

## TORONTO-BASED CONSULTING COMPANY WINS OPENING BID IN INDIA

*Winning a World Bank bid in India is not the easiest thing in the world. But as R.V. Anderson Associates Limited (RVA) recently has shown, it can be done with much perseverance and a little bit of government backing.*

The Toronto-based company has been engaged in consulting engineering and technology management since 1948, but it's only recently that it has ventured onto the export scene in a big way.

As a matter of fact, the bulk of the \$10 million-\$20 million annual sales of this 150-employee firm is still domestic.

But all this could all change, thanks to a \$3-million contract to upgrade the sewerage operation and maintenance services of the Municipal Corporation of Greater Bombay.

### Focus India

How did RVA choose India as its main focus?

One of the contributing factors, according to Alan Perks, RVA Manager, International Business, was the *Focus India Strategy* officially launched last June.

Various federal organizations — including the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Industry Canada, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA INC), and the Export Development Corporation (EDC) — as well as the provincial governments contributed to form a Team Approach.

The purpose was to pool each organization's specific expertise into a common strategy to help Canadian companies take advantage of Indian market opportunities in three priority sectors: telecommunications, environment and power projects.

### Contract bidding

How did RVA find out about this World Bank project?

"It was through our Bombay-based partner PHE Consultants," Perks explains. "We had formed that partnership in 1993 after having met the Indian company during its trip to Canada."

But during the more than year-long negotiations, the company faced many ups and downs.

"We were up against large British and American companies," Perks recalls, "but in the end our package won out."

And quite a package it was.

For the project, RVA enlisted the support of a number of Ontario partners, including the Ontario Clean Water Agency, Envirotrain International (a consortium of six Canadian Community Colleges), and the Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton.

Their role will range from developing personnel

organization and management information systems to training and human resources development assistance through practical training and exchanges.

### Government help

"What was also instrumental in winning the bid — a real Team Canada approach," according to Perks, "was the bidding support provided by CIDA INC and the Ontario International Trade Corporation, and CIDA INC support for an enhanced training package that was made available to the Bombay Municipal Corporation."

Perks firmly believes that such financial support in the face of fierce international competition is crucial for small- and medium-size Canadian companies to succeed in this high-stakes market.

"It's a very difficult and time-consuming process to win these bids," Perks admits. "That's why there is a strong need for teamwork between industry and government," emphasize Perks.

He is also quick to recognize the help and support — in terms of communications and attending meetings — received from the Canadian High Commission and Consulate in India.

### Future prospects

RVA will no doubt put such help to good use as it seeks other opportunities in India for itself and a host of other Canadian firms and equipment suppliers.

"In this case," says Perks, "our PHE partners will not only be instrumental in completing our Bombay contract, but they will also provide a solid base for pursuing other environmental and infrastructure opportunities throughout the Indian sub-continent."

RVA already is pursuing that quest by participating last month at Envirotech Trade Fair in Bombay. Although it is too early to talk about results, excellent contacts were made.

For a company which strength is built on environmental and infrastructure specialists in water, wastewater, transportation, urban development and telecommunication technologies, opportunities will abound.

For more information on RVA, contact Alan R. Perks, Manager, International Business. Tel.: (613) 226-1844. Fax: (613) 226-8930.

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