



INFRASTRUCTURE CONSULTANTS ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

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Ref. No. ICAI/Chairman/NHAI/2025-26/1110

Date 25.11.2025

To,

The Chairman,

National Highways Authority of India,

G-5 & 6, Sector-10, Dwarka,

New Delhi - 110075

Email: chairman@nhai.org

Sub.: Quarterly Review Meeting with Authority Engineers / Independent Engineers at NHAI Head Quarter on 17-11-2025.

Respective Sir,

We are grateful for inviting us in the Quarterly Review Meeting held with Authority Engineers and Independent Engineers at NHAI Head Quarter on 17-11-2025 in which the following were present.

NHAI Side:

1. Shri Vipnesh Sharma, Member (Projects)
2. Shri P. K. Jain, CGM (Chairman's office PPP Policy & Project Appraisal)
3. Shri Deepak Saxena, (GM (IT))
4. Shri A. K. Jain, GM (Finance)
5. Shri P. M. Gawasane, GM (SRD & Q, Haryana)
6. Shri Anil Kumar Jha, GM (Finance)

Consultants' Side:

1. All CMDs, MDs and CEOs of Consultancy firms

The following points were discussed and agreed by NHAI for implementation which are summarized below:

1. **Monthly site Kick off meetings:** The monthly site kick-off meetings are currently attended primarily by Team Leaders, as it is not practically feasible for AEs/ IEs to be physically present at sites. However, it has been observed that Team Leaders are



sometimes unable to take prompt and appropriate decisions during these meetings due to operational limitations.

To address this and ensure fast decision making, it was agreed to provide VC links to AEs/ IEs to facilitate joining of monthly site kick off meetings virtually to provide necessary inputs and support real time decision making. With this arrangement, the decision taken in the kick off meeting will be available to NHAI HQ in a timely manner. All Project Directors may kindly be advised to share VC links well in advance for all future monthly kick off meetings.

2. **Approval of Design & drawing through Datalake Portal:** It has been told that approval of design and drawings should be done by AEs / IEs through Datalake Portal. All Contractors / Concessionaire may kindly be advised to furnish their proposals for approval of design and drawing on Datalake Portal so that AEs/ IEs may either approve or offer comments on submitted proposal through Datalake Portal. Adoption of this procedure will ensure transparency in the entire system of approval of design and drawings.

3. **Delegation of Power delegated to Team Leaders / Highway Maintenance cum Resident Engineers and Powers retained by AEs/ IEs:** It is submitted that most of the AEs / IEs working in NHAI have formally delegated part of their financial and technical powers to the respective Team Leaders / Highway Maintenance cum Resident Engineer to ensure smooth and timely execution of day to day site activities. The following powers have been delegated to the Team Leaders/ Highway Maintenance cum Resident Engineer.

"Recommendation of IPCs, signing of RFIs, Source Approval of quarry materials and other local materials, monthly Contractors' Bills, issuance of site instructions/ field quality clearance for day to day works etc."

However, the following powers have been retained by AEs / IEs

"Approval of COS, EOT, recommendation of PCOD/ COD, approval of Plan and profile and design and drawings and matters involving financial implications."

A sample copy of the Delegation of Powers is enclosed as **Annexure – A** herewith for your kind perusal and record please.



4. Fixing Responsibilities of Team Leaders along with other Site Consultancy Staff:

Responsibilities of Team Leaders and other site staff who are involved in processing and recommending payments to contractors / concessionaires may please be fixed since payment of IPCs are being processed at site with no interference of AEs / IEs. In case AEs / IEs will start doing processing at their end, the consequent IPCs will be delayed. Team Leaders along with consultancy team will be responsible for access payment to contractors / concessionaires

Practically, all AEs / IEs follow this procedure and have delegated the responsibility to Team Leaders. Hence if any over payment is detected, the concerned Team Leader may be held responsible and blacklisting action may be taken against the said Team Leader.

Similarly Bridge Engineers may please be assigned the responsibility of checking feasibility of the proposed bridges. As soon as contractors / concessionaires submit their design / drawing pertaining to bridges, the concerned Bridge Engineer may please check atleast the feasibility of proposed structures before forwarding to the Head Office of AEs / IEs for detailed scrutiny and checking. If any deficiency is found at feasibility stage, action may be taken against the concerned Bridge Engineer and not against AE/IE.

