

**GUIDELINES FOR INDIAN AGENTS OF FOREIGN SUPPLIERS**

- 1.0 There shall be compulsory registration of agents for all global (Open) Tender and Limited Tender. An agent who is not registered with RailTel Units shall apply for registration in the prescribed Application -Form.
- 1.1 Registered agents will file an authenticated Photostat copy duly attested by a Notary Public/ Original certificate of the principal confirming the agency agreement and giving the status being enjoyed by the agent and the commission/ remuneration/ retainer-ship being paid by the principal to the agent before the placement of order by RailTel.
- 1.2 Wherever the Indian representatives have communicated on behalf of their principals and the foreign parties have stated that they are not paying any commission to the Indian agents, and the Indian representative is working on the basis of salary or as retainer, a written declaration to this effect should be submitted by the party (i.e. Principal) before finalizing the order.
- 2.0 DISCLOSURE OF PARTICULARS OF AGENTS/ REPRESENTATIVES IN INDIA, IF ANY.**
- 2.1 Tenderers of Foreign nationality shall furnish the following details in their offer:
  - 2.1.1 The name and address of the agents/representatives in India, if any and the extent of authorization and authority given to commit the Principals. In case the agent/representative be a foreign Company, it shall be confirmed whether it is real substantial Company and details of the same shall be furnished.
  - 2.1.2 The amount of commission/ remuneration included in the quoted price(s) for such agents/representatives in India.
  - 2.1.3 Confirmation of the Tenderer that the commission/ remuneration if any, payable to his agents/ representatives in India, may be paid by RAILTEL in Indian Rupees only.
- 2.2 Tenderers of Indian Nationality shall furnish the following details in their offers:
  - 2.2.1 The name and address of the foreign principals indicating their nationality as well as their status, i.e, whether manufacturer or agents of manufacturer holding the Letter of Authority of the Principal specifically authorizing the agent to make an offer in India in response to tender either directly or through the agents/representatives.
  - 2.2.2 The amount of commission /remuneration included in the price(s) quoted by the tenderer for himself.

- 2.2.3 Confirmation of the foreign principals of the Tenderer that the commission/ remuneration, if any, reserved for the Tenderer in the quoted price(s), may be paid by RAILTEL in India in equivalent Indian Rupees on satisfactory completion of the Project or supplies of Stores and Spares in case of operation items.
- 2.3 In either case, in the event of contract materializing, the terms of payment will provide for payment of the commission/ remuneration, if any payable to the agents/representatives in India in Indian Rupees on expiry of 90 days after the discharge of the obligations under the contract.
- 2.4 Failure to furnish correct and detailed information as called for in paragraph 2.0 above will render the concerned tender liable to rejection or in the event of a contract materializing, the same liable to termination by RAILTEL. Besides this there would be a penalty of banning business dealings with RAILTEL or damage or payment of a named sum.

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## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 RailTel Corporation of India Ltd (RAILTEL), being a Public Sector Enterprise, under the administrative control of the Ministry of Railways and therefore being an authority deemed to be 'the state' within the meaning of Article 12 of Constitution of India, has to ensure preservation of rights enshrined in Chapter III of the Constitution. RAILTEL has also to safeguard its commercial interests. RAILTEL deals with Agencies, who have a very high degree of integrity, commitments and sincerity towards the work undertaken. It is not in the interest of RAILTEL to deal with Agencies who commit deception, fraud or other misconduct in the execution of contracts awarded / orders issued to them. In order to ensure compliance with the constitutional mandate, it is incumbent on RAILTEL to observe principles of natural justice before banning the business dealings with any Agency.
- 1.2 Since banning of business dealings involves civil consequences for an Agency concerned, it is incumbent that adequate opportunity of hearing is provided and the explanation, if tendered, is considered before passing any order in this regard keeping in view the facts and circumstances of the case.

