

selecting other highway projects for VE studies.

(2) *Studies.* Value engineering studies shall follow the widely recognized systematic problem-solving analysis process that is used throughout private industry and governmental agencies. Studies must be performed using multi-disciplined teams of individuals not personally involved in the design of the project. Study teams should consist of a team leader and individuals from different speciality areas, such as design, construction, environment, planning, maintenance, right-of-way, and other areas depending upon the type of project being reviewed. Individuals from the public and other agencies may also be included on the team when their inclusion is found to be in the public interest.

(i) Each team leader should be trained and knowledgeable in VE techniques and be able to serve as the coordinator and facilitator of the team.

(ii) Studies should be employed as early as possible in the project development or design process so that accepted VE recommendations can be implemented without delaying the progress of the project.

(iii) Studies should conclude with a formal report outlining the study team's recommendations for improving the project and reducing its overall cost.

(3) *Recommendations.* The program should include procedures to approve or reject recommendations and ensure the prompt review of VE recommendations by staff offices whose speciality areas are implicated in proposed changes and by offices responsible for implementing accepted recommendations. Reviews by these offices should be performed promptly to minimize delays to the project.

(4) *Incentives.* The program may include a VE or cost reduction incentive clause in an STD's standard specifications or project special provisions that allows construction contractors to submit change proposals and share the resulting cost savings with the STD.

(5) *Monitoring.* The program should include procedures for monitoring the implementation of VE study team recommendations and VE change proposal

recommendations submitted by construction contractors.

(b) *State VE coordinators.* Individuals knowledgeable in VE shall be assigned responsibilities to coordinate and monitor the STD's program and be actively involved in all phases of the program.

(c) *Use of consultants.* Consultants or firms with experience in VE may be retained by STDs to conduct the studies of Federal-aid highway projects or elements of Federal-aid highway projects required under §627.1(a) of this part. Consultants or firms should not be retained to conduct studies of their own designs unless they maintain separate and distinct organizational separation of their VE and design sections.

(d) *Funding eligibility.* The cost of performing VE studies is project related and is, therefore, eligible for reimbursement with Federal-aid highway funds at the appropriate pro-rata share for the project studied.

(e) In the case of a Federal-aid design-build project meeting the project criteria in 23 CFR 627.1(a), the STDs shall fulfill the value engineering analysis requirement by performing a value engineering analysis prior to the release of the Request for Proposals document.

[62 FR 6868, Feb. 14, 1997, as amended at 67 FR 75924, Dec. 10, 2002]

PART 630—PRECONSTRUCTION PROCEDURES

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AUTHORITY: 23 U.S.C. 106, 109, 115, 315, 320, and 402(a); 23 CFR 1.32; and 49 CFR 1.48(b).

Subpart A—Project Authorization and Agreements

SOURCE: 66 FR 23847, May 10, 2001, unless otherwise noted.

§ 630.102 Purpose.

The purpose of this subpart is to prescribe policies for authorizing Federal-aid projects through execution of the project agreement required by 23 U.S.C. 106(a)(2).

§ 630.104 Applicability.

(a) This subpart is applicable to all Federal-aid projects unless specifically exempted.

(b) Other projects which involve special procedures are to be approved, or authorized as set out in the implementing instructions or regulations for those projects.

§ 630.106 Authorization to proceed.

(a)(1) The State transportation department (STD) must obtain an authorization to proceed from the FHWA

before beginning work on any Federal-aid project. The STD may request an authorization to proceed in writing or by electronic mail for a project or a group of projects.

(2) The FHWA will issue the authorization to proceed either through or after the execution of a formal project agreement with the State. The agreement can be executed only after applicable prerequisite requirements of Federal laws and implementing regulations and directives are satisfied. Except as provided in paragraphs (c)(1) through (c)(4) of this section, the FHWA will obligate Federal funds in the project or group of projects upon execution of the project agreement.

(b) Federal funds shall not participate in costs incurred prior to the date of a project agreement except as provided by 23 CFR 1.9(b).

(c) The execution of the project agreement shall be deemed a contractual obligation of the Federal government under 23 U.S.C. 106 and shall require that appropriate funds be available at the time of authorization for the agreed Federal share, either pro rata or lump sum, of the cost of eligible work to be incurred by the State except as follows:

(1) Advance construction projects authorized under 23 U.S.C. 115.

(2) Projects for preliminary studies for the portion of the preliminary engineering and right-of-way (ROW) phase(s) through the selection of a location.

(3) Projects for ROW acquisition in hardship and protective buying situations through the selection of a particular location. This includes ROW acquisition within a potential highway corridor under consideration where necessary to preserve the corridor for future highway purposes. Authorization of work under this paragraph shall be in accord with the provisions of 23 CFR part 710.

(4) In special cases where the Federal Highway Administrator determines it to be in the best interest of the Federal-aid highway program.

(d) For projects authorized to proceed under paragraphs (c)(1) through (c)(4) of this section, the executed project agreement shall contain the following statement: “Authorization to proceed is