
Prequalification Questionnaire

For the Provision of

**Home Condition Report Register and
Associated Consolidation Services**

FOREWORD

Definition

Reference to “the Department” or “ODPM” means the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, who will be the Contracting Authority for this project.

Purpose of this document

This Pre-Qualification Questionnaire ("Questionnaire") has been produced to enable Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) to evaluate which organisations that have expressed an interest to the contract notice (sent out on 9 March 2006) should be taken through to the next stage of the procurement process.

Organisation of this document

This document contains two sections:

- introduction, background information and instructions for completion;
- the pre-qualification questionnaire.

Background Information

Part 5 of the Housing Act 2004 is expected to be fully in force from 1 June 2007 and from that date, sellers of a residential property in England and Wales or their estate agents must have a Home Information Pack (HIP) when marketing their properties. This pack will be comprised of a number of documents including a Home Condition Report (HCR). Home Inspectors (HIs), who are members of an approved Certification Scheme, will produce HCRs.

The Act requires that where certification schemes exist, the Secretary of State must be satisfied that appropriate provision exists:

- for requiring HCRs to be entered on a register. This register may be owned by, or on behalf of, the Secretary of State.; and
- for the keeping of a public register of the members of the scheme.

The register is necessary to ensure the authenticity of the HCR, so that it can and will be trusted by those entitled to rely on it, i.e. buyers and lenders as well as the seller who procures it. In particular the register:

- ensures that the HCR can be produced only by a registered home inspector
- ensures that HCRs are insured

- ensures that consumers and others can check that the copy HCR provided to them is a true copy of the original
- ensures lenders can rely on the HCR as it will come from a trusted source so that the HCR will be used to underpin valuations in many cases
- enables the certification schemes to monitor the work of their members.

ODPM will prescribe the standards required for the completion of HCRs that will be implemented by multiple, competing Certification Schemes. These will require all Certification Schemes to hold a register of HCRs undertaken by its members, and also to lodge those reports in a central “archive” register. It is that register, and the associated services to enable the searching for HCRs across Certification Schemes, that is being procured through this process.

The department therefore wish to appoint a contractor to provide an IT infrastructure that will support the implementation of the Home Information Pack Scheme in England and Wales on 1st June 2007. Primarily this involves:

- Maintaining an ‘archive’ of reports that provide information on the condition of individual properties and their energy performance
- Providing portal services to enable the identification of Home Inspectors and acquisition of Home Condition Reports from local HCR Registers operated by authorised industry stakeholders.

The duration of the initial contract is likely to be in the region of 10 years. The contract is expected to be wholly funded by a fee payable by those who lodge HCRs, for each HCR lodged in the ‘archive’. The fee for lodging HCRs is to be set in regulations.

Scope of Work

The successful contractor will be responsible for the following services:

- Maintaining an ‘archive’ of reports that provide information on the condition of individual properties and their energy performance and retaining those reports for up to 15 years
- Providing a Home Condition Report Index service to identify location of Home Condition Reports within Local HCR Registers as operated by industry stakeholders authorised by the ODPM
- Providing information on and access to the reports as specified in Regulations and/or the ODPM

- Providing Home Inspector Register Index service to identify Home Inspectors within Local HI Registers as operated by industry stakeholders authorised by the ODPM
- Providing access to the HI index as specified by ODPM
- Providing a central addressing database related service to allowing search and identification of Properties and appropriate Unique Property Reference Number (UPRN) for cross-referencing all Home Condition Reports for the same property
- Governing ODPM owned XML Schema & Messages (which are currently in development) defining the service interfaces, including change management of future amendments
- Providing ongoing capabilities to enable monitoring of HCR content and HI competency, by Certification Schemes
- Providing appropriate information to ODPM such as to enable performance management of contractor and industry stakeholders authorised by the ODPM

The contractor will also be required to administer all aspects of the delivery of the register and services including the development, testing and implementation.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE COMPLETION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The respondent will be responsible for obtaining all information necessary for the preparation of its response to this Questionnaire and all later submissions as the procurement process proceeds. In addition, the respondent will bear all costs, expenses and liabilities incurred in connection with the preparation of its response to this Questionnaire and all further participation in the procurement process.

Information provided at this stage may be subject to verification at later stages of the procurement process. If any error, omission or misrepresentation is discovered, ODPM reserves the right to disqualify the respondent from further participation in the process no matter what stage in the process has been reached.

ODPM reserves the right not to proceed with the competition at any stage during the procurement process and shall not, in the event of discontinuance, whatever the cause, be liable for any costs incurred, directly or indirectly, by any potential supplier.

The ODPM reserves the right to take up any references provided in responses to this Questionnaire but will do not so without your consent.

