



Foreword from Chairperson CPB



Once again, it is my pleasure to share with you an update on some of the activities and innovations taking place at the CPB.

We have given a theme to this newsletter which is *Health, Safety and Environment*. By definition, Health, Safety and Environment (HSE) is the set that studies and implements the practical aspects of protecting the environment and maintaining health and safety at occupation. This is what organizations must do to make sure that their activities do not adversely damage the environment nor cause any harm to anyone.

Environmental safety is a crucial issue and should be an overriding concern for any industrial activity as negligence and non-compliance proportionately increases the risk resulting in injuries, illnesses, and accidents as well as potentially causing untold harm to the environment. As most of the major projects approved for awards concern works, at the CPB, we pay special attention to the environment as well as the safety of all concerned.

In most high-rise buildings cum structures, it is a requirement under the National Labour Act, that the contractor employs a professional Health and Safety Officer who has to prepare a Health and Safety Plan for the project and ensures its implementation by regularly visiting the workplace.

Under the Health, Safety and Welfare Regulations 1980, every employer employing more than 100 persons must establish a Health and Safety Committee in their business, and appoint a Health and Safety Officer either on a full time or part time basis.

Furthermore, under the Labour Act, a building in which an employee is required to perform work must be provided with adequate lighting and ventilation and the employer must provide sanitary conveniences, washing facilities, and facilities for the taking of meals, at or near the place of work with.

I had mentioned in the last Newsletter, that the CPB has been working with the Civil Service College Mauritius to mount a five-module course for the evaluators that the CPB calls upon to carry evaluation of the bids received in total independence **BUT** in total conformity with the Public Procurement Act of 2006, its Regulations and the numerous Directives, Circulars, etc.

Unfortunately, there are still some delays in the rolling out of these courses, because the programs require more fine tuning, pursuant to the peer review carried out on the contents of the modules. Hopefully, this should be done before the end of the year.

Regarding the training courses for the Team Leaders, the CPB has had to change tack and is now turning to University of Technology, Mauritius that runs a degree course on Procurement and Supply.

In the very near future, only those evaluators as well as those Team Leaders who will have followed these courses will be selected to constitute Bid Evaluation Committees.

Another concern that CPB has is with regard to cost estimates. As is now, when bids received are not within 15% of the cost estimates, they are deemed to be abnormally high or low. In a world where prices of imported items are highly volatile, this becomes a major concern and this has recently led to non-award of contracts. Refloating the bids inevitably lead to undue long and unacceptable delays of up to a minimum of six months as well as increase in cost.

If you have any question or comment, please contact us at cpb@govmu.org.

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Chairperson, CPB

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ELECTRONIC PROCUREMENT SETTING THE TREND TOWARDS THE GREENING OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE

In an era marked by growing environmental concerns and an increasing reliance on technology, the adoption of green practices by government institutions has become not just a choice, but an imperative.

As a matter of fact, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change which was adopted by 196 Parties at the UN Climate Change Conference (COP21) in Paris has set a clear goal to hold the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and endeavour to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial level

It is in this context that Government, with the support of the European Union, has recently come up, following a consultancy exercise, with bold measures for the 'Greening of the Public Sector' in line with Government Programme 2020-2024.

The objective of the initiative is to encourage public organisations to green their activities through the adoption of sustainable consumption practices in their day to day operations with respect to conservation of energy and water, waste minimisation and recycling, paperless work, adoption of sustainable technology and also adopting business practices including sustainable procurement to sustain and improve service delivery.

It has to be emphasised that, the Public Procurement function has seen the early adoption of green practices with the championing of the e-Procurement system as far back as 2015. This landmark digital transformation has ushered a paradigm shift in the Public Procurement Process. As a matter of fact, and since its launching in 2015, some 32,904 Bidding Documents were uploaded on the e-Procurement Platform, 111 Public Bodies including 8 in Rodrigues have been on board and 5,452 Suppliers have been registered. Moreover, in Budget 2020-2021, Government has sent a strong signal by making mandatory the procurement of goods, services, works and consultancy over the e-Procurement system by Public Bodies.

The Central Procurement Board had to adapt itself to major changes in embracing the e-Procurement platform such as adopting a paperless environment and digitally enabled processes. As a matter of fact, Bids submitted by Bidders which normally comprised of voluminous documents of several volumes and copies are now received on electronic format on the eProcurement Platform. Moreover, our evaluators are now fully trained on



e-ps to evaluate bids and prepare evaluation reports on the digital platform.

Besides, the transition to e-procurement has the added advantage of reducing the risks of corruption, ensuring transparency and accountability and that taxpayers' money is utilized efficiently. Through granting access to a broader pool of suppliers, this digital system fosters healthy competition, ultimately driving cost savings within the public sector.

