

Minutes of the 131st Research Council (RC) meeting

The Special Research Council Meeting was held on 7th March, 2024 from 4 to 6.30 pm through Online Mode on MS Teams Platform. Accordingly, the following members attended the meeting online:

1. **Prof. Mahesh Tandon, RC, Chairman**, Tandon Consultants Pvt. Ltd. 17, Link Road, Jangpura Extension, New Delhi 110014.

Research Council Members:

2. **Shri. Dharmanand Sarangi**, Director General (*R*), MoRT&H, and Special Secretary, GoI.

3. **Prof. Lelitha Devi Vanajakshi, MoRTH Chair Professor**, Department of Civil Engineering, IIT, Madras

4. **Ms. Minimol Korula**, Head, Strategic Projects, M/s Maccaferri Environmental Solutions Pvt. Ltd.,

5. **Prof. Manoranjan Parida**, Director, CSIR-Central Road Research Institute, New Delhi.

Secretary and other Senior Scientists of CSIR - CRR

6. **Dr. S. Velmurugan**, Secretary, RC, Chief Scientist and Head, Traffic Engineering and Safety (TES) Division

7. **Dr. E.Madhu**, Chief Scientist, Transportation Planning and Environment Division

8. **Dr. Ch.Ravisekhar**, Chief Scientist and Head, TPE Division and Officiating Head, PME Division

Item 1: Welcome Address by Prof. M. Parida, Director CSIR - CRR

Prof. M. Parida welcomed the RC Chairman and other members for the Special RC meeting and specifically thanked them for attending the same at very short notice.

Item 2: R&D Seed Fund (RDSF) of CSIR seeking the Approval of RC

Prof. Parida explained the RC Members in respect of the above scheme:

The vision of CSIR is to create and nurture the future technological developments in niche areas by introducing the R & D Seed Fund *i.e.* RDSF with a budgetary support of maximum Rs. 1,00,00,000 per laboratory from the financial year 2024 under CSPA - 2024 to execute research projects. In this regard, the concerned Laboratory should ensure that the proposal floated by the scientists shall align with the VISION-2030 document of CSIR as well as align with the commitments made by the concerned laboratory under the Performance Assessment Board (PAB) done in 2022. This aspect was taken into consideration by the institute while inviting the research proposals from the young and middle level scientists of the institute under CSPA – 2024 scheme.

As part of the evaluation, eight research proposals submitted by the scientists under CSPA - 2024, were screened by the special expert committee (*consisting of one outside expert Prof. Aravind Swamy, IIT, Delhi and two internal experts Dr. Vasant G. Havangi and Dr. E.Madhu*) without disclosing the names of PI. Out of the above, six of them were shortlisted by the above committee and the same has been placed before RC for its consideration and possible approval. Thereafter, he requested RC Chairman to deliver his opening remarks.

Prof. Mahesh Tandon requested the Scientists to make their presentations. Other members also appreciated the efforts of CSIR for introducing schemes especially young scientists to nurture their research skills and at the same time focusing on societal benefits.

Decision of the Research Council:

The list of the presentations made by six individual scientists on the proposed research topic is given in Table 1. After listening to the six research projects, it was agreed by the RC that all the proposals merit consideration for funding under CSPA. Accordingly, inputs were given by the RC Members in terms of either the modification of the study scope, refinement of study methodology, consideration of the study area and project deliverables.

Also, it was decided to allocate Rs. 17 Lakhs per project to S.Nos. 1 to 4 i.e. to the Proposals submitted by Dr. Safaraz Ahmed, Dr. Rajiv Kumar, Dr. Ravi Shankar whereas Rs. 16 Lakhs to S. Nos 5 and 6 i.e. to the proposals submitted by Sh. Ramesh Chandra Majhi and Dr. Deepa S.

Table 1: List of Research Projects Presented along with the Names of Scientists

1. **“Feasibility of using Reclaimed Asphalt (RAP) Material in High Performance (HiPER) Bitumen Mixes for Sustainable Road Construction”**, by Dr. Safaraz Ahmed, FP Division
2. **“Characterisation of Asphalt Film Thickness and its Impact on Bituminous Mixtures (hot mix asphalt, warm mix asphalt, and cold mix asphalt)”** by Dr. Rajiv Kumar, FP Division
3. **“Cyclic interfacial response of Geosynthetic reinforcements with marginal/Industrial waste materials for highway applications”** by Dr. Ravi Shankar, GTE Division
4. **“Assessing the suitability of RAP (Reclaimed Asphalt Pavement) as coarse aggregate with Nanomaterial as a construction material in concrete road construction”**, by Sh. Romeil Sagwal
5. **“Investigating emergency evacuation behavior of residents in hilly areas in case of natural disaster such as flood”** by Sh. Ramesh Chandra Majhi, TES Division
6. **“Evaluating the Climate Resilience and Environmental Impact of Alternate Pavement Construction Technology”** by Dr. Deepa S, FP Division

Considering the above decision, all the concerned scientists were advised to resubmit the proposal by complying with the observations as well as revisiting the project costing (including reallocation of the heads). The revised proposals conforming to the PME Format shall be submitted on or before 11th March, 2024.

