

Albanian Road Authority
Building Resilient Bridges Program
(Phase 1 of the Multi-Phase Programmatic Approach)

**Terms of Reference
for
International Individual Consultant**

I. BACKGROUND

The Government of Albania (GoA) through the Ministry of Finance (MoF) and Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy (MIE), has received financing for the “Building Resilient Bridges” (BRB) Program, from the World Bank (the Bank). The project’s development objectives are: (a) to enhance resilience to climate change and natural hazards of Albania’s critical bridge infrastructure and (b) to improve road and bridge asset management.

Part of this funding has been earmarked to assist the Albanian Road Authority (ARA) to collect the required data and develop a needs-based strategic plan for the maintenance of the assets on its road network and development of annual maintenance works programmes. The requirements from the consultant are described below.

Contracting Authority

MIE is responsible for Project oversight and has overall responsibility for transport sector policies, designing strategies, developing sub-sectoral programs and budgets, and performing regulatory functions. Albania Road Authority (ARA) is responsible for implementing the project and on behalf of the GoA is the Contracting Authority for this consultancy service.

Country Background

Albania is situated in the south - east of Europe and covers 28,748 square kilometres bounded by Montenegro and Kosovo in the north, North Macedonia to the east and Greece to the south. The country lies on the eastern shores of the Adriatic Sea opposite the heel of Italy and has a population of approximately 3,000,000. About 70% of Albania is mountainous with the remainder plains and hills. The coastal regions have a temperate climate but inland, especially to the north, the climate is characterized by harsh winters and hot showery summers.

The Country has shown recently a strong economic development with macroeconomic stability and the highest economic growth rate of South Eastern Europe. Considerable progress has been made in infrastructure's improvement through investments with the aid of loans and grants by international donors for construction and rehabilitation of roads and port infrastructure.

Development of a Road Asset Management System (RAMS)

Until cir. 2019 there were four regional performance-based contracts (PBC) covering 1,327 km of the network, as part of an earlier World Bank support programme. These contracts lasted for 5 years each and under their management, each contractor was required to collect various condition data about the roads under their management, including roughness IRI (twice a year) and deflectometer (annually) data. However, whilst this approach eventually resulted in an improvement of the roads covered, almost two thirds of ARA’s network were not covered, and there were doubts about the consistency of the data collected (its quality and compatibility with other data used).

The development of a Road Asset Management System (RAMS) was initiated under the same program. The core RAMS hardware and associated IT infrastructure were acquired to support data storage and analysis, laying the groundwork for developing a functional system. However, significant gaps remain, and the system is not operational due to challenges in integrating and processing the collected data into a usable platform. ARA also manages and monitors the bridge and culvert infrastructure on the NRN using a Bridge Management System (BMS) initiated in 2010. However, the BMS currently consists only of a database with data from a 2010 inventory survey, including basic information such as geometrical characteristics, geographical location, construction materials used, equipment, and year of construction.

To address these challenges, ARA seeks to continually developing comprehensive RAMS and BMS. This system will enable ARA to manage, monitor, and prioritize road maintenance and rehabilitation activities based on data-driven decision-making, improving road performance, and ensuring sustainability.

In this regard, ARA seeks to hire an International Individual Consultant (Consultant) with expertise in road asset management to support the implementation and institutionalization of RAM processes, tools, and strategies.

II. Objectives of the Consultant's assignment

The overarching objective of this consultancy is to assist the ARA in continued development operationalization, and institutionalization of RAMS and BMS. Specifically, the individual consultant (an international expert) will provide technical expertise, to the ARA in evaluating and enhancing the existing systems, supporting the procurement process for consulting services for data collection, system population, and road condition assessments, and strengthening ARA's institutional capacity for the long-term sustainability of the RAMS/BMS.

III. Key Tasks

The Consultant will generally be responsible for advising and assisting PIT and ARA Project Director in continued development of the RAMS/BMS. In particular, the Consultant shall carry out the following five key tasks listed below, as well as any associated tasks which become necessary.

1. Evaluate the existing RAMS at ARA, including BMS, assessing its readiness for long-term use and integration into ARA's planning processes. The consultant will identify key areas for improvement and take into consideration recommendations/reports made by third parties, if any, ensuring that the system can effectively support strategic decision-making and operational needs.
2. Provide advice and support ARA in the procurement process for hiring a qualified and experienced consulting firm for road data collection, populating the system, and conducting road condition assessments, with the goal of ensuring high-quality data is fed into the RAMS/BMS.
3. Development of Terms of Reference (ToR) for the procurement of consulting service to supervise the data collection process, ensure data quality control, and oversee the preparation of strategic network planning, budgeting, annual works programming, and network monitoring functions.
4. Assist ARA in strengthening its institutional capacity to support the long-term sustainability of the RAMS/BMS, including developing an effective Service Level Agreement (SLA) to define roles, responsibilities, and KPIs for key stakeholders involved in road asset management.

