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Group : 6, 17

18 December 2001

Works Bureau Technical Circular No. 31/2001

Electronic Submission of Consultancy Proposals on Removable Media

Scope

1. This circular promulgates the procedures for the electronic submission of Expressions of Interest, and Technical and Fee Proposals for consultancies under the purview of the Architectural and Associated Consultants Selection Board (AACSB), and Engineering and Associated Consultants Selection Board (EACSB).
2. This circular does NOT apply to consultancy services procured in accordance with Chapter II of the Stores and Procurement Regulations.

Effective Date

3. This circular shall take effect on 28 December 2001.

Effects on Existing Circulars

4. This circular has no effect on other circulars.

Related Circulars

5. This circular should be read in conjunction with-
 - (a) Works Bureau Technical Circular no. 17/2001 on "Electronic Dissemination of Invitation Documents for Consultancies"
 - (b) the Handbook on Selection, Appointment and Administration of Architectural and Associated Consultants published by the AACSB, ("AACSB Handbook"); and

- (c) the Handbook on Selection, Appointment and Administration of Engineering and Associated Consultants published by the EACSB, ("EACSB Handbook").
6. If there are discrepancies between the provisions of this circular and those of the AACSB and EACSB Handbooks, the former should prevail.

Definitions

7. In this circular, unless the context otherwise requires-
- (a) "Consultant" means a consultant included in the longlist for EOI or the shortlist for T&F.
 - (b) "Digital Signature" means a digital signature as defined in section 2 of the Electronic Transactions Ordinance (Cap. 553) satisfying the requirements stipulated in section 6 of that Ordinance. "Digitally Signed" should be interpreted accordingly.
 - (c) "EOI" means the Expression of Interest.
 - (d) "Electronic Invitation Package" (or "EIP") means a collection of electronic files containing
 - (i) the Invitation Documents issued for an Invitation; or
 - (ii) the Invitation Addendum.
 - (e) "Electronic Proposal Package" (or "EPP") means a collection of electronic files containing the EOI or T&F submitted for an Invitation.
 - (f) "Invitation" means an invitation for-
 - (i) EOI's issued in accordance with the EACSB Handbook; or
 - (ii) T&F issued in accordance with the AACSB or EACSB Handbook.
 - (g) "Invitation Addendum" means a set of documents and its attachments issued before the submission closing date and time to amend the invitation documents.
 - (h) "Invitation Documents" means the documents issued for inviting submission of EOI or T&F, including
 - (i) the invitation to submit EOI or T&F and other documents issued together with it; and
 - (ii) Invitation Addenda.
 - (i) "Managing Department" means the department responsible for managing a consultancy under the purview of the AACSB or EACSB.

- (j) "Organisational e-Cert" means a digital certificate issued under the name of an organisation by a recognised certification authority as defined under section 2 of the Electronic Transactions Ordinance (Cap. 553).
- (k) "T&F" means the technical proposal and fee proposal.

Background

- 8. As outlined in WBTC no. 17/2001, the e-procurement of consultancy services is implemented in three phases as agreed by the Working Group on E-Procurement of Consultancy Services.
- 9. The first phase which is the electronic dissemination of invitation document was implemented on 17 September 2001 through the promulgation of the WBTC no. 17/2001.
- 10. The second phase which is the electronic submission of EOI's and T&F's on removable media is covered in this circular. The procedures for the final phase, electronic submission through the Internet, will be promulgated under separate circulars.

Policy

Invitation for EOI or T&F

- 11. All proposals, whether in the form of EPP or hard copy format, shall be checked and assessed on an equal basis. The Managing Department shall include the following paragraph in the invitation letter for EOI or T&F:-

"You may make your submission in either electronic format or hard copy format. If part of the submission is made in both electronic and hard copy formats, the electronic format shall prevail over the corresponding hard copy format. If you elect to make your submission in electronic format, the documents for your proposal shall be prepared and submitted in accordance with Annex [&]¹- Requirements for Submission of Proposal in Electronic Format. All proposals, whether submitted in electronic format or in hard copy format, will be evaluated on an equal basis."

¹ Insert appropriate Annex number

12. The "Requirements for Submission of Proposal in Electronic Format" in Appendix 1 shall be attached to the invitation letter.