5. Payment of GST to AEs / IEs: Meeting has already been conducted on 21-11-2025 with GST Cell. The discussion was fruitful and result oriented. Agreed points in the meeting is submitted vide our letter no. ICAI/ Chairman/ 2025-26/ 1109, dated 25-11-2025 and copy enclosed herewith as Annexure-B.

6. Payment of Monthly Consultancy Invoices: During discussion in the review meeting, it was submitted by AEs/ IEs that there are delays in release of payment by the paying authorities thereby severely affecting the financial health of the consultants. It was also submitted that although the monthly consultancy invoices raised by AEs /IEs generally amount up to approximately Rs. 10 Lacs., yet the payments are not released in a timely manner.

In several cases, certain PIUs are releasing payments of consultancy invoices collectively after a gap of 3 to 4 months or more. These prolonged delays are causing significant financial hardship to the consultants thereby making it difficult to meet



salary commitments and other operational expenses in a timely manner. As discussed during the review meeting, we kindly request you to issue necessary guideline / instructions to all concerned PIUs directing them to release 90% of the consultancy invoices immediately upon submission and remaining 10% may be released after due scrutiny of the invoice and fulfillment of contractual obligations.

7. Deemed Approval of Key Personnel and Sub Professional staff: If RO has recommended CV of any Key Personnel then permission for joining of the particular Key Personnel may be granted or if no action is taken within the period of 30 days from the date of submission of CV then it may be treated as deemed approved and accordingly attendance of the Key Personnel may be allowed on Datalake Portal.

8. Reduction of remuneration for attendance less than 90% of Key Personnel/Sub Key Professional for civil projects:

NHAI vide Policy Circular No.10.2.32/2022 dated 05.12.2022 had issued clarification regarding reduction of remuneration for attendance less than 90% of Key Personnel/Sub Key Professional for civil projects. Thereafter NHAI vide Policy Circular No.10.2.33/2023 dated 20.07.2023 further clarified that the deduction in monthly payments on account of inadequate deployment of Key Personnel/Other Key Personnel/Sub Professional shall be applied on the respective remunerative part/component of Key Personnel/Other Key Personnel/Sub Professional **but many authorities are not still complying the instructions and therefore it is most humbly requested to issue another instructions for strict compliance in this matter.**

9. Review/Amendment of penal provision in consultancy contract relating to fake educational degrees of Key Personnel:

As per the present terms of the Agreement, the consultant is held solely responsible for any misrepresentation/fake educational degree submitted by Key Personnel. In case any such incident is detected, NHAI is entitled to recover twice the salary and perks paid to the delinquent Key Personnel during the entire period of deployment from the consultant.

It is submitted that CVs of Key Personnel are primarily sourced from the Infracon Portal maintained by the Ministry of Road Transport & Highways. Consultants have no legal authority to get degrees of Key Personnel verified from issuing universities/institutions.



The image shows a handwritten signature in blue ink over a circular stamp. The stamp contains the text "Infrastructure Conservation Association of India" around the perimeter and a star at the bottom. The signature is written across the stamp.

Further in the matter, consultancy contracts are awarded on highly competitive rates with average profit margins of only 12 to 15%. For a typical contract value of approx. Rs.5 Cr., the consultant's net profit ranges between Rs.50 Lakh to Rs.60 Lakh only. Thus recovery of twice the remuneration of a delinquent expert (in addition to the salary already paid to the expert) effectively results in a three times cost to the consultant, which is not rational and far exceeds the modest profit earned on the entire consultancy assignment.

In order to protect the interest of NHAI while simultaneously removing the disproportionate financial burden on consultants, we humbly propose that at the time of submission of CVs of Key Personnel to NHAI, the Consultant may obtain the following instruments/documents from each Key Personnel:

- a) A PDC cheque equivalent to the entire remuneration payable to the concerned Key Personnel for the full contract period or proportionate period till deployment is mandatorily submitted to consultant. In case any degree is subsequently found to be fake, consultant may encash the cheques and initiate legal action for recovery of amount equivalent to the financial penalty levied by NHAI against the Key Personnel with the help of NHAI.

OR

Kindly blacklist the delinquent Key Personnel on finding fake degree certificate / experience certificate and kindly delete the penalty Clause for imposition of penalty on consultants.

We firmly believe that the above mechanism will fully safeguard the interest of NHAI and eliminate the possibility of financial losses to consultants.

