

No. RW/NHVI-50(3)/83-Vol II

*Dated the 5th February, 1988*

To,

The Chief Engineers of State Public Works Deptts. and Union Territories dealing with National Highways and other Centrally Financed Schemes; The Director General (Works), Central PWD; The Director General Border Roads.

Subject: Creation of a separate bridge maintenance organisation in State Highway Departments — implementation of the Report of the Special Committee.

This Ministry has been deeply concerned over the inadequate performance in service of some major bridges on National Highways and accordingly set up a Special Committee under the aegis of Indian Roads Congress of bridge experts to recommend measures for ensuring greater professionalism in construction practice and security of major bridges. Report of this Committee giving specific and general recommendations has been accepted by this Ministry for its implementation. The only one specific recommendation on supplemental measure for design, detailing, and durability of important bridge structures has already been circulated *vide* this Ministry's letter of even no. dated the 13th January, 1988. One of the general recommendation on the subject cited above as given by the Committee is reproduced hereunder:

"A separate bridge maintenance organisation should be created in all Highway Departments to look after the important functions of indepth inspection, special investigations, repairs planning & documentation. Such organisations should be staffed with selected experienced personnel and provided with modern sensory tools and mobile bridge inspection units"

2. The Committee has observed as under regarding "maintenance management" about important bridges in their Report.

- (i) A systematised quality assurance system calls for new priorities in maintenance management system. To begin with, special inspection of all bridges on a national scale should immediately be undertaken to provide the data base. In view of the special importance of the activity, data obtained from routine visual inspection should not be used for this purpose.
  - (ii) Planned maintenance of important bridges will require adequate organisation, equipment, expertise and funding. At present, all of them seem to be deficient. A separate bridge maintenance organisation in the Highway Administration should be created and charged with the responsibility of indepth inspection, special investigations, repair planning & documentation.
  - (iii) A detailed Manual of Maintenance activities should be framed carefully for each important bridge before it is put to use. This should include details of the performance and the feed-back system. Such a manual should be prepared by the successful tenderer and should form part of a bridge contract.
3. It is suggested that suitable action may please be taken immediately for creation of a separate bridge maintenance organisation out of the infrastructure available with the PWDs.
4. The receipt of this communication may please be acknowledged.
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