

CTE's INSPECTION: VALUE FOR GOVERNMENT MONEY

The Chief Technical Examiner's Organization works under administrative control of Central Vigilance Commission. It deals with Technical matters including technical examination of works undertaken by various organizations, Ministries, Departments and Public Sector Undertakings etc.

The Public Accounts Committee, in 1947-48 recommended to set up an inter departmental committee to examine the question of setting up an independent inspection agency for Technical examination of expenditure of CPWD works.

The Committee, set up in May, 1948 recommended introduction of an organization on the pattern of Chief Technical Examiner and Chief Surveyor of the works in the CPWD.

Initially, only a Superintending Surveyor of work organisation was set up under the control of Chief Engineer, CPWD. The organization was signed to inspect the all important work, during their progress and after their completions, undertaken by CPWD.

Public Accounts Committee, in year 1956 reiterated and pressed for setting up CTE's Organisation and Central Government issued formal order for

creation of Chief Technical Examiner's Cell in the then Ministry of the Work Housing and Supply in May 1957.

As per recommendation of Committee on Prevention of Corruption under the Chairmanship of Sh. K. Santhanam, the jurisdiction of CTE was extended to cover the construction works undertaken by other Ministries/Departments/Public Sector Undertakings etc. and CTE's Organisation was placed under the administrative control of the Central Vigilance Commission in 1964.

CTE may carry out Intensive Examination of any work of any magnitude, yet, considering its limited resources, it generally examines works of larger size only. The quarterly progress reports of all important works are sent to CTE organization in January, April, July and October every year by the concerned PSU/Department.,

CTE's Inspections are mostly done with prior intimation so that concerned Engineers, Planners, Designers and the tender accepting authority may clarify their points.

After intensive examination is carried out by Technical Examiner of CTE's Organization, inspection report is sent to Chief Vigilance Officer of concerned Department/Ministry/PSU.

The report brings out instances of lapses/irregularities in awarding contract, defective contract conditions and clauses, overpayment made to the contractor, execution and acceptance of sub-standard work, infructuous and avoidable expenditure etc.

CTE may also suggest preventive measures in certain areas as a safeguard against malpractices or corrupt practices and to plug loopholes in procedure/rules, regulations etc.

In case, where serious irregularities or negligence are observed, such paras are referred to Chief Vigilance Officer for detailed investigation.

The defects, pointed out in CTE's report, should be removed either by contractor or otherwise (at the risk and cost of contractor). Minor irregularities brought in the report should be got regularized by competent authority after ascertaining reasons for the same. Preventive measures may be taken and defaulters may be suitably warned so that such irregularities do not occur in future.

The CTE's function has resulted in recovery of Rs.8.75 crores in year 2000-01 which was more than the total budget of year 2000-01 of CVC which was of the order of Rs. 4 crores.

The CTE's organization has carried out Intensive Examination of various works at Western Coalfields Limited in recent past. The irregularities, which are generally pointed out, in Intensive Examination Report of CTE are compiled as follows:

- Press release of NIT should not be released in anticipation of approval of NIT.
- Administrative approval, expenditure sanction and approval of preliminary must be obtained before making detailed estimate.
- Decision must be taken, for type of foundation to be adopted during execution, before award of work.
- Copy of sanctioned estimate must be made available to the site Engineer.
- Letter of extension of validity of offer must be obtained before expiry of validity of tenders to avoid difficulty in case of dispute by agency.
- Cutting and overwriting in tenders must be authenticated to avoid scope of any dispute at later stage.
- The condition of advancing the progress of one of model units in completing it in all respect in advance to avoid the recurrence of same discrepancy/mistakes in all repetitive units should be incorporated in tender.

- Letter of acceptance of tender incorporates period of completion of work excluding rainy-season. Why the period of completion including rainy season could not be specified? Period of rainy season should be prescribed.
- The item of pile foundation stipulates that bailing out water if any, met during bore is included in rate of item of boring. Such note has greater financial implication around 25% of cost of boring. It gives scope to tenderers to quote higher rate. It should have been covered under separate item after detailed survey of site condition.
- In addition responsibilities of contractor, contractor has to arrange insurance in the name of the company. It should be ascertained that necessary insurance cover has been obtained by the agency.
- Hindrances were recorded on account of non-availability of cement, labour shortage, machineries, which were responsibility of contractor. As such hindrances on this account are not admissible.
- Sources of receipt of cement, batch number and brand name of paint and theoretical consumption of paint should be mentioned in the cement and paint consumption registers to control the actual consumption of these materials.
- Number of mandatory tests are on lower side.

- Cement concrete cubes are not tested at regular interval of 7 days and 28 days, thus defeating the very purpose of testing concrete cubes.
- End beam should be provided in sloping roofs.
- Pinhead glasses are provided in place of Plain sheet glass.
- Ventilator frame are not of ISI marked.
- Groove, in plaster at junction of wall and roof, have not been provided.
- Size of Tower-bolt are of lesser length than specified.
- Thickness of waist slab of staircase was found 110 mm against 120 mm as specified.
- Dates are not being put on plasterwork to watch curing of plaster.
- Top of parapet had been plastered instead of coping.
- Half brick wall was provided without reinforcements in railing and parapet.
- Plinth protection level was lower than road level in some of the blocks.
- There is no system of making part rate payment still, some items have not been executed fully but paid at full rate and some amount has been withheld.

- Proper sequence for providing dado and flooring in W.C. and bath had not been followed, i.e. dado item has been executed before flooring.
- The sizes of rails and styles was changed.
- In one work, species of wood was found to be 'Hollock' instead of Bijasal as specified in agreement.
- Weight of holdfast and tie rod should not be included in the weight of doorframe while making payment as per CPWD specification.
- Smaller sizes of holdfast have been used for fixing frame in half brickwork.
- Manhole are at higher level than the plinth protection and Manhole covers are too light and size of manhole opening is too small.
- Date of expiry of chemical has not been mentioned on anti-termite register.
- Thickness of marble used in the work was less than 30 mm as required.
- Secured advance, on perishable items should not be paid without obtaining insurance cover.
- Theoretical consumption of murum, aggregate boulder, bitumen should be prepared to ascertain that the quantity of materials actually used are not less than the required theoretically.

- Floor trap used in building work are of contracted neck variety which are not permissible.
- Tack welding has been used in manufacturing of steel window against continuous flash butt welding.
- Rawl plug have not been provided at top and bottom member of steel window.
- 25 mm thick Kota stone has been used in kitchen slab in place of 25 mm thick Cuddappa stone as specified in agreement.
- Under coat of cement mortar plaster for providing glazed tiles had not been roughened and it had been much advanced, which will result in inadequate bond between tiles and floor.
- Bed blocks over brickwall under the RCC beam have not been provided.
- The acceptability of test result and action taken for failure of sample in respect of testing of mandatory test of several construction materials are not being recorded.
- Glazed tiles are not tested for their specification.
- No interest free mobilization advance should be paid to the contractor.
- Minimum weight of empty HDPE tank (500 litres) (Exclusive of man-hole lid & fitting) and the minimum wall thickness of top, bottom and sides as per IS 10146-1982 are 18.00 kg and 6 mm respectively.

- Size of kitchen sinks provided are less than the specified in agreement.
- Pro-rate progress had not been achieved.

(This article of Sh. RK Kashyap, Superintending Engineer (Vig.), Western Coalfields Ltd. was published in the Journal "CONCERN" (March, 2003) of the Vigilance Department of Western Coalfields Ltd.)
