



Streamlining construction procurement processes

How we created a specification for BIS that brings significant cost savings to the construction industry

Challenge

For many years, UK construction industry businesses have had to embrace 'pre-qualification' to tender for work. This can be very wasteful, because it involves repeatedly providing the same information to different potential buyers to make the invitations-to-tender shortlist. Moreover, many businesses have had to employ specialist staff to complete pre-qualification forms, while a proliferation of pre-qualification schemes has created a significant amount of unnecessary effort and cost for buyers and suppliers.

Solution

To make the whole process more efficient, BIS (the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills) asked us to develop a PAS (publicly available specification) for a set of common questions, recognized across the construction industry, so that would-be suppliers would only need to complete one questionnaire.

During the process we engaged stakeholders from throughout the construction industry to create a set

of questions that were common to all construction-related procurement that would prompt unambiguous responses and increase potential for recognition by various pre-qualification processes and schemes.

A key objective was to reduce the duplication, unnecessary paperwork and excessive costs the industry had put up with for too long.

Published in 2010, PAS 91 Construction related procurement. Pre-qualification questionnaires presented two sets of common questions to be used in pre-qualification processes. The first set (the core questions) is to be asked in every situation and addresses supplier identity and contact information, financial information, business and professional standing and health and safety policy and capability.

The second set (which includes questions about equal opportunity and diversity, environmental management and quality management) concerns areas of supplier capability that buyers frequently want or need to know about.

PAS 91 did *not* seek to introduce new questions, rather to formalize questions already asked of suppliers by buyers.

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Outcome

The project is a good example of the flexibility that the PAS process provides for refinement and improvement.

Early in 2012, work began on reviewing PAS 91, guided by user experience, with a view to refining the questions to enable universal adoption. Experts have added questions on BIM (Building Information Modelling and Management), an increasingly significant topic, while another objective has been to modify question format to make them more suitable for electronic application. The revised version of PAS 91 is scheduled for publication in February 2013.

To download your free copy of PAS 91 please visit bsigroup.com/pas91

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