

Process Of Handling Federal Aid Projects Between The  
Bureau of Public Roads And The States.

1. Apportionment of Funds
2. Project Statement
3. Examination and Approval
4. Surveys - Plans - Estimates  
Approved Specifications
5. Examination, modification,  
approval
6. Letting of contracts
7. Project Agreement
8. Inspection, State, Bureau of Public Roads
9. Completion
10. Payment of vouchers
11. Reports from Field to Construction Division  
and Summary.

## 1. Apportionment of Funds

Upon authorization by Congress the Secretary of Agriculture makes the apportionment of funds for the ensuing fiscal year and notifies the Secretary of the Treasury and each State highway department of the amount apportioned to each State.

## 2. Project Statement

The law requires that any State wishing to secure Federal aid for the improvement of a section of road shall file a Project Statement. This Project Statement is an application for aid and sets forth the proposed improvement. It is submitted by the State directly to a representative of the Bureau of Public Roads who has headquarters convenient to the State highway department. The road to be improved must lie on the Federal Aid Highway System.

## 3. Examination and Approval of Project Statement

The examination of the application filed by the State is made first in the field by an engineer of the Bureau of Public Roads who goes over the route of the proposed improvement and makes a detailed report to the Bureau's District Engineer. This report, with the recommendation of the District Engineer, is forwarded to the Washington Office and if the project is satisfactory, its approval is recommended to the Secretary of Agriculture. The State is formally notified after such approval.

Disapprovals are rare because if our engineers find that projects, as submitted by the State, are not satisfactory, they do everything possible to secure a satisfactory adjustment before submitting the project for action. In this way harmonious relations with the State are promoted. If, however, a project is not satisfactory and cannot be made so, it is disapproved.

## 4. Surveys, Plans, Estimates

After an application for a project has been approved, the State prepares at State expense plans and specifications and an estimate of the cost of the work. The plans are submitted to a field engineer of the Bureau for transmission to Washington with his recommendation for approval with or without necessary modifications.

## 5. Examination, Modification and Approval of the Plans, Specifications and Estimate.

A field engineer of the Bureau keeps in touch with the development of the plans while they are being prepared by the State. In this way many changes which might otherwise be necessary are obviated. After the plans are finished they are carefully examined and if modifications are found to be necessary, this matter is taken up with the States for

adjustment. Considering the large number of projects and the mileage involved there is relatively little modification required because most of the States are now using approved standard specifications and understand in general and in detail the grade of work required. The plans, specifications and estimates after a final review in the Washington office are recommended to the Secretary for approval if they are found satisfactory and formal notice is sent to the State of such approval.

#### 6. Letting of Contracts

In the meantime the State may proceed with the advertising and other necessary arrangements preliminary to letting contracts and a contract may actually be entered into for construction when the District Engineer of the Bureau of Public Roads signifies to the State that the plans are satisfactory although the formal approval of the Secretary may not yet have been given. This arrangement makes it unnecessary to delay the award of contract unduly.

#### 7. Project Agreement

When the Secretary of Agriculture approves the plans, specifications and estimates for a project, a contract called a Project Agreement is drawn up in the Bureau of Public Roads for execution by the Secretary of Agriculture and the State highway department. This Project Agreement specifically describes the project and the funds to be contributed by the State and the Government, recites any special conditions affecting the project and insures that the State shall assume the proper obligations for integrity of construction, adequate inspection and future maintenance.

#### 8. Inspection by the State and Bureau

While construction is in progress continuous and adequate inspection is required by representatives of the State, and Engineers of the Bureau visit the project at such intervals as may be necessary to insure that the work is progressing in a satisfactory manner and in accordance with the provisions of the specifications and plans.

Provision is made for the testing of materials both on the work and at the source of supply as may be most convenient and economic.

#### 9. Completion of Project

The work of construction proceeds under the direct supervision of the State highway department in accordance with the State laws and is followed at every stage by periodic inspections of the Bureau. When the project is finally completed an engineer of the Bureau makes a final inspection to insure that all the work contemplated has been properly carried out and that the obligation of the State in its contract with the Secretary of Agriculture has been met.

## 10. Payment of Vouchers

Payment to the State of the aid allotted to a project is made either as the work progresses or on completion of the entire project, in accordance with the terms of the Project Agreement. In most cases payments are made monthly on vouchers prescribed by the Comptroller and submitted by the States. On the voucher appears a detailed estimate of all the items of work on which the State bases its claim and payment is made on this voucher. The vouchers are cumulative and progressive so that with the submission of each new voucher a complete recheck of quantities is obtained. The final voucher shows the complete estimate of work on which the full amount of Federal aid is claimed by the State. Each voucher is supported by the specific recommendation of a field engineer of the Bureau who is personally familiar with the work done and is certified to by the District Engineer of the Bureau.

## 11. Reports from Field to Construction Division and Summary.

All inspections made by representatives of the Bureau of Public Roads are reported in writing to the Construction Division in the Washington office. Similarly all special inspections covering the voucher claims, final completion and the condition of maintenance of a Federal Aid Project are in writing and filed in Washington. The report of final inspection summarizes the progress of the work and includes a specific statement as to its complete condition, its conformity with the specifications and the proper nature of the claim for reimbursement by the State. Maintenance inspections are made of all completed projects at least twice yearly - in the fall and spring. Projects in an unsatisfactory condition of maintenance are at once called to the attention of the State highway department and the necessary steps taken to bring the project into satisfactory condition.

Through all the stages of a project an orderly and expeditious procedure is maintained. The close working relations established with the State highway departments insure complete protection of both the Federal and State interests.