



Government  
Commercial  
Function

24

25



# GOVERNMENT COMMERCIAL FUNCTION

## ANNUAL REPORT 2024-25

May 2025

Alternative format versions of this report are available on request from the Government Commercial Function:  
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# FOREWORD

**THE GOVERNMENT COMMERCIAL  
FUNCTION HAS CONTINUED TO GO  
FROM STRENGTH TO STRENGTH**

# FOREWORD

The Government Commercial Function (GCF) has continued to go from strength to strength, continuing to make significant progress against our seven strategic objectives during financial year 2024-25.

As we come to the end of this current Strategy, which started in 2021, I am delighted to see that we have achieved the majority of the demanding goals we set ourselves at the start of the period, with a 90% strategy completion rate. This is testament to the hard work, dedication and flexibility of our workforce, who have overcome considerable change and challenge along the way. I would like to thank all my colleagues for this commitment and dedication, qualities which embody the spirit of the GCF.

We have seen great progress in the past financial year, building on the momentum of previous years. During financial year 2024-25, we increased contract performance and drove efficiency while maintaining excellent customer service. We also continued to enhance commercial capability across the public sector. Notably, we celebrated the successful launch of the Procurement Act 2023, which will transform the way we approach procurement across government.

**We have made great strides in our initiatives to:**

- ➔ Use innovation to drive continuous improvement of our products and services, supporting commercial activity across government and the wider public sector. This encompasses the ongoing enhancement of our digital platform, which simplifies the Commercial Continuous Improvement Assessment Framework (CCIAF) for all public sector users, making it faster and more efficient.
- ➔ Support businesses and all stakeholders through a continued, consistent, and efficient approach to closing out projects that commenced at the start of the Strategy period.



**WE HAVE CONTINUED  
TO DELIVER AGAINST  
OUR COMMITMENTS  
AND OBJECTIVES.**

— ANDREW FORZANI



This report can only highlight some of this year's successes. The achievements and case studies illustrate the ongoing commitment and excellence of the members of the commercial function and their collective efforts to deliver: value for money; improved performance from our supply chain while boosting Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) spend; innovative and pro-business projects; and an approach that constantly considers social value.

We have continued to deliver against our commitments and objectives despite ongoing economic challenges. This includes utilising government procurement to support small businesses and drive economic growth, as well as reducing late payments – in both of which the GCF has made significant advances.



## THE NEW SUPPORTING REGIME IS SET TO DRIVE IMPROVEMENTS IN OUR PROCUREMENT PRACTICES.

— ANDREW FORZANI

### Looking towards the next year:

- We will continue to align with the Grants Function to share best practice, align processes and systems, and strengthen governance whilst enhancing collaboration through information and data sharing.
- The new supporting regime associated with the Procurement Act is set to drive significant improvements in our procurement practices, ensuring we focus on delivering value and efficiency.
- We will continue to simplify and streamline our processes to enable our people to concentrate their time and skills on the areas of the commercial lifecycle that add the most value to customers.

The work we are doing now will lay the foundations for a truly transformed procurement system, enabling us to add even more value. We are on track to achieve this, and as a function, we can rise to challenges. Everyone involved should be proud of the progress we have made.

Andrew Forzani  
Government Chief Commercial Officer

## WE WILL SHARE BEST PRACTICE



Andrew Forzani addressing  
senior leaders from  
Commercial and Grants

# OBJECTIVES

**STRIVING TO SECURE SAVINGS  
AND DELIVER SIGNIFICANT  
RETURNS ON INVESTMENT**



# OBJECTIVES

## Progress against our 7 key objectives

### 1 Objective 1

The GCF aims to be in the top quartile (measured against industry benchmarks) of large organisations for financial benefits and return on investment by March 2025.

- Since 2021, we have consistently striven to secure savings and deliver significant returns on investment. In financial year 2024-25, we realised £6.8bn in cumulative savings (£3.4bn in cashable and £3.4bn in non-cashable savings). This marks an increase of £3bn in our cumulative savings in the last financial year alone. These savings translate into a £3.52 saving on every £100 the government has spent externally on buying goods and services. Overall, the GCF continues to yield approximately six and a half times the Return on Investment (ROI) compared to the total cost of the function: so for every £1 invested in Commercial, the taxpayer benefits by £7.35, an increase of 85p per pound from the previous year. That means we're not only continuing to recover our costs entirely, we are also delivering a multi-fold additional cost benefit.

### 2 Objective 2

The GCF will make these savings whilst also being recognised as leading the way in delivering social value through procurement.

- Our commitment to embedding social value in procurement processes has continued to accelerate. Inspired by our commitment in 2021 during the launch of the strategy and following the implementation of our new policy covering social value reporting in March 2023, all central government departments are now required to report against any commitments made against the Social Value Model.
- Departmental data collected in the last financial year demonstrates a strong delivery against the required minimum of 10% tender evaluation social value targets. This includes the creation of additional full-time employment opportunities, with over 10,100 people having participated in the social value training offered by the Government Commercial College.

**WE WILL STRIVE  
TO SECURE  
SAVINGS**



**WE AIM TO IMPROVE THE  
COMMERCIAL CAPABILITIES  
OF THE CIVIL SERVICE AND  
MAKE SIGNIFICANT SAVINGS  
FOR THE TAXPAYER.**



### 3 Objective 3

The GCF will drive up contract performance by suppliers and meet its transparency obligations.

- Our efforts in transparency and contract performance began in 2021 with our commitments to improve processes. **By the end of the last financial year, we have increased contract publication efficiency from 68% to 73% within 30 days.** This is an increase of 5% from the start of the year representing positive progress towards our target of 85%.
- We have consistently maintained 90% of KPIs rated Good, this equals to 9980 KPIs. The total number of unique contracts reported is 1549. This demonstrates our culture of accountability and performance improvement.

### 4 Objective 4

The GCF will drive efficiency and speed across the procurement lifecycle.