The adoption of green practices such as the e-Procurement system in government is not just a matter of environmental responsibility; it is a smart, forward-thinking approach to governance. By leading the way in sustainable practices, Government can set the example for businesses and citizens alike. In doing so, we contribute to a more sustainable, efficient, and environmentally conscious future for all. As Government continues to prioritize sustainability, the impact of greening public procurement will be felt for generations to come.

Swaminathan RAGEN
Vice-Chairperson

HEALTH AND SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS INTO THE PROCUREMENT PROCESS



Procurement Agencies play a critical role in the acquisition of goods, services, and resources for an organization. Ensuring safety and health considerations are integrated into the procurement process, is essential to protect the well-being of employees, contractors, and the broader community.

When a procurement agency is involved in projects, whether they are construction projects, infrastructure development, or any other type of project, it is crucial to consider various safety and health elements. These elements help ensure that the projects are executed in a way that prioritizes the well-being of all stakeholders involved.

Here are key safety and health considerations for projects **to be kept in mind**:

1. Define OSH Requirements:

Clearly define OSH requirements and expectations for all procurement activities. Include OSH criteria in procurement specifications, contracts and tender documents. Specify safety standards, certifications, and compliance with relevant regulations.

2. Supplier Evaluation:

Implement a robust supplier evaluation process that includes assessing the safety and health performance of potential suppliers. Consider factors such as safety records, past incidents, and OSH certifications.

3. Pre-Qualification of Suppliers:

Pre-qualify suppliers based on their OSH practices and track record. Only engage with suppliers who demonstrate a commitment to OSH and have appropriate safety management systems in place.

4. Safety Audits:

Conduct safety audits of potential supplier facilities to assess their safety practices, equipment and working conditions. Ensure they meet OSH stand-

ards and have effective safety programs in place.

5. Risk assessment:

Assess the OSH risks associated with the products or services being procured. Conduct a thorough risk analysis and develop strategies to mitigate potential hazards.

6. Safety Training:

Require suppliers to provide safety training to their employees who will be involved in the delivery, installation, or servicing of products or services. Verify that training is up to date and relevant.

7. Supplier Collaboration:

Collaborate with suppliers to identify OSH improvement opportunities. Encourage them to share best practices and innovations related to safety and health.

8. Safety Clauses in Contracts:

Include specific OSH clauses in procurement contracts that outline safety requirements, responsibilities, and penalties for non-compliance. Clearly define reporting procedures for safety incidents.

9. Emergency Response Plans:

Ensure that suppliers have effective emergency response plans in place and that they align with your organization's emergency response procedures. Coordinate plans to address potential accidents or incidents.

10. Regular Monitoring:

Implement ongoing monitoring and evaluation of supplier OSH performance throughout the contract period. Conduct regular inspections and audits to verify compliance with safety requirements.

11. Communication:

Maintain open and transparent communication with suppliers regarding OSH expectations, incident reporting, and safety improvements. Encourage a culture of reporting near misses and safety concerns.

12. Documentation:

Maintain comprehensive records of all OSH-related activities, including audits, inspections, incident reports, and training records. Documentation helps track progress and compliance.

13. Continuous Improvement:

Continuously review and improve OSH policies and practices within the procurement process. Encourage feedback from suppliers, employees, and stakeholders to identify areas for enhancement.

14. Legal Compliance:

Ensure that the procurement process complies with all relevant OSH laws, regulations, and standards. Stay updated on changes in OS regulations that may impact procurement decisions.

15. Employee Involvement:

Involve employees in OSH decision-making processes and encourage them to provide input on OSH requirements and supplier evaluations.

16. Benchmarking:

Compare your organization's OSH procurement practices with industry best practices and benchmarks. Learn from successful examples and adapt them to your organization's needs.

17. Sustainability:

Consider the long-term sustainability of OSH practices. Prioritize suppliers that have a strong commitment to OSH as part of their sustainability initiatives.

By incorporating these safety and health considerations into the procurement process, a procurement agency can help protect the organization's reputation, mitigate risks and liabilities associated with inadequate safety and health practices and contribute to the well-being of all stakeholders involved. Additionally, it can lead to more sustainable and responsible procurement practices.

Dyaneshwar RAMDHONY
Board Member

Engagement with Public Bodies to improve Vetting Time



The Central Procurement Board (CPB) has noted that some Bidding Documents that Public Bodies are submitting for vetting have many weaknesses which are causing excessive delays in vetting. The submission of incomplete bidding documents, the use of the wrong SBD's unrealistic cost estimates are some examples of the list of shortcomings that are adversely affecting the procurement process.