10. Approval of Key Personnel as replacements with reduction in remuneration in case technical score of proposed candidates are lower than the original candidates:

One time special dispensation to fill the vacant positions of Key Personnel was carried out by NHAI under your able governance vide NHAI Policy Circular No.10.1.41/2025 dated 09.06.2025 in which provision of accepting CVs of the proposed Key Personnel for replacement having technical score upto 90% of the replaced Key Personnel has been provided on prorata deduction in remuneration. NHAI Works Manual 2006 has



also provided to accept the new proposed personnel having less marking in comparison to the marks of the original personnel on decreased remuneration basis.

It is therefore proposed that if the procedure of NHAI Works Manual 2006 regarding replacement of professional/staff by the consultant is applied then approval for replacements of Key Personnel would be faster and repetitive rejection of CVs on being slightly lesser qualified could be avoided. Consequently deployment of Key Personnel in projects would be faster.

11. Separate Policy on eligibility of Key Personnel for deployment in OMT Projects:

We have suggested in the Review Meeting to allow deployment of young Engineers having B.E. degree with minimum 5 years experience for the positions of Highway Maintenance cum Resident Engineer and Bridge/Structural Engineer. The maximum length of experience may kindly be restricted to 7 years to make the positions available for young, energetic and efficient candidates. Being younger, they will be able to put more efforts in the project. Besides being more efficient, the young Engineers are more computer savvy and well versed with the latest software. On the contrary, the experienced Key Personnel may not as much aware about the use of software and new technology as young Engineers with 5 to 7 years experience. It has also been experienced that most of the Key Personnel having requisite qualifications and experience usually resort to blackmailing of consultants due to their limited availability and perform duties on their terms.

12. Approval of Key Materials like Cement, Bitumen and Steel: Earlier critical materials such as Cement, Bitumen and Steel were permitted in NHAI projects only from specifically approved brands / manufacturers through NHAI Circular. Subsequently these specific approvals were withdrawn and the responsibility of approving materials was shifted to Authority Engineers / Independent Engineers based on specified test results from NABL accredited laboratories.

The old approved vender lists are no longer valid, yet consultants are often compelled to accept materials from manufacturers who were once on those lists but whose current quality control is doubtful.

In order to ensure uniformly high quality and to protect the long term performance of National Highways, the following suggestions are hereby submitted for kind consideration and implementation please



The image shows a handwritten signature in blue ink over a circular stamp. The stamp contains the text "Infrastructure Consultants Association of India" around the perimeter and a small star at the bottom. The signature is a stylized, cursive script.

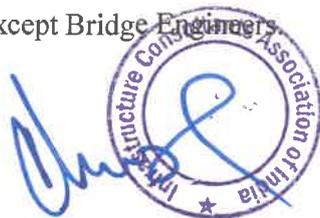
- i. Kindly reintroduce brand wise / manufacturer wise approval for Cement, Bitumen and Steel through a fresh Circular based on proven track record and test results carried out in NABL accredited laboratories and fast performance in NHAI projects.
- ii. In the interim, Bitumen and bituminous products may kindly be permitted only from Government Refineries i.e. IOCL, BPCL and HPCL. Steel may please be permitted from renowned producers namely SAIL, TATA Steel, JSW Steel, Jindal Steel, RINL and IISCO. Similarly Cement from renowned manufacturers like Ultratech, Orient, JK Cement, ACC, Ambuja, Wonder, Dalmia Cement may be permitted for use in NHAI projects.
- iii. Other manufacturers, brands may be allowed only when the above listed manufacturers issue NOC / regret letter stating their inability to supply the required quantity and grade within the project timeline.

13. One time limited window for editing CVs on Infracon Portal: Several Key Personal whose CVs are already uploaded on the Infracon Portal have minor inadvertent errors, particularly in designation. Because of these minor discrepancies, many otherwise eligible and experienced personnel are facing rejection during documents verification stage.

We earnestly request that a onetime limited window say for 15-30 days, may kindly be provided wherein enrolled Key Personnel be allowed to rectify such genuine minor errors in their CVs. This single relaxation will resolve anomalies in a large number of CVs.

14. Review of Eligibility Criteria for Selection to the Position of Team Leader / other Key Positions of Consultancy Services: It has been our consistent submission that retired Executive Engineers from any Central / State Government Departments or Public Sector Undertakings may kindly be considered eligible for the position of Team Leader irrespective of their parent department and their specialization on the same lines as adopted by NHAI in recruiting their officers on deputation / lien from any government department irrespective of their areas of specialization.

