

NPS



BiP's NEWSLETTER FOR THE PROCUREMENT SERVICE

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MoD – lowering the barriers for SMEs

WITH AN annual procurement spend of £18 billion, the Ministry of Defence (MoD) is not just UK industry's single biggest customer, but also one of its most influential and important buyers.

Now, assisted by BiP Solutions, the MoD is further enhancing its reputation as a forward-thinking organisation by lowering the thresholds at which its contract opportunities are advertised, and making them available through **MoD Defence Contracts Bulletin (MoD DCB)** and the national lower-value contracts portal **Supply2.gov.uk** – both of which are provided by BiP.

From 30 June 2007 MoD buyers will be required to advertise all 'non-warlike' requirements with a value of over £40,000, and will also have the option to advertise requirements valued as low as £20,000. The MoD has requirements for virtually every product and service imaginable, so this step is a huge boost for businesses, and particularly small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

Philip Margerison, Head of the MoD's Defence Suppliers Service, said: "The lowering of contract thresholds is good news for all businesses that currently supply to, or are looking to supply to, the MoD and also for buying teams within the MoD. By increasing the visibility of the diverse range of products and services required by the MoD, there is greater opportunity for all sectors to get involved in the defence supply chain. As a result, MoD acquisition teams will benefit from increased diversity and innovation from suppliers."

The MoD uses BiP's **Project** e-notice service to create, manage and transmit its contract opportunities efficiently and compliantly. By using Project to create its lower-value contract opportunities, the MoD ensures that these also appear on the Supply2.gov.uk service; so ensuring compliance with national and European Commission best practice guidance in this area.

Now it is even easier for your organisation to join the MoD in embracing the SME community. BiP is currently offering a free Project licence to buyers not already using the service, and a free additional licence to existing users. To find out more about this offer, contact the Public Sector Solutions Team on **0845 270 7090**, visit: www.delta.ets.com, or email: psst@bipsolutions.com

For more information on MoD DCB and Supply2.gov.uk, visit: www.contracts.mod.uk and: www.supply2.gov.uk respectively.

2006-07 sees record growth for BiP

BiP SOLUTIONS' 2006-07 financial year has recently come to a close – and the news is that this has been the most dynamic and successful year in the company's 23-year history.

Driving the success has been a record level of investment in our staff, services and infrastructure, all of which will secure the future growth of the company and expansion into new areas.

Sales of BiP's contract information services – such as **Tracker** – increased by record levels in 2006-07 and new, value-added services such as the electronic news alert service **Market Monitor** have been extremely well received by our customers. More suppliers viewing more contracts can only be good news for buyers, since this helps increase innovation and improve value for money.

Speaking of more contracts, independent research conducted at the beginning of 2007 demonstrated that BiP's **Contrax Weekly** publication contained on average 181% more contracts than the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU), while **Contrax Weekly Ireland** contained on average 669% more contracts than the OJEU.

Increasing the number of suppliers means that buyers have more to choose from. Assistance on this front has come in the form



of BiP's new **Select** accreditation service, which is already saving suppliers and buyers countless hours in the preparation and review of Pre-Qualification Questionnaires.

During 2006-07, BiP created new sales and support functions, redeveloped virtually all of its services (besides creating new ones) and focused on developing back-office functions and technology. The result is that BiP's customers – both buyers and suppliers – can enjoy the benefits of our services, and relax in the knowledge that they are well supported.

As to the future, our aim is to continue the development of our services by listening to and anticipating customer needs, and delivering the cutting-edge solutions that buyers and suppliers demand.

Thank you to all of the customers, clients and partners who contributed to our success in 2006-07.

Full house

THE GLASGOW Housing Association (GHA) has signed a two-year deal for the complete **Delta** e-tendering suite, from BiP Solutions.

The deal means that BiP will provide the GHA with unlimited access to **Project** for the creation and issuing of contract announcements and to **Select** for the management of supplier lists and handling of PQQ information, as well as unlimited use of **Vault** for issuing and receiving tender documentation and holding unlimited e-auctions. BiP will also provide a fully managed **aXcess** buyer profile to the GHA for the duration of the contract.