Item 3: Seeking approval of RC for Extension of Tenure of Consultants engaged in Administration

Ms. Beena A. Sequeira, Controller of Administration (CoA), made a detailed presentation of the roster of administrative and isolated cadres at CSIR-CRRI as on date (**Refer Table 2**):

Table 2: List of Sanctioned Post, In-Position and Vacant Position

| S. No. | Name of Post | Sanctioned Position | In-Position as on date | Vacant Positions |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|------------------|
| Cadre: General Administration | | | | |
| 1 | Assistant Section Officer (Gen.) | 16 | 01 | 15 |
| 2 | Sr. Secretariat Assistant (Gen.) | 07 | 07 | Nil |
| 3 | Jr. Secretariat Assistant (Gen.) | 08 | 02 | 06 |
| Cadre: Finance and Accounts | | | | |
| 4 | Assistant Section Officer (F&A) | 05 | 01 | 04 |
| 5 | Sr. Secretariat Assistant (F&A) | 03 | 03 | Nil |
| 6 | Jr. Secretariat Assistant (F&A) | 03 | Nil | 03 |
| Cadre: Stores and Purchase | | | | |
| 7 | Assistant Section Officer (S&P) | 03 | 02 | 01 |
| 8 | Sr. Secretariat Assistant (S&P) | 03 | 01 | 02 |
| 9 | Jr. Secretariat Assistant (S&P) | 03 | Nil | 03 |
| | TOTAL (1 to 9) | 42 | 23 (40%) | 25 (60%) |
| Isolated Cadre: Security Staff | | | | |
| 10 | Security /Watch & Ward Assistant | 01 | Nil | 01 |

It can be seen that from Table 2 that the Institute is facing severe staff crunch in the Administration and therefore to cope up with the situation, Institute engaged three Consultants as a stop gap arrangement for six months or till the regular posts are filled up in this Institute, whichever is earlier as per CSIR Circular No.5-1(354)/2016-PD dated 02.12.2022 & Dept. of Expenditure, MoF, OM No.3-25/2020-EIHA dated 09.12.2020. Since, the recruitment of administrative posts is being carried out at CSIR Hqrs level and it is still under process and further

the recruitment of Security Assistant cannot be completed as it awaits reply of clarifications from CSIR Hqrs. therefore, to cope up with the manpower crises and in view of the satisfactory performance of the above consultants, the tenure of Consultants was again extended to next six months as per aforementioned CSIR Circular dated 02.12.2022. The details of the three consultants hired in the past are given in Table 2.

Table 2: Consultants Engaged in the Past

| Name of Consultant | Section / Division | Date of Joining | Validity of 1 st Extension |
|---|------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|
| Sh. Rameshwar Dayal, Retired Sub-Inspector (<i>Ministerial</i>), Delhi Police | General Administration | 18.04.2023 up to 06 months <i>i.e.</i> 17.10.2023 | 18.10.2023 to 17.04.2024 |
| Sh. Daleep Kumar Mutreja, Retired Senior Stenographer, CSIR-CRRI | Director's Office | 18.04.2023 up to 06 months <i>i.e.</i> 17.10.2023 | 18.10.2023 to 17.04.2024 |
| Sh. Tribhuvan Sharma, Retired Master Warrant Officer, Indian Air Force | Security In-charge | 15.05.2023 up to 06 months <i>i.e.</i> 14.11.2023 | 15.11.2023 to 14.05.2024 |

Since, the situation of manpower crisis stands still therefore, to cope with this crisis, extension of tenure to further 06 months to three consultants is proposed.

The engagement of above consultants is as per the instructions contained in CSIR Circular No. 5-1(354)/2016-PD dated 02.12.2022. As per the said CSIR Circular dated 02.12.2022 retired employees of CSIR/CAB/Central Government can initially be engaged on contract in CSIR for six months only which can be further extended for six months with the approval of the Competent Authority and concurrence of Finance. However, the tenure of above Consultants has already been extended twice for six months by the Competent Authority, CSIR-CRRI *i.e. total for a year*. As per CSIR Circular No. 5-1(354)/2016-PD dated 02.12.2022, extension beyond one year may be approved from the Research Council that too limited for 2 years only. In any case, extension sought shall not exceed six months at a time. In this regard, financial concurrence has also been accorded by the Finance and Accounts Section of CSIR - CRRI. Accordingly, the Research Council of CSIR - CRRI considered the extension of tenure of the three consultants given in Table 3.

Table 3: Proposed List of Consultants Sought Tenure Extension

| Name of Consultant | Section / Division | Proposed Tenure of Extension |
|---|------------------------|---|
| Sh. Rameshwar Dayal, Retired Sub-Inspector (<i>Ministerial</i>), Delhi Police | General Administration | 18.04.2024 to 17.10.2024 (<i>or till the joining of regular staff, whichever is earlier</i>) |
| Sh. Daleep Kumar Mutreja, Retired Senior Stenographer, CSIR - CRRI | Director's Office | 18.04.2024 to 17.10.2024 (<i>or till the joining of regular staff, whichever is earlier</i>) |
| Sh. Tribhuvan Sharma, Retired Master Warrant Officer, Indian Air Force | Security In-charge | 15.05.2024 to 14.11.2024 (<i>or till the joining of regular staff, whichever is earlier</i>) |

Research Council expressed its concern on the acute manpower shortage and despite the same, it was nice to see administrative work is being carried out by them with minimal delay. Considering the above, RC was of the unanimous view that the tenure of the above Consultants shall be extended by six months (*Ref. Table 3*) and hence gave its approval for the due processing by the Administration.

Meeting ended with the Vote of Thanks to the Chairman of RC, other RC Members, CoA, Other Invitees from CSIR - CRRI by Director, CRRI and RC Secretary.