- The journey from 2021 highlighted the need for agility and efficiency in procurement practices. Through a policy of proactive intervention, we have introduced projects to improve our 'support efficiency' and 'timescales' scores in the Functions Quality Survey. In general, we are working on relaying feedback on metrics via our digital and data experts in order to create more refined metrics and embed them into standard GCF reporting in financial year 2025-26.

### 5 Objective 5

The GCF will benchmark commercial practice across central government departments using our industry-leading standards and playbooks to improve everyone's performance.

- Our approach to benchmarking, initiated by the Commercial Continuous Improvement Assessment Framework (CCIAF), has transformed practices across the public sector. The CCIAF has been adopted not only across government but also within the wider public sector attracting 215 total number of organisations assessing themselves against the common standards framework. Out of these, 57 government and arm's length bodies (ALBs) have completed the two-year assessment cycle, achieving an average commercial maturity score of 76.8% by the 2024-25 window; an increase of 8.2% from the initial score of 68.6% in 2022. This marks an improvement from a rating of 'Good' to 'Better' for the GCF. In 2024-25, over 30 continuous improvement events were conducted to share best practice across the function and the wider public sector. The masterclass programme experienced significant growth in popularity, with an average of over 700 sign-ups per event, highlighting the interest and value these sessions provide to commercial professionals. We have, as evidenced in increased participation, solidified the functions reputation as an industry leader in commercial standards. Playbooks covering the gambit of relevant issues including commercial practices, procurement, sourcing and social media are now available online, with a further guide on contract management about to be launched.

# WE WILL DRIVE UP PERFORMANCE AND EFFICIENCY

## 6 Objective 6

The GCF will have the most talented and diverse commercial workforce.

- Investment in talent development has seen over 90% of our senior commercial professionals accredited, far exceeding our target to accredit 85% of the Government Commercial Organisation (GCO)<sup>1</sup> in March 2023. Due to this success, we set ourselves the goal of exceeding 90% in financial year 2024-25. This was achieved early in the year and by March 2025, 1,629 (92.6%) GCO employees had been accredited, with a further 159 (7.4%) working towards accreditation.
- The GCF is making impressive progress on the delivery of its inaugural Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) Strategy, which includes recruitment targets for gender, ethnic minorities and people with disabilities. Over the past twelve months, we have launched a 'D&I Pledge' for senior leaders, released a suite of resources to improve inclusive practice, partnered with the Hidden Disability Sunflower network, achieved Carer Confident Level 1 and celebrated a host of campaigns and events.
- GCO People Services has recently been audited by the Civil Service Commission and been awarded a top box rating of 'Good' for upholding the highest standards in open and fair recruitment.

## 7 Objective 7

The GCF will provide a great service to its customers.

- In the Functions Quality Survey for financial year 2024-25, respondents were asked to select five functions who deliver a quality service to provide feedback. Over the last four years the proportion selecting commercial has increased by 6% which is consistent with its increased importance.

<sup>1</sup> The GCO is the employer of senior commercial professionals, at Grade 7 and above, within the Government Commercial Function (GCF).



**WE WILL HAVE  
THE MOST  
TALENTED  
AND DIVERSE  
COMMERCIAL  
WORKFORCE**



# KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

**A CORE ELEMENT OF OUR  
STRATEGY IS OUR CONTINUED  
COMMITMENT WORKING TOGETHER  
IN ORDER TO DELIVER MORE**

# KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

## Growing our commercial community

At the core of our Strategy is the aim to extend the benefits and offer of the GCF into the wider public sector, in particular the ALBs with the highest spending: the NHS and local government. Last financial year, we continued to make good progress towards achieving this goal, building on the solid start in the previous year.

### KEY FACTS

- ➔ Working with central government and the Wider Government Bodies (WGBs) to continue professional growth by utilising the GCF’s three tier training offer, accrediting 225 colleagues for financial year 2024-25.
- ➔ There were over 12,500 registrations to our Commercial Standards Masterclasses, taking the cumulative total to over 69,000; our programme of fortnightly webinars focused on sharing best practice regarding specific areas of the standards.

## Commercial standards masterclass growth

Sign ups (in total)	Unique sign-ups	Average sign ups per events	Departments reached	No of events
69,716	12,563	502	446	139

## Digital and transparency

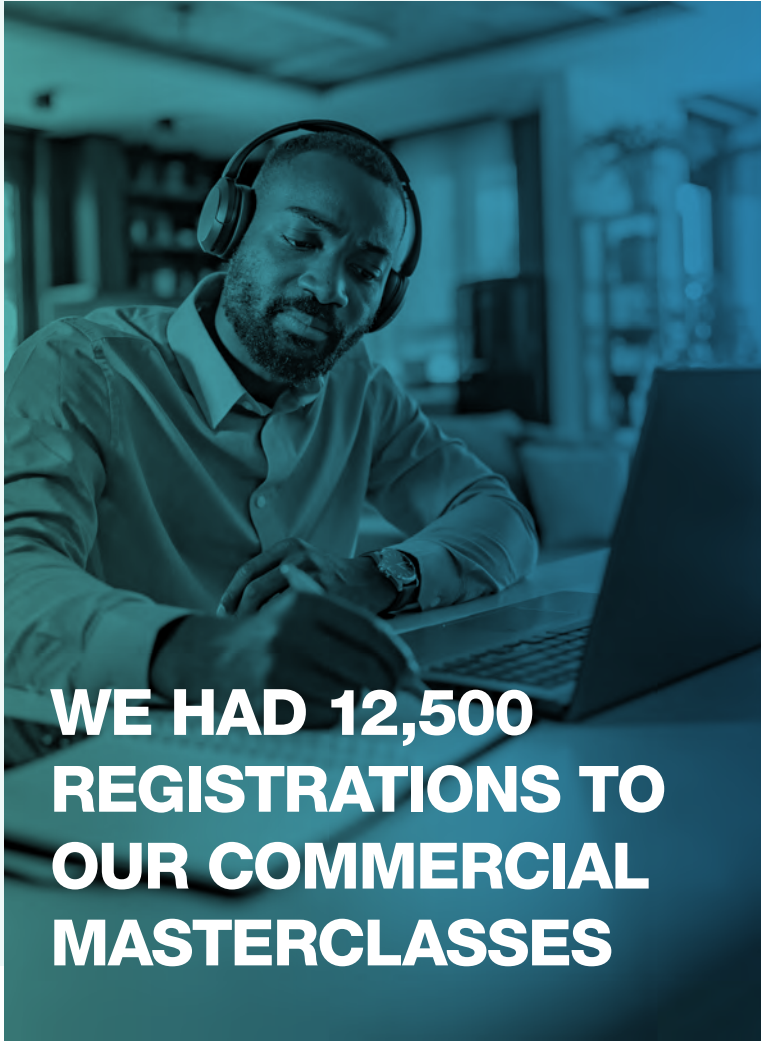
Being transparent about the performance of our contracts is important to us.

