees bargaining units, Headquarters offices, and other offices of state government and railroad corporations on all agency real estate matters.

- B. Is a member of the Relocation Review Board.
- C. Has principal duties consisting of:
 - 1. Maintaining a policy and procedural manual current with state law and federal regulations for compliance by all RES personnel.
 - 2. Advising WSDOT personnel at all levels in RES matters.
 - 3. Monitoring employee performance, recommending training, and/or needed corrective action.
 - 4. Coordinating with the WSDOT Human Resources Director in personnel management and in collective bargaining negotiations.
 - 5. Responding to state and federal audits of RES performance.
 - 6. Providing assurances to FHWA and other offices of government at all levels, of availability of replacement housing for persons displaced by highway construction projects.
 - 7. Obtaining advance approvals of project replacement or individual "housing of last resort" plans, or proposed policy deviation needed from FHWA or other offices of government in relocation assistance, right of way appraisal, acquisition, or property management.
 - 8. Reviewing and deciding on the acceptance of all transactions.
 - 9. Reviewing and deciding on the acceptance of surplus property rentals, as recommended by region offices, or sales of surplus property.
 - 10. Deciding on concurrence by the department or making recommendations in pretrial or stipulated settlements proposed by Assistant AG.
 - 11. Administering the functions of the acquisition; Title Condemnation and Records; Property Management; Relocation; and the Local Agency Projects/Special Acquisitions/Certifications Sections.
 - 12. Carrying out other assignments made by the Headquarters Design Office.

2-2.3 Local Agency Projects/Special Acquisitions/Certifications Section Manager

The Local Agency Projects/Special Acquisitions/Certification Section Manager reports to the HQ RESM, and is responsible for supervising the statewide Local Agency Coordination Program, the statewide PS&E Review Program and the statewide Right of Way Certification Program to include:

- A. Training and monitoring the region local agency coordinators responsible for the acquisition of right of way by local agencies on federally funded projects.
- B. Working through Highways and Local Programs to approve and monitor local agency's acquisition procedures and train the agencies in proper use of the procedures. Monitor and update Chapter 25 of the *Local Agency Guidelines* M 36-63.
- C. Reviewing construction project PS&Es to ensure that all necessary rights have been acquired and monitoring and reporting to the region and Headquarters on current status.
- D. Preparing Right of way Certificates for all acquisition on federally funded projects prior to construction project advertisement. Monitoring and recertifying any projects certified with exceptions (#3 certification).
- E. Maintaining permanent files on local agencies to include approved procedures, local agency agreements, and project certifications etc.

2-2.4 Property Management Section Manager

The Property Management Section Manager:

- A. Manages the statewide Property Management Program by assuring compliance with departmental operating regulations. The position reports to HQ RESM.
 - 1. Directing the review and inventory control of all excess property and sundry site (capital plant and materials sites) parcels.
 - 2. Directing the review of property disposition transactions to assure compliance with regulations and the validity of judgmental factors.
 - 3. Providing technical advice on property management matters to others.
 - 4. Directing the statewide promotion and sale of surplus properties including land and improvements by both auction and direct sale.
 - 5. Directing the statewide promotion and operation of rentals, leases, airspace agreements, and joint use.

6. Inspect and maintain WSDOT-owned properties other than infrastructure.
 7. Develop and implement discipline-specific training.
 8. Other functions as required by the HQ RESM.
- B. Provides for coordination with and advice to the Regional Administrators, other Headquarters offices, the Attorney General Office, and FHWA on property management functions.
- C. Coordinates with the Regional Administrators on the investigation of citations regarding compliance with operating regulations governing the property management functions.
- D. Formulates operating regulations governing the property management functions for approval by higher authority.