In 2002 tenants of Glasgow City Council voted for their homes to be transferred to the

GHA. The transfer took place on 7 March 2003. The GHA is the largest registered social landlord in the UK and is responsible for over 80,000 homes in Glasgow.

Gerry Feeley of BiP's Public Sector Solutions Team (PSST) said: "We are delighted that the GHA has selected BiP to deliver its e-tendering requirements, and are sure that the Association will benefit from using a service that enables a joined-up approach to its procurement activities."

To find out more about BiP's Delta e-tendering suite, contact the PSST on **0845 270 7090**, go to: www.bipsolutions/delta or email: psst@bipselect.com

GO Awards finalists announced



THE EAGERLY awaited 2007 **National Public Procurement Practitioners Day (N3PD)**, incorporating the **Government Opportunities (GO) Excellence in Public Procurement Awards**, was just two weeks away as this edition of *NPS* went to print.

N3PD 2007, organised by BiP Solutions and being held in central London on 6 June, is the only national day of recognition for procurement professionals across the UK. The GO Awards form the centrepiece of the event, recognising innovation and achievement by individuals, teams and organisations.

This year, demand for places at N3PD has reached a new high, as has the number of entries into the GO Awards.

Evaluating the Awards was no easy task for the judging panel, but after much deliberation the list of finalists below was arrived at:

GO Individual Excellence Award

- Robert Anstee, Ministry of Defence
- Ian Hardcastle, East Ayrshire Council
- Jean Henderson, Authorities Buying Consortium
- Roger Simpson Jones, London Borough of Ealing
- Melanie Walsh, South West Fire and Rescue Services

GO Team Excellence Award

- Authorities Buying Consortium
- Bedfordshire County Council Children's Commissioning Service
- Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

- Department for Work and Pensions Office Services
- Essex Procurement Hub
- London Borough of Havering
- London Borough of Southwark
- Manchester Corporate Technical Services Group
- South West Fire and Rescue Services
- Welsh Health Supplies

GO Sustainability Award

Sponsored by: Select Accredited

- Authorities Buying Consortium
- Department for Work and Pensions Sustainable Development Team
- London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority
- North Lincolnshire Council Highways and Planning
- Scottish Natural Heritage

GO e-Government Award

Sponsored by: Open Text Corporation

- Caerphilly County Borough Council
- City of Edinburgh Council
- eProcurement Scotl@nd
- Home Office
- London Borough of Camden

GO Best Service Award

Sponsored by: Central Telecom

- Black Country Housing/Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council
- BSS/Big Lottery Fund

- Lion Apparel Systems/London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority
- PageOne Ltd/British Army
- Reliance/Thames Valley Police

GO Best Small Supplier Innovation Award

Sponsored by: Supply2.gov.uk

- Amble Electrical Distributors/Luton Borough Council
- Blue Fountain Systems/Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council
- Bow House Ltd/Authorities Buying Consortium
- CorVu/Isle of Wight Council
- PSL Consulting/London Borough of Merton

GO Young Procurement Professional Award

- Robert Anstee, Ministry of Defence
- James Brooks, Sheffield College
- Sharon Griffin, Authorities Buying Consortium
- Joanne Leah, Allerdale Borough Council
- Natalie Ledger, Sheffield College

Congratulations go to all of the finalists, and thanks to all who entered. To find out who won, and who was highly commended, look out for a full review of N3PD and the GO Awards in the next issue of *NPS* and the July edition of *GO*. If you can't wait that long, the N3PD website (www.n3pd.com) will be updated with the results of the GO Awards on 7 June.

Accreditation – the path to smarter buying solutions

ACCREDITATION NOT only makes sense for suppliers – its use has also been recommended to buyers by the Government.

In a recently issued guidance on the use of supplier accreditation services, the Office of Government Commerce (OGC) advised purchasers on the use of accreditation systems, such as BiP Solutions' **Select** service.

