सत्यमेव जयते

केन्द्रीय सतर्कता आयोग
CENTRAL VIGILANCE COMMISSION

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सं./No. 015/VGL/091/553640

दिनांक / Dated 14.06.2023

Circular No. 04/06/23

Subject : Adoption and implementation of Integrity Pact-Revised Standard Operating Procedure- regarding.

The Commission has reviewed the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for adoption of Integrity Pact (IP) by all Government Organizations, Public Sector Enterprises, Public Sector Banks, Insurance Companies, other Financial Institutions and Autonomous bodies etc. A copy of the revised SOP is enclosed, which would be applicable for adoption and implementation of the IP by the organizations concerned.

2. The present SOP is in supersession of the earlier SOP issued vide Circular No. 05/01/22 dated 25.01.2022.

WJKeishing

(Wormila Jasmine Keishing)
Deputy Secretary

Encl.: As above

To

(i) All Secretaries of Ministries / Departments. **(This Circular may also be shared with the existing IEMs in the organizations concerned)**

(ii) All CMDs/Head of CPSUs/Public Sector Banks/Organisations. **(This Circular may also be shared with the existing IEMs in the organizations concerned)**

(iii) All CVOs of Ministries/Departments/CPSUs/Public Sector Banks/Organisations. **(This Circular may be brought to the notice of the Chief Executive of the organization concerned)**

(iv) All Independent External Monitors.

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF INTEGRITY PACT

1.0 BACKGROUND

1.1 In order to ensure transparency, equity and competitiveness in public procurement, the Commission recommends adoption and implementation of the concept of Integrity Pact (IP) by Government organizations, Public Sector Enterprises, Public Sector Banks, Insurance Companies, other Financial Institutions and Autonomous Bodies, etc.

1.2 Deptt. of Expenditure vide OM dt. 19.7.2011, issued guidelines to all Ministries/Departments/Organizations including their attached/subordinate offices and autonomous bodies for implementation of IP. Also, vide OM dated 20.7.2011, Deptt. of Expenditure requested Department of Public Enterprises for directions to Central Public Sector Enterprises for use of IP.

1.3 Further, in view of the increasing procurement activities of Public Sector Banks (PSBs), Insurance Companies (ICs) and Financial Institutions (FIs), the Commission vide Circular No. 02/02/2015 dated 25.02.2015 advised that all PSBs, PSICs and FIs shall also adopt and implement the Integrity Pact.

1.4 The Commission vide Circular No. 05/01/22dated 25.01.2022, issued a revised Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for adoption and implementation of Integrity Pact by Organizations.

2.0 INTEGRITY PACT

2.1 The Pact essentially envisages an agreement between the prospective vendors/bidders and the buyer, committing the persons/officials of both sides, not to resort to any corrupt practices in any aspect/stage of the contract. Only those vendors/bidders, who commit

themselves to such a Pact with the buyer, would be considered competent to participate in the bidding process. In other words, entering into this Pact would be a preliminary qualification. The essential ingredients of the Pact include:

- Promise on the part of the Principal not to seek or accept any benefit, which is not legally available;
- Promise on the part of bidder not to offer any benefit to the employees of the Principal not available legally;
- Principal to treat all bidders with equity and reason;
- Bidders not to enter into any undisclosed agreement or understanding with other bidders with respect to prices, specifications, certifications, subsidiary contracts, etc.
- Bidders not to pass any information provided by Principal as part of business relationship to others and not to commit any offence under PC/ IPC Act;
- Foreign bidders to disclose the name and address of agents and representatives in India and Indian Bidders to disclose their foreign principals or associates;
- Bidders to disclose the payments to be made by them to agents / brokers or any other intermediary;
- Bidders to disclose any transgressions with any other public/government organization that may impinge on the anti-corruption principle. The date of such transgression, for the purpose of disclosure by the bidders in this regard, would be the date on which cognizance of the said transgression was taken by the competent authority. The period for which such transgression(s) is/are to be reported by the bidders shall be the last **three years** to be reckoned from date of bid submission. The transgression(s), for which cognizance was taken even before the said period of three years, but are pending conclusion, shall also be reported by the bidders.

2.2 Any violation of Integrity Pact would entail disqualification of the bidders and exclusion from future business dealings, as per the existing provisions of GFR, 2017, PC Act, 1988 and other Financial Rules/Guidelines etc. as may be applicable to the organization concerned.

2.3 IP would be implemented through a panel of Independent External Monitors (IEMs), appointed by the organization. The IEM would review independently and objectively, whether and to what extent parties have complied with their obligations under the Pact on receipt of any complaint by them from the bidder(s).

