

CHAPTER V: RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Audit objectives: To examine whether the resources *viz.* plant and machinery, stores were procured timely and utilised by BRO efficiently and whether sufficient manpower was deployed to execute the works.



5. Management of resources

Resources like Vehicles/Equipment/Plants (V/E/Ps) and other stores required for execution of works play a vital role in management of works. Besides, deployment of human resources also acquires special significance in case of BRO as the work force has to deal with hostile terrain and harsh climatic conditions.

The stores to be used by the BRO fall under two broad categories, *viz.* Category 'A' and Category 'B'. Category 'A' stores includes vehicles and major plants and machinery for construction and bridging *etc.*, spares of these equipment and clothing articles. Category 'B' stores consist of expendable tools and plants like shovel, pick axes, grinders *etc.*, and items which are consumed in work like cement, bitumen, steels, timber, *etc.*. Cat 'A' stores are procured centrally by the DGBR, after approval of the BRDB and the Ministry of Finance (Defence) and Category 'B' stores by CEs (P), Commander BRTF within the delegated financial powers.

5.1 Delay in procurement of Medium Crawler Rock Drill (MCRD)

Annual Procurement Plan (APP) is prepared at DGBR based on the requirement, holding and down gradation plan of V/E/Ps of each Project. After processing and approval by the BRDB, APP is forwarded to MOD (Fin) for concurrence. After approval of the MOD (Fin), procurement action is initiated at DGBR.

We noticed that sanction for nine types of V/E/Ps was accorded in October and December 2010 and was included in APP 2010-11⁶. Out of the nine supply orders, there was delay in three cases, of which, in the case of procurement of Medium Crawler Rock Drill (MCRD) machine the delay in placement of supply orders was to the extent of 20 months. Sanction of MCRD was accorded in October 2010, whereas supply order for its procurement was placed in December 2013 and materialized in November 2014.

Non- availability of MCRD affected the execution of the formation work as discussed below:

Work on the stretch from km 0.00 to km 10.00 was sanctioned on the strategic road G-L in October 2007 for ₹ 24.40 crore for departmental execution with the PDC as March 2010. Due to non-availability of MCRD, a hiring Contract for one MCRD was concluded in April 2011 for ₹ 22 lakh for the period from May 2011 to November 2011. As the contractor failed to arrange the MCRD, the contract was cancelled in June 2012 and the risk and cost contract could not be concluded (July 2015) resulting in slow progress of the work (22.54 *per cent* as of March 2015). Further, non-completion of the stretch up to 10 km had affected the work on stretch 10 km to 20 km for which contract was signed in May 2010 since the work was expected to commence on completion of 0-10 km stretch. Concerned Road Construction Companies itself stated in March 2015 that the work from km 0.00 to km 10.00 was likely to be completed by March 2018 and accordingly the work between km 10.00 to km 20.00 likely to be commenced by April 2018. Thus, there has been a chain effect of non- execution/completion of the works on the stretch km 0.00 to km 20.00 of a significant ICBR due to non-availability of MCRD (Para 3.8.1 refers).

DGBR, in response to the audit query on delayed procurement, stated that, being foreign equipment, it involved vetting of Request For Proposal (RFP) by MoD (Fin/BR), issue of global tender, technical evaluation, opening of price bid and therefore additional time was required for processing the case for CFA's approval. Reply is not convincing as provisioning of the required V/E/P could not be done within the time schedule of 23 weeks provided in the Defence Procurement Manual.

⁶ No provisioning of V/E/Ps was made in APPs-2012-13 to 2014-15 in respect of ICBRs.

5.2 Non- procurement of Extra Wide Bailey Bridge (EWBB)

DGMO in July 2010 decided to upgrade 38 roads including two CSG roads in the Eastern Command (M-T-Y and N-TCC) to higher specification *i.e.* improve the load capacity in a fixed time frame up to 2013 for movement of new generation weapons/equipment *viz.* Bofors Guns, Smerch and Pinaka vehicles as a measure of defence preparedness. For this BRO was to procure 08 EWBBs for road M-T-Y and 17 for N-TCC. Sanctions for M-T-Y were accorded in March and July 2012 and for N-TCC in March 2013 by the DGBR. However, Supply Order was placed by the DGBR for 38 sets of EWBB in September 2015, out of which only eight sets were procured for one road only *viz.* M-T-Y. This has affected the up-gradation of the concerned ICBRs for facilitating movement of new generation weapons/ equipment.