In addition, the Better Regulation Commission (BRC) has called for the development of an accredited system to help government buyers plan for successful and efficient procurement – particularly when it comes to engaging small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

Select Accredited is fully compliant with the EC Treaty, EU Public Procurement Directives and UK Regulations and can therefore be accepted across the public sector.

The service provides a global approach to pre-qualification via supplier assessment across a common range of requirements, helping to



deliver increased efficiency and reduced costs for buyers and suppliers. It helps public sector organisations streamline their procurement processes, as well as reducing the administration burden on suppliers.

Select Accredited is the only cross-public sector accreditation service delivered to the same exacting standards set for the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI)'s Constructionline accreditation service, itself the only UK government-supported accreditation service.

Select Accredited buyers have access to a diverse database of approved BiP Select and

Constructionline registered suppliers, allowing them to select suppliers that are fit for purpose. Select Accredited also minimises the financial and administrative burden on suppliers and buyers, and provides suppliers with the assurance of knowing they have achieved a public sector recognised standard. To date, nearly 50 public sector organisations have signed up to use Select Accredited.

Select Accredited is SME-friendly, with annual fees starting from as low as £70 plus VAT. The fees are solely dependent on a company's overall turnover, therefore charges are always proportional to that company's ability to pay and the value it will derive from the service. Since Select Accredited is recognised across the public sector, suppliers benefit by only having to pay once to have their details included.

Buyers and suppliers interested in finding out more about Select Accredited can do so at: www.bipselect.com, or by calling **0845 270 7094**.

Supply2.gov.uk – a year of success

27 JUNE 2007 sees the first anniversary of the launch of the **Supply2.gov.uk** lower-value contracts portal, and what a first year it's been.

To date, approaching 50,000 suppliers have registered on the service, and over 43,000 contracts of all values have been published. Thousands of public sector organisations from across central and local government – including areas such as health, education, emergency services, housing associations and agencies – are now using Supply2.gov.uk to publish their lower-value (typically under £100,000) requirements.

Supply2.gov.uk, for which BiP Solutions is the service provider on behalf of the Department of Trade and Industry's Small Business Service, has enjoyed national and international recognition since it launched. The service has been praised by HM Treasury for its innovative approach and cited by the European

Commission as a best practice means of advertising lower-value contracts.

For buyers, the good news is that Supply2.gov.uk is not only an effective and compliant means of advertising lower-value contracts, but also completely free to use. To join the thousands of other buyers advertising their contracts through the service (now including the MoD – see separate story on page one of this edition of NPS), simply visit www.supply2.gov.uk to register your organisation.

Fiona Campbell, Brand Manager for Supply2.gov.uk, said: "Supply2.gov.uk has had a successful first year, and we aim to build on that positive start. The service has undoubtedly increased the visibility of opportunities to businesses throughout the UK and provided buyers with more choice and innovation. We look forward to welcoming more buyers and suppliers to Supply2.gov.uk in the future."

GO gets a new look

GOVERNMENT OPPORTUNITIES (GO) magazine, the UK's most authoritative guide to public procurement, has undergone a redesign in order to make it an even better read, and to include yet more essential information on what's happening in the sector.

Published by BiP Solutions, GO contains the latest news, features, analysis and insight into not just UK procurement issues, but also those from around the world. The new-look magazine continues this theme, but has now increased its focus on private sector developments as well.

GO Managing Editor Grahame Steed said: "The new-look GO reflects the dynamic and professional marketplace it is there to serve. GO's readers need high-quality information to keep them up to speed with developments and to help them make effective procurement decisions, and the redesign now presents this information and insight in a more user-friendly way. Business magazines should be a good

read as well as being informative."

GO is available free of charge to those working in a procurement-related role for a public sector organisation.

To request a copy, email 'GO request' to: feedback@govopps.co.uk

If you already receive GO, please ensure you complete the reader request form inserted in the latest issue and return it in the Freepost envelope provided. This will help us maintain our circulation list and ensure you never miss a copy.



