

(To be published on Europa)

Notice of call for proposals with a view to obtaining grants for pilot projects to promote secure rest places along the trans-European road network

Call for proposals DGTREN/PIL/2006

1. CONTEXT

The European Commission intends to award¹ grants to promote pilot projects on secure rest places along the trans-European road network (TEN-T) as announced in the DG TREN work programme for 2006. Information on this call for proposals is available on the DG TREN website at the following address:

[http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/energy_transport/grants/proposal_en.htm]

An increasingly frequently cited problem by operators is criminal activity, where drivers are attacked at parking areas and their goods are seized. This has been raised by several Members of the European Parliament through questions to the Commission and recognised by Home Affairs Ministers, for example in a recent Declaration on the protection of commercial drivers engaged in export trade from becoming victims of organised crime².

The social partners at European level, namely the International Road Transport Union (employers) and the European Transport Workers Federation (Trade Unions), have expressed several times to the Commission their shared concern on the need for action to address the lack of secure parking spaces, particularly along the trans European road network. The European Conference of Ministers of Transport (ECMT) and the International Road Transport Union have also jointly started to address this issue by carrying out a survey on Attacks on International Heavy Goods Vehicle Drivers and by updating a publication providing information on truck parking areas in Europe.

Moreover, the availability of a sufficient number of adequately equipped parking areas contributes to a smooth and efficient implementation of the rules on maximum driving times and minimum breaks and rest periods, which has been recently updated by the European Union.³ Numerous types of national or regional week-end bans are also in force throughout the Union. This makes drivers forced to wait for a prolonged period in a parking place until the ban is over. Limited parking areas and parking areas without appropriate equipments ensuring an acceptable level of protection against freight crime could therefore lead to situations where drivers would have to schedule their itineraries in a suboptimal manner in order to comply with the regulation in force.

On the initiative of the European Parliament, a pilot project budget line has been introduced in the 2006 Community budget, allocating € 5,5 million to address this specific issue. The budget is devoted to study the feasibility of, and to encourage, several pilot projects aiming at constructing, installing and equipping exemplary secure parking

¹ Subject to the adoption by the Commission of the annual DG TREN work programme 2006 for grants.

² OJ C24, 31.11.2003, p. 9

³ Regulation (CE) 561/2006, Official Journal L 102 , 11/04/2006 P. 0001 - 0014

areas along the main TEN-T routes in the EU. It is hoped that this initiative will act as a seed-corn initiative that could be replicated

2. SOURCES OF FUNDING

The actions selected will be co-financed from the budget line “Pilot project on safety TEN-T” (060702).

3. ESTIMATED TOTAL AMOUNT FOR THIS CALL

The estimated total amount for the Pilot project(s) for 2006 is EUR 5.340.000.

4. PERCENTAGE OF COMMUNITY CO-FINANCING

The grants are intended as incentives for carrying out a pilot project which could not be executed without Community financial support, and they reflect the principle of co-financing.

The Commission therefore plans to grant only funds which are complementary and subsidiary to contributions made by the beneficiary, the national, regional or local authorities and other bodies. Accordingly, the amount granted will be up to 50% of the total eligible costs of the operation. Contributions in kind are not regarded as eligible costs.

5. OBJECTIVES AND EXPECTED RESULTS

Definition of a secure rest place:

A secure rest place along the trans-European road network provides an appropriate number of secure parking slots which are equipped with security means adequate to the specific risk assessment of the parking area concerned.

Objectives:

The proposed pilot project should address in an appropriate way the reduction of risks of three types of crime for international road transport: cargo theft, vehicle theft and theft of driver's belongings in the vehicle or attacks against drivers. The project should reduce the risk of these types of crime to an acceptable level in relation to the traffic volume at the concerned rest area. As far as possible, insurance companies and police authorities should be involved in defining the adequate security standards.

Proposals should follow at least one of the two different approaches:

- *Approach 1:* A project shall aim at defining and validating common requirements of secure rest places for at least 5 Member States including the introduction of a labelling, inspection and evaluation scheme. The applicability in the 5 Member States, and possible applications for more additional Member States, has to be clearly demonstrated.

