Mobilisation & Implementation

If you have been awarded a contract, there will be a mobilisation period before the contract is implemented i.e. a period of time, before you begin performing the contract, for your organisation to become ready to become the contract supplier. This mobilisation period will normally be specified in the procurement documents by the buyer e.g. the buyer may state that it will take 3 months to mobilise the contract and when the contract implementation date is.

During this period you will work with the buyer and the current supplier (if there is one) to ensure that:

- you have all the information you need to implement the contract
- end users have all the information they require to access the contract products once you take over e.g. contact details, information on the goods/services available from the contract, etc.
- there is continuity of supply for the customer during the migration from the old to new supplier.

If you have not submitted a project plan as part of your successful tender bid already, it is advisable to create a mobilisation project plan which is agreed by the buyer which will cover:

- all tasks to be completed, and what these tasks are dependent upon
- respective timescales
- roles and responsibilities of both your organisation and the buyer's personnel.

The mobilisation period will allow you to gather all of the information you need to run the contract, from varying sources as well as ensuring that your staff, processes and procedures are ready to run the contract. Again some, if not all, of these requirements will have been included in the procurement documents sent by the buyer, and detailed in your bid response. Some common areas are listed below.

Meetings/Communications

A contract should have a pre-agreed meeting/communications schedule with an agenda for the topics to be discussed during the mobilisation period. These meetings will ensure that all key parties are kept up to-date with progress e.g. review progress against the project plan; raise if any further information is required; highlight if any issues being encountered, etc. Such communications should help to reduce risk and ensure all those involved are aware of any problems as soon as possible.

Scorecard

Dependent on the size, complexity and risk involved with the contract the buyer may decide to run a scorecard - this is where your contract performance is scored on pre-agreed areas for the duration of the contract. Areas scored may include: quality, cost, sustainability and service.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) will be used to determine how these differing contract areas are performing. A KPI is a value that demonstrates how well objectives are being met. Examples of KPIs are:

- Invoice Accuracy: To what extent does the supplier ensure that invoices provide detailed, accurate cost information, and that, where queries occur, they are resolved within agreed timescales?
- Response Times: To what extent does the Supplier meet the agreed performance levels in relation to Response Times?
- Sub-Contractor Payment: Does the Supplier pay sub-contractors promptly, within the contractually agreed limits?
- Quality of Goods: To what extent do products arrive undamaged and with expected shelf life?

It should be determined, before the scorecard begins, what: areas are to be scored and how; how often the scorecard will run e.g. every quarter? And who will collate the information for the KPIs.

Ordering and Finance Procedures

You must agree on the purchase order and invoice procedure to be used i.e.:

- how will purchase orders be raised e.g. what system will be used? Can an online catalogue be set up to order at set agreed prices?
- how often will purchase orders be raised e.g. before every requirement? once a month? once a year with call offs?
- how and when will invoices be raised e.g. after every new requirement is shipped? consolidated invoicing? using electronic invoices (eInvoicing)?

You must not provide goods or services without receiving a valid purchase order number and that all invoices raised must list this purchase order. If your invoice does not include the purchase order number it will be returned. This process is used to ensure you are paid as quickly as possible i.e. listing the purchase order number will ensure that your invoice is

matched and approved quickly.

Contingency Procedures

You should plan for what could happen if something changes or goes wrong e.g. what happens if: a large delivery does not arrive? your premises are flooded? a subcontractor goes out of business? Scenario planning will allow you to put in place processes and procedures to counteract such issues and therefore spread risk. Such planning can be included in future bids that you make.

Planning should include resource cover e.g. if key personnel were to become unavailable, and escalation procedures which are communicated to the buyer. This should include details of who the buyer should contact if they are experiencing ongoing issues.