

For further FREE procurement information regarding legislation and the EC Directives, a dedicated newsroom and much more register FREE of charge at:

[www.demo.delta-ets.com](http://www.demo.delta-ets.com)

#### What is the Accelerated Procedure?

It is a procedure under which shorter advertising periods are permitted due to urgency. Justification must be published as part of the tender notice.

#### What is the Negotiated Procedure?

It is a procedure where only chosen suppliers are invited to negotiate contracts. May be used in limited circumstances – eg extreme urgency, failure of open/restricted procedures to yield valid tenders, repetition of similar work.

#### What are Non-Priority Services?

They are services subject to less stringent rules in the Services & Utilities Directives. Contrasted with Priority Services. Also referred to as 'Residuary Services'. Obligations are adherence to Directives' rules on technical specifications, and notification of awards.

#### What are Framework Agreements?

These are agreements laying down terms, conditions and prices governing future contracts. If an award is made in accordance with the Directives, then the ensuing contracts may be awarded without further calls for competition.

#### What is a PIN?

**Prior/Periodic Information/Indicative Notice.** A PIN is an advanced warning of a contract to be awarded at some time in the future, as in Prior (Public Sector) or Periodic (Utilities) Indicative Notice. The issuance of a PIN does not guarantee that a contract will be placed. In the case of Utilities only, a PIN may be a call for competition in its own right.

#### Can I shorten the dates because a PIN has been published?

**Open procedure** – if a PIN notice has been published (following the above timescales) the timescales regarding the return of tender documents may be reduced to 36 days, but in any case not less than 22 days, instead of the normal 52 days. The reduction of these timescales can only be applied as long as the contract notice was dispatched at least 52 days after the PIN notice was dispatched.

**Restricted procedure** – if a PIN has been published the timescales for a restricted/negotiated procedure regarding the return of tender documents and NOT the receipt of requests to participate may be reduced to 26 days instead of the normal 40 days, provided a PIN notice has been sent for publication in the OJEU, within a minimum period of 52 days and a maximum period of one year.

#### "Is this notice a non-mandatory one?" How should I answer this question?

Answer no if the notice is mandatory (is over the EU threshold). Answer yes if the notice is voluntary (is under the EU threshold or an Annex 1b service), but you still wish it to be published in the OJEU.

#### When do I have to advertise in the OJEU?

When the following thresholds are exceeded:

**Supplies and Services** – entities listed in Schedule I (mainly Government Departments and NHS Trusts): £99,695.

**Supplies and Services** – other Contracting Authorities (Councils etc.): £153,376.

**Works** – entities listed in Schedule I (mainly Government Departments and NHS Trusts): £3,834,411.

**Works** – other Contracting Authorities (Councils etc.): £3,834,411.

#### What are CPVs?

Common Procurement Vocabulary codes. The CPV was specially developed for public procurement, its main purpose being to help suppliers find contract announcements which are of interest to them by using a standardised vocabulary in public procurement between awarding authorities and bidders.

#### What are CPCs?

Central Product Classifications, used by the United Nations.

#### What are CPAs?

Classification of Products according to Activity.

#### What are NUTS Codes?

Geographical codes – not mandatory for use in the OJEU.

#### What are NACE Codes?

NACE is the General Industrial Classification of Economic Activities within the European Communities; this is used in notices for the award for Public Works contracts.

#### What are Service Categories?

The generic category relating to the service. A service category search service is built directly into Project, so you can locate the service category quickly.

#### What is the WTO?

The World Trade Organization. For Central Government bodies WTO rules on public sector procurement determine the threshold for advertising supplies contracts.

#### What is the GPA?

Government Procurement Agreement, part of GATT, which is now the WTO (World Trade Organization). Covers mainly Central Government Departments and all NHS Trusts. Universities are funded centrally so may fall under the GPA. Local Authorities/Councils are not covered by this normally.

#### What are Variants?

Tenders which meet minimum specifications but vary in technical terms. May be allowed by a contracting authority where award criterion is that of most economically advantageous tender.

#### What is a Concession Contract?

A contract solely for the right to exploit property held by an organisation, whether for a payment or free of charge.

#### How many suppliers must I invite to tender?

This must either be a number or a range; in any event, the number of candidates invited to tender shall be sufficient to ensure genuine competition. The Restricted procedure range must number at least 5 suppliers and may be up to 20. Under the Negotiated procedure the number of candidates admitted to negotiate may not be less than 3 providing there is a sufficient number of suitable candidates.

