



**2-DAY RETREAT FOR FEDERAL MINISTRY OF WORKS HIGHWAYS
ENGINEERS AND MANAGEMENT STAFF**

***THEME: “ENSURING DELIVERY OF MR. PRESIDENT’S AGENDA ON ROAD
INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT”***

COMMUNIQUE

ON

**PRESENTATIONS AND CONSIDERATION OF MAJOR CONCLUSIONS
FROM THE 2-DAY RETREAT**

AT

**(NIA), MUHAMMADU BUHARI CONFERENCE CENTRE (MBCC),
ABUJA**

FROM FRIDAY 17TH - SATURDAY, 18TH JANUARY, 2025

2-DAY RETREAT FOR FEDERAL MINISTRY OF WORKS HIGHWAYS ENGINEERS AND MANAGEMENT STAFF

The Federal Ministry of Works organized a 2-Day Retreat with the theme. **”Ensuring Delivery of Mr. President Renewed Hope Agenda on Road Infrastructure Development”** for Nigeria Highways Engineers and some selected Directors, held from Friday 17th to Saturday 18th January, 2025 at the Conference Room of the National Intelligence Agency (NIA) in Abuja, Federal Capital Territory.

2. The main objective of the Retreat was to facilitate an interactive session focusing on the presidential priority for the road sector, while its specific objectives included:

- i. educate participant to properly understand Mr. President’s Renewed Hope Agenda with specific reference to road infrastructural development
- ii. Educate participant on the legal implication (s) of violating the provision of Extant Rule such as the Public Service Rules, (PSR), Financial Regulation (FR), Fiscal Responsibility Act (FRA), Public Procurement Act (PPA) etc,
- iii. Educate participant on the principles of effective project management and delivery, among others.

3. The Retreat is expected to achieve the following deliverable:

- i. Produced a team of highly mobilized and well informed engineers ready to deliver on Mr. President’s Renewed Hope agenda for the road sector
- ii. Trained corps of engineers, knowledgeable in governance processes, public service rules, financial regulations, procurement guidelines, legal provisions, Budgeting and other extant regulations, towards improving performance and service delivery
- iii. Complement of Engineers with a changed mindset, focused, high morale and esprit de corp towards promoting team work for enhancing effective and efficient service delivery for accelerated development of the road sector in Nigeria
- iv. Engineers grounded on project development, management processes and delivery.

4. A total of 235 participants attended the retreat. The dignitaries that attended the retreat comprised the Honourable Minister, **H.E SEN (Engr.) David Nweze Umahi, CON, FNSE, FNATE**, the Honourable Minister of State, **Hon. Bello Muhammed Goronyo Esq**, The Chairman Senate Committee on Works, distinguished Sen. Mpigi Barinada, the Chairman House Committee on Works, Hon. Akin Alabi, the Permanent Secretary, **Engr. Olufunsho O Adebisi, FNSE**. Other participants included Heads of Highways Departments, some selected Directors, Engineers and Resource Persons comprising the Permanent Secretary Federal Ministry of Justice, represented by Mr. Gladys Odegbaro, Director General, Bureau of Public Procurement, Dr. Adebowale A. Adedokun, Chairman, Economic and Financial Crime Commission, represented by Mr. Francis Usani, Engr. Emeka Ezeh, Chairman FCT Civil Service Commission, Hadiza Bala Usman, Special Adviser to the President on Policy Coordination/Head(CDCU), Former Director Federal Highways Engr. Bala Danshehu and the Director General, Budget Office of the Federation, Hon. Tanimu Yakubu.

5.0 The Opening Ceremony of the 2-day Retreat featured the followings:

5.1 **Welcome Address by the Permanent Secretary**

The Permanent Secretary, Federal Ministry of Works Engr. Olufunsho O Adebisi, *FNSE*, delivered the welcome address, where he welcomed the Honourable Minister of Works and Honourable Minister of State and thanked them for approving the retreat. He also welcomed all participants and thanked them for honoring his invitation. He informed of the alarming statistics from the Road Safety Commission on the causes of accident on Nigeria Roads. He urged all the Engineers to take responsibility to change the trajectory of the negative perception of the public that bad road constitute the major cause for motor accident. He stated that there will be massive capacity building for the Engineers to enable effective service delivery and urged all to support the vision of Mr. President. He assured the Honourable Minister he was handing over to him a completely changed and well informed corps Engineers.

