Project Title: C-07-17: Reliability Study of the NYS Bridge Inspection Program

PIN: New Project

Responsible Unit: Engineering Division, Office of Structures

Project Manager: Alampalli, Sreenivas

Project Goal:
An FUWA study done a few years ago showed that bridge inspection ratings have high variability and questioned the visual based inspection procedures’ quality. This is a potential vulnerability in New York State, although current thinking is that the results of the FHWA study are not applicable in New York State. The NYS bridge inspection program is more robust and detailed than what is mandated by FHWA and differs in several aspects (such as number of components inspected, rating scale personnel qualifications, QC/QA program, and training provided) from inspections conducted in other states. The FHWA study involves inspection teams from several states; and did not account for the fact that the qualification of inspectors and the inspection procedures vary significantly from state to state. Notwithstanding this opinion, research is required to confirm the opinion that the New York State bridge inspection program provides reliable results.

The goal of this project is to document the variability associated with the bridge inspection program, suggesting improvements to policy and procedures, and areas requiring further training, if needed, to reduce the variability and improve the reliability of the program.

Actions Proposed:
Repeat the Visual Inspection study conducted by FHWA geared towards the New York State inspection program.

Anticipated Work Products and Accomplishments:
A report documenting suggested improvements to policy and procedures and training.

Proposed Budget: $400,000