

Results - Following up on Mystery Shopper Investigations -April 2017

Procurement Process

Contracting Authority / Prime Contractor complaint against - Crown Commercial Service

Issue: A supplier contacted the Mystery Shopper service about the difficulties they had experienced in trying to register for the CCS eSourcing tool and the numbers of click-throughs in order to find information.

Outcome: *CCS recognised the difficulties suppliers have experienced and have been working on a new system called the Crown Marketplace that will address these difficulties in the long term. In the interim, CCS has identified links to old information and missing information and corrected these in its procurement documents*

Result of Follow-up: *CCS confirmed again that the notice templates in Emptoris have been checked to ensure that they contain the most direct URL to the guidance webpage for suppliers, so in the short term this should avoid any further issues with registering. In the longer term, the Crown Commercial Marketplace is currently being developed with the principle of single sign-on for suppliers which means that you only have to register once - rather than on multiple systems. This is currently still in development.*

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Issue: A supplier experienced delay in CCS approving its novation from an LLP to a Ltd company.

Outcome: CCS and Mystery Shopper reviewed CCS processes for novation. Mystery Shopper recommended that approval could be delegated to reduce time taken. CCS accepted this recommendation.

Result of Follow-Up: *CCS responded quickly to advise that they will undertake due diligence on future novations in line with CCS's internal procedures. As part of this process, they highlighted that the Internal Approvals Board now meet more regularly which should help to speed up the process and avoid a situation like this occurring again.*

Contracting Authority / Prime Contractor complaint against - Crown Commercial Service

Issue: A supplier advised they had been unsuccessful in two lots on the Technology Services framework due to failing a pass/fail question and they were concerned that their response had been evaluated inconsistently against the criteria.

Outcome: CCS responded quickly to the concerns raised and accepted the recommendation that in future procurements this type of question should no longer be evaluated as a pass/fail.

Result of Follow-up: *The Mystery Shopper team contacted the relevant CCS teams to ensure that this recommendation had been considered in the development of the next Technology Category led Framework - Tech Services 2.*

CCS respond to advise that they will be using a pass/fail question for previous experience for Tech Services 2 however, they have undertaken several steps to ensure that a similar issue will not occur again. These include:-

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1. *Sharing top tips with potential bidders at pre-OJEU events for this procurement.*
2. *Evaluators will be receiving clear guidance and training on how to assess this particular section to ensure that there is a consistent approach to how previous experience is scored.*

To access the tender documents for Tech Services 2, please see the [CCS website](#)

OJEU Contract Notice if required can be found here <http://ted.europa.eu/udl?uri=TED:NOTICE:100502-2017:TEXT:EN:HTML&src=0>

Procurement Strategy

Contracting Authority / Prime Contractor complaint against - Crown Commercial Service

Issue: A Mystery Shopper raised a number of concerns about the Contingent labour 1 framework agreement. In particular they were concerned about the arrangement where the single supplier in this framework is able to retain up to 20% of the spend for its own business.

Outcome: We worked with the Crown Representative for SMEs to address many of the issues that small suppliers raised. CCS confirmed that the single supplier (Capita) was complying with the 80% / 20% split in the contract. At least 80% of the business flowing through the framework agreement is advertised in the open market for suppliers, including small businesses, to compete for.

Result of Follow-up: *CCS advised that from 19th June 2015 the CL1 framework agreement was extended. As part of the framework extension, Capita and their affiliate companies would no longer have the ability to supply under the framework agreement. This means that since June 2015 all work through the CL1 framework agreement has been filled by the supply chain.*