

### 6.3 PROFESSIONAL ENGINEER TRAINING PROGRAM

As discussed in **Chapter 5.0**, the FDOT's P.E. Training Program is a four-year, two-phase training program encompassing all aspects of the Department's operations, and prepares the trainee for a role in organizational leadership. The purpose of the P.E. Training Program is to:

*[...] facilitate the recruitment and hiring of graduate civil engineers by offering an initial career path providing broad, practical experience in the field of transportation engineering, leading to licensure as a Professional Engineer in Florida; [...] the program also serves as a resource for the succession of Professional Engineers who develop into future leaders and managers within the Department.*

Evaluation of relevant P.E. Trainee pay and retention data indicate that:

- Turnover of P.E. Training participants has been relatively low over the 10-year period (2003-2012) based upon data collected by FDOT. However, there were significant economic issues during that period that may have influenced this low turnover.
- Florida provides a very comprehensive program compared to other southeastern states, offering a 48-month EIT program as compared to other states whose programs run from 12 to 24 months.
- Florida average DOT salaries rank fifth among the peers analyzed in this study and fall slightly below the overall peer average.
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- Overall, FDOT's P.E. Training Program's pay raise system is relatively competitive in comparison to other southeastern states, and is specifically comparable to the pay raise system reported by North Carolina. As such, it should maintain this system of rewards to facilitate retention.
- Florida's population is projected to grow at a higher rate than any other southeastern state. This expansion likely will result in the need for more infrastructure enhancements requiring a strong workforce of civil engineers.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 3**

***FDOT should consider increasing the starting salary of the P.E. Trainees to at least the value equal to the average paid by other southeastern states. This increase would increase P.E. Trainee salary by approximately \$652 to \$45,406.***