2.4 Integrity Pact, in respect of a particular contract, shall be operative from the date IP is signed by both the parties. The IEMs shall examine all the representations/grievances/complaints received by them from the bidders or their authorized representative related to any discrimination on account of lack of fair play in modes of procurement and bidding systems, tendering method, eligibility conditions, bid evaluation criteria, commercial terms & conditions, choice of technology/specifications etc.

2.5 For ensuring the desired transparency and objectivity in dealing with the complaints arising out of the tendering process, the matter should be examined by the full panel of IEMs jointly, who would look into the records, conduct an examination, and submit their joint recommendations to the Management. In case the full panel is not available due to some unavoidable reasons, the available IEM(s) will conduct examination of the complaints. Consent of the IEM(s), who may not be available, shall be taken on record.

2.6 The role of IEM is advisory and the advice of IEM is non- binding on the Organization. However, as IEMs are invariably persons with rich experience who have retired as senior functionaries of the government, their advice would help in proper implementation of the IP.

2.7 The role of the CVO of the organization shall remain unaffected by the presence of IEMs. A matter being examined by the IEMs can be separately investigated by the CVO in terms of the provisions of the CVC Act or Vigilance Manual, if a complaint is received by him/her or directed to him/her by the Commission. CVO and /or the officials of the vigilance wing should not be associated by IEMs during examination of the complaints in any manner.

3.0 APPOINTMENT OF IEMs

3.1 The IEMs appointed should be eminent persons of high integrity and reputation. A periodical notice inviting applications from eligible persons will be published on the Commission's website. After due scrutiny and verification of the applications and accompanying documents, as may be deemed appropriate by the Commission, the name(s) would be included in the panel for consideration for nomination as IEM.

3.2 The zone of consideration of eminent persons for empanelment as IEMs would consist of:-

(i) Officers who have held the post of Additional Secretary to Govt. of India or were in equivalent or higher pay scale, at the time of retirement (whether serving with Govt. of India or any State Govt.).

(ii) Persons who have held the post of CMD of Schedule 'A' Public Sector Enterprise and were equivalent to Additional Secretary to Govt. of India, at the time of retirement.

(iii) Persons who have held the post of CMD/MD and CEO of Public Sector Banks, Insurance Companies and other Financial Institutions, at the time of retirement.

(iv) Chief Executive Officer of an organization (other than listed above and were equivalent or higher to Additional Secretary to Govt. of India, at the time of retirement).

(v) Officers of Armed Forces, who were in the pay scale of equivalent or higher to Additional Secretaries to Govt. of India, at the time of retirement.

3.3 The Commission would not include a retired person in the panel being maintained by it for consideration for nomination as IEM, if that retired person has accepted a full time assignment, post retirement, either in government sector or private sector or elsewhere. All those empanelled persons, who accept full time assignment elsewhere, would cease to remain on the panel, from the date on which they have accepted the said assignment. In

this regard, it would be incumbent upon the empanelled persons to immediately inform the Commission about the acceptance of full time assignment by them.

3.4 The Commission would nominate IEMs for an organization, from the panel of IEMs maintained by it. The concerned organization should send a request for nomination of IEMs in case of adoption of Integrity Pact by them. Whenever a vacancy is likely to arise due to completion of tenure of an existing IEM, the organization should send the request for nomination of IEM three months before the expiry of tenure. Similarly, in case of resignation of IEM(s), intimation along with request for nomination should be sent immediately by the organization to the Commission.

3.5 Three IEMs shall be nominated for appointment in Maharatna and Navratna PSUs and two IEMs shall be nominated in all other organizations.

3.6 A person may be appointed as an IEM in a maximum of three organizations at a time.

3.7 An empanelled person cannot be appointed in one organization for a period of more than three years.

3.8 Age of IEM should not be more than 70 years at the time of appointment.

4.0 IMPLEMENTATION PROCEDURE

4.1 The provision for the Integrity Pact is to be included in all Requests for Proposal/Tender documents issued in future in respect of the procurements that meet the criteria laid down by the Ministry/Department in terms of Department of Expenditure's OM dated 19.07.2011.

4. 2 In all tenders covered under the IP, particulars of all IEMs, including their email IDs, should be mentioned, instead of mentioning details of a single IEM.

4.3 The Purchase / procurement wing of the organization would be the focal point for the implementation of IP.

4.4 It has to be ensured, through an appropriate provision in the tender document, that Integrity Pact is deemed as part of the contract so that the parties concerned are bound by its provisions.

