

NEWS RELEASE

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European Commission recognises UK portal aimed at rolling out lower-value contracts

A new official interpretative document published by the European Commission (EC) has uniquely recognised the new UK Government portal www.supply2.gov.uk as a best practice means of public authorities advertising lower value contracts to businesses.

The EC guidance contains suggestions on how public authorities can ensure compliance with EU law through ensuring that their lower-value requirements (typically under £100,000) are openly advertised to a degree adequate enough to ensure sufficient competition, – thus delivering greater value for the taxpayer. Such contracts account for the vast majority of public procurement in the European Union and represent significant opportunities for business, particularly smaller companies.

EC Internal Market and Services Commissioner Charlie McCreevy said: "Individually, these contracts may be of low value, but together they are worth billions. Restricting them to local bidders means that companies across the EU are missing out on potential opportunities and governments aren't getting value for money – and ultimately it's the taxpayer who loses out."

The supply2.gov.uk portal allows UK public sector organisations to publicise their lower value contracts and businesses can now view these contracts in one place, reducing the time taken to source opportunities. Since its launch in March 2006, Supply2.gov.uk has registered over 16,000 suppliers and published over 9000 Government contracts

BiP Solutions is the service provider for the Supply2.gov.uk web portal. CEO Ron Burges said: "We are delighted that the European Commission has recognised the Supply2.gov.uk portal as a best-practice means of advertising lower value contracts. The portal's success since its launch demonstrates that there is tremendous appetite for information on lower-value government contracts amongst businesses. We hope this Communication encourages more buyers to promote their opportunities on the service and so ensure their compliance with the principles of the EU Treaty. Supply2.gov.uk is a win for both small businesses and the public sector."

ENDS

Notes to editors:

1. To view the EC Interpretative Communication, log onto http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/publicprocurement/docs/keydocs/communication_en.pdf
2. While all public sector contracts valued at more than around £100,000 are required by law to be listed in the Official Journal of the European Union, there is no such mandate for lower-value contracts. The aim of the new portal, www.supply2.gov.uk is to open up this market to all types of businesses and make it easier for them to work with the public sector.
3. BiP Solutions is the service provider for the Supply2.gov.uk web portal. It employs 130 staff at its Glasgow HQ, and has over 22 years' experience in providing public sector contract information to the private sector.

Useful links

Supplier Route to Government: www.supply2.gov.uk

Small Business Service: www.sbs.gov.uk

Business Link: www.businesslink.gov.uk

BiP Solutions : www.bipsolutions.com

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