

Improving Administration of Federal-Aid For Local Public Agencies

VIRGIL BELL

Technical Assistance Engineer
Division of Local Assistance
Indiana Department of Highways

POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL

It is important that at least one person in each LPA (Local Public Agency) be aware of the information presented below.

My first topic is our policy and procedure manual involving 22 chapters. This manual expands and updates our existing procedures, which was started in August, 1982 and includes the following subjects:

Handout No. 1—Index for Policy and Procedure Manual

Chapter Number and Title

1. Federal Aid Programming (FA-2 forms, etc.)—not completed.
2. Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)—required for all type I and II cities—listing of approved projects into the future for that urbanized area—not completed.
3. Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)—duties of which includes developing the TIP—not completed.
4. Federal Aid Highway System—procedures and guidelines to be followed in developing this system—not completed.
5. Federal Aid Highway Funds—categories and uses of funds available to local projects—completed 11-29-82.
6. Project Scheduling—listing of projects in production schedule and future planning for funding of all projects approved in the annual program—not completed.
7. Procedures for Selecting Consultants—will be discussed later—completed 7-12-83.
8. Agreements—will be discussed later—not completed.
9. Claims—filing of claim vouchers—not completed.
10. Audits—procedures for resolving audits—not completed.
11. Advance Studies—Environmental—discussion of all types of environmental statements—an interim transmittal to all consultants—October, 1983.
12. Advance Studies—Location (Corridor)—guidelines for preparing location and location/design study reports—an interim transmittal to all consultants—July, 1983.
13. Bridge Projects—Plan Development—partially complete with

transmittals of 11-82 and 9-83—(bridge re-inspection, bridge construction and bridge replacement projects)

14. Road Projects—Plan Development—partially complete with transmittal of 9-30-83—(all road projects except 3R)
15. Sign Projects—plan development—not completed.
16. Signal & Lighting Projects—Plan Development—interim transmittal of 7-12-83.
17. Safety Projects—Plan Development—partially complete—(HES projects) with two transmittals as of 8-3-82.
18. Left Open
19. Soils Work—completed (and revised) as of 3-7-83.
20. Right-of-Way Project Development—procedures for acquisition of right-of-way—not completed.
21. Construction Engineering—agreements for, including scope of work, manhour justification and fee—not completed.
22. Miscellaneous—guidelines for obtaining loans by LPA's from the Distressed Road Fund—transmittal 7-12-83.

Several of the chapters are not completed as of this date have been written and are under review. It is hoped that the manual will be completed within one year. Copies of the completed chapters are available upon request. This new manual will definitely improve the administration of federal aid projects.

My next subject is duties and responsibilities of personnel in the new Division of Local Assistance, which was re-organized during January, February and March, 1982. The chief of this new division is Robert E. Woods, who will speak later. He is responsible for the actions of all personnel in the division and for formulating new policy, procedures, and guidelines for the use of federal aid funds on local projects.

The technical assistance section is responsible for providing technical assistance in the development of all local projects for which federal aid will be used in any or all phases of preliminary engineering, right-of-way and/or construction. Area engineers will be assigned responsibility for the coordination of all projects within a geographical area of the state. The area engineer will schedule and coordinate the review and development of projects in all development phases with the appropriate divisions in the Department of Highways. The area engineer will monitor, arrange and attend informational meetings, and provide project status information for projects of all types initiated in their areas from request of federal funds through letting.

A map of the State of Indiana defining the geographic boundaries of each area engineer's responsibility and a staffing chart is being passed out now. (Hand Out No. 2) All correspondence, environmental reports, location study reports, plans, informational questions or problems re-

lating to a specific project shall be directed to the respective area engineer.

I have been assigned the position of Technical Assistance Engineer with duties of supervising the three area engineers and serving as area engineer for Area D, the Indianapolis urban area. Telephone (317) 232-5319. The area engineers are:

	Telephone
Area A: Mr. Bruno Canzian	(317) 232-5316
Area B: Mr Donn Eusey	(317) 232-5315
Area C: Mr. Stephen Dilk	(317) 232-5317

Administrative Assistance Section

This section is responsible for providing administrative services to local public agencies during the project development stage. Specific tasks includes the review, approval and processing of all local project agreements, processing of project claims against the agreements, maintaining of local funding records for each county, city and town, and the coordination of educational/training program for local officials.

All new agreements and supplements to new agreements and all claims from local public agencies for preliminary engineering and right-of-way activities shall be directed to the administrative assistance manager. Any agreements initiated prior to March 1, 1982 or supplements to those agreements shall be directed to John Jordan, engineer of consulting services. Claims for construction engineering services shall be directed to Indiana Department of Highways District Construction Engineer within the district where the work is being performed as is the present practice.