Similarly, retired Asst. Engineer from any government departments having relevant experienced in Infrastructure Projects may please be considered eligible for all positions of Key Personnel except Bridge Engineers.



For the position of Bridge Engineer, any candidate possessing experience in structural design in any field of civil engineering may kindly be accepted.

Adoption of the above criteria will remove unnecessary restrictions and enlarge the pool of experienced retired Government Personnel available for Consultancy Services.

15. Fixing Responsibilities of Key Personnel and Authority Engineers/ Independent Engineers Separately: The responsibilities and liabilities of Key Personnel including Team Leaders and other consultancy staff may kindly be fixed as per Delegation of Power mentioned in the aforesaid Para (3) of this Minutes of Meeting.

Accordingly Key Personnel and consultancy staff will be responsible for the decision taken within the delegated powers which include the followings:

- i. Excess payment to contractors / concessionaires.
- ii. Data Entry on NHAI One App
- iii. Timely submission of Monthly Progress Report
- iv. Entry on Data Lake Portal
- v. Approval of quarry / local material.
- vi. Slackness observed in supervision of work and site investigations.
- vii. Irregularities in maintaining quality and quality of materials.
- viii. Failing to attend meetings with clients.
- ix. Timely Submission of Maintenance Manual
- x. Any other duties assigned to Team Leader / Key Personnel as mentioned in Delegation of Power.

The responsibilities of AEs / IEs based on the Delegation of Powers will be as follows:

- i. Change of Scope.
- ii. Delay in Processing EOT.
- iii. Declaration of COD.
- iv. Source Approval of Bitumen, Steel, Cement and other factory made materials.
- v. Any other responsibilities involving financial implications and assigned to AEs / IEs as per Delegation of Power.

16. Policy Guidelines to Prevent Routine Reopening of previously Approved Decisions due to Change of Guards at PD / RO Level: It has been observed that whenever there is a Change of Guard at the level of Project Directors or Regional Officers, the incoming officer in an effort to review past decisions, often re-examines technical / commercial decisions that were earlier taken and duly approved by his predecessor. In several cases,



even minor deviations that were consciously accepted by the previous competent authority are being treated as irregularities leading to issuance of Show Cause Notice to the concerned consultants. It is therefore submitted that the necessary guidelines may kindly be issued with the effect that the decisions taken on approvals granted by a previous PDs / ROs within their delegated powers shall be treated as final and binding unless specific malafide is established.

17. Provision for Providing Design Review Charges in all types of EPC / HAM / BOT / DBFOT Contracts: Kindly fix 1% of project cost for design review in the financial offer of Authority Engineers / Independent Engineers for plan and profile for bridges and highways.

PRAYER

We shall be grateful, if the following prayer is examined and suitable instructions may kindly be issued for implementation of the same.

1. AEs / IEs are allowed to join monthly site kick off meetings through VC.
2. Submission of design and drawing by contractors / concessionaires only through Datalake Portal.
3. Fixing responsibilities of Key Personnel / Consultants as per Delegation of Power issued by consultants.
4. Expeditious payment of Monthly Consultancy Invoices.
5. Allowing attendance of Key Personnel and Sub Professional staff who are deemed approved after expiry of 30 days period post submission of CVs.
6. Issue of instructions for strict follow up of Policy Circulars for reduction of remuneration for attendance less than 90% of Key Personnel/ Sub Professional.
7. Request for review / amendment of penal provision in Consultancy Contract relating to fake educational degrees of Key Personnel and removal of penalty clause from Consultancy Contract Agreement and withdraw the following provision from NHAI Policy Guidelines vide No. 10.2.23, dated 20-07-2022 (File No. NHAI/11013/AE&IE/RFP Docu./2017-Part(1)).
"Monetary penalty to be imposed as per Clause 9 of the GCC of Fake CVs".
8. Approval of Key Personnel having lower technical scores than the original candidates on the basis of provision in NHAI Works Manual 2006.
9. Separate Policy on eligibility of Key Personnel for deployment in OMT projects.
10. Procedure for approval of key materials like Cement, Bitumen and Steel.