Increase your e-learning with PASS

BiP's **NEW e-learning zone** has been boosted with the addition of more presentations.

Delivered by BiP's **Procurement Advice and Support Service (PASS)** consultants, and endorsed by the Society of Procurement Officers in Local Government, the zone now offers five modules aimed at improving understanding of, and compliance with, public procurement legislation. These include *A Beginner's Guide to Public Sector Contracting*, *Playing to Win, Race and Equality in Procurement*, *Electronic Public Procurement* and *Contract Management*.

The e-learning zone caters for both buyers and suppliers, and enables procurement professionals to keep up to speed on the latest legislation, guidance and best practice without leaving the office – you simply log on and learn. Whether you are new to the



market, or just looking to refresh your knowledge, the e-learning zone is the place to go to.

Further exciting developments are planned for the e-learning zone, including the live streaming of BiP-organised events. This is set to start with the Scotland Excel Conference and Exhibition being held on 6 September 2007.

To find out more, go to: www.pass-elearning.com
For information on PASS events, go to: www.bipsolutions.com/pass.index.php or email: psst@bipsolutions.com

Exporting excellence

BiP SOLUTIONS has been at the forefront of developments in public sector procurement since it was established in 1984. The company has supported hundreds of public sector awarding authorities and thousands of buyers and suppliers across the UK with its e-tendering solutions, contract information services, training events, consultancy services and more.

The international dimension of BiP's procurement consultancy work has gathered momentum in recent years, and this has resulted in the delivery of procurement best practice on a global scale.

The delivery of projects in the last 12 months has seen members of BiP's consultancy team begin to resemble Michael Palin. First, the team delivered a study on behalf of the European Defence Agency (EDA) in Brussels. This project was followed by the team leading the contract negotiations for and delivery of an e-tendering portal for the Army Purchasing Directorate in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The e-tendering portal project was announced by the UAE Army in February at the IDEX 2007 international defence exhibition in Abu-Dhabi and goes live later in 2007.

For the first time in its history, BiP is delivering procurement consultancy in Africa, with a procurement audit on behalf of the Ministry of Education in Kenya. The project will study the procurement processes and procedures used for \$80 million of World Bank donor funding spend and recommend process improvements based on international best practice.

With BiP's influential and market-leading position in the public procurement arena, the consultancy team is often invited to speak at international conferences. BiP's Commercial Director Scott Smith was invited to address an audience of government and business personnel in Lisbon, Portugal, on the subject of the public sector engaging effectively with SMEs. BiP's experience in this sector – as the provider of the UK lower-value contracts portal **Supply2.gov.uk** – made it the obvious choice.

While BiP has a highly experienced procurement consultancy team, it recognises the value that local knowledge and additional specialist skills can bring to international projects. To support BiP's overseas efforts it is developing its partner network, and in the last year has added organisations from Canada, Cyprus, Greece, India, Kenya, Lebanon, Malta, Romania, the UAE and USA to its partner community.

So – many countries, a diversity of public procurement projects, a growing partner network and a developing international client base. The year ahead will see further international growth and we expect to see the BiP flag flying in even more locations.

NPS EVENTS GUIDE www.bipsolutions.com/events

JUNE 2007

McClelland and Beyond – The Supplier Route Forward

5 June COSLA, Edinburgh
25 June Teacher Building, Glasgow

6 JUNE 2007

National Public Procurement Practitioners Day (N3PD)

One Great George Street, London

6 JUNE 2007

PASS – How to Sell to the Public Sector

Renaissance, Heathrow

JUNE 2007

PASS – Preparing Perfect Tenders

7 June Palace Hotel, Manchester
14 June Marriott Maida Vale, London

13 JUNE 2007

PASS – Selling to the NHS

Renaissance, Heathrow

19 JUNE 2007

PASS – Winning Contracts – Understanding Electronic Tendering Techniques

Marriott Maida Vale, London

20 JUNE 2007

PASS – A Guide to the New EU Public Procurement Regulations and Transposing UK Regulations

