

## PEPS Fireside Chat Question & Answer Summary

### *Prime Provider Evaluations – July 2021*

Q1: Where are these evaluations posted?

A1: Each project manager can see their own evaluation within the PS-CAMS consultant portal. TxDOT employees can see the information through the internal portal.

For more information and to gain access to the PS-CAMS database, visit this website <https://www.txdot.gov/business/consultants/architectural-engineering-surveying/managed-contracts.html>

Q2: Would it be possible to provide information for TxDOT to consider before the evaluation? It seems sometimes not all information is being considered for all the topics being evaluated.

A2: Yes, you can submit information to TxDOT. Talk to the TxDOT PM about it and let them know that you would like to submit information for their consideration.

Q3: Are work authorization (WA) evaluations required annually or only on specific times as mentioned (change in project managers (PMs), milestones, and closeout)?

A3: Every contract will have an annual evaluation. Work authorizations will typically be done at milestones (30/60/90%), when there are changes in the PM on either the TxDOT or consultant side, or when there are changes in performance (schedule or budget is slipping). If the TxDOT PM has conducted an evaluation on all of the active work on an annual cycle, then an annual contract review would not be necessary.

Q4: Is the highest score 100?

A4: Yes.

Q5: Is on-time delivery measured the same between a schematic/environmental work authorization and a PS&E work authorization? PS&E is easier to control than schematic/environmental with external review agencies.

A5: On time is whatever you collectively agree to.

Q6: Is there a timeline on when we should be able to see the PM score by PM? PS-CAMS only show us the firm average and the firm PM average, but not the score of the individual PM.

A6: The firm can see each evaluation in the PSCAMS consultant portal for their firm. The PM can see all of their evaluations regardless of firm they worked for when the evaluation was completed. The PM must have a login and password in order to view the portal. If you need assistance, please send those to [PEPS\\_PS-CAMS@TxDOT.gov](mailto:PEPS_PS-CAMS@TxDOT.gov).

Q7: Do PM evaluation expire after a defined period? e.g. if a PM has only one evaluation and it is 5 years old, does the score/evaluation fall off?

- A7: Scores will drop off after 5 years. Since we essentially started over with PS-CAMS, we are only in year 2 at this point.
- Q8: Will the additional year for issuing work authorizations apply only to new contracts or would it be retroactive to existing contracts. It would be nice to be able to make up for the "lost" pandemic year.
- A8: We plan to make it retroactive, though it is not something that can be done until final approval by the Commission. Due to the pandemic, FHWA already approved providing a one-time one year extension to federal contracts that are close to termination and the Support Services Center is working to make the changes to those contracts.
- Q9: What is the approximate time frame to implement TAC changes after the process starts in July?
- A9: It typically takes around two to three months, but is dependent on the Texas Register's publishing schedule.
- Q10: Can consultants see past firm and PM evaluations in PS-CAMS?
- A10: Yes, you can see all past evaluations that have been done since we started conducting them in PS-CAMS (2019). We are no longer accessing evaluations that were done in CCIS. We currently have about 6,000 evaluations in PS-CAMS.
- Q11: Can you consider dropping an older score when a new one comes in?
- A11: All scores are averaged and they are maintained over a rolling 5-year period. Once a score hits the 5-year mark, it will roll off.
- Q12: For TxDOT PMs it is vital to have a strong consultant PM and efficient firm on board for a successful project delivery. For proposal evaluation purpose, can we reconsider increasing the current 5% weighting of past performance to something higher (possibly 10-20%)?
- A12: Yes. We leave that up to our customers, the Districts and Divisions. Some districts already use a higher percentage for past performance. The Austin District has taken it to 15%. Once we only have changes to proposals only, it should be much easier since all contracts will then have the four standard criteria (PM experience, key staff experience, technical approach, project management planning), plus the past performance score.
- Q13: Are PMs notified of their evaluations? I've heard from several of my PMs they didn't know about their evaluations.
- A13: Yes, they should always be notified of their evaluations. It is unclear why that would not be happening. We will look into it.
- Q14: With evaluation of other staff besides PM's, will TxDOT allow a path for professionals to get to be PM's rather than the current catch-22 of you can't be a PM unless you have already been a PM by taking over a project from a more senior PM?

