

Rural Utilities Service, USDA

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for the specific projects for which the work order fund was established.

(h) RUS will advance funds to finance minor construction work projects only if all necessary documents, including an FRS and supporting data covering the project, are received within one year of the date construction of the project is completed.

[55 FR 3573, Feb. 2, 1990. Redesignated at 55 FR 39397, Sept. 27, 1990, and amended at 59 FR 43718, Aug. 25, 1994; 64 FR 16612, Apr. 6, 1999]

§ 1753.81 Inspection and certification.

(a) Upon completion and prior to closeout, minor construction must be inspected and certified to be in compliance with RUS construction standards, to be reasonable in cost, and to meet applicable codes. The certification is made by an experienced telephone engineer who is either licensed in the state where the inspection will be performed, or is a borrower's staff engineer, who meets the requirements of the "employee in charge" of force account engineering as described in subpart B of this part. The GFR will periodically audit the inspection of minor construction to ensure integrity of the procedure. RUS borrowers with less than 2000 subscribers may use the above procedure or have construction inspection performed by the GFR.

(b) Engineering services for minor construction may be contracted using RUS Form 245, Engineering Service Contract—Special Services. Costs for these services may be included in the costs for construction on the Form 771. (See subpart B of this part.)

(c) Upon completion of construction, the borrower shall obtain the engineer's certification on RUS Form 771. An official of the borrower, designated by the board of directors, shall also execute the borrower's certification on Form 771.

[54 FR 39267, Sept. 25, 1989. Redesignated at 55 FR 39397, Sept. 27, 1990, and amended at 55 FR 53488, Dec. 31, 1990]

§ 1753.82 Minor construction closeout.

(a) For minor construction inspected by the borrower's engineer, an original and two copies of Form 771 shall be sent to the GFR. The GFR will initial and return the original and one copy.

(b) When funds are requested for minor construction, the original Form 771 signed or initialed by the GFR, shall be submitted with the FRS. Forms 771 should be submitted only with the FRS which they support. RUS does not encumber funds pursuant to Forms 771 unless an advance is made to the borrower. (See 7 CFR part 1744 subpart C).

§§ 1753.83–1753.90 [Reserved]

Subpart J—Construction Certification Program

SOURCE: 55 FR 3574, Feb. 2, 1990, unless otherwise noted. Redesignated at 55 FR 39397, Sept. 27, 1990.

§ 1753.91 General.

(a) This subpart implements and explains the provisions of the loan documents setting forth the requirements and procedures to be followed by borrowers accepting nomination for the construction certification program. Terms used in this subpart are defined in § 1753.2.

(b) [Reserved]

(Approved by the Office of Management and Budget under control number 0572-0062)

§ 1753.92 Policies and requirements.

(a) It is RUS policy that, as borrowers gain in experience and maturity, the advice and assistance rendered by RUS shall progressively diminish. Prior to approval of a loan, RUS may nominate certain borrowers to fulfill the responsibilities for administration and construction of projects financed with RUS loans. Borrowers who accept this nomination will be known as "certification borrowers," and the program in which they participate will be known as the "certification program."

(b) Generally, initial loan borrowers are not eligible for the certification program.

(c) Generally, the factors which RUS will consider in selecting borrowers for the certification program will include:

(1) The experience of the staff of the borrower.

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(2) The RUS assessment of the borrower's ability to handle the certification program requirements considering the size and complexity of the proposed construction in the LD.

(3) The history of the borrower in following RUS's policies and procedures.

(4) Other factors deemed relevant by RUS.

(d) Except as specifically stated in this subpart, certification borrowers must comply with all requirements applicable to other borrowers.

(e) RUS reserves the right at any time to require submission of construction documents or to remove the borrower from the certification program.

§ 1753.93 Responsibilities.

(a) *Responsibilities transferred to certification borrowers.* (1) Approval of engineering and architectural service contracts.

(2) Approval of P&S.

(3) Approval of price quotations and bids, except where the low price bid is not accepted.

(4) Approval of award of construction contracts and amendments.

(5) Approval of FAP's if RUS has approved the force account method of construction for the construction project.

(6) Inspection and certification of construction.

(7) Approval of closeout documents.

(8) Other responsibilities as may be specifically granted in writing by RUS.

(b) *Responsibilities retained by RUS.* (1) Approval to deviate from RUS requirements, except as provided in (a) above.

(2) Approval of use of loan funds for projects other than those included in the loan construction budget. See 7 CFR part 1744 subpart C.

(3) Approval of use of loan funds in excess of amounts included in the loan budget.

(4) Approval of force account methods of engineering and construction.

(5) Approval to make significant deviations from the work plan approved by RUS.

(6) Approval of interim construction.

(7) Approval to use materials not listed in the List of Materials Acceptable for Use on Telephone Systems of RUS Borrowers.

(8) Approval of field trials.

(9) Approval to modify or alter standard forms and contracts.

(10) Approval to open bids when fewer than the required number have been received.

(11) Approval of outside plant layouts.

(12) "Buy American" determinations.

(13) Other responsibilities not specifically transferred by this subpart or in writing by RUS.

§ 1753.94 Procedures.

(a) Certification borrowers shall appoint three certification officials. These appointments shall be subject to RUS approval.

(1) The "Certifying Officer" shall be an officer or employee of the borrower who is authorized to execute binding agreements. This officer shall sign all contracts, amendments, closeout documents and the certification on RUS Form 158, Certification of Contract or Force Account Proposal Approval, and RUS Form 159, Summary of Completed Construction.

(2) The "Construction Certifier" shall be an experienced telephone engineer who is either licensed in the state where the inspection will be performed, or is a borrower's staff engineer who meets the requirements of the "employee in charge" of force account engineering as described in subpart B of this part. RUS may determine that it will accept the certification only for matters within the staff engineer's area of specialization. In such cases the position of "Construction Certifier" shall be filled by more than one engineer. This official is responsible for certifying that the construction complies with all technical and code requirements.

(3) The "Certification Coordinator" shall administer the certification program and serve as the official point of contact for RUS. The certifying officer or construction certifier may also serve as the certification coordinator.

(b) Certification borrowers, shall submit and obtain RUS approval of a work plan before construction and related engineering begin.

(1) The work plan shall provide a description of the proposed construction and methods of purchasing in such detail as to enable RUS to monitor the