

VDOT ADVERTISEMENT & AWARD PROCESS

VDOT advertises and awards highway construction projects each month. Every year over a billion dollars is paid to firms that have contracted with or supplied goods and services for the VDOT construction and contracted maintenance program. Opportunities are available through VDOT in the areas of construction, maintenance, engineering, and the procurement of goods and services. So, it's clear, there is plenty of work to be done by the contracting industry. It is important that you know how to find out where the work is and when the jobs will be bid.

An annual schedule for the advertisement & receipt of bids on construction and maintenance projects is published in September of each year by the Contract Engineer with the advertisement and bid letting dates. This is sent to the contractors and all stakeholders. There are normally two advertisements each month. (Special advertisements are held in cases of emergency). RAAPs (Regular Advertisement and Award Process) are advertised on the 2nd Tuesday for a minimum of 21 days. Most actually exceed 35 days. They are mailed to our prequalified contractors and posted on VDOT's Contractors Advertisement Bulletin Board (CABB) web system and the eVa website. SAAPs (Special Advertisement and Award Process) are advertised for 10 days minimum. Most actually exceed 25 days. They are mailed to our prequalified contractors and posted on VDOT's Contractors Advertisement Bulletin Board (CABB) web system and the eVa website.

Bids are received electronically on Wednesday (usually the 4th Wednesday) of each month at 10 am in the Central Office. Bids are open and read publicly by the Contract Engineer. After the reading of each group of bids for a given order number, the individual reading the bids shall announce the following in compliance with Section 33.2-1100:

"The low bid (exceeds) / (does not exceed) the maximum tolerance of the Engineer's estimate".

Thursday and Friday after bids are read the estimating section reviews all bids for unbalancing and mathematical errors. The estimating section develops a written Bid Analysis for each project. The District Administrators, District Construction Engineers and Maintenance Engineers are asked to give comments or explanations on bids if over the Engineer's Estimate. This process is described in the Estimating Manual. Sometimes a bidder may need to be contacted for further explanations of his bid. This may be a phone conversation or a face-to-face meeting. This must be held as soon as the need is discovered in order to not delay award. Friday and Monday after bids are read the State Estimate Engineer compiles a written summary from the Estimator's analysis for each project. The projects are recommended for award or rejection by the Contract Engineer. All changes to the Estimator's recommendations are documented. Any bids that are 7% above Engineers EE or 25% below the EE and 25% below the next bidder, must have a written justification on why it is recommended for award. This explanation is part of the letter from the Chief Engineer to the Commissioner with award recommendations.

The following Monday after bids are received, a meeting is held with the Contract Engineer, State Estimate Engineer and estimating section to discuss the bid analysis. The Contract Engineer reviews the analysis and makes the final decision for the division on award or reject before it goes to the Chief Engineer.

The Director of Contracts and Estimate Engineer have a meeting with the Chief Engineer to review the bid summaries. The Director of Contracts provides additional information to the Chief Engineer as requested. The Chief Engineer makes his decision to award or reject to the Director of Contracts orally. They meet again if additional information is needed. After the meeting with the Chief Engineer the contractors are notified by letter that the projects are going to be recommended for award or rejection. After the Chief Engineer makes his recommendation the ballot is then prepared for the CTB or the Commissioner.

There are 2 separate ballots made and distributed; one for jobs that are over \$5 million; and one for jobs below \$5 million and. There may not always be 2 ballots prepared in a given month.

The ballot consists of the following:

- Bid results totaled by the Road System and receipt date. The ballot for the CTB also includes the estimated construction cost
- The Department's bid recommendations
- Justification for bids that are recommended for award that are 7% over the Engineers Estimate or 25% below the Engineers Estimate.
- A project narrative that describes the work in lay terms
- Cover letters for Chief Engineer and Commissioner

Bid over \$5 million

Once the Director of Contracts assembles the ballot with all of the above, it is then sent to the Chief Engineer for his approval which is then forwarded to the Commissioner to approve and forward to the CTB for award. The Commissioner's secretary forwards an advance copy to all CTB members and the District Administrators by not later than the Friday two weeks prior to the CTB meeting. Director of Contracts supplies electronic copies of the ballot to the Assistant to the Commissioner, who prepares the CTB action books. The Director of Contracts presents the ballots at the CTB meeting. Once the board has approved all of the recommendations, the Award Process begins. This is official when the Commissioner signs the fund distribution sheets and the action letter.

\$2 million and below

Once the Director of Contracts assembles the ballot with all of the above, it is then sent to the Chief Engineer for his approval which is then forwarded to the Commissioner to award. Once the Commissioner has signed the ballot the Award Process begins.