## **2. Scope**

- 2.1 The General Conditions of Contract (GCC) of RAILTEL generally provide that RAILTEL reserves its rights to remove from list of approved suppliers/ contractors or to ban business dealings if any Agency has been found to have committed misconduct and also to suspend business dealings pending investigation. If such provision does not exist in any GCC, the same may be incorporated.
- 2.2 Similarly, in case of sale of material there is a clause to deal with the Agencies/ customers/ buyers, who indulge in lifting of material in unauthorized manner. If such a stipulation does not exist in any Sale Order, the same may be incorporated.
- 2.3 However, absence of such a clause does not in any way restrict the right of Company (RAILTEL) to take action / decision under these guidelines in appropriate cases.
- 2.4 The procedure of (i) Removal of Agency from the List of approved suppliers/ contractors; (ii) Suspension and (iii) Banning of Business Dealing with Agencies, has been laid down in these guidelines.
- 2.5 These guidelines apply to Corporate Office, all Regions and Subsidiaries of RAILTEL.
- 2.6 It is clarified that these guidelines do not deal with the decision of the Management to avoid entertaining any particular Agency due to its poor / inadequate performance or for any other reason.
- 2.7 The banning shall be with prospective effect, i.e., future business dealings.

### 3. Definitions

In these Guidelines, unless the context otherwise requires:

- i) 'Party / Contractor / Supplier / Purchaser / Customer' shall mean and include a public limited company or a private limited company, a firm whether registered or not, an individual, a cooperative society or an association or a group of persons engaged in any commerce, trade, industry, etc. 'Party / Contractor / Supplier / Purchaser / Customer' in the context of these guidelines is indicated as 'Agency'.
  
- ii) 'Inter-connected Agency' shall mean two or more companies having any of the following features:
  - a) If one is a subsidiary of the other;
  - b) If the Director(s), Partner(s), Manager(s) or Representative(s) are common;
  - c) If management is common;
  - d) If one owns or controls the other in any manner;
  
- iii) 'Competent Authority' and 'Appellate Authority' shall mean the following:
  - a) For Company (entire RAILTEL) wide Banning: The Director shall be the 'Competent Authority' for the purpose of these guidelines. CMD, RAILTEL shall be the 'Appellate Authority' in respect of such cases except banning of business dealings with Foreign Suppliers of imported items.
  - b) For banning of business dealings with Foreign Suppliers of imported items, RAILTEL Directors Committee (RDC) shall be the 'Competent Authority'. The Appeal against the Order passed by RDC, shall lie with CMD, as First Appellate Authority.
  - c) In case the foreign supplier is not satisfied by the decision of the First Appellate Authority, it may approach Railway Board as Second Appellate Authority.
  - d) For RailTel Regions only: Any officer not below the rank of General Manager appointed or nominated by the Executive Director of concerned Region shall be the 'Competent Authority' for the purpose of these guidelines. The Executive Director of the concerned Region shall be the 'Appellate Authority' in all such cases.
  - e) For Corporate Office only: For procurement of items / award of contracts, to meet the requirement of Corporate Office only, Concerned Group General Manager / General Manager shall be the 'Competent Authority' and concerned Director shall be the 'Appellate Authority'.

- f) CMD, RAILTEL shall have overall power to take suo-moto action on any information available or received by him and pass such order(s) as he may think appropriate, including modifying the order(s) passed by any authority under these guidelines.
- iv) 'Investigating Department' shall mean any Department or Unit investigating into the conduct of the Agency and shall include the Vigilance Department, Central Bureau of Investigation, the State Police or any other department set up by the Central or State Government having powers to investigate.
- v) 'List of approved Agencies - Parties / Contractors / Suppliers/ Purchaser/ Customers' shall mean and include list of approved /registered Agencies - Parties/ Contractors / Suppliers / Purchasers / Customers, etc.

#### **4. Initiation of Banning / Suspension**

Action for banning / suspension of business dealings with any Agency should be initiated by the department having business dealings with them after noticing the irregularities or misconduct on their part. Besides the concerned department, Vigilance Department of each Region / Unit/ Corporate Office may also be competent to initiate such action.

