

# Highway Administration

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## SYNOPSIS

•IN A comprehensive review of problems in highway administration, the author suggests ways to improve present practices. The introduction points up the leading position that the highway occupies in transportation in the civilized world, noting especially its status in the United States. The observation is made that basic to road development, as well as overall economic and social development, is the need to face facts.

An analysis is made of conditions in general in underdeveloped areas showing how these reflect ineffective administration in public affairs. The contrast between the United States and less advanced countries is noted and ascribed to the historic difference in "drives" among the various countries. Psychological immaturity is named as a chief reason for economic problems.

Excessive formalism in procedures, the "paper barrier" which delays handling of even minor problems, and the indifference to important needs are given as the main reasons for underdevelopment in general and road underdevelopment specifically.

The role of local laws and policies is noted, including an analysis of their employment in civilized and uncivilized areas. The gross national product and its rate of change is mentioned as an indicator or index to national development. The methods used by private enterprise are pointed out as the pattern for government procedures.

In sections on "Highway Administrative Problems," "Finances" and "Human and Physical Needs," analyses are made of ineffective policies and procedures. Possible improvements are suggested, such as coordination of interrelated work, effective advance planning, thorough analysis of job requirements, adequate control through each operation, and adequate maintenance of completed projects. Need for education and training in highway administration is emphasized. The effective technological services and counsel of the U.S. Bureau of Public Roads in the developing countries is acknowledged as an example of developmental assistance.

In the sections on "Priorities," "Preliminary Studies" and "Design," attention is called to existing inadequacies and suggestions made for new approaches. In the section on "Contracts" the author declares that such an instrument is the engineer's charter for the job and not simply a legal device. The author also addresses himself to the prevalent practice of bidding for professional services and its effect on quality of work.

Four recommendations are made for Brazil with respect to highway administration:

1. Reformulation of procedures;
2. Appropriate selection of highway officials;
3. Creation of a permanent Secretariat for all agencies involved in highway development; and
4. Adaption of administrative functions and activities of other leading countries in road development.