The Commercial Function Leadership Group regularly monitors progress and implements new ways to drive up compliance.

## Contract Notices (CN)

Reporting period	Number of CNs	0-30 Days
Q1	1447	70%
Q2	1301	71%
Q3	1404	75%
Q4	1384	75%

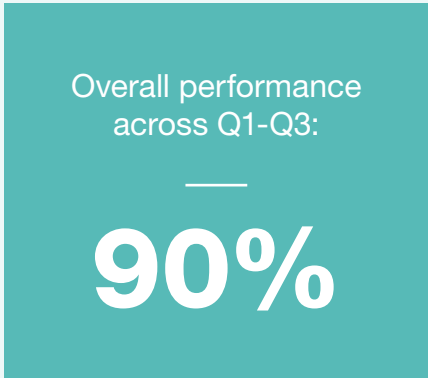
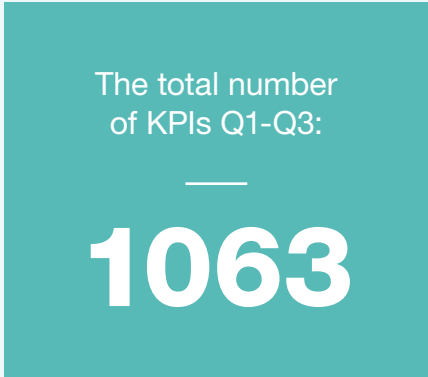
Performance against our target for KPIs and contract notice publications continues to improve, supported by targeted interventions planned from financial year 2024-25.





KPIs for Q1 - Q3

(Q4 closes 27 May)



Reporting period	Number of KPIs	KPIs rated good	KPIs rated good
24-25 Q1	3493	3148	90%
24-25 Q2	3718	3333	90%
24-25 Q3	3852	3499	91%

Contract Management

Contracts are split into three tiers, according to their importance. A contract's tier indicates:

- ➔ What level of training a contract manager requires to be responsible for it
- ➔ The degree of risk associated with it
- ➔ Its strategic importance to the contacting authority and/or the Government as a whole.

Gold contracts are very closely monitored throughout the procurement life-cycle to ensure they operate as planned.

Contract tier	Total value (%)	Average contract value
➔ Gold	£401.1bn (14%)	£128m (92%)
➔ Silver	£25.1bn (25%)	£4.5m (6%)
➔ Bronze	£7.6bn (53%)	£628k (2%)
Other	£4.2bn (8%)	£2.3m (1%)

WE SPLIT CONTRACTS INTO THREE TIERS ACCORDING TO THEIR IMPORTANCE



WE HAVE BEEN PROACTIVE IN INCREASING OUR COLLABORATION ACROSS THE WIDER PUBLIC SECTOR, INCLUDING THE APPOINTMENT OF FOUR CROWN REPRESENTATIVES.

### Increasing our collaboration

At the centre of our Strategy since 2021 has been our commitment to collaboration. Strategic Supplier Relationships, sustainability and social value initiatives have really supported us to extend the benefits and offer of the GCF collaboratively. We have also been proactive in increasing our collaboration across the wider public sector. For example, GCF has been working with the Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC) and NHS England functions that will be integrated into DHSC to launch a new Strategic Supplier Relationship Management (SSRM) programme across the health sector. This includes the appointment of four new Crown Representatives covering 15 strategic suppliers to Health.

### What are we doing?

A core element of our strategy is our continued commitment working together in order to deliver more. Key to this is ensuring priority initiatives such as social value commitments are embedded across our departments and in our relationships with external partners. We continue to work with customers directly on more social value focused projects to demonstrate a solutions capability in high impact problem solving; delivering value on a bespoke basis to customers on a co-design basis. We deliver a comprehensive programme of masterclasses and on the shoulder support (see case study, *A Collaborative Commercial Community*).

Crown Commercial Services (CCS) has sponsored (invested) in collaboration between the GCF, CCS, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), Local Partnerships and the wider public sector to upskill commercial managers and contract managers in organisations that do not have the funding to invest themselves.

### What have we achieved?

To date the CCS sponsored collaboration has seen 1,088 managers benefit from contract management training, 174 sat a commercial assessment and 119 participate in commercial learning and development. As referenced above, we take a proactive and collaborative approach to all of our social value work, extending initiatives across departments and sectors (i.e. in Health).

All departments and associated arm's length bodies (ALBs) are committed under the Strategy to identify their strategic suppliers and implement best practice SSRM techniques in line with the GCF standards. This was to reduce risk and increase value through jointly held plans. At the end of last financial year all departments in GCF Central Teams were successfully operating a form of SSRM.



**WE TAKE A PROACTIVE AND COLLABORATIVE APPROACH TO ALL OF OUR SOCIAL VALUE WORK**



## CASE STUDY

### Case study: a collaborative commercial community

The Government Commercial Function (GCF) has demonstrated exceptional growth in community engagement across multiple channels, successfully welcoming and connecting commercial professionals throughout the UK, opening new opportunities to join the profession. The GCF is widely recognised as a mature community with a deep sense of pride in public service delivery, able to respond collectively to challenges and mission led change.