#### **5. Suspension of Business Dealings**

- 5.1 If the conduct of any Agency dealing with RAILTEL is under investigation by any department (except Foreign Suppliers of imported items), the Competent Authority may consider whether the allegations under investigation are of a serious nature and whether pending investigation, it would be advisable to continue business dealing with the Agency. If the Competent Authority, after consideration of the matter including the recommendation of the Investigating Department, if any, decides that it would not be in the interest to continue business dealings pending investigation, it may suspend business dealings with the Agency. The order to this effect may indicate a brief of the charges under investigation. If it is decided that inter-connected Agencies would also come within the ambit of the order of suspension, the same should be specifically stated in the order. The order of suspension would operate for a period not more than six months and may be communicated to the Agency as also to Investigating Department. The Investigating Department may ensure that their investigation is completed and whole process of final order is over within such period.
- 5.2 The order of suspension shall be communicated to all the departmental heads within the unit/ region/ Corporate Office as the case may be. During the period of suspension, no business dealing may be held with the agency.

- 5.3 As far as possible, the existing contract(s) with the Agency may continue unless the Competent Authority, having regard to the circumstances of the case, decides otherwise.
- 5.4 If the gravity of the misconduct under investigation is very serious and it would not be in the interest of RAILTEL, as a whole, to deal with such an Agency pending investigation, the Competent Authority may send his recommendation to Chief Vigilance Officer (CVO), RAILTEL Corporate Office alongwith the material available. If Corporate Office considers that depending upon the gravity of the misconduct, it would not be desirable for all the units/ regions of RAILTEL to have any dealings with the Agency concerned, an order suspending business dealings may be issued to all the units/ Regions / Corporate Office by the Competent Authority of the Corporate Office, copy of which may be endorsed to the Agency and all concerned. Such an order would operate for a period of six months from the date of issue.
- 5.5 for suspension of business dealings with Foreign Suppliers of imported items, following shall be the procedure:
- i) Suspension of the foreign suppliers shall apply throughout the Company/ Regions including Subsidiaries.
  - ii) Based on the complaint forwarded by ED / GGM / GM or received directly by Corporate Vigilance, if gravity of the misconduct under investigation is found serious and it is felt that it would not be in the interest of RAILTEL to continue to deal with such agency, pending investigation, Corporate Vigilance may send such recommendation on the matter to Executive Director / GGM / GM, to place it before a Committee consisting of the following:
    1. ED / GGM/ GM (viz. Representative of Corporate Finance).
    2. ED / GGM/ GM (viz. Representative of Department concerned with procurement of imported items)- Convener of the Committee.
    3. ED / GGM/ GM (to be nominated on case to case basis).
    4. ED / GGM/ GM ((viz. Representative of Corporate Law).

The committee shall expeditiously examine the report and give its comments / recommendations within twenty one days of receipt of the reference by ED/ GGM/ GM.

- iii) The comments / recommendations of the Committee shall then be placed by ED/GGM/GM, before RAILTEL Directors' Committee (RDC) constituted for import of items. If RDC opines that it is a fit case for suspension, RDC may pass necessary orders which shall be communicated to the foreign supplier by the ED/GGM/GM.

- 5.6 If the Agency concerned asks for detailed reasons of suspension, the Agency may be informed that its conduct is under investigation. It is not necessary to enter into correspondence or argument with the Agency at this stage.
- 5.7 It is not necessary to give any show-cause notice or personal hearing to the Agency before issuing the order of suspension. However, if investigations are not complete in six months time, the Competent Authority may extend the period of suspension by another three months, during which period the investigations must be completed.

## **6. Ground on which Banning of Business Dealings can be initiated**

- 6.1 If the security consideration, including questions of loyalty of the Agency to the State, so warrants;
- 6.2 If the Director / Owner of the Agency, proprietor or partner of the firm, is convicted by a Court of Law for offences involving moral turpitude in relation to its business dealings with the Government or any other public sector enterprises or RAILTEL, during the last five years;
- 6.3 If there is strong justification for believing that the Directors, Proprietors, Partners, owner of the Agency have been guilty of malpractices such as bribery, corruption, fraud, substitution of tenders, interpolations, etc;
- 6.4 If the Agency continuously refuses to return / refund the dues of RAILTEL without showing adequate reason and this is not due to any reasonable dispute which would attract proceedings in arbitration or Court of Law;
- 6.5 If the Agency employs a public servant dismissed / removed or employs a person convicted for an offence involving corruption or abetment of such offence;
- 6.6 If business dealings with the Agency have been banned by the Govt. or any other public sector enterprise;
- 6.7 If the Agency has resorted to Corrupt, fraudulent practices including misrepresentation of facts;
- 6.8 If the Agency uses intimidation/ threatening or brings undue outside pressure on the Company (RAILTEL) or its official in acceptance/ performances of the job under the contract;
- 6.9 If the Agency indulges in repeated and / or deliberate use of delay tactics in complying with contractual stipulations;
- 6.10 Willful indulgence by the Agency in supplying sub-standard material irrespective of whether pre-dispatch inspection was carried out by Company (RAILTEL) or not;