- *Approach 2:* A project shall aim at constructing secure parking slots in trans-border regions or on trans-border corridors with high load of international traffic facing security problems involving at least two sites in two EU countries:

- by upgrading existing rest places to secure rest places or
- by converting private truck depots, currently only used to park vehicles of the proprietor, to secure parking areas open also for vehicles of other hauliers in a non discriminatory way or
- by constructing a completely new secure rest place

International traffic is also facing organised criminality, which might occur in specific regions or along the traffic flow of certain transport corridors. The sites forming part of the project should therefore be confronted with the same or comparable problems of crime and security risks and/or should protect the same type of international traffic. The project should follow a common approach to resolve the problem of security risks on the sites concerned and a common methodology to evaluate the measures taken.

General condition for the two types of projects:

- The project shall demonstrably improve the situation of security and perceived security at the rest places concerned. Applications shall include a detailed description of the current situation of insecurity underlined by figures (types and numbers of crimes in relation to total traffic of heavy goods vehicles) and confirmations of the relevant authorities and shall describe the expected improvements by realising the project.
- The project should *inter alia* refer to existing internationally recognised good practices, requirements and standards in the field of protection against freight crime. They should target locations internationally known by the haulage and logistic industry as hot spot.
- The application should be accompanied by documents proving the financial commitments of the organisations which will co-finance the projects. The application should include an evaluation plan. Applications related to approach 2, should include a financial plan which demonstrates the economic viability of the project (feasibility).
- The project should be developed, implemented and evaluated under the supervision of a Steering committee, being a part of the internal organisation of the project. The Steering committee should ideally be composed of infrastructure managers, user's association, and representatives of the relevant authorities of the Member States concerned, including the police, as well as relevant insurance companies. The Steering committee should approve the application and the various reports delivered to the Commission. It should in particular be responsible for the overall evaluation of the pilot project.
- Attention will also be paid to an information system in order to inform users in advance about the availability of secure parking slots at rest places.
- During the period covered by the grant, all data (indicators) necessary to allow full insight into the project for the evaluation of the project and its capability to run in a sustainable way the time after funding will be available to the Commission upon request. Data to allow external ex-post evaluation will also be kept available to the Commission during two years after the end of the duration covered by the grant.

Expected results:

The proposal should demonstrate effective and efficient use of both the financial means in general and of the EU-co financing in particular, in relation to the dimension of the problem tackled and in relation to the expected result.

The pilot project should establish a prime example (light-house character) or practical guideline for future economically viable financed secure rest places along the trans-European road network. This concept might include basing the project on financing entirely by the users. However, the pilot project and/or the continuation after finishing the pilot may also be implemented in form of a Public Private Partnership.

The project should be established in that way that it can continue running when funding ends and that it can be easily replicated in several other Member States.

Formal conditions:

The reports according to Article 1.5 of the Grant Agreement shall be submitted in English language, in any case in paper and electronic formats. The final technical implementation report will include a complete description of the work and the results achieved. It will include guidelines of good practice in the case of projects which implement approach 1 and the detailed evaluation results in the case of approach 2.

Three copies of the reports shall be supplied on paper form and one copy in electronic form, either in MS Word or in HTML format.

The Commission may publish the results of the project and necessary data in order to allow a reproduction of successful approaches at other rest places along the TEN-T. For this purpose, the applicant must ensure that there are no restrictions based on confidentiality and/or intellectual property rights. All confidential information should be provided in a clearly labelled annex to the public report.

6. PERIOD OF ELIGIBILITY OF COSTS:

The Commission is ready to support biannual operations of a maximum duration of 24 month. Eligible costs can be incurred only after signature of the grant agreement by all the parties, save in exceptional cases, and under no circumstances before submission of the application for a grant.

Purchase costs of equipment (new or second-hand) and generally accepted for items of the same type are eligible costs, provided that it is written off in accordance with the tax and accounting rules applicable to the beneficiary and to its partners. Only the portion of the equipment's depreciation corresponding to the duration of the project and the actual rate of use for the operation may be taken into account by the Commission.