2-2.5 Relocation Assistance Section Manager

The Relocation Assistance Section Manager:

- A. Manages the statewide Relocation Assistance Program. The position reports to the HQ RESM.
- B. Additional responsibilities include:
1. Management of the Headquarters Relocation Assistance Section.
 2. Reviewing and approving all incoming claims.
 3. Advising the HQ RESM, and regional offices in program matters.
 4. Maintenance of official relocation files.
 5. Promulgating operating procedures that implement current state law and federal regulations.
 6. Coordinating and scheduling appeal of determinations and benefits, when necessary.
 7. Provide technical advice and guidance on relocation matters to others.
 8. Assures statewide compliance of relocation matters under the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended.
 9. Develops and implements discipline specific training.
 10. Other functions as required by the HQ RESM.

2-2.6 Appraisal and Appraisal Review Section Manager

The Appraisal and Appraisal Review Section Manager:

- A. Manages the statewide Appraisal and Appraisal Review Program. The position reports to the HQ RESM.
- B. Manages the Headquarters appraisal office. All review appraisers report to this position. Headquarters staff appraisers report to this position.
- C. Assures that appraisals and reviews are prepared in consistency with current acceptable appraisal standards for eminent domain.
- D. Issues operating procedures that implement current state law and federal regulations.
- E. Manages the Approved Fee Appraiser and Review Appraiser List.
- F. Develops and implements discipline specific training.
- G. Performs other functions as required by the HQ RESM.

2-2.7 Acquisition and Title Section Manager

The Acquisition and Title Section Manager:

- A. Manages the statewide Acquisition and Title Review functions and the records within Headquarters. Reports to the HQ RESM. The principal duties of this position are:
 - 1. Directs the review and final processing of all real property acquisition and damage claim files. Assures legal sufficiency and compliance with state laws and departmental regulations. Performs final review and processing of surplus property conveyance documents.
 - 2. Directs the preparation of legal descriptions and exhibit maps, and determinations of interested parties for use by the Attorney General Office in eminent domain proceedings.
 - 3. Makes recommendations for procedures concerning real property title and document processing functions for approval by higher authority.
 - 4. Prepares affidavits and/or testifying in court as the department's expert witness in real estate matters involving titles and legal descriptions.
 - 5. Supervises the Real Estate Services administrative activities which include:
 - a. Indexing and storage of the departments official real property transactions of ownership files.

- b. Maintaining complete and current official files of transportation project right of way and sundry site plans.
6. Develops and implements discipline specific training.
7. Performs other functions as required by HQ RESM.

2-3 Region Organization

2-3.1 General

- A. The principal satellite offices of WSDOT are known as “region offices.”
- B. The relationship of the Region Real Estate Services (RRES) offices within WSDOT is shown in the Table of Organization at www.wsdot.wa.gov/about/ExecOrgChart.htm.
- C. The geographic boundaries of each region are provided on the WSDOT internet Web site at www.wsdot.wa.gov/. If the limits of a particular highway project extend across the boundaries of a region, the responsibilities are assigned to either of the two regions by working agreement based on a case evaluation.

2-3.2 Responsibility and Authority

2-3.2.1 Regional Administrator

- A. The Regional Administrator is responsible to the Assistant Secretary of Engineering and Regional Operations (Chief Engineer).
- B. The Regional Administrator has final authority in the region for decisions on highway matters within the framework established by departmental operating regulations in the form of Secretary Executive Orders, Directives, Policy Statements, Instructional Letters, and department manuals.
- C. The Regional Administrator exercises administrative and management supervision over the Region RES Office as follows:
 1. Furnishes the facilities and supplies, and provides for the staffing required for the effective accomplishment of the Right of Way Program and its related activities.
 2. Within the scope of departmental operating regulations, may review and approve transactions or may make recommendations for further actions. **Note:** This activity may be subdelegated to the Region RESM but may not be further subdelegated.