Appointments in the Administrative Assistance Section are:

Administrative Assistance Manager—Jack Smitherman—(317) 232-5318

Claims and Agreement Technician—Marka Wildman—(317) 232-5311

Program Development Section

This section is responsible for providing assistance to local public agencies in the areas of planning, programming and scheduling of local projects. The section will monitor and process federal aid applications and A-95 reviews to assure prompt action on requests and provide notification to LPA's on the status of project requests. The section will also coordinate the scheduling of local federal aid funds and projects and identify programming problems and project delays for corrective action.

Apointments to this section are as follows:

Program Development Manager – Arthur Boyle – (317) 232-5142
Scheduling Coordinator – Janet Tincher – (317) 232-5144

Additional expansion may occur in this office in the near future due to an increase of 120% in federal funds available for local projects, which in turn has increased the work load. The original expansion and any future expansion will increase the services provided by this office to local agencies.

During the past year, a subject involving such discussion has been the Managerial Decentralization Plan. This plan may involve shifting some of the responsibilities of the central office to the district highway offices. It is felt, that one person in each district could be of great assistance to all LPA's. Some of their duties might be:

1. Assistance in filling out FA-2 forms.
2. Obtain information for railroad crossing projects.
3. Assist in traffic control signage at railroad crossing projects.
4. Set up meetings between LPA's and central office.
5. Answer LPA questions pertaining to federal aid.
6. Attend meetings of county commissioners, board of public works or town boards.
7. Attend meetings of MPO's.
8. Assist in revising federal aid system.
9. Assist in setting up four five-year program for LPA's.
10. Assist in resolving audits.
11. Assist in collecting amounts billed local agencies.
12. Attend pre-construction conferences.
13. Attend project viability field trips.
14. Resolve final inspection project discrepancies.

We feel that the creation of this new position in each district would be a great benefit to all persons concerned.

Another improvement that has been made is the standardization of agreements. Our standard agreements involve the following:

1. LPA – Consultant, Involving:
 - a. Advanced Studies (Location and Environmental Studies)
 - b. Preliminary Engineering
 - c. Construction Supervision
 - d. Bridge Re-inspections
2. LPA – State, Involving
 - a. All preliminary engineering activities
 - b. All right-of-way activities and/or right-of-way acquisition
 - c. Construction and construction engineering
 - d. Railroad crossing/railroad signal projects
3. LPA – Utility Company, Involving:
 - a. Non-reimbursable utility agreement
 - b. Reimbursable utility agreement

4. LPA—Railroad, Involving:
 - a. Railroad force account agreement

The first 18 pages of all the LPA—consultant agreements are standard and only require blanks to be filled in and executed. This “boiler-plate” should not be reproduced through a word processor, but rather printed (zeroxed) in its present form, as this helps save time in reviewing the agreement. Attached to the boiler plate are appendix “A”—Services by Consultant; appendix “B”—Information and Services to be furnished by LPA; appendix “C”—Schedule, appendix “D”—Compensation. These appendixes are presented as a guide as no two agreements are alike, but all items of information covered by the appendixes must be included in the agreements. We are requesting that everyone use these standard agreements as this will cut review time by 40-50%. In this way, we will also know that all items have been covered. And finally, if you plan to use federal funds in an agreement involving preliminary engineering or construction engineering you must have on file with this office an approved consultant selection procedure and use this approved procedure in the selection of consultants. In your letter of transmittal, transmitting the draft agreements for review, you must list the following information:

1. Names of consultants who were sent requests for proposals (RFPS).
2. Names of MBE/WBE consultants who were sent RFPS.
3. Names of all consultants who submitted proposals.
4. The name of the selected consultant and why this firm was selected.
5. Why MBE was not considered.

All of the above information must be in the letter of transmittal, otherwise the complete transmittal will be returned.

This office has been discussing the necessity for having an approved procedure for selection of consultants since March 1980, almost four years ago. At present, 83 counties and 47 cities and towns have approved procedures, a total of 130 LPAs. A total of 206 counties, cities and towns over 5,000 population and smaller towns within urbanized areas should have approved procedures, therefore, we are only 63% successful so far. No agreement for P.E. or C.E. will be reviewed unless an approved procedure is on file.

In summary, we feel that our new policy manual, the expansion of our office in 1982 and 1984, the decentralization of some of our work to the districts, the use of standard agreements, the approval of and correct use of consultant selection procedures will go a long way in helping us all to achieve more efficient administration of federal funds for local projects.