

*No.RW/NH-34044/1/94-DO III*

*Dated, the 15th June, 1994*

To

Chief Engineers, PWD of all States/UTs (dealing with National Highways and other Centrally sponsored schemes); Director General (Works), Central Public Works Department; National Highway Authority; Director General Border Roads

Subject: Selection of Consultants for Road/Bridge Projects on National Highways- Supplementary Guidelines

With a view to streamlining the process of selection of Consultants, the "Interim Guidelines for engaging consultants for preparation of Highway Projects" were circulated among the State Chief Engineers and other concerned organisations vide this Ministry's letter No.RW/NH-34011/62/89-DO II dated 12th January, 1990. In addition to prescribing an evaluation criteria for prequalification of consultants, these guidelines have laid down the procedure for selection of consultants based on composite evaluation of the technical and financial proposals with appropriate weightages assigned to each.

2. Subsequent to the issue of the above guidelines, a large number of consultancy projects in respect of National Highways have been got carried out by this Ministry. Based on the experience gained therefrom and the views expressed by professionals involved in selection and implementation process, the existing procedures for selection of consultants have been reviewed. In respect of domestic consultancy services, it is felt that apart from other needed modifications in the selection process, the adoption of an alternative procedure comprising selection of the consultant with the lowest financial bid out of the technically acceptable consultants in substitution of the existing procedure based on technical-cum-financial weightage, merits consideration.

3. Accordingly, the following supplementary guidelines for engaging domestic consultants are being communicated for adoption:-

- (i) The terms of Reference (TOR) should be carefully drawn. These should indicate specifically the minimum qualification of personnel, their man-months, scope of survey and investigation, quality control checks to be exercised during project implementation and the requirement of specific recommendations/advice regarding type and details of construction equipment appropriate to the project together with their upkeep. The TOR should also stipulate that the overall responsibility for the quality of the project will rest with the consultant.

- (ii) In addition to the details of price break-down to be included in the financial proposal, as indicated in para 8 of the "Sample Letter of Invitation to Pre-qualified Consultants" (Annexure III of the Interim Guidelines for engaging consultants, circulated vide this Ministry's letter referred to in para 1 above), the cost for survey and investigation should also be included in the price break-down.
- (iii) The evaluation criteria for the technical proposals, together with the minimum acceptable threshold technical score, should be decided on a case-by-case basis.
- (iv) Financial bids of only those firms who secure the minimum acceptable technical score need be opened. The work should be awarded to the lowest financial bidder provided his offer is found to be reasonable.

4. Under emergent situations, the prequalification step could be omitted and proposals invited from select list of consultants in consultation with this Ministry. However, this will be done only exceptionally. In addition, this Ministry may, if so deemed appropriate, directly engage the consultancy services for a specific project/study.

5. The empanelment of consultants will be a continuous process for which applications, as and when received by this Ministry from the prospective consultants, will be considered appropriately. The panel would be kept up-to-date at least on a yearly basis. An empanelled consultant could be taken out if his performance is not found satisfactory.

6. It is considered that performance evaluation of the projects already handled by the empanelled consultants should be inbuilt in the selection procedures for engaging consultants. Accordingly, the criteria for performance evaluation of the consultants are presently under this Ministry's consideration and the same will be circulated on finalisation, for being suitably incorporated in the selection process.

7. The above guidelines may please be circulated among the concerned officers of your department for information and adoption in respect of consultancy services to be engaged in future in respect of domestically funded projects.

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