The CPB vets on average some 60 Bidding Documents in respect of major projects yearly. It is to be noted that the number of days set in-house as KPI for vetting of documents is **15 days**. Due to the poor quality of some Bidding Documents that are received, however, this target is often largely exceeded. As an example, there is currently a situation where vetting has gone up to 304 days without the document being finalized yet.

Delays in vetting and consequently in project implementation have many important consequences as highlighted below:-

- Price fluctuations on the market and inflation negatively impact on costs.
- Since a significant part of public spending takes place through public procurement any bottleneck in the procurement process translates in ineffective budget execution.
- There are important delays in the delivery of goods and public services to the population.

The CPB which is mandated for the vetting of Bidding Documents for major contracts considers this situation as unacceptable. It endeavours to improve vetting time by engaging with Public Bodies to reflect on issues that will help them ensure that the quality of their document is not compromised. The CPB is organizing this workshop with the relevant stakeholders with the aim to enable them to voice out any difficulties they may be facing in the preparation of documents and at the same time to identify any training requirements.

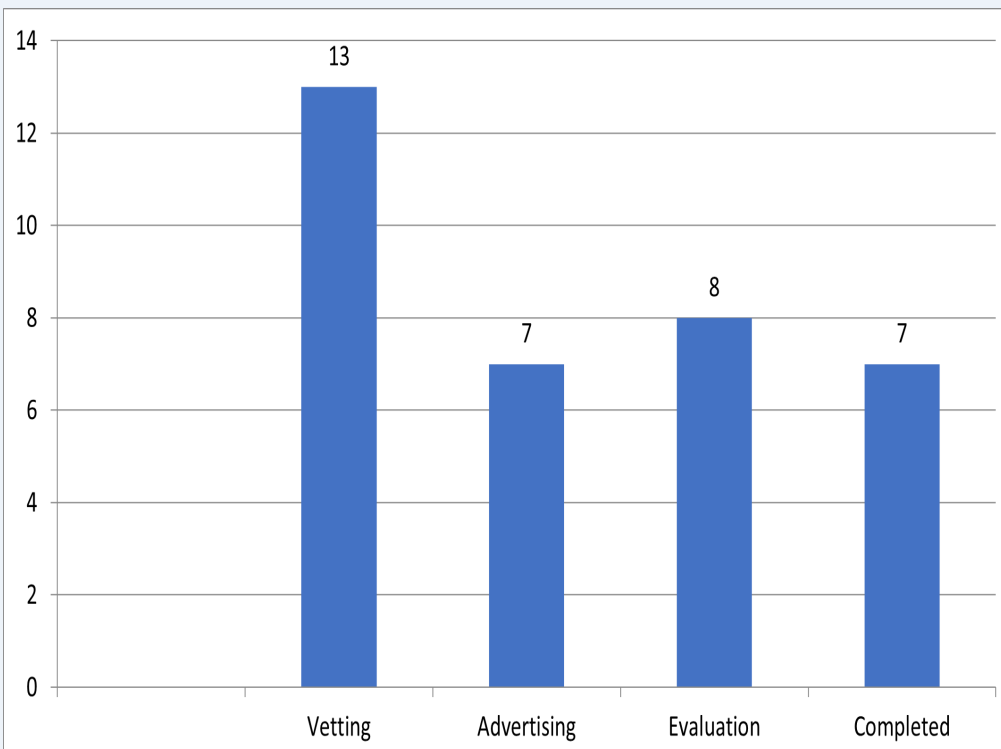
The points raised during the interactions was submitted to the relevant bodies such as Procurement Policy Office for training and PIMA for resources.

Statistics Snapshot (01 July - 30 September 2023)

Balance of Live Procurement Projects as at 01 July 2023	29
No. of Projects Received	12
No. of Bidding Documents vetted (completed)	15
No. of Public Openings	14
No. of Evaluations Completed	06
No. of Approvals of Award	04
Balance of Live Procurement Projects as at 30 September 2023	35

PROJECT STATUS

As at 30 September 2023, the CPB was handling 35 procurement projects falling under the category of major contracts. Out of which, 13 were at vetting stage, 7 at advertising stage, 8 at evaluation stage and 7 have been completed. (graph below).



Vision

To be the model for efficient and effective public procurement in Mauritius

Mission

To ensure value for money in public procurement and timely acquisition through a fair and transparent process

Core Values

Transparency - Integrity - Ethical Practice - Equality/ Fairness - Accountability

Contact Us

Give us a call for more information and visit our website for additional information.

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