Preparation and Submission of EOI or T&F

13. Consultants who elect to submit their proposal in electronic format shall prepare the EPP in accordance with the "Requirements for Submission of Proposal in Electronic Format" in Appendix 1.
14. All electronic files contained in the EPP shall be Digitally Signed by the Consultant. Organisational e-Cert used for the purpose of applying Digital Signatures shall be issued under the name of the Consultant and shall be valid as at the submission closing date and time for the EOI or T&F.
15. Consultants shall package the EPP and submit the proposal in accordance with the instructions contained in the invitation letter.

Handling of EPP

16. The AACSB and EACSB will release the ORIGINAL set of EPP on technical proposal or EOI to the Managing Department for evaluation. The AACSB and EACSB will release the EPP on fee proposal to the Managing Department for evaluation upon completion of the technical assessment.

Assessment of EOI and T&F

17. For documents for fee proposal, two sets of printouts shall be submitted together with the EPP. For documents for technical proposal or expression of interest, printouts may optionally be submitted together with the EPP. All printouts shall be clearly stamped "PRINTOUT" and duly signed by the Consultant. The signed printouts shall not be used for assessment unless there are problems in using the files in the EPP.
18. Managing Departments should preserve the contents of the EPP. No alteration to the electronic files of the submissions is allowed. To avoid any inadvertent changes or damage made to the EPP, the following measures shall be adopted in handling the EPP -
 - (a) CD-ROM drive which is NOT capable of writing or re-writing data on CD media shall always be used to read the EPP.
 - (b) Duplicate CD-ROM copies of the EPP shall be made and used for the purpose of proposal evaluation. The original EPP shall not be used as far as possible.
19. Managing Departments should check the validity of electronic files submitted in the EPP as follows-
 - (a) All files have been Digitally Signed by the Consultant.

- (b) The Digital Signatures are generated by an Organisational e-Cert of the Consultant.
 - (c) The Organisational e-Cert corresponding to the Digital Signatures is valid as at the submission closing date and time for the EOI or T&F.
20. If an electronic file in the EPP cannot be opened properly for viewing and printing by following the Consultant's instructions given in the EPP, that file shall be deemed as missing from the EPP unless a signed printout of that file has been included in the submission. The Consultant shall be notified in writing that -
- (a) an electronic file is deemed as missing from the EPP if the file cannot be opened properly by following the Consultant's instructions given in his EPP; or
 - (b) a signed printout of an electronic file submitted by the Consultant will be used for evaluation notwithstanding that the electronic file cannot be opened properly by following the Consultant's instructions given in the EPP.

Preparation of Consultancy Agreement

- 21. The consultancy agreement shall be prepared using the printouts of the required documents contained in the EIP and/or EPP, and the signed printouts of the submission only if the corresponding electronic files cannot be opened properly, in accordance with the AACSB and EACSB handbook.
- 22. The retention and destruction of EPP's shall be handled in the same manner as proposals submitted in hard copy.

Enquiries

- 23. Enquiries on this circular may be made to Computer Services Unit of Works Bureau at fax no. 2905 1181 or e-mail address csu@wb.gov.hk.



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Deputy Secretary (Works Policy)

Annex [&]²**Requirements for Submission of Proposal in Electronic Format**

The following requirements apply if the proposal is made in electronic format.

1. In this Appendix, unless the context otherwise requires-
 - (a) "Digital Signature" means a digital signature as defined in section 2 of the Electronic Transactions Ordinance (Cap. 553) satisfying the requirements stipulated in section 6 of that Ordinance. "Digitally Signed" should be interpreted accordingly.
 - (b) "Editable File" means an electronic file which is stored in file formats that are editable using mainstream computer applications for office automation and computer-aided drafting.
 - (c) "Image File" means an electronic file which is stored in file formats that capture the printed image of the document.
 - (d) "Electronic Proposal Package" (or "EPP") means the collection of the electronic files containing the proposal submitted for this invitation.
 - (e) "Organisational e-Cert" means a digital certificate issued under the name of an organisation by a recognised certification authority as defined under section 2 of the Electronic Transactions Ordinance (Cap. 553).
2. EPP shall be submitted on CD-ROM media complying with ISO 9660 standard. All CD-ROMs should be clearly labelled or marked to indicate the agreement number, the name of the consultant, and the disk number if more than one CD-ROM is submitted. Each CD-ROM shall have a "README.rtf" file in the root directory prepared in Rich Text Format and Digitally Signed. This file shall contain at least the following information:
 - (a) general guidance on the use of the electronic files in the EPP (e.g. the file naming convention, directory structure of the CD-ROM, software name and version for viewing the file);
 - (b) a list of all documents submitted in the EPP with the following information-
 - (i) brief description of the contents of the document; and