11. Allow one time limited window for editing CVs on Infracon Portal.
12. Review of eligibility criteria for selection to the position of Team Leader / other key positions of consultancy services.
13. Kindly issue Policy Guidelines to prevent routine reopening of previously approved decisions due to change of PDs / ROs.
14. Kindly fix consultancy charges separately for design review for plan and profile of bridges and highways.

I shall be grateful if the matter is kindly examine and suitable instructions issued at the earliest.

With due regards,

Thanking you,

Yours sincerely,

For Infrastructure Consultants Association of India



(Dr. L. N. Malviya)
Chairman

Encl.:

- 1- Annexure-A Power of Delegation to Team Leader.
- 2- Copy of ICAI letter No. ICAI/ Chairman/ 2025-26/ 1109, dated a25-11-2025 as Annexure-B regarding GST.

Copy to:

- 1- Shri Vipnesh Sharma, Member (Projects), (Email: memberproject@nhai.org)- For kind information.
- 2- Shri P. K. Jain, CGM (PPP Policy & Project Appraisal), NHAI, HQ (Email: pkjain@nhai.org) – For kind information
- 3- Shri Deepak Saxena, CGM (IT), NHAI, HQ (Email: deepaksaxena@nhai.org) – For kind information
- 4- Shri P. N. Gawasane, General Manager (T)-SRD&Q, Haryana, NHAI, HQ (Email: prashant@nhai.org) – For kind information
- 5- Shri Anil Kumar Jha, GM (Finance)- For kind information.
- 6- All esteemed Members of ICAI – For information

**DRAFT POWER OF DELEGATION APPROVED
BY MEMBERS OF THE ASSOCIATION**

To,
The Project Director,
National Highway Authority of India

Sub: Name of consultancy assignment. Reg.: Delegation of Power.

Ref: Agreement signed on -----

Sir,

The Contract Agreement under reference has been drawn by us with National Highways Authority of India, for providing our services on the project under subject.

It is submitted that....., Team Leader cum Sr. Highway Engineer will carry out the routine duties/correspondence in respect of subject consultancy services as Follows;

- i. Signing of RFT's,
- ii. Recommendation of IPC's,
- iii. Source approval of materials like Soil, Aggregate, Sand & Water and for rest all material (Team Leader has to send recommendation to Independent Engineer for approval of all materials excluding Soil, Aggregate, Sand & Water.).
- iv. Approval of Plant & Machinery used in project work.
- v. Quality Assurance Plan.
- vi. Correspondence related to Traffic Management in Work Zones and Road Safety as per IRC & NHAI provisions in consultation with Road Safety Expert of the Project.
- vii. Permission for opening of new petrol pumps. Team Leader has to send recommendation to to Independent Engineer for Approval.
- viii. Preparation of Documents for Extension of Time (EOT) & Change of Scope (COS) proposal for sending to to Independent Engineer for final recommendation.
- ix. Carryout proper Supervision of works and Site investigations on regular basis.
- x. Responsible for maintaining quality and quantity of materials used in the construction activities.
- xi. He will supervise the works as per Contract Agreement and Codal Provisions and perform all activities regularly except the duties vested with to Independent Engineer or his designated Authorized Representative at Head Office.
- xii. He will attend the meetings with the client, contractors and other stakeholders.
- xiii. The Team Leader will be responsible for ensuring the quality, quantity, and measurement of all types of work being carried out on site, as well as ensuring that all work is done in accordance with the relevant Codal provisions and the CA .Additionally, the Team Leader will be fully responsible for verifying the Contractors's bills and recommending them to the NHAI client. If any discrepancies or errors are found in the Contractors's bills, the Team Leader will be entirely responsible.
- xiv. The Team Leader will be accountable for ensuring that the payment of consultancy bill is received in the company's account by 5th of every month, enabling the company to make payments to the consultancy staff timely.



Further -is designated as Engineer of the project in terms of Policy circular No.10.1.42/2025,dated 10/06/2025.The following duties vested in Independent Engineer will be performed by the designated Engineer of consultancy firm.

Imposition of liquidated damages, subletting of works, suspension of works and termination payments, recommendation of EOT, COS, Approval of Plan and Profile and Design and Drawings, Annuity payments, Final payment to contractors, Issue of Completion Certificate, any matter involving financial implication Source Approval of Factory Made Materials, Arbitration and conciliation.

Thanking you and assuring our best services

Yours Truly

For, Consultancy Services

Mr Xyz

Managing Director

Copy to: The Regional Officer, -----

