

# PEPS Fireside Chat Q&A

## Debriefs – February 2025

**Q1: How does TxDOT evaluate the effectiveness of its debrief program?**

A1: There is not a formal measure in place to evaluate effectiveness.

**Q2: Is there a way for PEPS to ensure or enforce consistency between districts (and divisions) regarding debrief protocol? It would be so helpful to have more transparency and consistency in the process. Having the score sheet in writing in advance would be a huge help. To Donna's point, I don't understand how one procurement engineer can say something is "not allowed" but it is common practice for another. "Not allowed" by whom?**

A2: The procurement engineers conduct quarterly meetings, which include discussions on policies and processes. Based on feedback from today, this will be an excellent topic for an upcoming meeting. PEPS will review and solidify our debrief process to ensure better consistency across the service centers.

**Q3: May we do one of these on TxDOT interviews? The difference between proposal debriefs and interview debriefs and any specific advice.**

A3: For an SD procurement, firms who were *not* shortlisted can receive a debrief in addition to the shortlisted firms. Therefore, debriefs for shortlisted firms cover both their written proposal (part 1) and interview (part 2). Consultants should ask how their slides were perceived in the interview. For interview debriefs, the PEPS staff typically take copious notes and provides direct feedback for the interview.

**Q4: Since subconsultants rarely are invited to debriefs, what is the best way to learn content prime's need from the prime and get further input?**

A4: The participants on the panel do not typically share debrief information with subconsultants. Very often, subconsultants are on multiple teams. However, on a side note, the TxDOT DRIVE program does provide a

good forum for discussion between mentors and proteges about debriefs and best practices.

**Q5: I have a comment about the PM score. The score is based on TxDOT database and past performance for the individual. Some established firms have project managers with solid scores. How can new upcoming project managers compete against established ones and win contracts? This criterion needs some clarification.**

A5: TxDOT recently started allowing firms to evaluate Work Authorization PMs; this can help up-and-coming Contract PMs build their scores up earlier in their career. It is also important to note that project managers and firms that have not previously done work with TxDOT before start with an average score, not with a zero.

**Q6: Are proposals considered proprietary? TxDOT sometimes get asked about what the #1 team did that they did not do.**

A6: TxDOT is required to speak on the merits of each proposal individually, not other proposals. Firms desiring to see what other firms did should submit an Open Records Request.