Costs of equipment which is directly and exclusively linked to the Pilot Project (such as e.g., fences, gates, barriers, lighting, weight bridges, surveillance systems...etc) will exceptionally, given the nature of the pilot project, be considered as fully eligible for a reimbursement by the Commission of up to 50 %. However, this exception only applies if the beneficiary keeps the equipment purchased with the support of the EU grant in that specific project for at least five years. Purchase of land is excluded.

For the works which are exclusively and directly linked to the pilot project the Commission will accept to reimburse up to a maximum of 50 % of the total cost.

Costs for the works carried out for the project can be as well subcontracted if the beneficiaries do not intend to carry out them themselves. If so, rules provided by article II.9 of the contract apply. Equipment purchased by subcontractors in order to implement subcontracting will be submitted to the same rules as subcontracted works.

7. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

7.1. Legal status of applicants:

Applications submitted in writing by legal persons who are citizens of a Member State of the European Union. The organisation coordinating the project and the partners, hereafter named “Applicants”, must show that they exist as a legal person, by providing a certified true copy of their articles of association or equivalent.

7.2. Grounds for exclusion

Applications will not be considered for a grant if the applicants are in any of the following situations:

- a) they are bankrupt or being wound up, are having their affairs administered by the courts, have entered into an arrangement with creditors, have suspended business activities, are the subject of proceedings concerning those matters, or are in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for in national legislation or regulations;
- b) they have been convicted of an offence concerning professional conduct by a judgment which has the force of res judicata;
- c) they have been guilty of grave professional misconduct proven by any means which the contracting authority can justify;
- d) they have not fulfilled obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions or the payment of taxes in accordance with the legal provisions of the country in which they are established or with those of the country of the contracting authority or those of the country where the contract is to be performed;
- e) they have been the subject of a judgment which has the force of res judicata for fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organisation or any other illegal activity detrimental to the Communities' financial interests;
- f) following another procurement procedure or grant procedure financed by the Community budget, they have been declared to be in serious breach of contract for failure to comply with their contractual obligations;
- g) are subject to a conflict of interest;
- h) they have been guilty of misrepresentation in supplying the information required or have failed to supply this information.

Applicants must certify that they are not in one of the situations listed in point 7.2.

7.3. Administrative and financial penalties

- 1) Without prejudice to the application of penalties laid down in the contract, applicants, candidates or tenderers and contractors who have been guilty of making false declarations or have been found to have seriously failed to meet their contractual obligations in an earlier procedure will be excluded from all contracts and grants financed by the Community budget for a maximum of two years from the time when the infringement is established, as confirmed after an adversarial procedure with the contractor.

That period may be extended to three years in the event of a repeat offence within five years of the first infringement.

Applicants, tenderers or candidates who have been guilty of making false declarations will also incur financial penalties representing 10% of the total value of the grant being awarded.

Contractors who have been found to have seriously failed to meet their contractual obligations will incur financial penalties representing 10% of the value of the grant in question.

That rate may be increased to 20% in the event of a repeat offence within five years of the first infringement.

- 2) In the cases referred to in points 7.2 a), c), d) and f), the applicants, candidates or tenderers will be excluded from all contracts and grants for a maximum of two years from the time when the infringement is established, as confirmed after an adversarial procedure with the contractor.

In the cases referred to in points 7.2 b) and e), the applicants, candidates or tenderers will be excluded from all contracts and grants for a minimum of one year and a maximum of four years from the date of notification of the judgment.

Those periods may be extended to five years in the event of a repeat offence within five years of the first infringement or the first judgment.

- 3) The cases referred to in point 7.2. e) cover:
 - a) cases of fraud as referred to in Article 1 of the Convention on the protection of the European Communities' financial interests established by the Council Act of 26 July 1995⁴;
 - b) cases of corruption as referred to in Article 3 of the Convention on the fight against corruption involving officials of the European Communities or officials of Member States of the European Union, established by the Council Act of 26 May 1997⁵;
 - c) cases of participation in a criminal organisation, as defined in Article 2(1) of Joint Action 98/733/JHA of the Council⁶;
 - d) cases of money laundering as defined in Article 1 of Council Directive 91/308/EEC⁷.

⁴ OJ C 316, 27.11.1995, p. 48

⁵ OJ C 195, 25.6.1997, p. 1.