- 6.11 Based on the findings of title investigation report of CBI / Police against the Agency for malafide/ unlawful acts or improper conduct on his part in matters relating to the Company (RAILTEL) or even otherwise;
- 6.12 Established litigant nature of the Agency to derive undue benefit;
- 6.13 Continued poor performance of the Agency in several contracts;
- 6.14 If the Agency misuses the premises or facilities of the Company (RAILTEL), forcefully occupies tampers or damages the Company's properties including land, water resources, etc.

(Note: The examples given above are only illustrative and not exhaustive. The Competent Authority may decide to ban business dealing for any good and sufficient reason).

## **7. Banning of Business Dealings**

- 7.1 Normally, a decision to ban business dealings with any Agency should apply throughout the Company including subsidiaries. However, the Competent Authority of the Region/ Unit except Corporate Office can impose such ban Region-wise only if in the particular case banning of business dealings by respective Region/ Unit will serve the purpose and achieve its objective and banning throughout the Company is not required in view of the local conditions and impact of the misconduct/ default to beyond the Region/ Unit. Any ban imposed by Corporate Office shall be applicable across all Regions/ Units of the Company including Subsidiaries.
- 7.2 For Company-wide banning, the proposal should be sent by ED of the Region/ Unit to the CVO/RailTel setting out the facts of the case and the justification of the action proposed alongwith all the relevant papers and documents except for banging of business dealings with Foreign Suppliers of imported items.

The Corporate Vigilance shall process the proposal of the concerned Region/ Unit for a prima-facie view in the matter by the Competent Authority nominated for Company-wide banning.

The CVO shall get feedback about that agency from all other Regions/ Units. Based on this feedback, a prima-facie decision for banning / or otherwise shall be taken by the Competent Authority.

If the prima-facie decision for Company-wide banning has been taken, the Corporate Vigilance shall issue a show-cause notice to the agency conveying why it should not be banned throughout RAILTEL.

After considering the reply of the Agency and other circumstances and facts of the case, a final decision for Company-wide banning shall be taken by the competent Authority.

- 7.3 There will be a Standing Committee in each Region/ Unit to be appointed by Chief Executive Officer for processing the cases of "Banning of Business Dealings" except for banning of business dealings with foreign suppliers. However, for procurement of items/ award of contracts, to meet the requirement of Corporate Office only, the committee shall be consisting of General Manager/ Dy. General Manager each from Operations, Finance, Law & Project. Member from Project shall be the convener of the committee. The functions of the committee shall, inter-alia include:
- i) To study the report of the investigating Agency and decide if a prima-facie case for Company-wide / Region wise banning exists, if not, send back the case to the Competent Authority.
  - ii) To recommend for issue of show-cause notice to the Agency by the concerned department.
  - iii) To examine the reply to show-cause notice and call the Agency for personal hearing, if required.
  - iv) To submit final recommendation to the Competent Authority for banning or otherwise.
- 7.4 If the Competent Authority is prima-facie of view that action for banning business dealings with the Agency is called for, a show- cause notice may be issued to the Agency and an enquiry held accordingly.
- 7.5 Procedure for Banning of Business Dealings with Foreign Suppliers of imported items.
- i) Banning of the agencies, shall apply throughout the Company including subsidiaries.
  - ii) Based on the complaint forwarded by Executive Director or received directly by Corporate Vigilance, an investigation shall be carried out by Corporate Vigilance. After investigation, depending upon the gravity of the misconduct, Corporate Vigilance may send their report to Executive Director/ GGM/ GM, to be placed before a Committee consisting of the following:
    1. ED / GGM/ GM (viz. Representative of Corporate Finance).
    2. ED / GGM/ GM (viz. Representative of Department concerned with procurement of imported items)- Convener of the Committee.
    3. ED / GGM/ GM (to be nominated on case to case basis).
    4. ED / GGM/ GM ((viz. Representative of Corporate Law).

