

STRUCTURES

EOR Response to RFI

A Contractor submitted a Request For Information (RFI) on a bridge deck. The RFI included phase deflections provided by a Specialty Engineer to the Contractor. The Contractor interpreted that there was an error in the design drawings because plans “did not take into account the phased construction. Because of phased construction the slab deflections for the interior beams would be less than shown”. Also, the Contractor asked for a revised “camber schedule”. The EOR responded by informing that design drawings were “correct for purpose of fabricating the beam camber in the final position”. Also, the EOR provided interior beam mid-point deflections after each phase pour.

A second question compounded the request by asking the EOR “Please provide agreement that dry-run slab measurements will be less than the post pour”. The Consultant responded with a brief statement: “We concur with the statement that the dry run measurement will be less than the post pour”.

During construction the bridge deck was found to be thinner than as designed, and the Contractor claimed that the EOR had agreed to a thinner deck by not expressly disagreeing with the RFI. The EOR had responded promptly to the Contractor with information such as interior beam mid-point phase deflections. The EOR is not required to provide phase deflections as these are depend on the method of construction. Further, the Contractor is responsible for method of construction.

LESSON LEARNED: The Engineer of Record is not responsible for method of construction, and should be careful in responding to an RFI. The response must be consistent with Section 16, Turnpike Pre-Services Manual. An Engineer of Record providing Post Design Services must route all RFI responses to the Contractor through the CEI. If it appears a contract change is needed, advise the CEI. . The CEI will determine if a change is really needed and then route the RFI to the Contractor.