

Department of Contracts
Notre Dame Ravelin
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To Heads of Department
and Parastatal Bodies

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TENDER DOCUMENTATION IN ELECTRONIC FORMAT

The Department of Contracts is taking a number of initiatives with a view to offering more efficient services to the public. These include the introduction of electronic point of sales and internet payment facilities related to the sale of tenders. Plans are also in hand in order to put published tenders on-line thereby eliminating the need for interested bidders to call at the Department of Contracts to pick up tender documents.

These initiatives are also in line with the European Commission's plan for the attainment of an electronic public procurement system across all Member States by the year 2010. The plan aims to increase efficiency and competitiveness levels in the European Union.

Electronic procurement involves the conversion of manual, paper based tendering procedures into the appropriate electronic equivalents that are re-engineered to increase efficiency and transparency for all stakeholders. A major obstacle in the electronic process is the unavailability of electronic formats of tender documentation. The Department is currently in the process of facilitating the tender process for interested and prospective bidders by making the downloading of tender documents and payment thereof available through on-line facilities. A system is already in place enabling direct electronic publication of tender notices above the EU thresholds in the Official Journal of the European Communities.

In this respect, with effect from 1 August 2007, all tender documentation to be processed by the Department of Contracts on behalf of Contracting Authorities is to be presented not only in the normal hard copy 'original' version but also on CD format. The electronic documents are to be submitted both as one holistic word document as well as in pdf. format. The Department of Contracts cannot guarantee the publication of tenders after the indicated date unless a soft copy is available.

As the success of this initiative depends largely on the co-operation of all contracting authorities and in view that certain high value tenders include bulky documentation such as architectural plans and Bills of Quantities, Heads of Department and Government entities are enjoined to take the necessary administrative measures in order to cater for these new requirements.

F Attard
Director General (Contracts)