

INFRASTRUCTURE CONSULTANTS ASSOCIATION OF INDIA



T-10, 3rd Floor Above Vishal Mega Mart
Plot No-I, Zone-I, M.P. Nagar Bhopal (M.P.)
Ph. & Fax- 0755-4295421 Mob. 9977828711
E-mail: infraconsultantindia@gmail.com
Website:-www.icaindia.net

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Ref. No. ICAI/NHAI/Chairman/2021-22/803

To,
The Chairman,
National Highway Authority of India,
Add: G – 5 & 6, Sector – 10,
Dwarka, New Delhi – 110075
Email:- chairman@nhai.org

Sub: Various issues of DPR/AE/IE Consultants.

Hon'ble Sir,

We thank you Sir for organizing an interactive event on 31.08.2021 with Independent Engineers, Authority's Engineers and DPR Consultants to listen and understand the various problems faced by them. Dr. L.N. Malviya, Chairman, Infrastructure Consultants Association of India has also attended the event and apprised the various problems of Independent Engineers, Authority's Engineers & DPR Consultants. Your Hon'ble Sir has patiently listened Dr. Malviya and asked him to furnish all the details through letters for proper redressal of the problems.

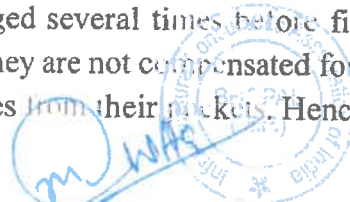
The issues raised by the Association before the Hon'ble Minister are outlined in the following para:

1. DPR of In Principle Roads:-

The Consultants in the past have been instructed to hold the work of Preparation of In Principle DPR and asked to claim bill upto certain stage say upto Inception Report. Whereas a Consultant has done many other activities simultaneously like alignment Survey, Sub Soil Exploration, Part work of Design etc. The DPR Consultants are not fully compensated for the entire activities conducted till the suspension of work. The association therefore requests that a criteria should be evolved to compensate the consultant to a certain extent either through taking over of raw data or completion of some assigned activities as per contract agreement and release the payment to consultant accordingly.

2. Frequent Changes in the Alignment of the Proposed Highways/Roads:-

It has been brought into the notice of the Association by several DPR Consultants that the alignments of proposed Roads/Highways are changed several times before finalization which result into infructuous extra work to consultants as they are not compensated for repeated works. The consultants are supposed to bear all the expenses from their pocket. Hence the association



proposes the following methods/procedures for effective and time bound finalization of the alignment.

(a) For NHAI

The concerned PD, RO, Alignment approval committee and the consultants should meet jointly and discuss the proposed alignment and finalize within a period of 1 month after submission by the consultant. The existing system of recommending one most suitable alignment by field office to respective RO and then to Nodal officer at Head Quarter delays the process of approval. Hence it is proposed to conduct a joint meeting consisting of field officer, RO, Nodal officer at Head Quarter and Consultants either through virtual mode or physical mode within a period of one month of submission of proposed alignments to finalize the most suitable alignment. This procedure will avoid unnecessary delays due to frequent changes at every stage of review.

(b) For NHIDCL

The concerned GM, Executive Director, Head of the committee and the consultants should meet jointly and discuss the proposed alignment and finalize within a period of 1 month after submission by the consultant. The existing system of recommending one most suitable alignment by field office to respective ED and then to Head of the Committee at Head Quarter delays the process of approval. Hence it is proposed to conduct a joint meeting consisting of field officer, ED, Head of the Committee at Head Quarter and the Consultants either through virtual mode or physical mode within a period of one month of submission of proposed alignments to finalize the most suitable alignment. This will avoid unnecessary delays due to frequent changes at every stage of review.

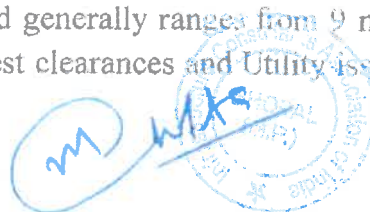
(c) For State PWD (NH Work)

The concerned Executive Engineer, Chief Engineer, RO, Authorized Officer of DG office and the consultants should meet jointly and discuss the proposed alignment and finalize within a period of 1 month after submission by the consultant. The existing system of recommending one most suitable alignment by field office to respective RO and then to Nodal officer at DG office delays the process of approval. Hence it is proposed to conduct a joint meeting consisting of field officer, RO, Nodal officer at DG office and the Consultants either through virtual mode or physical mode within a period of one month of submission of proposed alignments to finalize the most suitable alignment. This will avoid unnecessary delays due to frequent changes at every stage of review.