⁶ OJ L 351, 29.12.1998, p. 1. Joint action of 21 December 1998 on making it a criminal offence to participate in a criminal organisation in the Member States of the European Union

8. SELECTION CRITERIA

The applicants must have access to solid and adequate funding sources, so as to be able to maintain activities for the period of the project funded and to help finance the project. The applicants must have the professional skills and qualifications required to complete the proposed action.

8.1. Financial capacity of applicants

Applicants must show that they have the financial capacity and operational capability to complete the operation to be supported and must provide their balance sheet for the last financial year for which the accounts have been closed. The last of these provisions does not apply to public bodies and international organisations.

Applicants must fill in the form relative to legal entities, available from the website mentioned in point 1.

8.2. Technical capacity of applicants

Technical and professional capacity – means of proof required

- (1) Applicants must have the technical capacity and the operational capability to complete the operation to be supported. They must provide evidence of their knowledge and experience in the field of transport infrastructure, safe parking areas and innovative projects and descriptions of projects and activities undertaken in the last three years and more particularly of projects related to the relevant issue.
- (2) Applicants must provide evidence of the extent of the team's professional experience and the sectors in which it has been gained and the areas dealt with throughout the professional career of the team members, in particular by providing detailed curriculum vitae in English language of the Steering Committee members as well as of staff having managerial responsibilities in the pilot project for carrying out the work, including his or her educational background, degrees and diplomas, professional experience, research work and publications.
- (3) Applicants must provide evidence of the contacts and organisations that they intend to consult and whose resources they intend to draw-upon in the course of the execution of the pilot project.
- (4) Applicants must provide evidence for availability of the financing resources needed, apart from the co-financing of the EU required, in particular as far as own resources of the applicants and his partners, public funding and bank loans are concerned.

9. CRITERIA FOR THE AWARD OF THE CONTRACT

The operation supported must be designed to further one of the objectives referred to in point 5 above. The Commission will base the choice of projects, (this is not a tender) and the rate of Community co-financing on the basis of the following criteria:

1. **Soundness of the approach:** A succinct presentation of the understanding of the present specifications, the clarity of the objectives and the description of tasks,

the robustness of the methodology proposed, the realism of the schedule of work (timetable) and the evaluation plan (including the quality of the result indicators compared with the proposed objectives) will be taken into account. The application should also demonstrate the maturity of the project (e.g. proofs of existing planning and authorisations where appropriate), including the financial commitments of the project partners, the potential for exploitation of results and where appropriate the economic viability (20%).

2. **The organisation of the work, including the composition of the team and the Steering Committee** in order to meet the requirements of the pilot project and its potential to promote the development of secure parking spaces in the EU after the pilot project phase. Account will be given to the allocation of work, milestones and deliverables (20%).
3. **Interest of project at European level and multiplier effect** : The application should explain why and how the project will have a European dimension: cross-border impact and multiplier effect (transfer, generalisation, dissemination or large-scale application of the results, experiences, knowledge and good practice). The innovative character of the project, in terms of new approaches presented and new practices developed will be taken into account. The visibility⁸ (publications, organisation of events, Internet sites, CD-ROM, etc.) will also be taken into account. Purely national initiatives are excluded (40%).
4. **Cost effectiveness ratio of the project** : The proposal should indicate the ratio between EU co-financing and expected result, in particular security level, as well as the ratio between total costs of the project and the expected result, in particular security level. It should be referred to the three types of crime in relation to the traffic volume (20 %).

Only bids that have reached a total score of a minimum of 75 % and a minimum score of 60% for each criteria will be taken into consideration for awarding the contract.

10. GENERAL CONDITIONS FOR AWARDING GRANTS

The general conditions for awarding grants, particularly the definition of the eligible costs and the methods of payment, are set out in the draft grant agreement available at the Internet address mentioned in point 1. Applicants must compulsorily take notice of this document and must take into account the conditions for awarding grants when drawing up their proposal.

For all applications for pre-financing of over €100 000, a financial guarantee equivalent to the amount pre-financed will be required. In addition, the Commission reserves the right to require a financial guarantee for pre-financing amounts of under €100 000.

