

Advice for Suppliers/Providers

We expect all our staff to deal with you in a prompt, courteous and efficient manner. If you encounter a problem or difficulty which you are unable to resolve by speaking to the person dealing with you, you may speak to our Purchasing Manager who may be contacted on Belfast 01232/254800. If you need to write to us please address your correspondence to: The Purchasing Manager, Environment and Heritage Service, Calvert House, 23 Castle Place, Belfast BT1 1FY. Please quote the contract or order number.

We will acknowledge your letter within 3 working days and aim to reply in full within 15 working days, while it may take longer to investigate more difficult cases.

Green Housekeeping

Our aims are to protect and conserve the natural and built environment and to promote its appreciation for the benefit of present and future generations. Good environmental practice, eg. recycling, including the use of materials and substances which do not deplete the environment, are essential to the fulfilment of these aims.

The Service demonstrates its commitment by taking a life-cycle stewardship approach to all aspects of its operations for example, reducing consumption of energy, water, natural resources and materials and in each instance seeking the most sustainable environmental option.

We expect suppliers to adopt good environmental practice and this includes:-

- ◆ the supply of cleaning materials, fuels, paints, batteries, aerosols, etc. which are not harmful when released into the environment either because of use or disposal.
- ◆ minimisation of waste by the use of returnable, recyclable packaging and avoiding excessive packaging of goods.
- ◆ to derive products from sustainable sources, eg. recycled paper.
- ◆ to meet relevant environmental statutory regulations or codes of practice.



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PURCHASING ARRANGEMENTS

***A brief guide for suppliers
and providers of goods
and services***



Who are we?

The Environment and Heritage Service is an Executive Agency established within the Department of the Environment on 1 April 1996.

What do we do?

The Service is a multi-disciplinary organisation, comprising scientific, professional, administrative and support staff. We deliver a wide range of services, including managing and conserving Historic Monuments; maintaining and protecting archaeological records; managing and maintaining Country Parks and Countryside Centres; monitoring environmental pollution and regulating certain discharges to the environment.

What goods and services do we require?

In order to undertake all the tasks for which the Service has responsibility, we 'buy-in' a range of goods or services. Here are some brief descriptions of those goods and services:-

- (a) Exhibition, photographic, publication materials and services
- (b) Laboratory equipment and services
- (c) Building materials, tools, plant and equipment
- (d) Construction and general maintenance services
- (e) Protective and specialist clothing
- (f) Consultancy and contractual services.

How do we go about our business?

As a public service organisation, our aim is to secure goods and services with regard to Government's best practice on the basis of value for money. We aim to establish a business relationship with contracted suppliers or providers. For operational reasons, contracts may be established on a call-off basis. Ad hoc purchases of less than £15,000 are made on the basis of competitive quotations, against a specification of our requirements, ie. we will not favour a particular product or organisation. Expenditure in excess of £15,000 will be engaged by formal tender action. If appropriate, contracts will be advertised in the Official Journal of the European Union.

Competition procedures

Generally we endeavour to:-

- ◆ Specify our requirements, in writing, in terms of outputs, or functionality, to encourage innovation and attract competition;
- ◆ Invite offers by means of quotes, or more formal tenders, from a sufficient range of suppliers to ensure genuine competition;
- ◆ Ensure tendering procedures or documentation on which quotes are based are as clear as possible, requesting only information necessary to evaluate offers;
- ◆ Accept offers, in writing, within a reasonable or agreed timescale (usually a minimum 30 days) and notify unsuccessful offerors.

Submitting quotes or tenders

If you are invited to submit a quote or tender, this usually constitutes an offer. Our acceptance of your offer will form the basis of a contract. You are advised not to refer to any standard terms and conditions that your company may use. This is because EHS uses its own terms and conditions. When you submit a quote or tender, please follow any instructions given. For example, to submit your quote within a specified timescale. Quotes or tenders received after the deadline will not be considered - even if delayed in transit.

Evaluation of quotes or tenders

The Service is interested in best price, best value purchases. Factors including delivery date, quality, durability, serviceability, environmental considerations, experience and price may be considered as part of an evaluation. A contract is awarded as soon as possible after evaluation and within any agreed timescale. A formal letter of acceptance/contract, perhaps a purchase order if appropriate (usually for purchase of goods) will be issued. If you want to know why a particular offer of yours was unsuccessful, you can ask for a debrief.

Contract or ordering procedure

The Service does not make verbal purchases or contracts. If we obtain goods or services from you as a supplier or provider, to make a valid transaction and meet our accounting and audit obligations, we will agree arrangements in writing and or issue a purchase order as appropriate. We also use the Government Purchasing Card, mainly for low value purchases (not exceeding £500). The contract or purchase order will serve as evidence of a binding transaction and as a reference against which invoices must be submitted.

When placing a contract or order we will set out clearly:-

- (a) the goods or services required;
- (b) the validity period of the contract or order;
- (c) the price structure agreed;
- (d) invoice/payment conditions.

What do we ask of suppliers/providers?

If you supply us with goods or services we ask you to:-

- (a) obtain and observe the terms and conditions of a written contract or order;
- (b) provide itemised delivery or receipt notes of goods or services supplied;
- (c) provide itemised invoices quoting the contract or order number;
- (d) identify a customer contact who will deal with queries;
- (e) observe good environmental practice.

What about payment

We are committed prompt payers and aim to effect payment of valid transactions, in full, within 30 days of receipt of a valid invoice. If it is necessary to dispute an invoice or any item on an invoice, we will advise you of this and may exclude disputed items from payment until the matter is resolved.