## ELECTRONIC CONTRACT NOTIFICATION SERVICE

#### Introduction

The purpose of the open advertising of impending competitions is to generate and gauge private and public sector interest in tendering. Whether or not the EU Procurement rules apply, the first step is to inform suppliers of the impending competition via a call for initial expressions of interest from potential bidders. Where the EU Procurement rules do apply, contract notices must be dispatched to the *Official Journal of the European Union* (OJEU) using a standard format. Contract notices should also be published in *Contrax Weekly*. Advertising in appropriate trade journals, national and/or local press (or other publications) may be necessary in some cases, especially where it is difficult to gauge the level of private sector interest.

#### Publishing of notices

Contract notices should be dispatched to the OJEU prior to publication in the UK press. This means that as soon as you have submitted the notice (including through the Project service) it can be published in any medium.

Project uses structured XML messaging, ensuring your announcements are published quicker and without the need to rekey. Project provides you with an audit trail to confirm that you have indeed dispatched the notice. Notices published elsewhere should contain no more information than that supplied to the OJEU.

#### Background

In December 2002, BiP Solutions Ltd became the first "OJS e-Sender" to use the new XML Document Type Definition (DTD) to produce contract information for publication in the OJEU. The move into production with the brand-new XML gateway using the Project e-notice service ensures a truly automated system for the sending and publishing of notices to the OPOCE (Office for Official Publications) via structured XML messaging.

Hilde Van Loon, of OPOCE, said: "One of the objectives of the Office for Official Publications of the European Communities is to use new technologies like XML for the collection of notices to be published in the Supplement to the Official Journal (OJEU). The partnerships with different OJS e-Senders in the Member States, such as with BiP, will help the Publications Office achieve its goal to increase the number of notices sent in electronic format. For 2003, the Office is aiming for 30% of the total number of notices published to have been received electronically."

Project is a module of the e-tendering service Delta-ets:  
[www.delta-ets.com](http://www.delta-ets.com)

## PROJECT FAQs

#### What is Project?

Project is an internet e-notice service used to create, manage and transmit contract announcements. The service provides the required formats for all types and values of contract announcements, including those that have to follow EU procurement legislation for publication in the OJEU.

#### Does Project comply with the use of standard forms?

Project was updated in line with the European Commission adopting the Directive imposing, from 1 May 2002, the use of standard forms in contract notices published in the OJEU. It meets the

requirements for compliance with the new notice formats through its data output to the OJEU.

The interface that is viewed by the operator is much simpler and more intuitive than the multi-level formatting required within the form itself. Project provides you with the exact nature and procedure layout, instead of having to trawl a long multi-purpose form.)

The data exchange mechanism within the program ensures the output meets the specification of the new forms and, by having this exchange mechanism built into the system, makes it much easier for operators to compile the information required.

#### How do I use Project?

Register as a Buyer at [www.delta-ets.com](http://www.delta-ets.com). You will then be sent a username and password for the Buyer activity centre.

#### Are there mandatory fields?

Yes. Fields marked with red text and an \* are required for publication, and the automatic validation ensures that announcements cannot be submitted without the completion of these fields.

#### Is online help available?

Yes. To view the online help facility please click on the help icon next to the relevant item or click on the Help button to download a PDF of the user guide.

#### What does OJEU stand for?

OJEU stands for *The Official Journal of the European Union*. Public sector bodies are required to advertise their contract opportunities in the OJEU if the value exceeds the thresholds set by the EU.

#### What is a Directive?

A Directive is EU legislation which Member States must translate into national legislation. Note that Directives are binding on national governments and their agencies as soon as they are adopted – even though no legislation to implement them has yet been passed at national level.

#### What is a contract notice?

A contract notice is an advertisement placed to notify suppliers of a contract opportunity.

#### What type of contract notices can I create?

**Service notices** – all purchases other than Works or Supplies. Mixtures of services and supplies are usually put in the category to which more than 50% by value belongs.

**Supply notices** – goods, including both consumables and capital items. Mixtures of supplies and services are usually put in the category to which more than 50% by value belongs.

**Works notices** – construction and civil engineering, also referred to as 'public works'.

**Utility notices** – Electricity, Gas, Water, Telecommunications and industries with special rights. Ownership (public or private) is not a criterion. The special rights are normally an exclusive right to exploit a resource or to offer a service in a given area, eg transport, ports, oil extraction.

