



Consultant Contract Services

Evaluation Procedure for Qualification Statements

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PURPOSE: Informational Memorandum

SUBJECT: Evaluation Procedure for Qualification Statements

In accordance to Title 48 of Louisiana Revised Statutes, a numerical rating system is used by the Project Evaluation Team (PET) to determine the makeup of each shortlist. It is applied to all responsive submittals. A computer program is used to assist the Team in the application of the rating system. The program adds the scores for all rating criteria and determines the top three ranked firms (assuming there are three qualified respondents). The short list will be presented to the DOTD Secretary for the final selection. The following is a detailed explanation of the rating system used by the Project Evaluation Team.

RATING CATEGORIES

Typically, six standard rating criteria/categories are used. These categories are location, compatibility, key staff experience, firm experience, workload and past performance on DOTD projects. Additional criteria may be added for specialty types of projects. In rare cases, again for specialty types of projects, one or more of the standard six categories may be waived. The evaluation criteria will be included in the announcement/advertisement for the project. Each respondent is rated from 1 to 5 in all categories with 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest. Each rating category is multiplied by the corresponding weighting factor and then added together to arrive at the respondent's final rating. The weighting factors vary from 3 to 6.

It may be advantageous or necessary to form a multidisciplinary team to respond to an advertisement requiring various specialties. Sub-Consultants are scored separately and the overall score for the team is weighted according to the percentage of the project assigned to each Sub-Consultant. The rating for a Sub-Consultant may not be included in the total score for the team when the percentage of work to be performed by that Sub-Consultant is minimal. For a project with multiple disciplines, the overall rating is the sum of the ratings (for each discipline) weighted according to the percentage (based on the estimated cost) of each discipline. Firm experience, key staff experience, and past performance on DOTD projects are assigned for various disciplines. Each category is discussed in detail below.

LOCATION

The location factor is based on the distance between the firm's office(s) to the project site. The firm's office will be the location where the key staff and the majority of the personnel performing the work for the project are located. Basically, the closer the firm's office is to the project site, the higher its score. A coordinate system or a GIS-based procedure is used to compute the distance to the project site. For district and statewide projects, coordinates for the District Office or Marksville (for statewide) will be used for the project location unless otherwise noted in the advertisement. The weighting factor for this category is usually 4. For Urban System projects, the factor is increased to 6. The table below describes the rating.

Distance	Rating
0 To 50 Miles	5
50 To 450 Miles	Interpolated between 5 and 1
More than 450 Miles	1

COMPATIBILITY

The intent of this category is to optimize the firm's size (total number of full-time employees) to the size of the project (total estimated cost of the project). A small firm responding on a large project will not score well in this category. Likewise, a large firm responding on a small project will not score well. The "penalty" for being too small is greater proportionately than for being too large. Prime Consultant's compatibility rating will be used for the Sub-Consultant's rating when the percentage of the work to be performed by the Sub-Consultant is small. The same compatibility rating may also be used for all respondents for small retainer contracts. The firm size criterion will be based on the complexity of the project. The graph to determine the firm size rating will remain as is for normal projects. For complex projects, a firm with a ratio 5 or greater will receive no less than a rating of 3 (can vary between 5 and 3 depending on the project).

The first step in the computation of this rating is to determine the firm's size that is the total number of full-time employees. Then, based on the size of the firm's staff and the contract time for the project, an optimum project size for the firm (in \$) is calculated, using \$3000 per person per month. This optimum project size is then used to obtain the rating for this category.

KEY STAFF EXPERIENCE

Each team member independently evaluates each respondent for key personnel experience **relevant** to the project advertised at all levels within the firm performing the work on the project. Experience gained with any employer is "counted". This rating is generally obtained from Section 11 of the DOTD Form 24-102. For reference, the ratings are based on the following: 1 – Very Weak; 2 – Weak; 3 – Acceptable; 4 – Strong; 5 – Very Strong. The weighting factor for this category is generally four.

FIRM EXPERIENCE

Each team member independently evaluates each respondent for firm experience **relevant** to the project advertised. This category is also concerned with the experience of the top-level managers, **as a unit**, for the responding firm. This rating is generally obtained from Section 10 of the DOTD Form 24-102. For reference, the ratings are based on the following: 1 – Very Weak; 2 – Weak; 3 – Acceptable; 4 – Strong; 5 – Very Strong. The weighting factor for this category is generally three.

The following examples may help in understanding firm and key staff experience categories.

EXAMPLE #1 – A new firm is formed of the most experienced personnel in the state, drawn from many different firms. The day after the company is formed they apply for a DOTD project. Their score in FIRM EXPERIENCE is one. If the firm stays together, remaining solvent and gaining experience as a firm, with projects similar to those in the DOTD notices, their FIRM EXPERIENCE rating will improve.

