



Oifig um Sholáthar Rialtais
Office of Government Procurement

Information Note

Procurement Officer Role



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

National Public Procurement Policy Framework

Public procurement is governed by EU and national rules. The [National Public Procurement Policy Framework](#) sets out the overarching policy framework for public procurement in Ireland and comprises five strands.

1. Legislation (Directives, Regulations)
2. Government Policy (Circulars etc.)
3. Capital Works Management Framework for Public Works
4. General Procurement Guidelines for Goods and Services
5. More detailed technical guidelines, template documentation and information notes as issued periodically by the Policy Unit of the Office of Government Procurement

The framework sets out the procurement procedures to be followed by government departments and State bodies under national and EU rules. The framework supports contracting authorities, including the Office of Government Procurement, the four key sectors (Health, Education, Local Government and Defence), individual departments, offices, commercial and non-commercial State bodies, and private entities which are subsidised 50% or more by a public body, when awarding contracts for works, goods and services. It supports and enables public bodies to adopt procedures to meet their public procurement requirements and facilitates compliance with EU and national procurement rules.

PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS INFORMATION NOTE IS PROVIDED FOR GUIDANCE AND INFORMATION PURPOSES ONLY AND DOES NOT CONSTITUTE LEGAL ADVICE.

THIS INFORMATION NOTE IS ALSO DYNAMIC IN NATURE AND SUBJECT TO PERIODIC REVIEW AND AMENDMENT. CHECK WWW.OGP.GOV.IE FOR ANY FUTURE REVISIONS.

1. Introduction

This information note is an initiative under the [National Public Procurement Policy Framework](#) which sets out the overarching policy framework for public procurement in Ireland. Part of the OGP's remit is to support better procurement practice and provide contracting authorities with information they can use to achieve this.

The purpose of this note is to outline the role of a Procurement Officer in organisations that carry out public procurement. The Procurement Officer is important to ensuring organisations meet their procurement obligations. Contracting authorities are obliged to treat public funds with care, and to ensure that the best possible value for money is obtained whenever public money is being spent or invested. Equally, contracting authorities have a responsibility to implement good corporate governance standards.

Procurement has been identified as one of a number of activities requiring special attention in promoting good corporate governance. Having a Procurement Officer benefits governance in general, including the preparation and implementation of procurement strategies beginning with the development of a Corporate Procurement Plan. The appointment of a Procurement Officer is provided for in Circular 40/02.

2. Role of a Procurement Officer

The position of Procurement Officer can support contracting authorities in meeting their various procurement obligations. Higher levels of compliance and efficiency can be achieved where there is a strong procurement function supported by a dedicated and appropriately empowered Procurement Officer. The wider policy and governance context for this officer is summarised in the diagram on page 3.

A list of suggested responsibilities of a Procurement Officer is presented below. This is not, however, intended as an exhaustive list and should be reviewed against the existing procurement structures in the organisation. Keep in mind that the scale of procurement-related spend and associated risk can mean that responsibilities can vary between different contracting authorities.

Each contracting authority should satisfy themselves that the Procurement Officer position has been established with the appropriate level of authority to ensure that their role can be successfully fulfilled.

The Procurement Officer should be the organisation's first point of contact with the Office of Government Procurement (OGP) for procurement-related issues. Other suggested responsibilities are listed below.

Governance and planning

- Develop, refine and communicate the organisation's Corporate Procurement Plan (as outlined in the [OGP's information note](#) on these plans).
- Maintain a contracts register to assist in forward planning and exercising appropriate internal control and arrange for the publication of relevant details where required.
- Liaise with corporate functions regarding procurement governance obligations and risk management, and to provide updates on advice and guidance issued by the OGP.
- Report to senior management and boards as appropriate on procurement performance and compliance.
- Prepare the 40/02 Annual Return for the Secretary General where required, for issue to the Comptroller and Auditor General and copied to the OGP.

Support

- Provide advice, as and when required, to staff procuring goods and services to assist them in complying with procurement rules and share OGP communications with staff.
- Have strong knowledge of public procurement guidelines so as to support budget holders when requirements are out of scope for the centralised arrangements and the contracting authority must go out to the market for these requirements.
- Engage early with the OGP on issues of public procurement.

Communication

- Inform budget holders of the overarching public procurement policy framework, the contracting authority's procurement policy and the frameworks available through the OGP and other central purchasing bodies.
- Review documentation issued by OGP and communicate onwards within the organisation. All persons involved in procurement should be made aware of changes to procurement guidelines, thresholds, regulations and circulars.
- Develop a strong relationship with OGP Customer Service Team, support@ogp.gov.ie, and avail of the various supports available from the OGP in relation to public procurement.

Policy and Governance Context for Procurement Officers

Corporate Governance Standard for the Civil Service

A requirement to adhere to procurement rules is clearly outlined in the governance, assurance and compliance frameworks within the [Corporate Governance Standard for the Civil Service](#). Governance principals encompass procurement objectives such as openness, transparency, accountability and value for money.

Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies

The [Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies](#) identifies procurement as requiring special attention in promoting good governance. Contracting authorities must be familiar with national procurement rules including developing and circulating procurement policies and procedures to all staff.

Public Spending Code

The [Public Spending Code](#) emphasises the need for planning around procurement and requires Departments to publish summary information on all procurements in excess of €2 million and to assess their compliance with procurement rules with respect to both current and capital expenditure being considered.

National Public Procurement Policy Framework

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Freedom of Information Policy

Under the [Freedom of Information Act 2014](#) and the [FOI Model Publications Scheme](#), FOI bodies have obligations to make certain kinds of information routinely available, including information on how goods and services are procured and details on contracts in excess of €25,000.



Circular 40/2002

[Circular 40/2002](#) provides for the designation of a Procurement Officer who will be responsible for collating information on procurement for reporting and auditing purposes.