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D.O. # P-18023/1/2005/P-III

दिनांक: 30 मार्च 2022

Subject: Ground verification of the corrective action by State Quality Monitors (SQMs) on the NQM observation - regarding.

Sir,

As you are aware, the timeline for submission of Action Taken Reports (ATR) on NQM observations in respect of 'ongoing' and 'completed' works was decided and communicated to States vide DO letter of even no. dated 13th January, 2022 by Additional Secretary, MoRD and DG, NRIDA. In this regard, most of the State Quality Coordinators (SQC) have expedited furnishing the pending ATRs, which is appreciated.

2. You would agree that ensuring the quality of work is solely the responsibility of PIU, through the provisions of the agreement. SQMs and NQMs observations only have the advisory role to achieve the desired quality. A detailed procedure has already been laid down for processing of ATRs on NQM observations. In this regard it has been observed that in some ATRs on NQM observations, the PIU records that the corrective action has been taken in about 20-50m stretch on either side of the test pit attempted by the NQM. However, the efficacy of action taken / required at other locations of the road is not indicated by the PIU. The ATR do not speak as to how the defective stretch of road was identified from the entire stretch of executed length.

3. Since the structural defects pointed out by NQM, at a particular pit are indicative in nature, the PIU is expected to carry out detailed investigation of entire executed length to identify the defective portion and items of work. This detailed investigation may be carried out by way of conducting QC tests at various test pit locations, at an interval felt appropriate by the PIU, considering the nature of defects pointed out by the NQM. After taking the corrective action, the PIU is expected to record the details of rectification chainages in the ATR. In addition to this, the PIU should also record in the ATR that similar defect is not present in other sections of the road. In this regard, appending the geo-reference photographs of rectification process, in the ATR, is a good practice being adopted by some of the States.

4. On the part of ground verification carried out by SQM, it has been observed that in many cases the observations of SQMs on structural defects are superficial and are not supported by the QC test results. Sometimes, the QC test results of SQM appended in the report are either incorrect or are exact copy of the values recorded at other test pit locations of the road, which obviously cannot happen on ground. Further, it has been observed that in significant number of cases, the verification of SQM is limited to and exactly at the rectification locations indicated by PIU. Whereas, the SQM is expected to conduct the QC tests at the location he/she feels appropriate (*not limited to test pit location of NQM or rectified stretches*) and is the representative sample of the quality of the entire stretch. It was also found that in many cases, though the SQM has inspected the road and conducted ground verification of the ATR, however, the corresponding abstract quality grading of the inspection and the complete pdf inspection report is not uploaded in OMMAS.

5. In some cases, it was observed that the ATR recommended by the SQC is extremely casual in nature. In these cases, the SQC had simply signed the ATR without recording his/her satisfaction of the adequacy of action taken or had recommended the ATR recording that – "*since the SQM has verified the work, therefore the work is recommended for re-gradation*". Obviously that was not the intent while formulating the process of recommendation of ATR by the SQC.

6. The SQC is expected to technically examine the efficacy of action reported by the PIU on NQM observations *vis-s-vis* the ground verification report of the SQM, for each ATR. If the SQC is comprehensively satisfied by the action taken by the PIU, as warranted by the NQM observations is fully complied with and the ground verification carried out by SQM is conclusively verifying the corrective action taken by PIU, then only the SQC should record his satisfaction on the ATR and recommend for grade improvement.

7. Therefore, with a view to make ATR handling system more accountable, the following has been decided:

- (i) For all structural defects, the PIU will record the procedure of rectification and the chainages of rectification, in the ATR. The PIU would also record that similar defects are not present in other section of the road.
- (ii) The ground verification of ATRs by the SQM shall be treated as routine SQM inspection and therefore, the grading abstract of all items executed at the time of SQM inspection along with scanned pdf copy of report shall invariably be uploaded in the OMMAS. For this purpose, the SQC will assign the work to SQM in the QMS application.
- (iii) Besides, the regular inspection report, a separate ATR report (*in the prescribed format*) will be prepared and the SQM will record his itemised observation on the corrective action taken by the PIU on each of the NQM observations. The SQM will record his date of inspection in the ATR and his observations on critical parameters should be supported by QC test results and geo-referenced photographs.
- (iv) While recommending the ATR to NRIDA, for grade improvement, the SQC will record his recommendation saying that- "***The action as warranted by NQM observations has been fully complied by the PIU and has been got verified on ground by the SQM/ concerned SE. I am fully satisfied by the corrective action taken and recommend for re-grading the quality of work as satisfactory***".

8. Needless to say that while recording the above recommendation by the SQC, the wording should not be altered. The above provisions shall be applicable for all ATRs submitted from April 01st 2022 onwards. I would therefore request you to issue necessary directions be to all PIUs, SQMs and the SQC for strict compliance.

भवदीय,

R. Patwarya

(डॉ. आई. के. पटेरिया)

To,

Chief Engineers of SRRDA in all States/UTs.

Copy to: (i) SQC of SRRDA in all States/UTs

(ii) PPS to AS (RD) & DG, NRIDA for kind information of DG, NRIDA.

R. Patwarya

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