EXAMPLE #2 – An old established firm has high ratings in both experience categories. However, their principal, who has been a very active participant in all projects, retires and sells the firm. Also, the Chief Engineer “moves on” to another firm. The remaining firm members are very experienced at their level in the organization. The net effect of these personnel changes may not affect the KEY STAFF EXPERIENCE rating much, or at all, depending somewhat on the credentials of the new principal and chief engineer. However, the FIRM EXPERIENCE rating will go down.

(5) VERY STRONG - Consultant's Qualification Statement exceeds requirements and demonstrates through accurate concise descriptions, exceptional experience the firm and the key staff have had with the disciplines of work being advertised. A thorough understanding of the relevance of the experience and high level of confidence that the goals and objectives of the contract are achievable with superb quality is demonstrated. Significant strengths exist with no weaknesses.

(4) STRONG - Consultant's Qualification Statement exceeds requirements and demonstrates, through accurate concise descriptions, good experience the firm and key staff have with the disciplines of work being advertised. There is a very good understanding of the relevance of the experience and level of confidence that the goals and objectives of the contract are achievable with high quality. The strengths outweigh any weaknesses that exist.

(3) ACCEPTABLE - Consultant's Qualification Statement meets the requirements and demonstrates, through basic general descriptions, adequate experience the firm and key staff have with the disciplines of work being advertised. There is an adequate understanding of the relevance of the experience and level of confidence that the goals and objectives of the contract can be achieved with acceptable quality. The strengths, if any, are offset with weaknesses.

(2) WEAK - Consultant's Qualification Statement does not meet the requirements and does not demonstrate adequate experience the firm and key staff have with the disciplines of work being advertised. There is doubt as to understanding the relevance of the experience and level of confidence for achieving the goals and objectives of the contract with acceptable quality. Weaknesses outweigh the strengths.

(1) VERY WEAK - Consultant's Qualification Statement does not meet the requirements and does not demonstrate adequate experience the firm and key staff have with the disciplines of work being

advertised. There is no clear understanding of the relevance of the experience and no confidence that the goals and objectives of the contract can be achieved. The consultant lacks or has failed to demonstrate the required qualifications.

WORKLOAD

This category considers the firm size (as explained in COMPATIBILITY), and the workload with the Department in dollars. Projects that are “counted” are: all contracts with others on behalf of the Department using Department administered funds; all contracts with others with supervision provided by the Department; and all contracts with the Department. Note that a project is counted as soon as the selection is made. For retainer type contracts, only the remaining balances on open Task Orders are counted. If a project is projected to be on “hold” or suspended for 6 months or longer, the remaining dollar amount for this suspended work will not count against the firm in the workload criterion. The remaining work should still be shown on the 24-102, but the remaining work does not have to be shown in the total. Documentation from the DOTD Project Manager of this suspension must be shown. The workload criterion will also be based on the complexity of the project. The formula to determine the workload rating will remain as is for simple and moderate projects. For complex projects, the workload factor will be neutralized by giving all respondents a rating of 5. This will encourage multi-discipline firms or teams with experience in the scope required for complex projects. The maximum workload for a firm with DOTD equals the firm size multiplied by \$125,000. The greater the firm’s workload is, the lower the rating in this category. A firm with no workload with DOTD would receive a rating of 5. The weighting factor for this category is generally five.

PAST PERFORMANCE ON DOTD PROJECTS

This rating is based on the results of input from the Project Managers at various project milestones. They evaluate the firms that they have managed within the last five years. The weighting factor for this category is generally six.

The firms are evaluated in five categories: knowledge and technical expertise, quality of plans and other deliverables, completion of work within the terms of the contract, cooperation and problem resolution, and communication and documentation. Project Managers rate on a 1 – 5 point scale in the CPPR rating system. For reference, the ratings are based on the following: 1 – unacceptable; 2 – marginal; 3 – satisfactory; 4 – above satisfactory; and 5 – outstanding. The ratings are given for several categories of work. Project specific ratings may also be obtained from the pertinent department personnel. Each firm receives the average rating from all Project Managers who have evaluated them. Project Managers’ ratings are subject to a review by their direct supervisors. The PET screens the Project Managers’ ratings for: those who may grade either too strictly or too leniently; consistency; grading which conflicts markedly with other coordinators, or with the PET’s perceptions; etc. The PET reserves the right to investigate any discrepancy they may identify and change or eliminate an old rating, if justified. To date, changes have been rare.

Firms who have not received a rating for a work category will be assigned the average rating of the firms submitting; with ratings capped at the statewide average rating for that category as of the date the advertisement was posted.

OTHER RATING CATEGORIES

The PET may use other rating categories in the evaluation process for specialty types of projects. The advertisement will include the details and weighting factors when additional categories are used. Examples of such categories that may be used for specialized and more complex projects

are interviews, presentations, overall project team rating that addresses all disciplines required for the project, or a report demonstrating the consultant's understanding and approach to the project. This information will be provided in Section 13 of the DOTD Form 24-102.