The budget for the action attached to the application must have revenue and expenditure in balance and show clearly the costs which are eligible for financing from the Community budget. Therefore, applicants must provide a detailed breakdown of all expenditure related to their proposal.

⁸ In this respect, grant beneficiaries are reminded that the words "project carried out with the financial support of the European Commission" and the flag of the European Union must be included on any publication, material etc. relating to the project.

The Commission will only recognise the cost of entities having signed the contract, whether as beneficiary or as cobeneficiary. She will no longer accept the cofinanced participation of third parties to the contract, when they are neither beneficiaries, nor cobeneficiaries, unless they are subcontractors, the costs of which are taken into account when considering the beneficiaries or cobeneficiaries.

For actions where the cost to be financed by the Commission exceeds €300 000, the proposal must be accompanied by an external audit report produced by an approved auditor. This report must certify the accounts for the last year available and give an assessment of the financial viability of the applicant. If this report is not submitted, the proposal will be rejected.

The Commission services would welcome applications in English and in any case a summary and an overview table in English.

11. SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS FOR A GRANT

Applications must be made only using the **model application form available at the Internet address mentioned in point 1**. For each application, **one signed original and five copies as well as an electronic version** must be supplied by the organisation coordinating the project. Partners must fill in the parts B and C of the application form.

The form relative to legal entities, available from the website mentioned in point 1, must also be filled in.

Any unsigned applications will be rejected when the tenders are opened.

12. CLOSING DATE FOR SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS FOR A GRANT

12.1. Grant applications can be sent in two ways:

(a) **either sent by registered mail or by private courier**

The application must be sent by registered mail or by private courier, dispatched not later than 8 September 2006 (the postmark or the receipt issued by the courier service serving as proof of the dispatch) to the following address:

By registered mail

European Commission
Directorate-General Energy and Transport
DM 28 - 0/110 - Archives
B-1049 Brussels
Belgium

With the mention “call for proposal Unit E.1”

By private courier

European Commission
Directorate-General Energy and Transport - DM 28 - 0/110
Rue de Genève, 1
B-1049 Brussels (Evere)
Belgium

With the mention “call for proposal Unit E.1”

(b) **or delivered by hand**

Tenders must be delivered by hand at the **Central Mail of the European Commission** by 8 September 2006 **not later than 3 p.m.** (Brussels time), at the following address:

European Commission
Directorate-General Energy and Transport – DM 28 0/110
Rue de Genève 1
B-1140 Brussels (Evere)
Belgium

With the mention “call for proposal Unit E.1”

In this case, a receipt must be obtained as proof of submission, signed and dated by the official in the Commission's central mail department who took delivery. The department is open from 08.00 to 17.00 Monday to Thursday, and from 8.00 to 16.00 on Fridays. It is closed on Saturdays, Sundays and Commission holidays.

12.2. Practical arrangements:

Applications must be submitted in two envelopes. Bids must be submitted inside two sealed envelopes. The inner envelope must bear the words:

<p style="text-align: center;">Call for proposals TREN/PIL/2006</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Not to be opened by the postal service</p> <p style="text-align: center;">DM 28 0/110 – Archives</p>
--

If self-adhesive envelopes are used, they must be sealed with adhesive tape and the sender must sign across that tape.

13. INDICATIVE SCHEDULE

Reception of proposals: refer to point 12.1 above

Evaluation: September/October 2006

Award decision: November/December 2006

Useful references

ECMT Report: “Crime in Road Freight Transport”, (75 2002 06 1 P), Jul-02, 142 pages, ISBN 92-821-1372-8;

<http://www.oecdbookshop.org/oecd/display.asp?lang=EN&sf1=identifiers&st1=752002061p1>

ECMT/IRU Catalogue (2003): “Truck Parking Areas in Europe”

<http://www.iru.org/Publications/PDF/Parking03.pdf>

ECMT/IRU, Survey on attacks on international Heavy Duty Vehicles drivers (ongoing).

ECMT/IRU, Update of the publication “Truck Parking Areas in Europe” (ongoing)

Decision 884/2004/EC on Community guidelines for the development of the trans-European transport network, Official Journal n° L 201 of 07/06/2004 p.1-55

This list does not constitute any formal commitment on behalf of the Commission.