The GCF is spread across the UK at 28 main locations, also working closely with the wider public sector, NHS, local government and the devolved UK Nations. The GCF engages with a number of professional bodies and associations, Chartered Institutes and academia in the UK and internationally to benchmark quality and standards.

#### Our locations

- Andover
- Birmingham
- Blackpool
- Branston
- Bristol
- Cardiff
- Corsham
- Coventry
- Darlington
- Glasgow
- Hastings
- Leeds
- Liverpool
- London
- Manchester
- Newcastle
- Newport
- Norwich
- Nottingham
- Peterborough
- Reading
- Runcorn
- Salisbury
- Sheffield
- Swansea
- Telford
- Wolverhampton
- York



The following highlights showcase how the GCF community is facilitating networking, sharing best practice, celebrating success and collaborating nationwide.

### Return on Networking Investment



#### Regional Conferences:

2,000 colleagues attended four UK regional conferences with a 97% satisfaction rate.



#### Senior Leaders Event:

200 attendees at the second Senior Leaders Event achieving 100% satisfaction (80% rating it 'Excellent').



#### Commercial Awareness Week:

3,500 attended in 2024.



#### Scotland Hub Women in Procurement Event:

Held with 100% of participants rating it 'Excellent'.

### Digital Engagement Excellence



#### Email Communications:

810,000 unique emails delivered with outstanding engagement read rates exceeding 80%, alongside 68 informative articles shared with the community.



#### LinkedIn Presence:

174,000 views on GCF LinkedIn content with 3,124 new followers joining our professional network.



#### YouTube Channel:

95,000 views of our video content, providing accessible learning and knowledge sharing.



#### GCF Knowledge Hub:

Membership increased by 1,500 to reach 7,300 members, with 73,000 page views and 23,500 downloads of guidance.

### Attraction and Recognition



#### GCF Awards 2024:

200 nominations received, with 100% event satisfaction rate - showcasing the very best of the commercial excellence.



Launched, in collaboration with the Welsh Government, the GCF Line Managers Guide to hosting work experience placements from a range of backgrounds.



Produced a new video and publication to promote the commercial profession to a new generation. This was a collaboration between the UK, Scottish, Welsh and Northern Ireland government officials.



**Transforming Public Procurement Social Media:** 48,000 unique views for TPP social media content.



In 2024 the GCF achieved its highest number of shortlisted finalists at the CIPS Excellence in Procurement & Supply Awards.

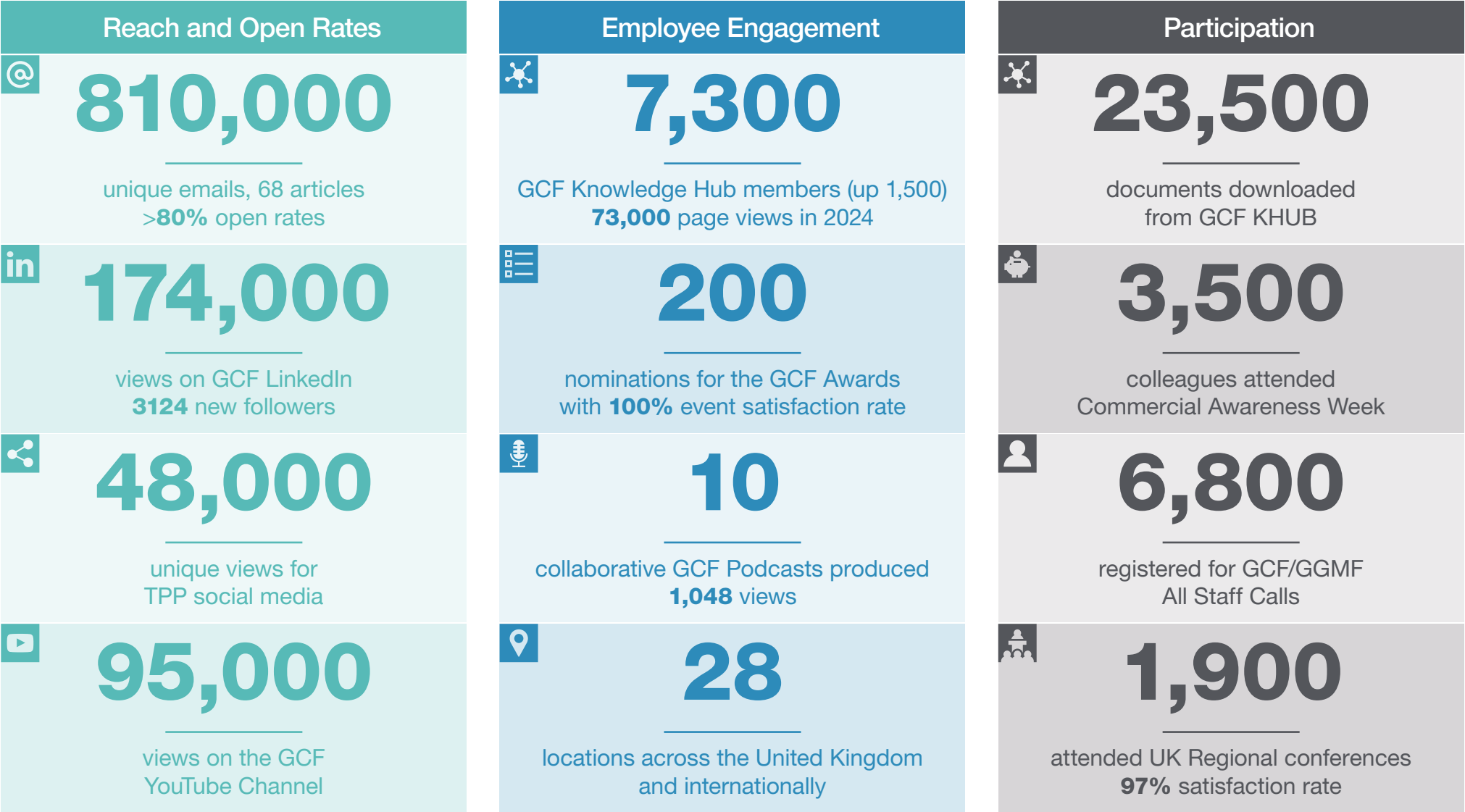


Women in Procurement Event in Glasgow



GCF community at a glance

These impressive figures demonstrate the GCF’s commitment to building a vibrant and connected commercial community that shares knowledge, celebrates success, and drives innovation and efficiencies in commercial activity across the UK.



