

**Estimates 2004-05 - Supplementary written questions November 2004**

**PM1 - Question on Notice – Senator Murray**

**Order for departmental and agency contracts**

**Office of National Assessments**

**1. When did the Department last update its procurement policy documentation?**

A revision of ONA's procurement policy documentation is underway. The revised documentation will reflect changes required to comply with the current Commonwealth Procurement Guidelines.

**2. What mechanisms does the Department have in place to ensure its procurement guidelines reflect current policy in relation to government contracting?**

ONA staff attend DoFA briefing sessions and participate in the Procurement Network to stay abreast of changes to current policy.

**3. Do the Department's current procurement guidelines refer to all of the following accountability mechanisms:**

- The Senate order for departmental and agency contracts;
- The Department of Finance and Administration's February 2003 *Guidance on Confidentiality of Contractors' Commercial Information*; and
- The Commonwealth Procurement Guidelines (CPGs) ?

ONA's guidelines refer to these accountability mechanisms.

**4. Do the Department's tender documentation and contract templates include the following elements:**

- a statement outlining the various Commonwealth accountability requirements;
- a consistent definition of confidential information across all templates;
- a provision for the inclusion of specific reasons justifying why a tenderer may wish to protect certain information in the contract if it awarded;
- a section that outlines the obligations of confidentiality after the contract has been awarded;
- a more detailed outline, with the general non-disclosure clauses, of the exceptions to confidentiality obligations for Commonwealth contracts; and
- the model contract clauses, given in DOFA's February 2003 *Guidance on Confidentiality of Contractor's Commercial Information*?

ONA's tender documentation is under modification to ensure this is the case in all future contracts.

5. At page 51 of ANAO Audit Report No.10 2004-2005, *The Senate Order for Departmental and Agency Contracts (Calendar Year 2003 Compliance)*, the ANAO has concluded that all FMA agencies would benefit from implementation of contract training courses, or a review of current courses, to ensure that the Senate order requirements are adequately covered and that procurement staff receive relevant DOFA guidance.

What training does the Department currently have in place for procurement staff?

ONA has a very small purchasing team who attend (external) training courses as necessary to keep up-to-date with changes in the procurement area.

6. Does this training cover the requirements of the Senate order for departmental and agency contracts and refer to DOFA's February 2003 *Guidance on Confidentiality of Contractor's Commercial Information*?

Relevant ONA staff are aware of the requirements of the Senate order for contracts.