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(सड़क परिवहन और राजमार्ग मंत्रालय)
National Highways Authority of India

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NHAI/Policy Guidelines/Consultancy/2021

Policy No. 10.1.30/2021 dated 15th November 2021

{Decision taken on E-Office File No. NHAI/QualityofConsultants/2021 (Comp.No. 116438)}

Sub: Timely deployment and improving Quality of Consultants (IE/AE/SC).

NHAI works on outsourcing model with lean & thin organization structure. The success of outsourcing model heavily depends upon standard of performance of the Consultants. In the recent past, several steps have been taken to improve the quality of the consultants. The following steps are stipulated now for timely deployment and to improve quality of services of the Consultants:

(i) Stopping the delays in appointing IE/AE/SC:

(a) Despite instructions dated 21.05.2020 & 03.11.2020, it was noticed that there are large number of cases where bids of IE/AE/SC were not invited & finalised timely in awarded projects. Henceforth, the award of consultancy assignments, where instructions dated 21.05.2020 & 03.11.2020 are not complied, shall be submitted to Chairman alongwith justification for delays.

(b) Timelines for finalising the bid of IE/AE/SC : Member concerned was authorised vide Policy Guidelines dated 28.02.2020 to allow engagement of a Financial Consultant for evaluating the bids of the Technical Consultants with certain conditions. This has been further extended for procurement of consultancy contracts being taken up by ROs as well. In this regard, the following timelines shall be adhered to:

(b1) Technical Evaluation shall be completed within 30 days of receipt of bids. Evaluation Committee/ Tech. Division to ensure that the Financial Consultants do not raise trivial issues and delay the process. The Financial Consultants whose services are not found satisfactory or who are delaying the process shall be de-empanelled through Finance Division.

(b2) After declaring L-1 bidder of civil work and ascertaining conflict of interest, if any, the technical evaluation result be declared and financial bids of consultants be opened within 7 days of declaring L-1 bidder of civil work.

(b3) The combined score & H-1 bidder be finalised and CVs be sent to the Expert Team [Ref. Para-(ii) below] for interview within 7 days of opening of financial bids of consultants.

(b4) Expert Team to hold interviews of Key Personnel, get replacements, if required and Tech. Division to award the consultancy assignment within 15 days of activity at (b3).

(b5) The generic issues in evaluating the technical bids of the consultancy assignments shall continue to be referred to the committee constituted vide Policy Guidelines No. 10.2.16 dated 07.09.2018 for deciding a common approach within NHAI.

(ii) **Interviews of Key Personnel of Consultants (IE/AE/SC):** The earlier system of interviews of Key Personnel after LOA, but before signing of the consultancy agreement was marred with several issues and hence it was discontinued. Now, the following system shall be followed:

(a) The Expert Teams (2-3 to begin with) comprising of 3 eminent retired/ serving officers in each team will be set up by each Member to take the interviews through VC of the Key Personnel of H-1 Consultant before issue of LOA of consultancy assignments under their

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jurisdiction. The proceedings of VC shall lie on Data Lake as a record. If any Key Personnel is found not suitable, such person will not be allowed to participate for 1 year in NHAI's projects. The Consulting Firm will be given only one opportunity to replace unsuitable person with a person of equal or better CV. No reduction in remuneration shall apply to such replacements. If Consultant fails to produce alternate CV within 7 days or alternate CV/ Person is also not found suitable by the team, then the bid of H-1 Consulting Firm will be considered non-responsive and the fresh financial bids from the remaining qualified consulting firms in the same assignment (technical proposal scoring atleast 75 points) shall be obtained by giving 15 days time and then the above procedure shall be repeated. In case the remaining qualified consulting firms are less than 2, then such consultancy bid shall be reinvited.

(b) **Interview of Key Personnel already deployed at site:** The Expert Teams as set up above will also take the interviews of Key Personnel deployed in ongoing projects, where progress of civil work is 50% or less, as a one time exercise in the order of oldest project first, following the same process as at Para-(ii)(a) above. If any person(s) is(are) found unsuitable by the Expert Team, such person(s) will be demobilised immediately & will not be allowed to participate for 1 year in NHAI's projects and the Consultant will be given an opportunity to replace such person(s) within 7 days failing which the Consultant will be kept on non-performer list so that they do not bid in future projects of NHAI till they replace the unsuitable person(s) with equal or better CV. In such interactions, PD shall present the performance of the consultant/ Key Personnel so far on the project including quality of supervision/ inspections/ NCRs/ digital MPRs, delays in decision making like COS, EOT, approval of drawings, etc. Expert Team may prescribe a format for this feedback from PD.

(c) During above interactions of Expert Teams, the following shall be present:

- (i) MD or Permanent Director of Consulting Firm; and
- (ii) CGM (T)/ GM (T) of HQ for procurements at HQ (or) RO/GM(T) of RO for procurements at RO.

2. The above guidelines shall be effective from 16th November, 2021.
3. This issues with the approval of Competent Authority.


(Sunil Prakash Bhardwaj)
Chief General Manager (Coord.)

To

All Officers of NHAI HQ/ ROs/ PIUs/ CMUs/ Site Offices

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