## Spotlight on Transforming Public Procurement

### Realising our goals in transforming public procurement

A major milestone was reached in February 2025 with the go live of the Procurement Act 2023. This marked the culmination of years of engagement across the Transforming Public Procurement (TPP) Programme and preparations for implementation across the whole public sector. The TPP legislation, National Procurement Policy Statement (NPPS) and central digital platform successfully came into effect on 24 February, with over 100 new procurement notices published in the first week. Nearly 2,000 contracting authorities and 11,500 suppliers registered on the central digital platform in the first month of roll out.

Implementation has been underpinned by the rollout of the centrally funded TPP training programme. Nearly 30,000 learners have enrolled on the core e-learning product, (10 to 15 hours of learning with a certification module) with 19,000 gaining certification, and over 6,300 attending the more detailed, three day, deep dives. The e-learning will be available on an ongoing basis, and the deep dives until July 2025, to support the transition to the new regime. Alongside these learning interventions, the TPP Communities of Practice has become a thriving forum and place for discussion, support and embedding TPP learning. So far there are over 11,000 members now taking part in the Community of Practice with nearly 60 meetups held in the past year attracting 30,000 people to them in total.

We are already seeing many examples of how flexibilities under the TPP regime are being used to support great commercial outcomes, including use of the new competitive flexible procedure, a focus on pre-market engagement, and innovation. Implementation support will continue over the next year, with regular communications and events to support contracting authorities to make the most of the new regime.

2 [National Procurement Policy Statement](#)

## WE WILL CONTINUE REGULAR COMMUNICATIONS AND EVENTS

*Andrew Forzani addressing Norwich*

The NPPS was laid in parliament ahead of the commencement of the Procurement Act 2023, and sets out the government's strategic priorities for public procurement. Contracting authorities should have regard to these priorities, which focus on how public procurement can support delivery of the government's missions and deliver value for money.

The Procurement Act 2023 has also brought in significant reforms to support SMEs. SMEs are on the face of the Act with a new duty on contracting authorities to have regard to their participation and consider whether they can remove barriers to entry. Additionally, the new NPPS sets out the government's strategic priorities for public procurement and makes increasing procurement spend with SMEs and Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprises a national priority to drive economic growth.

The NPPS also emphasises that public procurement should promote sustainable practices, requiring contracting authorities to ensure their suppliers are actively working to reduce their environmental impact, including greenhouse gas emissions and minimising waste in their operations<sup>2</sup>.



# PROGRESS

**WE HAVE REALISED THE MAJORITY  
OF OUR COMMITMENTS UNDER  
OUR STRATEGY**





# PROGRESS

Progress across the Strategy has been considerable in financial year 2024-25. We have realised the majority of our commitments under the four main themes of our Strategy:

## OUR PEOPLE



## DIGITAL, DATA AND TRANSPARENCY



## HOW WE WORK



## INFLUENCE AND SCALE



## Our People

### Increasing workforce capability drives delivery, value for money and savings

#### KEY FACTS

- As of 31 March 2025, the GCO had assessed and accredited 1629 (92.6%) staff with an “A” at our Commercial Assessment and Development Centre. This surpasses the 90% target set last financial year, having already surpassed our original 85% goal for 2023. The remaining c. 7% are on development courses with the goal of upskilling, reassessing and then employing all those who are successful.
- In addition to the GCO, we have engaged 48 wider public sector organisations and supported them to use the commercial assessment model to upskill and assure their commercial teams. To date 1,078 assessments have taken place in the wider public sector.
- We maintain a comprehensive contract management training programme, aiming to upskill all contract managers, but specifically ensure that those managing the top 1,000 contracts are fully accredited.
- To date nearly 30,000 individuals across the public sector have achieved their foundation contract management accreditation, providing the knowledge and confidence to manage bronze tier contracts.
- As at March 2025 1,485 people have now completed their practitioner or expert training (for silver and gold contracts) and 600 have become fully accredited. The courses are being redesigned in 2025 and we look forward to welcoming new learners in October 2025 to continue this journey.
- In addition to the above courses, 2024 saw the relaunch of the Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) for contract managers training. This course of 5 modules has been successfully rolled out to publicly appointed SROs (those on the Government Major Projects Portfolio - GMPP) and due to critical acclaim is scheduled for wider release in May 2025.
- The Contract Management Capability Programme has been enhancing and championing good practice as a ‘by product’ of the development programme throughout the last 12 months. Membership of the regional network increased by 10% in the last financial year to 6,370. Attendance at regional conferences was the highest in over five years with over 1,000 attending the contract managers’ conference.



**WE AIM TO UPSKILL ALL CONTRACT MANAGERS**

### Milestone achievements

The GCO continues to actively engage with commercial talent via bespoke commercial talent management offers that encourage promotion from within to meet future workforce plans, employing a stretching employee talent development model.

We have held a number of coaching programmes including 14 live executive coaching programmes with attendance at a range of grades; ongoing group and bespoke 1-1 talent conversations, as well as standard development check-ins to support on-boarding and individuals' journeys towards commercial accreditation. We maintain a full programme of coaching sessions on leadership and capability with an average of two courses per topic per quarter.




**WE ARE CONTINUING TO WORK ON ACTIVITIES SPECIFIED IN THE PEOPLE PLAN PUBLISHED BY THE GOVERNMENT PEOPLE GROUP.**

Our Knowledge Hub online community platform brings over 7,500 members from over 800 public sector organisations around the UK into our commercial community.

