

# Freedom of Information request 3570/2013

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## Information request

*Which minister asked ATOS to include contracts that were not in place?*

*Were tenders submitted by other firms rejected because of the inclusion of "pie in the sky" commercial contracts?*

*If commercial contracts would not been in place, why were they ever included in the first place?*

*Will the audit office be holding an inquiry into the tender process as a large amount of public money was invested?*

*Who stood to gain for the deceit, apart from ATOS?*

## DWP response

DWP officials were responsible for giving advice to bidders during tendering process for PIP assessments, in accordance with the usual rules for a fair and open competition. Ministers were not involved in this process.

All bidders for PIP assessments were assessed against established and published selection criteria. The full criteria, scoring methodology and specification were published on Business Link's Contract Finder website.

The Department would not expect any bidders to have entered into binding contractual arrangements with potential subcontractors at the tender stage. This would not be possible for any bidder as without a contract to deliver PIP they would be unable to sign contracts with other organisations. The final awarded contract includes a schedule of Approved Sub-Contractors which is to be finalised post contract award. This schedule was not reviewed as part of the tender evaluation process.

It is usual for there to be changes between contract award and delivery. What is important is that Atos has kept the Department informed about these changes. The mention, or not, of any particular organisation in the bids to deliver PIP was not material in the evaluation of the competition and had no impact on the decision.

The successful providers in each lot were selected following a robust open and fair competition. The Atos bid scored the highest evaluation score in Lots

1 and 3 based on the quality, risk and financial, aspects of their tender. The National Audit Office has no current intention of conducting a review of the tendering process. We are confident the providers in each lot have been properly selected following rigorous evaluation and assessed against appropriate and published selection criteria.