IV. Scope of Services

The detailed scope of services for each of the key tasks mentioned above is outlined below. These descriptions highlight the main activities to be undertaken; however, they are not exhaustive, and additional relevant activities may be required as the assignment progresses. The individual consultant will be responsible for carrying out all necessary tasks to ensure successful completion of the assignment in line with the project's objectives and expected outcomes.

Task 1: Evaluate the existing RAMS/BMS at ARA, assessing its readiness for long-term use and integration into ARA's planning processes. The consultant will identify key areas for improvement and take into consideration recommendations/reports made by third parties, if any, or any existing data that might be available, ensuring that the system can effectively support strategic decision-making and operational needs.

It will include the following tasks and will not be limited to:

- Review the overall design and functionality of the RAMS/BMS platform's architecture, including its data storage and management capabilities, integration with Geographic Information Systems (GIS) systems, scalability, sustainability and overall alignment with ARA's needs for long-term road asset management.
- Assess existing data governance practices related to RAMS/BMS and propose a comprehensive data governance and update protocol.
- Evaluate the current and potential interoperability of RAMS with other national and institutional systems (e.g., relevant e-Government platforms, contract management systems, financial planning tools, et. - and identify technical requirements for system integration.
- Examine the quality and completeness of the data currently integrated into the RAMS (e.g., approximately 100 km of road data). Evaluate the consistency, accuracy, and reliability of the data, including road condition indicators, asset inventory, and performance metrics. Identify any data gaps or inconsistencies that could undermine the system's effectiveness.
- Identify areas of improvement and analyze technical challenges in the current RAMS/BMS, such as deficiencies in data input processes, reporting capabilities, decision support tools, and system integration. Evaluate the system's user interface, output quality, and compatibility with existing operational workflows to ensure it meets ARA's requirements for strategic decision-making and operational efficiency.
- Evaluate the long-term sustainability of the RAMS/BMS, focusing on operational costs, required system updates, and resource allocation for maintenance. Provide an analysis of the cost-benefit ratio for maintaining and upgrading the system, ensuring its longevity and continued functionality in supporting ARA's road asset management objectives.
- Provide a set of actionable recommendations for system improvements and enhancements, addressing technical, operational, and institutional deficiencies. Propose strategies for optimizing the use of the RAMS, enhancing data quality.

The output of Task 1 will include, but not limited to:

1. A comprehensive evaluation report detailing the findings of the system assessment, data quality review, and internal capacity analysis.
2. A list of prioritized recommendations for improving the RAMS/BMS, including technical enhancements, strategies for long-term system sustainability.

Task 2: Development the ToRs and support ARA in the procurement process for hiring a qualified and experienced consulting firm for road data collection, populating the system, and conducting road condition assessments, with the goal of ensuring high-quality data is fed into the RAMS.

It will include the following tasks and will not be limited to:

- Based on the finding from Task 1 above, develop comprehensive Terms of Reference (ToR) for procuring consulting services for data collection, system population, and road condition assessment.
- Ensure the ToR incorporates clear specifications regarding the data collection methodology, data format, quality control measures, and timeline for completion.
- Provide comprehensive support throughout the Request for Proposal (RFP) process. This includes preparing and reviewing the RFP documents, ensuring they comply with ARA's requirements and the World Bank's procurement guidelines, responding to any inquiries from potential consultants, and advising on the appropriate selection criteria.
- Assist ARA in the evaluation of both technical and financial proposals from consulting firms. This will involve assessing the technical competence, proposed methodologies, and experience of the firms, ensuring they meet ARA's specific needs for data collection, RAMS/BMS population, and quality control.
- Provide technical guidance and support during the contract negotiation phase with the selected consulting firm to ensure that performance expectations, timelines, and deliverables are clearly defined and agreed upon.

The output of Task 2 will include, but not limited to:

1. A finalized ToR for the procurement of a consulting firm, tailored to ARA's specific needs for RAMS/BMS population and data collection.
2. Documentation supporting the RFP process, including evaluation reports and recommendations for selecting the consulting firm.
3. A finalized contract with the selected consulting firm, ensuring all deliverables, timelines, and quality control measures are clearly defined.

Task 3: Development of Terms of Reference (ToR) for the procurement of consulting services for the supervision of the data collection process, to ensure data quality control, and oversee the preparation of strategic network planning, budgeting, annual works programming, network monitoring functions and related certification required for the RAMS and BMS processes.

It will include the following tasks and will not be limited to:

- Develop a detailed ToR outlining the scope, objectives, roles, and responsibilities of the supervision services, specifically focusing on their oversight of the data collection process, data quality control, strategic network planning, budgeting, network monitoring functions and related certification required for the RAMS/BMS processes.
- Provide guidance to ARA during the entire procurement process, ensuring alignment with project goals and World Bank procurement regulations. This includes drafting the invitation for proposals, answering bidder inquiries, and supporting the preparation of contract documents.
- Assist ARA in evaluating the technical and financial proposals submitted by potential consultants. This includes assessing the technical qualifications, methodologies, and experience of the consultants, and ensuring that the financial proposals align with the project's budget and scope.