The GCF remains active in its pursuit of a diverse and inclusive commercial function. Following new civil service guidance on Diversity and Inclusion (D&I), published in May 2024, the GCF has begun to use and planned activity based on the People Plan and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) initiatives run centrally from the Government People Group. The GCF continues to monitor representation data and use key events such as National Inclusion week 2024 to support communications.

The May 2024 Guidance to Civil Servants mandated D&I activity to statutory obligations and government priorities. We are continuing to work on activities specified in the People Plan published by the Government People Group and the existing civil service D&I strategy which will be replaced later this year.

The GCF maintains a comprehensive webinar offer with a programme of complementary one-hour SALSA (Stop, And Learn Something About...) and SAS (Skills And Solutions) webinars continuing throughout the year. There were 6,270 registrations for the 16 webinars held, an average of 392 per webinar.



**WE REMAIN  
ACTIVE IN OUR  
PURSUIT OF A  
DIVERSE AND  
INCLUSIVE  
COMMERCIAL  
FUNCTION**



We continue to support early talent with a commercial apprenticeships, Fast Stream, Higher Executive Officer (HEO) and Senior Executive Officer (SEO) offer that enables GCF staff to become accredited Commercial Leads (CL) (Grade 7). We have improved our offer in the last year, allowing for the Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply (CIPS) qualification to be virtually obtaining and in general providing better ways of working, increased active face to face collaboration and professional engagement via an increased number of cohort days

In 2024, we launched a new Fast Stream website, with commercial material included <https://www.civil-service-careers.gov.uk/fast-stream>. This includes a bespoke landing page for when Fast Streamers are selected for commercial roles.

2024 was a record-breaking year for Fast Stream applications with almost 20% of all applicants expressing an interest for commercial work preference (5% as first preference).

In 2024, we gained a new provider for our apprentice scheme, allowing us to refresh our Level 4 training, with a new standard now in place, and rolled out to new starters in October 2024. Work continues to create best practice for apprenticeships, with departments volunteering to lead on profession wide sessions during National Apprenticeship Week.

Also in 2024 we held a bespoke SEO development day, focussing on top SEO talent in our pilot departments, sharing insight, knowledge, skills, and practical experience required to make the next grade.

We are currently updating our Assessment and Development Centre (ADC) and general Learning and Development courses to make sure that they are fit for all customers, across their content, language and case studies. In this update, we are prioritising accessibility by improving access, moving to MS Teams and establishing a fixed schedule, as well as working on additional capacity and funding where possible to support both organisations and individual learners.

The courses are available to all customer groups, capacity and funding permitting. Capability partnerships are going through a process to identify priority organisations linked to the government priorities.

The project to revise the current ADC and deliver a revised, ADC 2.0 version for commercial assessment, is progressing to time. A supporting commercial learning product for those working toward accreditation was launched for CL in parallel with the ADC 2.0 launch in April. A bridging product for the more senior grades formed part of the April launch for Associate Commercial Specialists (ACS) and will be available in July 2025 for all others ready for the launch of their ADC 2.0 in July 25. All applicants will be on the new assessment format by September 2025.

The GCO implements consistent controls around Conflict of Interest (COI). It has a clear COI process in place for all employees within the GCO and staff required to declare any COI, this is recorded and filled on an individual basis and, where required, mitigation actions are put in place. COI declaration takes place annually.

The GCF has recently renewed its membership agreement with World Commerce and Contracting Association (World CC) for 1,000 members for the coming year. Working with World CC, the National Contract Management Association, the GCF contract Management team is a critical stakeholder and contributor to the development of European (ISO standards) for contract management. The GCF team are also significant contributors to the Contract Management Playbook (launch date to be agreed).



Civil Service  
Fast Stream



## Digital, Data and Transparency

**Harnessing innovation to make us efficient and 'mission-driven', strengthening trust with citizens and business.**

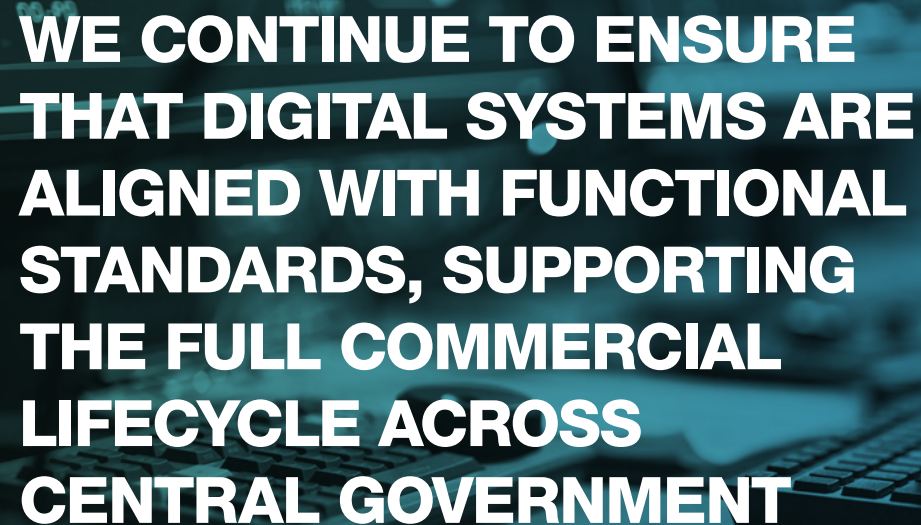
### KEY FACTS

- Recording and publishing in one place key performance indicators (KPIs) on the top contracts in central government is a key requirement of the Transforming Public Procurement (TPP) programme.
- From the outset our digital ambitions were to leverage technology for improved insights. The GCF now has a fully comprehensive Digital and Data Strategy covering both the Commercial and Grants Functions. The Strategy's vision is to achieve a future where public sector professionals seamlessly utilise advanced digital technologies and data-driven insights to enhance decision-making and deliver better outcomes and value, fostering a culture of collaboration and continuous improvement. The strategy includes a comprehensive and ambitious roadmap for future digital and data activity.

