Dear Convener

FORTH REPLACEMENT CROSSING TRAINING PLACES

Following the evidence session to your Committee, providing an update on the progress on the Forth Replacement Crossing project on Wednesday 5th March 2014, I undertook to write to you to provide details of the training provided on the project to date and the Contractor’s plans for the remainder of the project.

Specific minimum requirements have been included in the Principal Contract with Forth Crossing Bridge Constructors (FCBC) which are to provide –

- An annual average of 45 vocational training Site-based places for persons undertaking a vocational training construction skills training course leading to the award of a Scottish Vocational Qualification (SVQ) Level 2 or equivalent.
- An annual average of 21 professional training places for persons undertaking a professional engineering training scheme recognised and accredited by a national professional body (such as the Institution of Civil Engineers) and leading to membership of the professional body at technician or chartered level or equivalent.
- An annual average of 46 permanent Site-based full time equivalent employment construction opportunities in connection with the Works which are aimed specifically at people who have not been in employment for at least 25 weeks prior to being employed in relation to the Works.

These minimum requirements have been included within the Key Performance Indicator (KPI) monitoring requirements of the contract and financial deductions can be made if they are not achieved. Modern Apprenticeships fall into the first category of these requirements as they are rated at the higher SVQ Level 3.
In addition to the specific contract requirements, FCBC offered two more KPI categories relating to training as part of their tender for the Principal Contract. These are as follows –

- Employ a minimum of 10 Further Education students for at least three months of the year to gain work experience.
- Provide support to at least 2 PhD students per year

**Vocational Training Places**

There are currently 226 people undertaking vocational training at SVQ level 2 or above. On the project to date 288 people have undertaken or completed vocational training. The current cumulative annual average is 62.03 people undertaking training compared to the minimum contractual requirement of 45. These numbers include 8 Modern Apprentices, all of whom are from the Fife, Lothian or Edinburgh area. They are enrolled at Edinburgh, Carnegie or Perth College and 4 are training as Civil Engineering Technicians, 3 as Electricians and 1 as a Welder and Fabricator. They started their Modern Apprenticeships in March 2013 (one) or August 2013 (seven).

**Professional Training Places**

There are currently 45 people undertaking professional training and on the project to date 71 people have undertaken or completed professional training. The current cumulative annual average is 46.82 people in professional training compared to the minimum contractual requirement of 21.

**Long Term Unemployed**

There are currently 70 people in employment who had previously been unemployed for at least 25 weeks. The cumulative annual average is 43.06 compared to the minimum contractual requirement of 46. The current shortfall in the cumulative annual average is due to a slow start in the first year on site, which was expected, but this has been significantly increased in years two and three and is set to surpass the minimum annual average requirement during this year.

**Further Education Students Work Experience**

There are currently 3 students gaining work experience on the site and the cumulative annual average is 10.14 compared to the target requirement of 10.

**PhD Students**

FCBC is providing support to 2 students who are studying for PhD qualifications. One is studying the bond between steel and concrete under dynamic loads in special concretes and the second is studying behaviour, attitude and perception of safety risk in a nationally and culturally diversified workforce.

The performance of FCBC in achieving these training and employment KPI’s is monitored on a monthly basis and they are committed to continuing to work to maximise the opportunities that the FRC project brings to the wider community and providing a lasting legacy to the local workforce and economy. They are currently advertising in local job centres and the press for welders, platers, weld inspectors, survey engineers and plant/marine engineers.
We will continue to keep the Committee updated on these matters in our regular written update on the FRC project.

Yours sincerely

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Project Director / Employer’s Representative