4.5 A clause should be included in the IP that a person signing IP shall not approach the Courts while representing the matters to IEMs and he / she will await their decision in the matter.

4.6 In case of a joint venture, all the partners of the joint venture should sign the Integrity Pact. In case of sub-contracting, the Principal contractor shall take responsibility of the adoption of IP by the sub-contractor. It is to be ensured that all sub-contractors also sign the IP. In case of sub-contractors, the IP will be a tri-partite arrangement to be signed by the Organization, the contractor, and the sub-contractor.

4.7 The final responsibility for implementation of IP vests with the Head of organization/CMD/CEO of the organization.

5.0 ROLE OF IEMs

5.1 The IEMs would be provided access to all documents/records pertaining to the tender for which a complaint or issue is raised before them, as and when warranted.

5.2 The Procurement wing of the organization shall hold quarterly meetings with the IEMs. A summary of contracts awarded in the previous quarter, which are covered under the IP, shall be shared with the IEMs during the quarterly meeting. Such summary of contracts should include details like tender number, mode of tendering, period allowed for publicity, number of bids received, number of bidders considered eligible, and name and address of the successful bidder.

5.3 The above summary of contracts is to help the IEMs in analyzing whether appropriate mode of tendering is being adopted by the organization i.e. limited tender mode or nomination mode are not unduly used, number of bidders are not too low, large number of bidders are not excluded while judging the eligibility or during technical bid evaluation stage, and whether particular firm or set of particular firms is repeatedly getting contracts etc. Based on their analysis, the IEMs can suggest to the Management suitable systemic improvement(s) and measures to improve objectivity in decision making, capacity building etc.

5.4 It would be desirable to have structured meetings of the IEMs with the Chief Executive of the Organization on a half yearly basis to discuss / review the information on tenders awarded during the preceding six months' period. Additional such meetings, however, can be held as per requirement. All such meetings with the Procurement wing or with the Chief Executive of the organization should be minuted.

5.5 IEM should examine the process integrity; they are not expected to concern themselves with fixing of responsibility of officers. Complaints alleging malafide on the part of any officer of the organization should be looked into by the CVO of the concerned Organization.

5.6 In the event of any dispute between the management and the contractor relating to those contracts where Integrity Pact is applicable, in case, both the parties are agreeable, they may try to settle dispute through mediation before the panel of IEMs in a time bound manner. If required, the organizations may adopt any mediation rules for this purpose. However, not more than five meetings shall be held for a particular dispute resolution. The fees/expenses on dispute resolution shall be equally shared by both the parties.

In case, the dispute remains unresolved even after mediation by the panel of IEMs, the organization may take further action as per the terms & conditions of the contract.

5.7 All IEMs should sign non-disclosure agreements with the organization in which they are appointed.

5.8 The IEMs would also be required to sign a declaration of absence of conflict of interest. A person acting as an IEM shall not be debarred from taking up other assignments such as consultancy with other organizations or agencies subject to his declaring that his / her additional assignment does not involve any conflict of interest with existing assignment, and it is not a full time assignment. In case of any conflict of interest arising at a later date from an entity wherein he is or has been a consultant, the IEM should inform the CEO and recuse himself/herself from that case.

6.0 ENTITLEMENTS OF IEMs

6.1 In any organization, the IEMs shall be paid per sitting a fees of ₹ 25,000/- . However, the maximum amount payable to IEMs in a calendar year shall not exceed ₹ 3,00,000/- with respect to the sitting fees.

6.2 The travel and stay arrangement for the IEMs for such meetings shall be equal to their entitlements at the time of retirement. Booking of tickets for travel, as per the mode of travel indicated by the IEM in writing (including email), local transport and stay shall be done by the organization.

6.3 The fees for meetings held by IEMs for mediation between the Management and the contractor as per Para 5.6 above shall be the same as fee payable to IEMs otherwise and in addition to the fees for the regular meetings of IEMs, over and above the ceiling of ₹ 3,00,000/- annually, to be calculated as per calendar year. The travel and stay arrangement for such meetings shall be same as given in Para 6.2 above.

6.4 The organization concerned shall provide place for meeting and secretarial assistance to IEMs for rendering his/her job as IEM. No payment in lieu of secretarial assistance shall be paid to the IEMs.

7.0 REVIEW SYSTEM

7.1 CVOs of all organizations would keep the Commission posted with the implementation status through their annual reports and special reports, wherever necessary.

7.2 All organizations are called upon to make sincere and sustained efforts to imbibe the spirit and principles of the Integrity Pact and ensure its effective implementation.