## Milestone achievements

Creating central data repositories and automated reporting is a core element of our digital and data ambition. We have made considerable progress towards creating a Central Data Platform (CDP). The data discovery phase has now been completed and a set of core recommendations made, alongside recommendations for further research. This work has identified areas where remediation is needed on existing reports, as well as opportunities to use CDP as the data source instead of manual data collection. Further work is planned for next financial year to look at rationalising central reporting as a whole.

The GCF continues to ensure that digital systems are aligned with functional standards, supporting the full commercial lifecycle across central government. We are committed to creating converged common procurement and contract management processes, procedures and tools across the majority of central government departments. This includes defining and adopting standard source-to-pay processes and data standards through the Government Shared Services Programme. Additionally, a new updated version of the Functional Reference Model (FRM) has been created reflective of the CDP data discovery phase.



**WE CONTINUE TO ENSURE  
THAT DIGITAL SYSTEMS ARE  
ALIGNED WITH FUNCTIONAL  
STANDARDS, SUPPORTING  
THE FULL COMMERCIAL  
LIFECYCLE ACROSS  
CENTRAL GOVERNMENT**

## How We Work

### Ensuring best practice in all we do.

#### Key achievements

→ We made consistent progress in financial year 2024-25 to fulfil all commitments sitting under How We Work, resulting in achievement of exemplary practices on social value, setting consistent standards and driving continuous improvement. By embracing consistent standards from 2021, we have continued to drive continuous improvement, via CCIAF and our general working practices. This includes promoting strict adherence to effective and proportionate spend controls across all central government and health spending, allowing greater autonomy where organisations can demonstrate sustained high performance and compliance.

→ The CCIAF assessment 2024-25 saw the programme continue to grow with c.20 new organisations participating across the public sector. In addition, to the information provided in Objective 5, of the organisations who have participated in the assessment framework since it launched in 2022-23, 37% of these participants have successfully advanced to a higher maturity rating of Good, Better, or Best demonstrating the effectiveness of the framework as a vehicle to drive continuous improvement over the cycle period.

→ In 2024-25, we fulfilled our commitment to benchmarking during a year marked by significant legislative changes. We commend our stakeholders for their unwavering resilience and dedication to engaging in these benchmark processes, which are vital for enhancing the commercial landscape in the public sector.

→ The Blueprints assessment process enables cross-departmental comparisons to highlight best practices, identify common trends, and inform data-driven decisions of potential improvement opportunities. In 2024-25, Blueprints Round 5 focused on efficiency and return on investment across the function, evidencing overall that for every £1 invested in the GCF, it returns £7.35 in savings.

→ In the 2024-25 period, the Government Major Contracts Portfolio (GMCP), enabling reporting, progressive assurance and targeted intervention on the central government's 100 most critical contracts, was made up of 46 contracts across nine government departments, representing a total value of £30.9bn. The next phase for the GMCP will be to increase representation across departments to ensure the portfolio includes the most strategic contracts delivering government priorities.

→ The CO commercial assurance team delivered effective and proportionate spend controls across central government and Health, reviewing and assuring 432 control cases at a value of £186bn during 2024-25, and conducting a triage of an additional 355 cases that were designated as department 'self assure'.



**WE MADE CONSISTENT  
PROGRESS IN 2024-25**



- ➔ During 2024-25, the team also explored options for controls reform and how it could allow departments greater autonomy with a number of work streams that were identified and endorsed for further discovery. The first of which, Full Business Case Self-Certification, was successfully launched on 1st April 2025 and in the month since this launch, departments have self-certified approximately 20 cases. As well as driving accountability into departments, this has also freed up the Commercial Assurance team to provide departments with enhanced support through early engagement and a greater focus on the more complex cases.
- ➔ Commercial assurance and digital assurance have held meetings to align both processes and secure approval for expenditures. Continued engagement on reforms with HM Treasury, National Integrated Service for Transformation and Accountability (NISTA) and the functions will focus on designing and implementing a streamlined and integrated assurance and approval approach for high value and high complexity programmes.
- ➔ We continued to utilise common standards, Commercial Blueprints and the CCIAF to allow contracting authorities across the public sector to benchmark capability and maturity and drive continuous improvement.

### What have we achieved?

GCF has increased its collaboration with the Grants Function, sharing best practice and working to align processes and systems where appropriate, thereby strengthening governance of general grant funding in departments. Grants formed a key part of the cross government Commercial Awareness Week 2025. Grants and Commercial partnered with joint sessions at Civil Service Live 2024 and plan to do the same in 2025. Grants colleagues are included in engagement activities across both functions, these include All Staff Calls and via other communication channels. The 2025 Senior Leaders' Network Event included 200 senior civil servants from both functions. The Annual Conference 2025 will be a joint Commercial and Grants event, combining best practice sessions, panels and keynote speakers from both functions.

We continue to embed a standard, cross-government approach to delivering social value and sustainability through government's commercial activities, including measuring and reporting social impact. The Social Value Model has been updated to align with the government's five missions and NPPS which are primary priorities for this government. The new model has been streamlined; where criteria and metrics were redundant or duplicated other guidance, we have removed them. Except in

government's most important contracts, new guidance encourages in-scope organisations to choose just one outcome, further streamlining the process.

We continue to work with the cross-government Social Value Network to lead the implementation of social value, sharing case studies and feedback to drive continuous improvement. The on-demand masterclasses also remain available on the Government Commercial College providing further guidance for buyers on how to implement social value.

GCF is committed to tackling modern slavery by taking action to ensure modern slavery risks are identified and managed effectively in government supply chains.

The Procurement Act 2023, which came into effect 24 February 2025, strengthens the approach to excluding suppliers linked to modern slavery.

The Home Office has reviewed the scope and nature of Section 54 of the Modern Slavery Act and published statutory guidance for businesses in March 2025 to tackle forced labour and increase transparency in global supply chains.

