

simplified acquisition threshold fixed in 41 U.S.C. 403(11).

(3) *Noncompetitive negotiation.* Noncompetitive negotiation may be used to procure engineering and design related services on Federal-aid participating contracts when it is not feasible to award the contract using competitive negotiation, equivalent State qualifications-based procedures, or small purchase procedures. Contracting agencies shall submit justification and receive approval from the FHWA before using this form of contracting. Circumstances under which a contract may be awarded by noncompetitive negotiation are limited to the following:

- (i) The service is available only from a single source;
- (ii) There is an emergency which will not permit the time necessary to conduct competitive negotiations; or
- (iii) After solicitation of a number of sources, competition is determined to be inadequate.

(4) *State statutory procedures.* Contracting agencies may procure engineering and design related services using an alternate selection procedure established in State statute enacted into law before June 9, 1998.

(b) *Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) program.* The contracting agency shall give consideration to DBE consultants in the procurement of engineering and design related service contracts subject to 23 U.S.C. 112(b)(2) in accordance with 49 CFR part 26.

(c) *Compensation.* The cost plus a percentage of cost and percentage of construction cost methods of compensation shall not be used.

§ 172.7 Audits.

(a) *Performance of audits.* When State procedures call for audits of contracts or subcontracts for engineering design services, the audit shall be performed to test compliance with the requirements of the cost principles contained in 48 CFR part 31. Other procedures may be used if permitted by State statutes that were enacted into law prior to June 9, 1998.

(b) *Audits for indirect cost rate.* Contracting agencies shall use the indirect cost rate established by a cognizant agency audit for the cost principles contained in 48 CFR part 31 for the con-

sultant, if such rates are not under dispute. A lower indirect cost rate may be used if submitted by the consultant firm, however the consultant's offer of a lower indirect cost rate shall not be a condition of contract award. The contracting agencies shall apply these indirect cost rates for the purposes of contract estimation, negotiation, administration, reporting, and contract payment and the indirect cost rates shall not be limited by any administrative or de facto ceilings. The consultant's indirect cost rates for its one-year applicable accounting period shall be applied to the contract, however once an indirect cost rate is established for a contract it may be extended beyond the one year applicable accounting period provided all concerned parties agree. Agreement to the extension of the one-year applicable period shall not be a condition of contract award. Other procedures may be used if permitted by State statutes that were enacted into law prior to June 9, 1998.

(c) *Disputed audits.* If the indirect cost rate(s) as established by the cognizant audit in paragraph (b) of this section are in dispute, the parties of any proposed new contract must negotiate a provisional indirect cost rate or perform an independent audit to establish a rate for the specific contract. Only the consultant and the parties involved in performing the indirect cost audit may dispute the established indirect cost rate. If an error is discovered in the established indirect cost rate, the rate may be disputed by any prospective user.

(d) *Prenotification; confidentiality of data.* The FHWA and recipients and subrecipients of Federal-aid highway funds may share the audit information in complying with the State or subrecipient's acceptance of a consultant's overhead rates pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 112 and this part provided that the consultant is given notice of each use and transfer. Audit information shall not be provided to other consultants or any other government agency not sharing the cost data, or to any firm or government agency for purposes other than complying with the State or subrecipient's acceptance of a consultant's overhead rates pursuant

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to 23 U.S.C. 112 and this part without the written permission of the affected consultants. If prohibited by law, such cost and rate data shall not be disclosed under any circumstance, however should a release be required by law or court order, such release shall make note of the confidential nature of the data.

§ 172.9 Approvals.

(a) *Written procedures.* The contracting agency shall prepare written procedures for each method of procurement it proposes to utilize. These written procedures and all revisions shall be approved by the FHWA for recipients of federal funds. Recipients shall approve the written procedures and all revisions for their subrecipients. These procedures shall, as appropriate to the particular method of procurement, cover the following steps:

- (1) In preparing a scope of work, evaluation factors and cost estimate for selecting a consultant;
- (2) In soliciting proposals from prospective consultants;
- (3) In the evaluation of proposals and the ranking/selection of a consultant;
- (4) In negotiation of the reimbursement to be paid to the selected consultant;
- (5) In monitoring the consultant's work and in preparing a consultant's performance evaluation when completed; and
- (6) In determining the extent to which the consultant, who is responsible for the professional quality, technical accuracy, and coordination of services, may be reasonably liable for costs resulting from errors or deficiencies in design furnished under its contract.

(b) *Contracts.* Contracts and contract settlements involving design services for projects that have not been delegated to the State under 23 U.S.C. 106(c), that do not fall under the small purchase procedures in §172.5(a)(2), shall be subject to the prior approval by FHWA, unless an alternate approval procedure has been approved by FHWA.

(c) *Major projects.* Any contract, revision of a contract or settlement of a contract for design services for a project that is expected to fall under 23

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U.S.C. 106(h) shall be submitted to the FHWA for approval.

(d) *Consultant services in management roles.* When Federal-aid highway funds participate in the contract, the contracting agency shall receive approval from the FHWA before hiring a consultant to act in a management role for the contracting agency.

PART 180—CREDIT ASSISTANCE FOR SURFACE TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS

AUTHORITY: Secs. 1501 *et seq.*, Pub. L. 105–178, 112 Stat. 107, 241, as amended; 23 U.S.C. 181–189 and 315; 49 CFR 1.48.

SOURCE: 64 FR 29750, June 2, 1999, unless otherwise noted.

§ 180.1 Cross-reference to credit assistance.

The regulations in 49 CFR part 80 shall be followed in complying with the requirements of this part. Title 49 CFR part 80 implements the Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act of 1998, secs. 1501 *et seq.*, Pub. L. 105–178, 112 Stat. 107, 241.

PART 190—INCENTIVE PAYMENTS FOR CONTROLLING OUTDOOR ADVERTISING ON THE INTERSTATE SYSTEM

Sec.

- 190.1 Purpose.
- 190.3 Agreement to control advertising.
- 190.5 Bonus project claims.
- 190.7 Processing of claims.

AUTHORITY: 23 U.S.C. 131(j) and 315; 49 CFR 1.48(b).

SOURCE: 43 FR 42742, Sept. 21, 1978, unless otherwise noted.

§ 190.1 Purpose.

The purpose of this regulation is to prescribe project procedures for making the incentive payments authorized by 23 U.S.C. 131(j).

§ 190.3 Agreement to control advertising.

To qualify for the bonus payment, a State must have entered into an agreement with the Secretary to control outdoor advertising. It must fulfill, and must continue to fulfill its obligations