² Insert Annex number

- (ii) disk number (if the submission contains more than one CD-ROM) and filename with full path information for the Editable File and/or the Image File;
 - (c) information on the proper setting for viewing, editing, and printing the electronic files, including, without limitations-
 - (i) the printer to be used for printing the files;
 - (ii) the paper sizes;
 - (iii) requirements for special fonts; and
 - (iv) any special printing instructions;
 - (d) detailed instructions for viewing other type of electronic information or visualisation not covered in paragraph 8 of this Annex.
3. EPP shall be submitted in duplicate. The original and duplicate set of EPP shall be clearly stamped "ORIGINAL" and "DUPLICATE" respectively on the CD-ROM labels.
 4. The write once type CD media shall be used for the preparation of EPP. For the avoidance of doubt, re-writable CD media shall not be used. The CD-ROM shall be logically closed such that no subsequent change can be made to the EPP.
 5. CD-ROM shall be properly packed and protected to avoid physical damage during the submission process.
 6. If the invitation requires the submission of fee proposal and technical proposal, EPP shall be split into two parts, which shall be stored and submitted in separate CD-ROMs. One set of CD-ROMs, clearly marked "Fee Proposal", shall contain documents as specified in the Guidance for the Preparation of Fee Proposal and shall be submitted in the "Fee Proposal" envelope. The other set of CD-ROMs, clearly marked "Technical Proposal", shall contain the documents as specified in the Guidance for the Preparation of Technical Proposal and shall be submitted in the "Technical Proposal" envelope.
 7. All electronic files in the EPP shall be Digitally Signed. Organisational e-Cert issued under the name of the Consultant shall be used for the purpose of applying digital signatures. The Organisational e-Cert corresponding to the Digital Signatures must be valid as at the submission closing date and time for the expression of interest or the technical proposal and fee proposal.

8. (a) The following data formats shall be used for preparing documents in electronic form:-

<i>Type of Document</i>	<i>Editable File</i>	<i>Image File</i>
Text documents	Rich Text Format; or Word 97	Adobe Acrobat
Schedules or documents in tabular form	Excel 97; Rich Text Format; or Word 97	Adobe Acrobat
Drawings	Microstation; ⁴ AutoCAD; Document Exchange Format (DXF); or Initial Graphic Exchange Standard (IGES)	Adobe Acrobat
Other types of documents, including scanned documents or scanned drawings	Not Applicable	TIFF or Adobe Acrobat

If more than one file format are specified, files need to be provided in one of the specified formats only.

- (b) Files prepared in the above format shall not be compressed using file compression programmes and shall not contain any computer instructions, including but not limited to,
- (i) computer viruses; and
 - (ii) macros, scripts and fields that depend on the execution environment and the execution of which will cause changes to the electronic file itself or the information system displaying the electronic record.
9. Electronic files may be submitted in Editable File format or in Image File format or in both type of formats. If both type of formats are submitted, the contents of Editable File and Image File of a document should be identical. If there are discrepancies, the Image File shall prevail.
10. As the conversion of drawing files to Adobe Acrobat format may slightly distort the scale of the drawing elements, line scales in both horizontal and vertical directions should be included in drawings files to enable correction factors to be made to compensate for distortion.
11. For documents for fee proposal, two sets of printouts shall be submitted together with the EPP. For documents for technical proposal or expression of interest, printouts may optionally be submitted together with the EPP. All

⁴ Either AutoCAD or Microstation may be deleted if the receiving department cannot support the drawing file format.

printouts shall be clearly stamped "PRINTOUT" and duly signed by the Consultant. The signed printouts shall not be used for assessment unless there are problems in using the files in the EPP.

12. If other type of electronic information, for example, visualisation or modelling, not covered in paragraph 8 above is submitted with the proposal, software necessary for viewing the information shall be supplied with the submission. The software provided must be free of virus and can be run in mainstream PC under Windows operating environment. Necessary licence to use the software must be provided free of charge to the Government for viewing the information. Detailed instructions on setup, usage and removal of the software provided must be included in the submission.
13. Electronic file including the README.rtf of the EPP submission shall be deemed as missing from the EPP if that electronic file cannot be opened properly or does not comply with paragraph 7 and/or paragraph 8(b), unless the hard copy of that file has been submitted in the submission.