

Bridges & Structures

FHWA Data from 12.31.15 indicated 34.2% (831) of Maine's bridges were deficient, now the data, a mere two years later, indicates that 13.3% (326) of Maine's bridges are deficient?? How did the percentage of our deficient bridges seemingly decrease? FHWA discontinued F.O. tracking on 12.31.2015, delaying new performance measures reporting until October 2018...

Repost from March 2018: Anyone else notice the percentage of [Maine's deficient bridges](#) seems to have mysteriously gotten a whole lot better?

- **Structurally Deficient (SD):** This term was previously defined in <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/bridge/065odsup.cfm> as having a condition rating of 4 or less for Item 58 (Deck), Item 59 (Superstructure), Item 60 (Substructure), or Item 62 (Culvert), OR having an appraisal rating of 2 or less for Item 67 (Structural Condition) or Item 71 (Waterway Adequacy) *Beginning with the 2018 data archive*, this term will be defined in accordance with the [Pavement and Bridge Condition Performance Measures final rule](#), published in January of 2017, as a classification given to a bridge which has any component [Item 58, 59, 60, or 62] in Poor or worse condition [code of 4 or less].
- **Functionally Obsolete (FO):** This term was previously defined in <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/bridge/065odsup.cfm> as having an appraisal rating of 3 or less for Item 68 (Deck Geometry), Item 69 (Underclearances), or Item 72 (Approach Roadway Alignment), OR having an appraisal rating of 3 for Item 67 (Structural Condition) or Item 71 (Waterway Adequacy). Functionally obsolete is a legacy classification that was used to implement the Highway Bridge Program, which was discontinued with the enactment of MAP-21. As a result, fiscal year 2015 was the last year outstanding Highway Bridge Program funds could be obligated on eligible projects, including ones with bridges that were once classified as functionally obsolete. Therefore, FHWA is no longer tracking this measure, and *will not be publishing it on our website for the 2016 data forward*. Our focus has shifted to a performance-based program as established in MAP-21 and continued in the Fast Act. As such, we encourage the use of the Good-Fair-Poor bridge condition measures outlined in the [Pavement and Bridge Condition Performance Measures final rule](#), published in January of 2017.

FHWA Data as of this date:	# Bridges	# S.D.	% S.D.	# F.O.	% F.O.	Total # Deficient Bridges	Total % Deficient Bridges
12.31.2017	2458	326	13.3%	-	-	326	13.3%
12.31.2016	2450	352	14.4%	-	-	352	14.4%
12.31.2015	2431	361	14.8%	470	19.3%	831	34.2%

[Definitions of S.D. and F.O. and data used in above table from official FHWA website.](#)

“Functionally obsolete is a legacy classification... fiscal year 2015 was the last year outstanding Highway Bridge Program funds could be obligated on eligible projects, including ones with bridges that were once classified as functionally obsolete... FHWA is no longer tracking this measure, and will not be publishing it on our website for the 2016 data forward.”

Maine still has a third of the state's bridges that are sub-par; you can't just forget those 470 F.O. bridges that are conveniently not counted for now...

FHWA December [2018 Data](#):

Total bridges that the MaineDOT is responsible for: 2473

Bridges with a rating of good: 786 -or- 31.8% of total

Bridges with a rating of fair: 1362 -or- 55% of total

Bridges with a rating of poor: 325 -or- 13.1% of total

Whether we are #6 or #7 worst nationwide on bridges, or 14% or 13.1% poor or structurally deficient depends on the available data for the reports that I have referenced; these slight differences don't detract from the fact that our infrastructure is in sad shape and needs immediate attention.

In summary, we have gone from a total of 34.2% of Maine's bridges rated as deficient (structurally deficient + functionally obsolete) in 2015 to a total of 13.1% of Maine's bridges rated as poor in 2018 data. Does that make you feel better or should you hold your breath when you transit the bridges of Maine? And, what is the condition of those 522 bridges within the 21.1% no longer reported on?