Consortium Bids

Where a consortium or sub-contracting approach is proposed, all information requested must be given in respect of the proposed prime contractor. Relevant information must also be provided in respect of consortium members or sub-contractors who will play a significant role in the delivery of services or products under any ensuing contract. Responses must enable the ODPM to assess the overall structure proposed.

Where the proposed prime contractor is a special purpose vehicle or holding company, information must be provided as to the extent to which it will call upon the resources and expertise of its members or subsidiaries, together with relevant information in relation to such members or subsidiaries.

The ODPM recognises that arrangements in relation to consortia and sub-contracting may be subject to future change. Potential suppliers should therefore respond in the light of such arrangements as are currently envisaged.

Confidentiality

Responses to this Pre-Qualification Questionnaire will be treated in confidence, except that this obligation shall not apply to:

- a) Ministers and civil servants and others working with them to deliver the project (including their professional advisers), who will be entitled to access submissions, and the information contained within them, in whole or in part to the extent they deem necessary to enable them to deliver the project;
- b) submissions or parts of submissions which are indicated in writing as not requiring to be treated as confidential;
- c) information which is, or comes into, the public domain otherwise than through any disclosure not permitted under the terms of this document or otherwise by law; and
- d) the extent that the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister reasonably believes that it is required to disclose such information by law, including, without limitation, Environmental Information Regulations and the Freedom of Information Act , or by any regulatory or other government authority or in accordance with administrative practice such as the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

Evaluation Criteria

a) Pre-qualification

All potential suppliers that respond to the prequalification questionnaire will be assessed using the following evaluation criteria:

- experience of working on similar projects
- economic and financial capacity; and
- technical capacity and understanding of requirements
- compliance with law
- quality arrangements

The top scoring five to ten suppliers will be taken through to the next stage of the tender process. Invitations to supply Outline Proposals will be issued by 2nd May 2006.

b) Contract award

The basis for contract award will be given to the supplier that offers the best combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness in relation to the

requirements. Please note, however, that ODPM reserves the right not to proceed with the competition at any stage during the procurement process.

Submission of Completed Questionnaire

Please complete all parts of this questionnaire fully, preferably in typeface, providing all the necessary supplementary information. If separate sheets are needed, please clearly mark the top of each page with the number of the question to which each answer relates. In addition, please indicate under the relevant question that this has been done.

All questions must be answered in English.

Prospective service providers/ suppliers should answer all questions as accurately and concisely as possible. Where a question is not relevant to the responder's organisation, this should be indicated, with an explanation.

Please return the entire submission in 6 paper copies and a version on CD-ROM in Microsoft Word/Excel format.

The packaging must not bear any name or mark by which the respondent can be identified and the envelope should display the return label enclosed.

Deliver to:

[REDACTED]

Office of the Deputy Prime Minister

[REDACTED]

11th floor/E14

Ashdown House

123 Victoria Street

London

SW1E 6DE

Email:

[REDACTED]

To arrive no later than: 12 o'clock, on Monday 3rd April 2006.

Returns received after the closure deadline will be rejected.

Queries about the procurement

The Department will not enter into detailed discussion of the requirements at this stage. However questions may be addressed to:



using the query sheet contained in Appendix 1.

Telephone enquiries in relation to technical details will NOT be accepted.

Any questions, the answers to which, in the judgement of the Department, need to be shared with other suppliers who have requested the PQQ, must be tabled by e-mail, before close of business Monday 27th March.

If the Department considers any question or request for clarification to be of material interest, both the query and the response will be communicated, on a no name basis, to all service providers/suppliers who have responded.

All responses received and any communication from service providers/suppliers will be treated in confidence.

The ODPM reserves the right to take up any references provided in responses to this Questionnaire but will do not so without consent.

Organisation contact point

Suppliers have been asked to include a single point of contact in their organisation for their response to the pre-qualification questionnaire. The Department is not responsible for contacting the supplier through any route other than the nominated contact. The supplier must therefore undertake to notify any changes relating to the contact promptly.

QUESTIONNAIRE

GENERAL INFORMATION

a	Name of the company in whose name the tender would be submitted	
b	Contact name:	
c	Address:	
d	Telephone number:	
e	Facsimile number:	
f	E-mail address:	
g	Company Registration number:	
h	Date of Registration:	
i	Registered address if different from the above:	
j	VAT Registration number:	
k	Website address (if any)	
l	State type of legal entity (e.g. partnership, limited company, public limited company, etc.)	
m	Please provide an organisation chart and details of the management structure	
n	Please provide details of parent or holding company, where applicable.	
o	List the number locations of premises from which your organisation provides services similar to those required by the Department.	

