

## **Procurer Note: Office ICT equipment**

**Updated June 2014**

### **What does sustainability mean for office IT equipment?**

Many of us buying office IT equipment will be familiar with some of the key sustainability considerations from buying similar equipment at home: power consumption, life expectancy and compatibility with existing hardware and software.

But it's also becoming increasingly important to look at the components and materials used: a lot of chemicals and plastic are used in the manufacture of IT equipment and this can be a significant problem when it comes to disposal. So as well as looking at energy efficiency, it's worth checking how easy it will be to upgrade the equipment when necessary rather than just replacing it.

All central government departments and their related organisations must ensure that they meet at least the mandatory levels for these impact areas set out in Government Buying Standards (GBS).

### **Energy efficiency and Energy Star**

The energy efficiency component in GBSs for office ICT products refers to the US Government's 'Energy Star' criteria. The Energy star label has been endorsed by the EU and is supported by a database that helps buyers pick the most energy efficient models, within the group of ENERGY STAR qualified office equipment. Further detail, the database, and an energy efficiency calculator is provided on the EU's Energy Star web pages.

ICT is a rapidly innovating product area and Energy star criteria are periodically updated. When specifying, Buyers should ensure that suppliers understand that "Energy star" in the GBS refers to the latest version of energy star criteria relevant to the product they are purchasing.

## **The Energy Efficiency Directive**

[Article 6 of the Energy Efficiency Directive 2012/27/EU](#) came into force on 5 June 2014. Its obligations on central government departments, their agencies and non-departmental public bodies are (for England) set out in a [Cabinet Office procurement policy note](#). The governments of Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland will be issuing similar administrative directions.

In brief, the requirements are:

- a) All public sector bodies in scope of Article 6 must, when purchasing products and services and purchasing or renting buildings, comply with the energy efficiency standards set out in the Directive (Article 6 plus Annex III), subject to certain qualifications. In scope organisations are defined as all central government departments including non-ministerial departments, executive agencies and NDPBs.
  
- b) Other public bodies, including local and regional government, are not obliged to do the same, but are encouraged to do so, following the example of central government. All central government departments are asked to support the application of Article 6 by bodies associated with them including at a regional and local level in any way possible. For example, through sharing their own best practice.

### **How does the Energy Efficiency Directive relate to Government Buying Standards?**

We anticipate that for all energy-using product GBSs, the energy usage element of the standard will be matched or superseded by the requirements of the Energy Efficiency Directive.

Defra will be removing the energy efficiency requirements from the published GBS where necessary on a rolling basis and replacing them with a cross reference to the Directive. Any non-energy using elements (e.g. water use, CFCs etc.) will be retained.

In the meantime, departments are advised that they need to meet the standards in Article 6 in respect of the energy using characteristics of those products. The GBS will apply in relation to other aspects of the product.