5.2 **Goodwill Messages:**

5.2.1 The Honourable Minister of State, Hon. Bello Mohammed Goronyo *Esq* pledged continuous support to the Honourable Minister and applauded his vast experiences in governance and expressed his joy for having to work with him. He urged participants to pay very serious attention to the lectures of the prominent and well informed presenters and to support the actualization of Mr. President's Renewed Hope Agenda.

5.2.2 The Chairman, Senate Committee on Works, distinguished Sen. Mpigi Berinada called for continuous collaboration and cooperation between the Ministry and the National Assembly and pledged the support of the Committee to ensuring that adequate funds are appropriated for road construction in the country. The proposed budget for the Ministry in 2025 is a far cry from achieving the much needed improvement of the roads network when divided by the cost of 1km of road at the prevailing rates. He then advocated continuous retreats and engagements with relevant stakeholders for needs assessments before budgets for each year are prepared to engender citizen participation.

5.2.3 The Chairman House Committee on Works, Hon. Akin Alabi applauded the Ministry's plan to train and retrain officers to enhance their capacities to deliver the much needed improvements in the sector, noting that the expectation of citizens on good road network is as much as for food and other essential requirements. He assured the Ministry of his and the Committee's continuous support on legislative matters, while not losing sight of its oversight mandates.

5.2.4 The Chairman Economic and Financial Crimes Commission represented by Mr. Francis Usani, called on officers of the Ministry to cooperate with the Honourable Minister in his effort of ensuring that Nigerians enjoy the benefit of good road network as seen in the Minister's legacy on roads in Ebonyi State.

6.0 Keynote Address by the Honourable Minister.

6.1 The Honourable Minister, Federal Ministry of Works Engr. David Nweze Umahi delivered the Keynote Address. He welcomed all participants and commended the Permanent Secretary on his initiative in organizing the Retreat for the Engineers to engender effective service delivery and directed him to organize another retreat for the Agencies under the Ministry (FERMA & OSGOF).

6.2 The Honourable Minister also noted the significance and contribution of road infrastructure to National development. He stated that one of the objectives of the retreat is to address lapses he observed during field visit undertaken by Honourable Minister to various sites across the six geo-political zones. He urged all to join the team and participate effectively towards achieving the vision of Mr. President for road development in Nigeria. On this note, he declared the retreat open.

7.0 The presentation session of the retreat was structured into two parts consisting of lectures presentation and panel discussions during which the Resource Persons presented lectures on selected topics. The lectures delivered at the Retreat are shown in the table below:

S/N	LECTURE TOPIC	RESOURCE PERSON
1.	Project Management	Chairman FCT Civil Service Commission, Engr. Emeka Eze
2.	Violation of Extant Rules (Public Service Rules) and Financial Regulation, Fiscal Responsibility Act	Permanent Secretary , Federal Ministry of Justice represented by Mrs. Gladys Adegbaru
3.	Compliance with Procurement Act	Director General, Bureau of Public Procurement (BBP)
4.	Understanding Mr. President's 8 Point Agenda	Special Adviser on Policy Coordination Unit (CDCU) Hon. Hadiza Bala Usman.
5.	Prudent Use of Government Resources	Chairman, Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC).
6.	Budgeting (Challenges of Budgeting in Highway Projects Delivery)	Director General, Budget Office
7.	Effective Highway Projects Management	Rtd. Director Federal Highways.

7.1 The paper presentations were followed by intermittent break in the lectures to entertain questions from the participants on the various topics/subjects.

8.0 The panel discussants deliberated exhaustively on the lectures or papers and issues highlighted by the Permanent Secretary and proffered recommendations as listed below:

- i. Composition of Highways site management team for efficient service delivery.
- ii. The management of Bill 1
- iii. Interrelationships between engineers
- iv. Effective Project Planning processes
- v. Possibility of direct labour mechanism
- vi. Adherence to regulations on procurement Act, Fiscal responsibility Act, Public Service rules, etc
- vii. Funding of projects (Generation and sources).

