

Getting the Best out of **PrOJECT** Online

USING THE PrOJECT SERVICE FAQs

When do I have to advertise in the OJEC?

When the following thresholds are exceeded:
 Supplies and Services: Entities listed in Schedule 1 (mainly Government Departments and NHS Trusts): £100,410.
 Supplies and Services: Other Contracting Authorities (Councils etc.): £154,477.
 Works: Entities listed in Schedule 1 (mainly Government Departments and NHS Trusts): £3,861,932.
 Works: Other Contracting Authorities (Councils etc.): £3,861,932.

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 OJEC.

What is the WTO?

The World Trade Organisation. 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 Organisation). 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.

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 OJEC, within a minimum period of 52 days and a maximum period of one year.

Introduction

The purpose of the open advertising of impending competitions is to generate and gauge private sector and public sector interest in tendering. Whether or not the EC 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 EC Procurement rules do apply, contract notices must be dispatched to the Official Journal of the European Communities (OJEC). Contract notices should also be published in **Government Opportunities**. 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 OJEC 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 Online 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 OJEC.

What is PrOJECT Online?

PrOJECT Online 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 EC procurement legislation for publication in the OJEC.

Does PrOJECT Online comply with the use of standard forms?

PrOJECT Online was updated in line with the European Commission adopting the Directive imposing, from 1st May 2002, the use of standard forms in contract notices published in the EU's Official Journal (OJEC).

It meets the requirements for compliance with the new notice formats through its data output to the OJEC. The interface that is viewed by the operator is much more simple and 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 programme ensures the output meets the specification of the new forms and by having this exchange mechanism built into the system we make it much easier for operators to compile the information required.

Is there a Demo service available for PrOJECT Online?

Yes, a full PrOJECT site is available at www.bipcontracts.com/Delta/project.html. 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.

How do I create a new notice?

Having entered your username and password you will arrive at the welcome screen. Click on the New option on the navigation bar.

You will then be presented with a menu from which you can select the type of notice to be created.

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 (may not be listed in order of importance).

THE COMPLETE E-TENDERING SOLUTION

Electronic Tendering starts with



The Internet Contract Notice Creation Service

- Create, Manage and Transmit both OJEC and non-OJEC notices
- Fully integrated up-to-date CPV codes and automatic validation to EC Procurement Directives
- Instant access to OJEC and PrOJECT contracts notice database

Supplier Pre-Qualification Information Services provided by



The Internet Supplier Information Database Service

- Create, Manage and Exchange pre-qualification information between Buyers and Suppliers.
- Buyers build select lists and Suppliers maintain profiles online
- FREE access to both Buyers and Suppliers

Secure Electronic Tendering Services for the Public Sector



The Secure Internet Document Exchange Service

- Facilitates all procurement procedures - Open, Restricted, Negotiated and Accelerated - and for low-value contracts
- Real-time monitoring and an automatic, independent audit trail
- Digital Certificates provided by BT TrustWise

If you would like further information regarding any of the elements of the **DELTA SUITE** please contact our **Customer Services Department** on 0141 332 8247 or email delta@bipcontracts.com



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E-Tendering Services from BiP's Delta Suite

(Direct Electronic Links for Tender Administration)

BiP's Delta Suite of products provides a complete range of electronic tendering services that combines to create a seamless electronic tendering service for the millennium.

EC PROCUREMENT PROCESS FAQs

How do I create an Award Notice using PrOJECT?

This can be done in two ways.

1. Creating a new award notice from the New option on the navigation bar select the relevant award layout you require.
2. Creating an award notice from a contract notice – PrOJECT Online 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 threshold or outwith the remit of the EC 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.

1. 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.
2. Creating an Addendum/Amendment Form - select Addendum/Amendment Form from the New menu and enter all the relevant details in the normal way.

How do I select a Bids type?

In your PrOJECT notice form you will be asked to specify what type of bid is required. This is available through a drop down menu to select the type of bid.

Global Bid

Must bid for all of the contract (no division into lots).

Partial Bid

May bid for pre-determined lots.

Mixed Global & Partial Bid

May bid for whole and/or pre-determined lots.

Not specified

Type of bid not specified within contract.

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 OJEC?

The EU allows up to 12 days for publication in the OJEC. However, publication normally takes about 7 days. Using the PrOJECT electronic notification service will result in faster publication.

What resources are provided?

PrOJECT provides you with access to the latest legislation, advanced code searches and Contract Notice database.

Can I find other OJEC notices?

Yes, PrOJECT has an advanced search function for all notices and awards published in the OJEC and **Government Opportunities**. This function can be useful for market intelligence.

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 organisations 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.

What about Statistical Returns?

In line with the annual return made to the Department of Transport, Local Government and the Regions (DTLR) 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.

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

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 **BiP 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.

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.

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 OJEC are created using PrOJECT than any other service. And the number is growing by the day.

PrOJECT is a service provided by BiP. Who are BiP?

BiP (Business Information Publications 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.

Who else uses PrOJECT?

Literally hundreds of public procurement professionals use PrOJECT to create their contract notices. They represent virtually every type of public body, including central government departments, local authorities, health trusts, education establishments, defence agencies and many others. Approaching 40% of all UK notices for publication in OJEC are transmitted through PrOJECT.

Has any evaluation of PrOJECT been published?

Yes, 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

Where can I get further information on PrOJECT?

Either go to our website at www.bipcontracts.com/Delta/project.html,

email us at project_support@bipcontracts.com

or telephone the PrOJECT helpline on **0141 332 8247**.

What does OJEC stand for?

OJEC stands for The Official Journal of the European Communities. Public sector bodies are required to advertise their contract opportunities in the OJEC 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, e.g. 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.

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.

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 - e.g. 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 & 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 timescales apply to the EC Procurement Directive procedures?

How do I calculate my dates?

Calculations start from the day after submissions. Weekend dates and bank holidays should not be used as the final date for receipt of information requested.

Open procedure

Deadline for receipt of tenders must be at least 52 days from date of dispatch. There is no limit on how many days must be given for requests for documents so this could be a very limited time from publication (although tender documents should be issued within 6 days of request). With an Open procedure it is the receipt of tenders date which matters.

Restricted procedure

Deadline for receipt of requests to participate must be at least 37 days from date of dispatch. Weekend dates and bank holidays must not be used as a deadline date.

A minimum of 40 days must be given from dispatch of invitations to tender to the return of tender documents.

Accelerated restricted procedure

The time allowed for expressions of interest is 15 days from date of dispatch of the notice. A minimum of 10 days must be given from dispatch of invitations to tender to the return of tender documents. Again, weekend dates and bank holidays must not be used as the final date for receipt of expressions or return of ITTs.

What is a PIN?

Prior/Periodic 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.