- Provide technical assistance to ARA during the contract negotiation phase with the selected consulting entity. This includes reviewing the final contract terms, ensuring clarity of deliverables, timelines, and payment terms, and ensuring the selected firm can meet the project's specific needs.
- Specify the entity role in supervising the implementation of the data collection process, ensuring compliance with quality control measures, and managing the reporting of progress.

The output of Task 3 will include, but not limited to:

1. A comprehensive ToR for the supervision consulting entity.
2. Support documentation for the procurement process, including evaluation reports and recommendations for the selection of the consulting firm.
3. Finalized contract for the selected consultant.

Task 4: Development of Institutional Capacity Development Plan and training workshops plans. This task includes ensuring that knowledge is progressively transferred to ARA personnel during the consultancy.

- Assess ARA's internal technical and organizational capacity to effectively manage and sustain the RAMS over the long term. This includes evaluating the skills and expertise of staff, adequacy of training, hardware, software infrastructure, and institutional arrangements that support RAMS operations. Identify gaps in staffing, technical skills, or resources required for ongoing system maintenance and operation.
- Provide a set of actionable recommendations for strengthening internal capacity for data management and decision-making. Recommend organizational and procedural changes, if necessary, to improve ARA's ability to manage the system effectively in the long term.
- Specify the entity role to assist ARA in strengthening its institutional capacity to support the long-term sustainability of the RAMS, including developing an effective Service Level Agreement (SLA) to define roles, responsibilities, and KPIs for key stakeholders involved in road asset management.
- Develop tailored training materials (manuals, guides, modules) for different user groups within ARA, including technical staff, planners, and decision-makers.
- Deliver hand-on training on key aspects of the RAMS, such as data entry, network analysis, system use for budgeting, and reporting.

V. Required qualifications and Selection Criteria

Educational Background:

- The individual consultant shall be a qualified professional engineer with a Master's Degree Civil Engineering, Transportation Engineering, Infrastructure Management, or a related field. Relevant certifications or advanced training in Road Asset Management or similar domains will be an added advantage.

Professional Experience:

- At least of ten (10) years of international experience in road asset management, infrastructure planning, and management systems, with a focus on road maintenance, budgeting, and data-driven decision-making.
- Proven experience in the development, implementation, and management of RAMS/BMS including GIS-based systems, is essential.

- Familiarity with HDM4 (Highway Development and Management model) or similar road management tools is highly desirable.
- Demonstrated previous experience in procurement processes, particularly in drafting ToRs for consulting services particularly in road asset management.
- Experience working on similar projects in countries with developing or transitional economies, particularly within institutional and organizational settings comparable to ARA would be an asset.
- Experience in institutional capacity building, including development of training programs, or organizational strengthening plans related to road asset management systems.

Language Proficiency:

- Fluency in English, with excellent written and verbal communication skills.

VI. Timing, Consultant’s Remuneration

This assignment is part-time in nature with an estimated duration of 50 working days, to be completed over a period of 12 months, from May 2025. The exact commencement date will be confirmed upon finalizing the contract and mutual agreement between the ARA and the selected Individual Consultant.

While the majority of the tasks will be conducted remotely, the Consultant may be required to attend meetings and undertake field visits to Albania to fulfill specific tasks as outlined in the scope of services. These field visits are expected at key milestones, particularly for tasks involving in-person assessments, data validation, and stakeholder engagement. The Consultant is expected to allocate at least 30% of their time for these field-related activities, which will include a minimum of three separate missions to Albania. During these visits, the Consultant will be provided with a fully equipped office at ARA headquarters in Tirana, which will include internet access, printing facilities, and other necessary work resources.

The Consultant will be remunerated on a time-based contract, with the fee rate and currency to be agreed upon between the Consultant and ARA/PIT. Payments will be made monthly based on the number of working days completed during the month. The Consultant will submit monthly invoices detailing the work performed, days worked, and tasks completed, including a breakdown of time spent on field visits. Remuneration will cover both remote work and the field visits to Albania.

In addition to the daily remuneration, reimbursable expenses will cover the costs incurred during the field visits which may include travel, accommodation, per diem. These expenses will be reimbursed based on actual, reasonable, and justifiable costs.

VII. Evaluation Criteria

Applicants that fulfill the qualification requirements will be further evaluated based on the below criteria:

- a) General Qualification – 30 points
- b) Adequacy for the assignment – 60 points
- c) Language Proficiency – 10 points

VIII. Selection

The service will be selected under the provisions of the World Bank Procurement Regulations for Borrowers under Investment Project Financing” dated July 1, 2016, revised on November 2017, August 2018, and November 2020, based on the method of Selection of Individual Selection (IC) under time-based contract.