8.1 At the end of the Panel discussions and deliberations, the following resolutions were made:

- i. resolved that BPP approvals for response are not required during emergencies on our roads, rather administrative approvals suffice.

- ii. resolved that ER's are responsible for site administration with compliments of relevant staff.
- iii. resolved to use complimentary staff (i.e casual workers or corpers) to address shortfall in manpower on Ministry's site.
- iv. composition of a Committee to provide a typical Organogram, Staff strenght and average running cost for the Ministry's sites to be chaired by Engineer Femi, while other members are Engr. Adebisi, Aganaba, Ogbuagu, Danlele and a representative of Nigeria Institution of Highways Engineers. The time-frame for the assignment is 2-weeks.
- v. directed the organization of refresher courses for officers at the zonal level for all engineers on how certificates are raised, to be organized by Director Highways Planning and Development
- vi. assured at making frantic effort towards curtailing the Ministry's astronomical rise in number of on-going projects from 206 projects in 2015 to 2700 projects in 2025.
- vii. urged officers to improve on team work and inclusive approach in the handling of official matters.
- viii. Controllers henceforth would be the head of the team at the states and not officer based at the headquarters.
- ix. review issues surrounding VoP and augmentation in contract management in the Ministry using approved formula and ensure the inclusion of the new rates in the contract agreements.
- x. utilize Ministry's training centres in Lagos, Edo and kaduna for some of the training, controllers of these states to report on status of the facilities.

xi. Composition of a committee on funds and Director Highways Planning and Development to come up with necessary letters to members for the Permanent Secretary's consideration and this should be completed in 2-weeks.

9.0 Arising from the lectures presented, exhaustive discussions and deliberations, participants unanimously made the following observations, recommendations and decisions:

xii. **directed** the Permanent Secretary to collaborate with the Department of Human Resource Management on training and retraining as well as capacity building for staff towards improving performance, effective and efficient service delivery in the road sector.

xiii. **directed** the Organization of a similar retreat for FERMA and OSGoF.

xiv. **directed** organizing of Lecture on standard practice for the use of concrete in road construction to be organized for engineers among other training.

xv. **directed** the enforcement of Speed Bumps removal nationwide in compliance with the directive of the National Assembly as well as stoppage of use of road shoulders for trading and drying wares.

xvi. **directed** Controllers to have all documents of project in their various states.

xvii. **directed** that no file stays more than 24-hours on an officers table.

xviii. **directed** that in the event of directives not in tandem with rules and regulations of the Public Service, officers are authorized to send such observations and their recommendations as advisory note to the Permanent Secretary.

xix. **directed** State Controllers to forward 4-No project from their respective states for commissioning of the completed sections.

- xx. **directed** that no more payment of mobilization, until except the contractor has mobilized to site.
- xxi. **consider** the application of some component of Bill 1 in the engagement of young engineers at various projects to build capacities in road construction management.
- xxii. **discuss** with the Permanent Secretary on the redeployment of engineers to project sites taking into cognizance their knowledge of the projects requirements.
- xxiii. **fix** a date for the Ministry to hold a meeting with contractors, EFCC and ICPC in attendance to address the issue of having several projects without adequate equipment and resources to mobilize to sites concurrently.
- xxiv. **urged** change of old ways of doing things such as the application of VoP's, Bill 1, review of projects etc.
- xxv. **approved** dinner for the engineers and the Permanent Secretary for further discussion on better approaches to service delivery.
- xxvi. **adopted** all the decisions and recommendations made during the panel discussions for implementation.

11.0. **Vote of thanks by the Permanent Secretary**

11.1 The Permanent Secretary, Federal Ministry of Works on behalf of the Honorable Minister, Management and entire Staff of the Federal Ministry of Works, expressed his profound gratitude to the resource persons and participants for their useful contributions, insights and expertise that enriched deliberations and shaped the understanding of the critical role, infrastructure played in unlocking sustainable development of the road sector.

He thanked the management of NIA for granting permission to the Ministry for the use of its facility.

Done this Saturday, 18th day of January, 2025

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Engr. Olufunso O. Adebisi, FNSE

Permanent Secretary

.....
H.E Sen. Engr. (Dr) Nweze David Umahi CON, FNSE, FNATE

Honourable Minister of Works