#### What type of contract notice form should I use?

Type of contract depends on what the majority of costs will be spent on. If mainly a supply contract with a service element, it should be treated as a supply contract. If mainly service, with a supply element, it should be treated as a service. In addition, you have access to the Select online supplier database for the management of suppliers and their expressions of interest. To access Select click on the Select icon in the activity centre.

#### What is the Open Procedure?

It is a procedure where bidders can apply without prior selection. The Directives lay down the types of criterion which can be used to eliminate unqualified or unsuitable bidders.

#### What is the Restricted Procedure?

It is a procedure where bidders are selected by an open first-round invitation. All prospective bidders can apply to be included in the restricted list for the contract. The list is used only for the contract in question; new lists should be compiled for future contracts.

# USING THE **project** SERVICE

e-notice service



[www.delta-ets.com](http://www.delta-ets.com)

## Is there a demonstration service available for *Project*?

Yes, a full *Project* demonstration site is available at [www.demo.delta-ets.com](http://www.demo.delta-ets.com). When you register you will receive a password by email that allows you access to the site and your demo access will last for one month.

## Can I access a CPV search service using *Project*?

A CPV search service is built directly into *Project*, so you can locate and list CPV codes easily and quickly.

## Can I find other codes?

A full code search is available through *Project*. You can locate CPC, NACE, NUTS and other European coding classifications.

## How do I create a new notice?

Click on the *Project* icon in the activity centre and then on the New option in the navigation bar. You will then be presented with a menu from which you can select the type of notice to be created.

## What information do I place in the Object of the Contract section?

Within a Prior Indicative Notice, you have the ability to add multiple goods or services (lots) through the creation of an Object of the Contract section. You may create as many lots as required, each providing dedicated fields to complete details regarding title, nomenclature and description of the good or service.

## Do I have to recreate all notice information every time?

No, you can set global fields so that they always detail information that is common to your notices. You can also cut and paste information from previous notices of the same type, should you wish to do so.

## What are Global Fields?

**Areas of common information** – once completed these are automatically included in every new announcement.

*These fields can be amended as necessary:*

- Awarding authority details.
- Address and contact details.
- Applications address for suppliers to obtain application/questionnaire.
- Documents address for suppliers to obtain documents.
- Return of documents address for suppliers to return completed documents to.

**Qualifications** – details of data and conditions that suppliers have to include or adhere to in order to apply for the contract opportunity.

**Award criteria** – list of criteria that will be used to award the contract.

## How do I create an Award Notice using *Project*?

*This can be done in two ways:*

**Creating a new award notice** – from the New option on the navigation bar select the relevant award layout you require.

**Creating an award notice from a contract notice** – *Project* allows you to create an award notice from a previously entered contract notice. To create an award in this way, select the relevant contract notice from the List All menu, click on the Create Award button, and you will then be presented with the relevant contract award notice in the correct format with all common details transferred. You can now complete the additional information and submit in the normal way.

## What about notices that are below the thresholds or outwith the remit of the EU procurement legislation?

By using the competitive contract notice form in *Project* you can create any type of announcement that advertises an opportunity for suppliers to provide you with information or a bid or quote. These notices will be published free of charge in BiP-dedicated contract publications and internet services, so ensuring open competition. Using *Project* for all your notices ensures that all announcements, regardless of value, are stored in the organisation's own central database.

## When would I use a Sale of Goods Notice form?

This format can be used in the same way as the competitive notice to advertise the disposal/sale of surplus/unwanted goods.

## How do I create an Addendum/Amendment?

*This can be done in two ways:*

**Creating an Addendum from an existing notice** – from the List All menu click on the Edit button of the relevant contract notice to which you wish to make an amendment. You will then be presented with the function to issue an amendment. Click on the Issue Amendment button. An Addendum/Amendment Form will automatically be created containing the appropriate details to which further information can be added or deleted.

**Creating an Addendum/Amendment Form** – select Addendum/Amendment Form from the New menu and enter all the relevant details in the normal way.

## What is a Lot?

A lot (sometimes known as a bid) is a grouping of items or services or works. In contract terms it may state a single lot which would require the tenderer to bid for all items or provide all services within the contract. However, the contract may be broken down into lots, where the tenderer can opt to bid for items within one or more defined groups.

## Does *Project* provide me with access to a directory of the notices I have created using the service?

Yes. A full directory and copies of all notices are stored within the service and can be accessed at any time. An advanced search service is also available to search data.

## How long will it take for my notices to be published in the OJEU?

The EU allows up to 12 days for publication in the OJEU. However, publication normally takes about 7 days. Using the *Project* electronic notification service will result in faster publication, typically 2-4 days.

