



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

Procedure for Debriefing Suppliers

Procedure No. 411

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this procedure is to outline guidelines to be followed when disposing of Assets.

Scope

Health Service Executive, Mid-Western Area recognises “supplier debriefing” as an integral part of supply management.

Debriefing suppliers not selected either for a bid list or unsuccessful tenderers is important in helping suppliers to improve their competitive performance. It increases the potential for improved value for money (VFM) on future orders. It is a key element in supplier development and allows procurement staff to gain more information on the market place, in general, and supplier specialisation in particular.

Responsibility

It is the responsibility of the relevant Line Manager.

PROCEDURE

1.0 Procedural Guidelines

1. For all significant contracts Health Service Executive, Mid-Western Area purchasing authorities should formally debrief suppliers who request it where they have been unsuccessful at either the selection or tender stage in contracts. This requirement is mandatory where contracts exceed the prescribed EU thresholds.
2. Purpose of debriefing is to establish a reputation as a fair, honest, “open” and ethical organisation to encourage good suppliers and contractors to seek the HSE Mid-Western Area’s business and submit tenders. Unsuccessful tenders are offered some benefit from the time and money spent in preparing their tenders; and assisting suppliers to improve their performance.
3. Debriefing should be chaired by senior procurement personnel involved in the procurement with end-user representation where appropriate.
4. The debriefing interview itself should be carefully planned noting the weakness and strengths of the supplier’s submission avoiding dogmatic factual statement and allow the supplier time to respond.
5. In finalising the dates and timing arrangements for interviews, suppliers should also be informed that:
 - The interview will be carried out on an informal basis, aiming for mutual longer-term benefits;
 - They will be told frankly, honestly (and tactfully) of perceived weaknesses and that although their responses will be noted, the merits of the award are not for discussion;
 - Only their own submission will be discussed.

6. It is essential that the supplier understands that the perceived weaknesses are not simply the views of one person but a consensus of the client team and award of contract is considered at various management levels within the Health Service Executive, Mid-Western Area prior to decisions being taken.
7. The topics for discussion at an interview and the amount of detail covered will vary according to the nature of the procurement but care should be taken to demonstrate that judgements are being made only against the criteria published in the Invitation to Tender (ITT) or; if applicable, under the regulations covering pre-qualification of potential bidders or evaluation of tenders.
8. Department should adequately record the results and conclusions of debriefing interviews not only in case of follow-up action but also because this will assist the process of selecting suppliers and evaluating tenders for future similar procurements. Such records should not, however, be sent to suppliers.

Note:

1. Where appropriate debriefing must take account of the Public Procurement Regulations and the EU Public Procurement directives and similar rules under the World Trade Organisation (WTO) Government Procurement Agreement (GPA)

The key requirements under the Regulations are largely the same for supplies work and services. The key requirements are:

“The contracting authority shall, within 15 days of the date on which it receives a request” from any provider who was unsuccessful (at either the selection or tender stage) inform that provider of the reasons for being unsuccessful at the tender stage, the name of the person awarded the contract. It is expected that the Regulations will be revised further in due course to reflect the requirements of the WTOGPA. It is likely that the revision will include a requirement for the need to provide information of the characteristics and relative merits of the selected tender.”

References:

Relevant procurement reference documentation is available on Health Service Executive, Mid-Western Area Intranet Site (Go to Documents / Corporate Services / Materials Management)