## CASE STUDY

### Case study: CCIAF and UKHSA

The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) prepares for, and responds to, infectious diseases and environmental hazards to keep all our communities safe, save lives, and protect livelihoods. Since its conception, UKHSA has been committed to developing innovative commercial practices.

This commitment has shaped the commercial directorate. Using the CCIAF we benchmarked our commercial maturity shortly after becoming fully operational. The framework provided an excellent platform for our continuous improvement efforts. Rather than restrict improvement plans to the recommendations in the initial Cabinet's Office Playback Report we set ourselves a challenging goal to work on improvements across all CCIAF themes. We have maintained this momentum and conviction to develop our commercial practice by constantly reviewing our improvement plans.

In November 2023 we opted to conduct a new full internal assessment of our practices. This insightful approach enabled detailed analysis and interpretation of complex data, leading to significant improvements in our latest self-assessment (November, 2024). We meticulously reviewed and collated over 800 pieces of evidence, allowing us to both support and challenge our ongoing assessments. This rigorous approach resulted in a smooth peer review (February, 2025) where our self-evaluation and scoring was upheld. From the initial assessment in May 2022 to the self-assessment in November 2024, the team achieved a significant 32% increase in their overall maturity score. This achievement underscores the directorate's unwavering dedication to enhancing its commercial maturity and capability.

Sarah Collins, Commercial Director, said: *"I am incredibly proud of my team who have taken a proactive approach to the CCIAF. The framework is important as it measures our maturity level and benchmarks us against others. The CCIAF is intrinsically linked to our new Commercial Strategy, enabling us to continuously improve by working more effectively and efficiently."*

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**“I AM INCREDIBLY PROUD OF MY TEAM WHO HAVE TAKEN A PROACTIVE APPROACH TO THE CCIAF.”**

— SARAH COLLINS

**WE SET OURSELVES A CHALLENGING GOAL TO WORK ON IMPROVEMENTS ACROSS ALL CCIAF THEMES**



## Influence and Scale

By working together we deliver more.

### KEY FACTS

Throughout this strategy period, GCF has striven to improve the way the government and the wider public sector assesses, procures and manages complex commercial delivery and to expand its offer into the wider public sector. Embedding the sourcing playbooks across government is part of GCF's culture change programme. The team has delivered a wide range of on-the-shoulder support projects over the previous period. These have largely focussed on delivering delivery model assessments. The team has also continued to work with departments to embed the sourcing playbook principles as part of business as usual. We have made good progress with plans for further work during financial year 2025-26 to use data to focus on the areas where we can have the biggest impact.

## What have we achieved

GCF has developed construction-specific sourcing capability to enable the government to realise its ambition to deliver better, faster and greener construction solutions. We have undertaken a consultation exercise to update the Construction Playbook. This has been done in close collaboration with the Infrastructure and Projects Authority and departments in order to focus on enabling a more manufacturing led approach to major construction projects.

We have investigated the possibility of implementing a technology-enabled 'middle office' to provide assisted procurement services and support self-service buying for common goods and services. CCS now have a delivery plan in place for a new self-serve solution for CCS customers. The solution will enable catalogue purchasing and simple procurements, the precursor to having the CCS' full suite of products digitally. Longer term plans allow for either transition across the CCS digital estate, or ultimately, the first-time digital facilitation of all CCS agreements.

GCF is successfully coordinating the monitoring of risk associated with the strategic suppliers to government. This allows us to assess risk indicators and generate appropriate responses, including potential interventions, in relation to other cross government suppliers that present a high level of exposure across multiple departments. The last financial year has seen significant progress as almost all departments are engaged in the functional SSRM programme which now has a comprehensive toolkit in place and available for use across departments. CO led training programmes are available in both SSRM practice as well as behaviours available free to departments. A range of departments are now reporting concrete successes.



**GCF HAS DEVELOPED  
CONSTRUCTION-SPECIFIC  
SOURCING CAPABILITY.**

**WE WILL CONTINUE TO MAKE GOOD PROGRESS**



# FORWARD LOOK

**WE WILL CONTINUE TO  
USE COST EFFECTIVE  
SOLUTIONS AND DIGITAL  
TECHNOLOGY**



## FORWARD LOOK

Over the next year our communications and engagement strategy will focus on continued collaboration, driving innovation and the use of digital solutions to maintain a networked and responsive community, able to use new opportunities to achieve even greater commercial outcomes and efficiency.

We will continue to use cost effective, in house solutions and digital technology to ensure cost effective options and to achieve the greatest return on investment. This will support our strategic objectives of being a great place to work, seizing the opportunities to transform and advance collaboration.

The year ahead will include:

- GCG Annual Conference
- Government Chief Commercial Officer Regional Visits
- Commercial Awareness Week 2025
- Civil Service Live
- All Staff Calls
- GCF Awards
- GCF News and GCO Bulletins
- GCF Podcasts



*Commercial Excellence Award which went to FCDO*



*All winners from the GCF Annual Awards 2024*



# WHAT'S NEXT?


**WE WILL CONTINUE TO DELIVER  
EFFICIENCIES AND VALUE FOR  
MONEY TO THE TAX PAYER**



## WHAT'S NEXT?

### Plans for 2025-26

To ensure we continue to deliver efficiencies and value for money to the tax payer, we are going to use this next year to plan, reaffirm our scope and ambitions whilst delivering in parallel discreet priority activities across the following areas:




Consider and cement AI and digital and data quick wins in line with Digital and Data Strategy and prioritise opportunities for in-year implementation.



Streamline central team reporting focusing on KPIs to assess compliance with strategy.



Ensure the scale of public sector spending is leveraged effectively for common goods and services by applying volume related pricing in framework agreement.



Deliver a Strategy for the future which is ambitious and reflective of our core priorities whilst also building on the firm foundations of the current strategy.



**WE WILL CONTINUE TO  
IMPROVE GOVERNMENT  
COMMERCIAL CAPABILITY TO  
PROVIDE BETTER VALUE AND  
SERVICE FOR TAXPAYERS**



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