## What resources are provided?

*Project* provides you with access to the latest legislation, advanced code searches, a contract notice database, a news desk and discussion forum.

## What is the Discussion Forum?

An area which allows *Project* users to share and exchange ideas. Access is by registered users only.

## Can I find other OJEU notices?

Yes. *Project* has an advanced search function for all notices and awards published in the OJEU and *Contrax Weekly*. This function can be useful for market intelligence.

## What about Statistical Returns?

In line with the annual return made to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and the Office of Government Commerce regarding awards made, *Project* allows you to calculate this return using the award details entered in your *Project* account.

## Can my staff in various locations throughout the country connect to *Project* as one service?

It does not matter where your colleagues are located, at home or work, in London or in Edinburgh – being an internet-based service means that they can all access the service at any time, anywhere.

## How many licences can I buy?

You can buy as many licences as you wish. Our pricing policy means that the best value for money is achieved when you buy 10 licences or more.

## Can I have more than one registered user?

Yes, you can have as many users as you like. Each will receive a licence. The *Project* hierarchy allows you to create a pyramid of users to best reflect your organisation's structure. At the top is a controller who has access to all group users' data; at the bottom are individual users who only have read and write access to their own accounts; and in between you can set levels of supervisors and a group administrator.

## Does *Project* connect to other services?

*Project* is one module of BiP's *Delta* e-tendering service and connects to *Select*, a supplier information database service and *Vault*, the secure internet-based ITT exchange service. It can also be linked to other systems or solutions.

## Will my notices be published in other journals in addition to the OJEU?

Yes, under the terms of your licence to *Project*, BiP, the licensee of *Project*, has the right to include the notices sent in its dedicated public contract information publications and services. These include *Contrax Weekly*, *Government Opportunities* and the *Tracker* email service. You can also forward the notices you create for publication in other journals and newspapers and commit the information to your authority's website.

## How often do you upgrade the *Project* service?

We constantly work on new features, which are normally added every six months.

## How many other organisations in the public sector use *Project*?

Hundreds of public sector organisations now use *Project*. It is the most popular such service in Europe and more UK notices for publication in the OJEU are created using *Project* than any other service. And the number is growing by the day.

## What if I want to publish my contract notices on my website?

*Project* connects to the aXcess Buyer Profile Service, which publishes, in real time, any notices submitted and fulfils the requirements of a Buyer Profile Service.

## What is a Buyer Profile?

In line with the requirements within the Consolidated EC Directive contracting authorities are encouraged to publish their "buyer profile" on the Internet. The purpose of a Buyer Profile is to provide details about a contracting authority's procurement practice and intentions, so that potential suppliers will be better informed about the purchaser and better able to judge whether they want to bid for a particular tender. The Buyer Profile may include information on ongoing invitations to tender, scheduled purchases, contracts concluded, procedures cancelled and any useful general information, such as a contact point, a telephone and a fax number, a postal address and an email address.

## What are the benefits of having a Buyer Profile?

Buyer Profiles not only fulfil the requirements of the Consolidated Directive but can also fulfil the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act. Additionally, they can provide suppliers with a "How to Sell" area of your website.

By having a Buyer Profile, ie providing additional information for suppliers, contracting authorities in addition to sending contract announcements electronically may take advantage of reduced timescales within the tendering process.

## How do I create a Buyer Profile?

BiP's aXcess service fulfils this requirement by automatically updating your contract data without the need for manual intervention. aXcess provides templates for you to populate with other procurement information. Please contact [axcess@bipsolutions.com](mailto:axcess@bipsolutions.com) for further details.

## Who are BiP?

BiP Solutions Ltd is the UK's leading provider of public sector contract information. More subscribers rely on its contract information services than those of any other organisation and BiP publishes more UK contract information than any other provider.

## Has any evaluation of *Project* been published?

Yes. The NHS Purchasing and Supply Agency (PASA) carried out a full evaluation of *Project* and their report is published on the NHS PASA website and is also available from BiP. As a result of the evaluation PASA entered into a framework agreement for *Project*'s use by the whole of the NHS in England – [www.pasa.doh.gov.uk](http://www.pasa.doh.gov.uk)

## Where can I get further information on *Project*?

Either go to our website at: [www.delta-ets.com](http://www.delta-ets.com)  
email us at: [project\\_support@bipsolutions.com](mailto:project_support@bipsolutions.com)  
or telephone the *Project* Helpdesk:  
**0845 270 70 50**