2-3.2.2 Region RESM

The Region RESM:

- A. Is responsible to the Regional Administrator for managing the Region RES Office.
- B. Is responsible to the Regional Administrator for the following:
 1. Supervising and directing the Region RES Office to assure compliance with departmental operating regulations by:
 - a. Managing all region Real Estate Services functions.
 - b. Providing technical supervision and in service training in all Region RES program disciplines.
 - c. Identifying opportunities for functional replacement of publicly-owned real property. Assures compliance with special requirements for functional replacement.
 - d. Providing reports and systematic records on the anticipated costs of proposed right of way acquisitions and related costs.
 - e. Assuring the receipt of an appropriate right of way plan and an appropriate Work Order Accounting Plan prior to obligating funds on a project.
 - f. Monitoring proposed expenditures to assure their necessity and to assure accurate account coding.
 - g. Reporting on the causes for fund adjustments and the amounts of fund adjustments relative to a Work Order Accounting Plan.
 - h. Providing for appraisal evidence of the amount of the legally compensable fair market value lost to each separate fee and/or tenant ownership due to acquisition or highway project factors.
 - i. Performing the “Project Inspection and Parcel Assignment,” and ensuring that all property and/or property rights required for a project are either acquired or are referred for condemnation.
 - j. Directing the operation of the Relocation Assistance Program for project displaced persons.
 - k. Directing the management of property and/or property rights acquired.

1. Advising and assisting local public agencies (LAs) in completing their right of way acquisition programs when requested. Reviewing LA acquisitions as needed to assure compliance with state and federal requirements.
- m. Ensuring the accuracy of records, and the systematic input of project/parcel status information into the computer concurrent with parcel acquisition progress.
2. Coordinating with other staff officers in the region by:
 - a. Assuring adequate time allocations for right of way activities in the planning for lead time and scheduling
 - b. Providing for real estate services participation in the interdisciplinary team efforts and project field inspections in location and design as required by the Regional Administrator.
 - c. Providing data and/or personnel required to explain the acquisition, relocation assistance, and other related programs at public hearings.
 - d. Assisting in the preparation of right of way plans as required.
 - e. Taking actions as required in [Chapter 6](#) for the authorization of advance acquisition of projects.
 - f. Taking actions as required in [Chapter 6](#) for the authorization of hardship acquisition of parcels.
 - g. Recommending appropriate funding for, and directs the operation of, the regions's ongoing property management inventory.
3. Obtaining technical advice from the HQ RESM (or his designee) on the following:
 - a. Technical problems relating to any of Real Estate Services' disciplines.
 - b. Training of personnel.
 - c. Compliance with guidelines on right of way matters.

2-4 Organization of the Attorney General's Office

2-4.1 General

The Washington State Office of the Attorney General provides legal services to state agencies.

2-4.2 Responsibility and Authority

2-4.2.1 Attorney General

- A. The chief legal officer for the state of Washington holds the title of Attorney General. Since this is an elective position, the Attorney General is responsible to the voters of the state of Washington for all legal matters concerning the state.
- B. WSDOT has a staff of attorneys assigned on a permanent basis to advise and represent the department at the Attorney General's Office. WSDOT reimburses the Office of the Attorney General for salaries, benefits, and case related expenses.

2-4.2.2 Chief Counsel

- A. The principal Assistant Attorney General in the office of the Attorney General Office holds the title of Chief Counsel.
- B. The Chief Counsel is responsible to the Attorney General for all activities of his staff and operates in close coordination with the Secretary of Transportation.
- C. The Chief Counsel assures the close coordination of his staff with the Real Estate Services staffs in the regions and Headquarters.
- D. An Assistant Attorney General may be assigned to handle land acquisition matters for each region. If the case load in a particular region necessitates it, additional Assistant Attorneys General may be assigned to that region.
- E. Only in rare instances (e.g., excessive workloads on regular staff) are the services of a private attorney employed. In these instances, the Chief Counsel contracts with an attorney who has competence, interest, and familiarity with applicable procedures. If federal aid participation in the cost of his services is desired by the state, advance FHWA approval must be obtained to employ special counsel.

