

PROVISION OF STRATEGIC ENGINEERING SERVICES UNDER ROPS 2777

50/7/1-1 | #7454274

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council:

1. Approves the engagement of seven engineering consultants to undertake separable portions of engineering consultancy work portions for an initial 4 Month duration for the value of up to \$535,040 excluding GST
2. Approves to extend these engagements for an initial extension of 3 months (\$401,280) dependent on recruitment success and ensuring these extensions will be required only on the basis that vacancy remaining budget is not exceeded.
3. Approval to extend these engagements for a further period of 3 months (\$401,280) dependent on recruitment success and ensuring these extensions will be required only on the basis that vacancy remaining budget is not exceeded.
4. Delegates authority to the Chief Executive Officer in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2009* to enter into contracts, negotiate, finalise and execute any and all matters relating to this program subject to Council's procurement practices and policies.

INTERESTED PARTIES:

- Trinity Engineering and Consulting
- WMS Engineering
- NJM Engineering
- Aurecon

Note: The identification of interested parties is provided on a best endeavours basis by Council Officers and may not be exhaustive.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The Strategic Asset Management & Planning branch is currently under-resourced and efforts to recruit into the strategic asset engineering roles through several campaigns has been largely unsuccessful, attributed to the present engineering market conditions. Council has relied on consultants in recent years to assist in maintaining sufficient output to meet statutory requirements and continue delivering critical services.

This report requests to extend the five current engagements of the engineering consultants under the Register of Prequalified Supplier (ROPS 2777) and the additional

engagement of two further consultant roles to support the 3 Waters team. The SAMP team are actively working on a recruitment methodology to ensure critical roles are filled. This interim methodology is required to ensure delivery of critical functions for Council and to the community.

BACKGROUND:

The Strategic Asset Management and Planning (SAMP) branch in Cairns Infrastructure and Assets Directorate has faced significant challenges in recruiting and maintaining key strategic engineering roles in recent years and has relied on provision of consultancy engineering services to maintain necessary work output in the strategic engineering and development assessment areas of 3 Waters, Development Engineering and Transport & Electrical teams. Five engagements with locally based engineering consultants have been ongoing since December 2023 to support these teams while efforts to recruit permanently into these roles continues.

Efforts to recruit into these positions through several recruitment strategies have not been successful to date. The lack of success in recruiting into these positions is largely attributed to the present engineering market conditions and a large pipeline of major projects throughout the Country. SAMP continue to work with the People and Organisation Performance team on recruitment strategies and options to address this ongoing challenge.

COMMENT:

The typical scope of the consultancy is to provide support in the following task types:

- Review applications for development approval and operational works
- Assist with the development and review of interim Local Government Infrastructure Plans
- Assist with the development and delivery of capital and operational projects and initiatives
- Assist with network planning and asset management
- Provide technical advice to the relevant Coordinator on engineering matters

Existing Consultants

The market was rigorously tested in November 2023 utilising the ROPS 2777 panel and found the targeted resources had limited options after requesting services from AECOM, ARUP, GHD, TEC, ARO, NJM Engineering, PDC Consultants, Aurecon, Jacobs & WMS Engineering. It is intended to utilise this existing procurement activity to implement the recommendations with the nominated effort hours for each consultant noted below.

Consultancy: Trinity Engineering and Consulting
Resource: Senior Engineer
Nominated Effort: ≈24 Hours Per Week

Consultancy: WMS Engineering
Resource: Principal Engineer
Nominated Effort: ≈16 Hours Per Week

Consultancy: Trinity Engineering and Consulting
Resource: Engineer
Nominated Effort: ≈24 Hours Per Week

Consultancy: NJM Engineering
Resource: Principal Engineer
Nominated Effort: ≈24 Hours Per Week

Consultancy: Aurecon
Resource: Lead Electrical Engineer
Nominated Effort: ≈8 Hours Per Week

New Consultants

A request for quote (RFQ) is proposed to be completed via tenderlink and issued to the local consultants prequalified on ROPS 2777 Engineering Services. This method is selected to provide targeted engineering services. It is intended to utilise this procurement activity for the below arrangements with the nominated effort hours for each consultant noted.

Resource: Engineer – Drainage
Nominated Effort: ≈40 Hours Per Week

Resource: Senior Engineer – Dams
Nominated Effort: ≈24 Hours Per Week

It is calculated that an initial four-month period of engagement will require a total budget of \$535,040 across the seven consultancies. Based on available budget and satisfactory performance of the consultancies it is proposed to allow for two possible further extension.

OPTIONS:

Option 1

That Council:

1. Approves the engagement of seven engineering consultants to undertake separable portions of engineering consultancy work portions for an initial 4 Month duration for the value of up to \$535,040 excluding GST
2. Approves to extend these engagements for an initial extension of 3 months (\$401,280) dependent on recruitment success and ensuring these extensions will be required only on the basis that vacancy remaining budget is not exceeded.
3. Approval to extend these engagements for a further period of 3 months (\$401,280) dependent on recruitment success and ensuring these extensions will be required only on the basis that vacancy remaining budget is not exceeded.

4. Delegates authority to the Chief Executive Officer in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2009* to enter into contracts, negotiate, finalise and execute any and all matters relating to this program subject to Council's procurement practices and policies.

Option 2

That Council does not approve the proposed engagements.

CONSIDERATIONS:

Risk Management:

- Risk of further SAMP team members being impacted due to increased work loads
- Budget to cover this proposal is outside of nominated figures within the SAMP budget
- If unsupported key critical SAMP related work will need to be deferred and level of service to stakeholders and the residents will be impacted

Council Finance and the Local Economy:

- Further extensions will only occur based on a review of performance, recruitment success and available budget.
- Services such as development approvals and drainage assessment are key deliverables for the community. This proposal supports the continued delivery in that space.



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