- A14: Anyone can be proposed as a PM. The experience you are required to show can be from a Deputy PM role, a Task Leader role, etc. This will be a step to try and promote them up to give them their own score.
- Q15: Is your evaluation kept private or can anybody see it?
- A15: Anyone within the same firm can see all scores connected to that firm, but you cannot see scores from another firm.
- Q16: Can we ask our TxDOT PM for an evaluation if they only intended to do an annual?
- A16: Yes, you can ask for an evaluation at any time. For example, if you submitted something 15 months ahead of schedule and would like that to be reflected, request an evaluation.
- Q17: Because of the variability in evaluation scores between Districts, has there been thought to maybe "normalize scores" to reflect a One-TxDOT?
- A17: Every district and division is unique. There has and always will be some level of subjectivity to the process. However, we have performed training with the districts and share internal dashboards so they can see the differences in how things are being done across districts/divisions.
- Q18: How long are evaluations kept as part of the overall average score?
- A18: See A11
- Q19: We see a variety of scores for the same performance. Some Districts provide 90-100, and others won't score over 60 for exceptional work.
- A19: See A17
- Q20: Who performs the annual contract evaluation if the contract is being utilized across multiple Districts?
- A20: If it is a Division Indefinite Deliverable contract, it may be completed by the TxDOT PM in the Division at the or the TxDOT PM in the District. For District contracts, these are typically completed by the TxDOT PM in the District. These are usually performed at the WA level.
- Q21: With the evaluations being extended to people beyond the PM, is it possible to make this retroactive? (i.e. a WA PM can get an evaluation from a past project)
- A21: No. This would be a difficult task to do. There have been a significant number of project manager changes on both the TxDOT and consultant sides, so it would be hard to track them all down to get these evaluations completed.
- Q22: Has PEPS considered a TxDOT PM evaluation whereby a consultant PM can evaluate the TxDOT PM to offer true lessons learned/opportunities for improvements?
- A22: This has been talked about for years, but there are no current plans for this to be done.

- Q23: In the extreme rare cases where failure is directly attributable to the TxDOT PM's non-responsiveness, what options are there?
- A23: If a TxDOT project manager is non-responsive, that is unacceptable. That would be an issue that needs to be elevated.
- Q24: How long will evaluations be considered in RFP past performance scores after the evaluation is given, i.e. do evaluations "expire"?
- A24: See A11
- Q25: I had issues connecting through WebEx, and finally made it in with the help of my IT department. I checked your attendees list and I appear to be the only one. It looks like this is a universal problem.
- A25: At the beginning of each Fireside Chat we announce that attendee lists are not visible. This is a recommended setting because it impacts bandwidth issues. In order to ensure as smooth a session as possible, we adhere to these recommendations.
- Q26: Were the CCIS PM scores migrated to PS-CAMS or did every existing PM start with a clean slate?
- A26: The CCIS scores were not transferred to PS-CAMS. Everyone started with a clean slate.
- Q27: Does a 60% WA evaluation replace the 30% WA evaluation, or just add to the series of evaluations captured in PS-CAMS?
- A27: Scores are not replaced, they are combined into the 5-year rolling average.
- Q28: Can TxDOT provide the range of combined Firm/PM evaluation scores that result in a score of 5 during proposal scoring? Same question for a score of 4 during proposal scoring.
- A28: This is in the document on the Webpage at <https://ftp.txdot.gov/pub/txdot/ppd/ps-cams/faq.pdf> page 7.
- Q29: We have received and signed evaluations, but never see them in PS-CAMS. What should we do?
- A29: These evaluations are accessible to the firm via the PS-CAMS consultant portal. If you need assistance, please send those to [PEPS\\_PS-CAMS@TxDOT.gov](mailto:PEPS_PS-CAMS@TxDOT.gov).
- Q30: Can a firm that does not have an active contract with TxDOT have access to PS-CAMS?
- A30: No. There must be an active prime contract to gain access to PS-CAMS portal
- Q31: Does a PM evaluation score stay with him/her if they move to another firm? There are firms that have not yet won a contract with TxDOT but have hired PMs with evaluations with prior firms and need to see what their scores are.

- A31: A firm can see their project managers in the PS-CAMS consultant portal. The PM can see all of their evaluations but must be logged in to the portal (requires access)  
<https://www.txdot.gov/business/consultants/architectural-engineering-surveying/managed-contracts.html>
- Q32: If a firm can use multiple PMs in a contract, will they have to provide the experience for each PM they intend to use for the contract in the proposal?
- A32: A prime firm may only use one Prime Provider Project Manager. However, during the evaluation process, an individual with the prime provider's firm may be designated to manage a work authorization. If the proposed rules are adopted, the TxDOT PM would be allowed to evaluate this individual as a WA project manager.