Marriott Maida Vale, London

20 JUNE 2007

SOPO – Selling to Local Government Roadshow 2007

Ramada Plaza Hotel, Bristol

21 JUNE 2007

PASS – Effective Legal Compliance in Public Procurement

Marriott Maida Vale, London

26 JUNE 2007

PASS – Delivering Social, Environmental and Sustainable Public Procurement

Marriott Maida Vale, London

27 JUNE 2007

PASS – Applying Best Practice Performance and Contract Management

Marriott Maida Vale, London

28 JUNE 2007

PASS – Perfecting Compliant Evaluation Processes

Marriott Maida Vale, London

4 JULY 2007

Connecting to the Hub Roadshow 2007

University of Manchester

6 SEPTEMBER 2007

Scotland Excel Conference and Exhibition 2007

Murrayfield Stadium, Edinburgh

11 SEPTEMBER 2007

PASS – How to Win Tenders

Marriott Maida Vale, London

11 SEPTEMBER 2007

PASS – Introducing Effective Supply Chain Management

Holiday Inn City Centre, Birmingham

11 SEPTEMBER 2007

PASS – Supplier Negotiation: Developing Your Understanding

Holiday Inn City Centre, Birmingham

For further information on advertising your event contact the Events Team at BiP on **0845 270 7095** or email: events@bipsolutions.com

GO to the net

AS NPS was going to print, the finishing touches were being made to an upgrade to the **Government Opportunities (GO)** website at: www.govopps.co.uk

The new site will provide more information on *GO* magazine, which is published by BiP Solutions. It includes details of upcoming features, an archive of recent issues, background to the magazine and plenty of useful resources for both buyers and suppliers. There will also be a poll enabling users to express their views on the burning procurement issues of the moment.



MoD's main event

BiP SOLUTIONS, publishers of the MoD's **Defence Contracts Bulletin**, is once again hosting the MoD Defence Suppliers Service Annual Conference and Exhibition, which this year takes place at the City Centre Marriott in Bristol.

Following the success of previous events, and with an anticipated audience of both MoD and private sector personnel, the conference – entitled *Enabling the Future* – will focus on the transformations and opportunities within MoD procurement that have arisen from the Defence Industrial Strategy and the recent merger of the Defence Procurement Agency and the Defence

Logistics Organisation to form Defence Equipment and Support (DE&S).

Keynote presentations will be provided by Sir Kevin O'Donoghue, Chief of Defence Materiel (DE&S) and Amya Morse, MoD Defence Commercial Director.

The event, which is being held on 17 October, also involves organisations such as the Society of British Aerospace Companies (SBAC), the UK Council for Electronic Business (UKCeB), Thales and a number of MoD Integrated Project Teams (IPTs).

For full event details, please visit: www.modconference.co.uk

Top Tip

ARE YOU challenging your supply base to help your authority deliver sustainable procurement?

The majority of suppliers probably have a very poor understanding of what sustainable procurement really means.

Buyers must therefore lead in raising their suppliers' awareness. This can be achieved by integrating sustainable procurement within your standard terms of contract.

The main themes you should be considering when seeking to develop sustainable procurement should go beyond the usual narrow horizons of environmental procurement to include:

- delivering community benefit
- embracing ethical sourcing practices
- enabling employee development and advancement through training
- initiating environmental impact assessments
- meeting strategic labour market needs with regard to unemployment
- promoting fair employment practices, including encouraging ethnic workforce diversity
- promoting workforce welfare
- providing for disabled workers
- understanding and addressing corporate social responsibility

Through leveraging your purchasing power with suppliers you can help deliver sustainability, not just through the delivery of your requirements but also by encouraging suppliers to consider sustainability in their other contracts. So, why not start now?

IN JULY'S



Government Opportunities

- **GO Interview** – Alison Littley, Chief Executive of OGCbuying.solutions.
- **Sir David Varney**, Permanent Secretary at HM Treasury, discusses why shared services are a key tool for transforming public services.
- **Wally Johnson**, Chairman of Purchasing Index Ltd, explains to GO readers what really counts as a saving.

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