3. Simplification of Procedure for DPR Preparation:-

The Association has previously taken up the matter for simplification of procedure of preparations of DPRs with the competent authorities which is still under consideration. The Association once again raises the issue for consideration.

Presently the preparation of DPR takes around 4 years to complete the entire assignment under DPR preparation whereas the stipulated period generally ranges from 9 months to 12 months. The major cause of delays are LA issues, Forest clearances and Utility issues. The Association

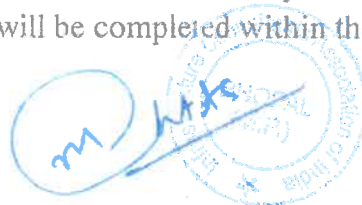


has demanded to bifurcate the whole procedure into four parts namely Technical part, Land Acquisition issues, Forest related and Utility related issues.

In our opinion based on the feedback of many consultants, Environment, Forest & Wild life Clearance can be handled efficiently by some of the retired officials from the post of forest conservator or equivalent. Similarly land acquisition matters can be handled effectively and efficiently by the officials retired from the post of Additional Collector or some senior officers of the Revenue Department. Utility related works can be handled smoothly by the retired officers of State Electricity Boards.

We suggest that the tenders for preparation of Detailed Project Report may be invited simultaneously in 4 parts. The whole process will bring immediate momentum in the progress of work during implementation stage. The technical portion of the tender will be handled by the technically qualified and experienced consultants who can handle the technical part of DPR very efficiently and effectively because the Director/Owner of the consultancy firms are usually Civil Engineers and they also employ many Civil Engineers who are technically competent to handle the preparation of technical part of DPRs. The progress of remaining three parts are entirely dependent on coordination of the officials of Ministry of Environment and Forest, Land Revenue Department and Electricity Boards. It is observed that the preparation of DPR is purely technical which are often completed by the consultants but they fail to get their work from these departments which are basically coordination work and result into non completion of contracts for many years in some cases. The consultancy firms generally do not have expertise to handle these types of coordination work and therefore generally not able to pursue those departments effectively for early grant of clearance of their proposals. The priorities of Forest department, Land Revenue department and Electricity Boards are decided by the senior officers of their respective departments and clearance related works get low priority for them. Hence, the proposal has been mooted that the tenders of preparation of DPR may be bifurcated in four parts i.e the work of Environment/Forest clearance, Land acquisition and utility shifting work may be invited separately amongst the retired officials of Forest departments, Revenue departments and Electricity boards who are willing to provide their services on item rate contract / lump sum basis. There are several retired officers of these departments who are willing to provide their services independently. They have many contacts in the departments which they can usefully utilize in the execution of clearance related jobs and with the result these clearances will expeditiously completed.

Presently the consultants usually deploy retired officers of Forest departments, Land revenue departments and Electricity departments to get clearances from the respective departments. But, these retired Gazetted officers do not efficiently perform the coordination works under the administration of Consultants and which ultimately result in non-clearance of activities related to Forest, Land acquisition and utility. That is why the preparation of DPR works often get delayed. On the other hand, if the coordination related works are awarded to the retired officers of these departments and agreements are executed for completion of works within a given time it is most likely that the entire works will be completed within the given time. We are confident



that this process of preparation of DPR will take between 4 to 6 months, if the coordination work is separated from the technical portion of DPR preparation.

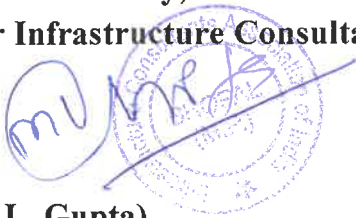
The Association therefore seeks your kind interference to evolve suitable solutions for the problems stated in the aforesaid para. It is further submitted that solutions of the above problems will not only benefit the consultants/consulting firms but will also advantageous to the Authority.

PRAYER

We therefore pray to Hon'ble Sir to kindly take up the matter stated from Para 1 to Para 3 above with NHAI Authorities for proper redressal of various problems faced by consultants. The implementation of our suggestions will lead to shortening of time for preparation of DPR besides saving the consultants from unnecessary hardships due to procedural flaws in the existing systems.

Thanking You

**Yours sincerely,
For Infrastructure Consultants Association of India**



**(M.L. Gupta)
Secretary**

Cc to: 1. All Consultants associated with us.
2. All working Consultants of NHAI /MoRTH/NHIDCL for information with the request to join ICAI to strengthen the Association.