
SUPPLIER'S PROCEDURE

Purpose

The Regional Infrastructure Standardization Committee (RISC) was established to ensure that various products and equipment utilized in water distribution, sewage collection, traffic control systems, and roads infrastructure meet acceptable standards of quality and consistency throughout the Region of Durham. More specifically, the committee develops and maintains guidelines for the submission and evaluation of products from manufacturers/suppliers. Once approved, products are placed on the applicable Region of Durham "Approved Manufacturers' Products List". This guide is designed to assist suppliers or manufacturers who have suitable products or as a reference for engineering consultants who are designing Region of Durham projects.

Structure

The Regional Infrastructure Standardization Committee is currently comprised of two sub-committees which oversee the product approval procedures for the following specific areas:

- Road, Watermains, Sewers
- Traffic Control Systems

Each sub-committee is headed by a sub-committee Chair, who conducts evaluation meetings with appropriate stakeholder groups and technical support staff. The Chair receives product approval requests from manufacturers and suppliers interested in having products evaluated and approved for use in the Region of Durham's infrastructure.

Currently, an Approved Manufacturers' Products List is available for Road, Watermains, Sewers and Traffic Control Systems products. Requests for product approval for these products must be submitted in accordance with these procedures.

All approved products in the Road, Watermain, Sewer and Traffic Control System-related product categories will be posted on the Region of Durham's "Pre-qualified Products" List on *The Road Authority's* (TRA's) web site at www.roadauthority.com. The Approved Products Listing on the TRA website is updated throughout the year to reflect the additions and deletions of products at sub-committee meetings.

Evaluation of Products Submitted for Approval

The RISC Sub-committees focus on three general areas when reviewing products submitted for Region of Durham approval. These are briefly described below:

1. Product Quality, Design, Functionality and Cost

Product samples are evaluated to ensure that the quality of construction, materials and design meet exacting requirements to ensure compatibility with Region of Durham locations and applications. Where relevant, productivity and life cycle costs are considered. Compliance to any required industry and Region of Durham specific standards or specifications are determined, based on the documentation supplied. Failure to provide certifications or testing results from an independent lab may result in products not being approved. It is therefore essential that product applications include such documentation.

2. Quality Management of Manufacturing Processes

It is important that manufacturing processes are managed in such a way to provide consistent design and quality standards. This ensures that when orders are placed, products will consistently meet the required standards. Quality management programs such as ISO certification or equivalent external or internal programs are therefore considered important in meeting this requirement.

The Region applies a similar evaluation to both foreign and domestically manufactured products. Since products manufactured outside of Canada may have different quality assurance programs than those manufactured locally, it is incumbent upon the submitting organizations to include all relevant documentation about the particular quality assurance programs before the respective sub-committee may proceed with product evaluations or testing.

3. Distribution, Warranty and Servicing

Manufacturers or their authorized distributors submitting new products to the Region of Durham must provide suitable distribution and servicing of products they wish to sell. This requires that adequate inventories be maintained for products and repair parts to ensure prompt delivery of orders and warranty/repair services. Local servicing by qualified staff for product training, repairs or maintenance is also required. Manufacturers should provide a comprehensive warranty for their products and offer competitive rates for extended warranty or support services. (The Region of Durham standard purchase order terms require that a 12-month warranty be provided for equipment purchases.) References verifying acceptable quality, delivery and servicing of products must also be provided.

Competitive Bidding

The Region of Durham's Purchasing By-law 68-2000, as amended, requires that competitive bids be obtained wherever possible. It is important to distinguish between approval of products under the RISC and approval of firms distributing products or providing services.

Unless a product is distributed exclusively through one agent, the Region of Durham will normally seek competitive bids from suitably qualified firms. Sometimes a separate process is undertaken to establish standing agreements with a number of product distributors or service providers. Examples of this approach are Maintenance, Repair and Operating (MRO) suppliers and various trades for which registries of suitable firms are established and updated annually. These bidding processes are conducted by the Region of Durham Purchasing Section.

The role of the RISC is not to approve (or limit approval to) any particular product reseller, agent, or contractor, but to administer the processes for approving products, which fully comply with the Region of Durham's standards and are supported through adequate distribution and local servicing.

OGRA, OPS and The Road Authority

The Region of Durham supports the efforts of the Ontario Good Roads Association (OGRA) and the Ontario Provincial Standards (OPS) organization. As part of these relationships, the Region of Durham has chosen to use the *The Road Authority* (TRA) to post its Approved Manufacturers' Products List for Road, Watermain, Sewer and Traffic Control System-related products on the internet. The Road Authority is a service provided by the OGRA and is "an internet-based information resource that provides a mechanism for infrastructure owners, consultants, contractors and product suppliers to collaborate and share information. TRA provides users with information on products services and technical solutions available for use in the public works sector."

HOW TO SUBMIT PRODUCTS FOR APPROVAL

Manufacturers and suppliers wishing to have products approved by the Region of Durham should provide the following:

1. The manufacturer or applicant must first be registered with TRA and all products being submitted for consideration must be profiled in TRA's products database.

The TRA registration process includes three steps

1. Manufacturer/supplier registration
2. Product identification (registration/profile)
3. Application for product "classification" by the OPS Products Management Committee (OPS-PMC)

Upon profiling of the products with TRA, TRA will forward product details to the Region of Durham provided the proponent indicates their desire to do so during the online product registration process.

As of March 31, 2003 all new product approval submissions in these categories must also receive an "Accepted for Use" classification by the OPS-PMC prior to consideration by the Region of Durham.

2. Upon request by the RISC Sub-committee Chair, samples of the product shall be supplied and delivered to a field test location at no charge to the Region of Durham. Since each sub-committee typically only convenes two to four times annually, the product evaluation and testing could take up to a year.

Note that once a product has been placed on the Region of Durham's Approved Manufacturer's Products List, it will be tentatively accepted for two years, during which time the appropriate sub-committee will review the product for full approval or rejection, based on the performance, quality and support provided.

In general, the new products that are accepted for use will not be placed on the Region of Durham Approved Manufacturers' Products List until early in the following year.

However, the Region of Durham Approved Manufacturers' Products List may be revised for use at any time for the purposes of tendering, at the sole discretion of the Region of Durham. The list of Region of Durham "Pre-qualified" Products (i.e., also having received approval for use by the Region of Durham) on the TRA website will be updated periodically throughout the year as acceptance is given.

If the Product is rejected for use, the manufacturer or supplier must wait for one (1) year from the date of previous application before re-submission. If a product is removed from the Approved Manufacturers' Products List, the manufacturer or supplier must also wait for one year from the date of removal. In the event that a product is not accepted, copies of the sub-committee's evaluations and comments will be forwarded to the distributor who submitted the application and the manufacturer, provided that the address of the manufacturer is on the application.

Suppliers wishing to obtain a copy of the Region of Durham's Purchasing By-law or a "Guide to Doing Business with the Region of Durham" should contact the Purchasing Section by phone at 905-668-7711, ext. 3369 or by fax at 905-666-6210 or visit the Purchasing Section's web page at:
www.durham.ca/finance.asp?nr=/departments/finance/purchasing/purchasinginside.htm

Please Note: In order for a road, watermain, sewer or traffic control system product to remain on the Region of Durham's Approved Manufacturers' Products List, the manufacturer or supplier must continue to hold membership, in good standing, in The Road Authority (TRA), the product must remain profiled in the TRA product database, and the product must maintain its "Accepted for Use" classification from the OPS Products Management Committee.