The Committee shall examine the report and give its comments/ recommendations within 21 days of receipt of the reference by ED.

- iii) The comments/recommendations of the Committee shall be placed by ED/ GGM/ GM before RAILTEL Directors' Committee (RDC) constituted for import of foreign items. If RDC opines that it is a fit case for initiating banning action, it will direct

ED/ GGM/ GM to issue show-cause notice to the agency for replying within a reasonable period.

- iv) On receipt of the reply or on expiry of the stipulated period, the case shall be submitted by ED to RDC for consideration & decision.
- v) The decision of the RDC shall be communicated to the agency by ED/GGM/GM concerned.

## **8. Removal from List of Approved Agencies – Suppliers/ Contractors, etc.**

- 8.1 If the Competent Authority decides that the charge against the Agency is of a minor nature, it may issue a show-cause notice as to why the name of the Agency should not be removed from the list of approved Agencies - Suppliers / Contractors, etc.
- 8.2 The effect of such an order would be that the Agency would not be disqualified from competing in Open Tender Enquiries but LTE (Limited Tender Enquiry) may not be given to the Agency concerned.
- 8.3 Past performance of the Agency may be taken into account while processing for approval of the Competent Authority for awarding the contract.

## **9. Show-cause Notice**

- 9.1 In case where the Competent Authority decides that action against an Agency is called for, a show-cause notice has to be issued to the Agency. Statement containing the imputation of misconduct or misbehavior may be appended to the show-cause notice and the Agency should be asked to submit within 15 days a written statement in its defence.
- 9.2 If the Agency requests for inspection of any relevant document in possession of RAILTEL, necessary facility for inspection of documents may be provided.
- 9.3 The Competent Authority may consider and pass all appropriate speaking order:
  - a) For exonerating the Agency if the charges are not established.
  - b) For removing the Agency from the list of approved Suppliers/ Contractors, etc.
  - c) For banning the business dealing with the Agency.
- 9.4 If it decides to ban business dealings, the period for which the ban would be operative may be mentioned. The order may also mention that the ban would extend to the interconnected Agencies of the Agency.

## **10. Appeal against the Decision of the Competent Authority**

- 10.1 The agency may file an appeal against the order of the Competent Authority banning business dealing, etc. The appeal shall lie to Appellate Authority. Such an appeal shall be preferred within one month from the date of receipt of the order banning business dealing, etc.
- 10.2 Appellate Authority would consider the appeal and pass appropriate order which shall be communicated to the Agency as well as the Competent Authority.

## **11. Review of the Decision by the Competent Authority**

Any petition / application filed by the Agency concerning the review of the banning order passed originally by Chief Executive / Competent Authority under the existing guidelines either before or after filing of appeal before the Appellate Authority or after disposal of appeal by the Appellate Authority, the review petition can be decided by the Chief Executive / Competent Authority upon disclosure of new facts / circumstances or subsequent development necessitating such review. The Competent Authority may refer the same petition to the Standing Committee for examination and recommendation.

## **12. Circulation of the names of Agencies with whom Business Dealings have been banned**

- 12.1 Depending upon the gravity of misconduct established, the Competent Authority of the Corporate Office may circulate the names of Agency with whom business dealings have been banned, to the Government Departments, other Public Sector Enterprises, etc. for such action as they deem appropriate.
- 12.2 If Government Departments or a Public Sector Enterprise requests for more information about the Agency with whom business dealings have been banned, a copy of the report of the Inquiring authority together with a copy of the order of the Competent Authority / Appellate Authority may be supplied.
- 12.3 If business dealings with any Agency have been banned by the Central or State Government or any other Public Sector Enterprise, RAILTEL may, without any further enquiry or investigation, issue an order banning business dealing with the Agency and its interconnected Agencies.
- 12.4 Based on the above, Regions / Units may formulate their own procedure for implementation of the guidelines.

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