5.3 Persistent shortage of manpower

The manpower of BRO comprises of civilian force, namely General Reserve Engineering Force (GREF) for departmental constructional projects. This force has been set up on Army lines and consists of personnel directly recruited, personnel belonging to ministries of central government, personnel of state government, local bodies *etc.* and personnel of defence services. Since BRO was formed primarily with aim to provide connectivity to remote, hostile and inaccessible locations as per the requirement and deployment of security forces, the BRO manpower has to work in areas facing stringent and inhospitable working conditions. As stated by the DGBR, continued shortage of Officers, and other staff especially JEs/Operators in the organisation impacts the supervision and execution of works. Against projection of vacancies of 860 JEs (Civil) and 119 JEs (E&M) to Staff Selection Commission (SSC) in 2014, only 385 JEs (Civil) and 24 JEs (E&M) have been inducted up to September 2016. A requirement of 651 JEs (civil) and 134 JEs (E&M) has again been projected to SSC. Due to inherent deficiencies of departmental staff, the quality of work due to lack of requisite close supervision and trained manpower certainly found compromised.

5.4 Working conditions of GREF Personnel

The Continuous deployment of the GREF personnel in difficult and remote areas, lack of communication with families, lack of adequate medical support, non-provisioning of entertainment facilities *etc.* adversely affect the physical and psychological health. This reduces the morale of the personnel impacting the progress and execution of works. The death of 21 GREF Officers/Personnel and 48 Casual Paid Labourers (CPLs) deployed in ICBR works from April 2012 to March 2016 in military-transport accidents/work site accidents clearly indicate the

tough and hazardous working conditions of the GREF personnel. As stated by the DGBR (September 2016), various steps were initiated/sanctioned to improve the facilities to the labourers and supervisory staff working in the remote locations having tough terrain at higher altitude and adverse weather conditions. A high level committee under the Chairmanship of Joint Secretary (Establishment) was constituted by the BRDB in March 2013 which recommended 13 welfare proposals for the GREF personnel, out of which only 07 proposals were resolved/sanctioned by the Government as indicated in **Table-8** below.

Table-8: Details of Welfare Proposals recommended by the High Level Committee

S/No.	Proposal	Remarks
1	Preservation and transportation of mortal remains of GREF personnel killed/died in harness.	Sanctioned
2	Grant of Ration at Army scale to GREF personnel at HQ DGBR, GREF Centre and GREF Records.	Sanctioned
3	Free Government transport from Unit location to Rail head while proceeding on leave/medical leave/categorization to GREF personnel.	Sanctioned
4	Grant of ex-gratia payment to GREF Officers/ personnel who dies as a result of hostile activities.	Sanctioned
5	Grant of special ration to Army/GREF personnel deployed above 12000 ft.	Sanctioned
6	Improvement of overall medical set up / condition of GREF service.	Sanctioned
7	Sanction to travel on cash TA in lieu of issuable free railway warrant against LTC/Temporary duty	Issue resolved by simplifying documentation procedure.
8	Extension of medical facilities from Army to GREF employees.	Being provided in field areas in emergency.
9	Grant of additional Railway Warrant (both ways) and concession vouchers to GREF officers/ personnel.	Referred to the anomaly Committee of 7 th CPC.
10	Transport facility to school going children.	Referred to the anomaly Committee of 7 th CPC.
11	Grant of GREF service pay.	Referred to the anomaly Committee of 7 th CPC.
12	Grant of House Rent Allowance (HRA) at Selected Place of Residence (SPR)	Referred to the anomaly Committee of 7 th CPC.
13	Grant of Cash Allowance to GREF Subordinates in lieu of clothing.	Referred to the anomaly Committee of 7 th CPC.

One of these issues viz. provision of medical facilities to GREF personnel from Army was partly resolved to avail it in field areas in emergency only. As could be seen from the above Table, balance five proposals having financial aspects were still under consideration of the Government (September 2016).

Resolution of these five significant issues requires special attention of the MOD for improving the working conditions of manpower deployed for execution of the road works.