TECHNICAL CAPACITY AND UNDERSTANDING OF REQUIREMENTS

BACKGROUND

p	Please provide a statement (maximum of four A4 pages of not less than 11pt font) outlining how you will be able to meet the requirements. This may include details of your understanding of the purpose, technology, business/change issues, management/maintenance requirements, software regulations, collaboration/interfaces, risks and issues, supporting hardware regulations, licencing requirements etc.	
q	Please provide a statement (maximum of four A4 pages of not less than 11pt font) outlining your experience over the past 3 years in providing similar systems and services. If the system is still in development please indicate when you expect the development to be completed.	
r	Please indicate how you would make services available to support the 'dry run' of the Home Information Pack scheme that will commence approximately two months after contract award.	
s	Please identify intended sub-contractors to be used for the provision of services/, identifying their name, address and service provision responsibility	
t	Please provide a brief outline of your policy regarding the use of sub-contractors	
u	Please provide details of three major recent private sector contracts the organisation named at "a" above has been awarded within the last 3 years for the provision of services similar to those required by the Department (in the following format). The ODPM reserves the right to take up any references provided in responses to this Questionnaire but will not do so without consent.	

v	Name & Address – 1	Contact name & phone number	Date contract awarded & value	Contract reference & description of services detailing subcontractors & their roles
w	Name & Address – 2	Contact name & phone number	Date contract awarded & value	Contract reference & description of services detailing subcontractors & their roles
x	Name & Address – 3	Contact name & phone number	Date contract awarded & value	Contract reference & description of services detailing subcontractors & their roles
y	Please provide details of three major recent contracts the organisation named at “a” above has been awarded by central government departments, agencies or NHS trusts within the last 3 years for the provision of services similar to those required by the Department (in the following format). ODPM reserves the right to take up any references provided in responses to this Questionnaire but will not do so without consent.			
z	Name & Address – 1	Contact name & phone number	Date contract awarded & value	Contract reference & description of services detailing subcontractors & their roles
aa	Name & Address – 2	Contact name & phone number	Date contract awarded & value	Contract reference & description of services detailing subcontractors & their roles
bb	Name & Address – 3	Contact name & phone number	Date contract awarded & value	Contract reference & description of services detailing subcontractors & their roles
cc	Has the entity at “a” above had a contract terminated (whether or not by agreement) or not renewed for failure			

	to perform to the terms of the contract in the last 3 years? If yes please provide details	
--	--	--

FINANCIAL AND ECONOMIC STANDING

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

dd	<p>Please enclose a copy of audited accounts for the organisation named at “a” above for the last 3 financial years or for the period of trading, if less. Please ensure that these include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - balance sheet, - profit and loss accounts or income and expenditure accounts, - statement of total recognised gains and losses, - full notes to the accounts, and <p>managing partner or director’s reports, and auditor’s report.</p>
ee	<p>Unless disclosed in audited accounts, if the organisation named at “a” above is part of a group of companies (or if the organisation is not trading), please also enclose a copy of the audited accounts for the last 3 financial years, or for the period of trading if less, of the organisation’s ultimate holding company. In the case of other types of legal persons, please provide appropriate details (e.g. list of partners).</p>
ff	<p>If the accounts being submitted include no financial year ending less than 10 months ago, please also include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a statement confirming that the trading position now is similar to the one at the date of the latest included audited accounts, or, if this is not the case, a statement with full details on the prime contractor’s current trading position, and <p>a statement of turnover since the last published accounts.</p>
gg	<p>Please enclose a statement of overall turnover in respect of services/supplies similar to the Department’s requirements for each of the last 3 financial years, or for the period of trading, if less.</p>
hh	<p>Please enclose a statement, as at the latest reporting date, of any contingent liability or loss where not otherwise reported, which would require disclosure in accordance with International Accounting Standard 10.</p>
ii	<p>Please enclose details of any significant financial or business factors, specific to the organisation named at “a” above and known at this time, that may have an impact on the prime contractor’s financial and economic standing in the future.</p>

BUSINESS CAPABILITY

jj	Principal areas of business activity			
kk	What is your total average manpower over the past 3 years?			
ll	The number of staff currently involved directly in the provision of services similar to those required by the Department:			
	Permanent staff numbers		Third party staff numbers	
mm	Of the above staff, please identify the numbers which hold the following skills: (insert skills relevant to the project in hand)			
nn	Details of staff turnover as percentage of your workforce for the last 3 years			
oo	Is your organisation registered under the Data Protection Act 1998? If Yes, please provide your registration number		Y/N :	

OTHER INFORMATION

COMPLIANCE WITH LAW

pp	Do any of the circumstances set out in Appendix 2 apply to the organisation at “a” above or to a director or senior officer or senior employee of the organisation? If “yes” please provide details on a separate sheet
----	---

CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS

qq	Please identify any potential conflicts of interest within the consortia or with major subcontractors that might arise if the prime contractor were selected.
rr	Please provide details of proposed approaches to mitigate any of these conflicts (if applicable).

QUALITY ARRANGEMENTS

ss	Please provide details of any quality assurance certification that your company holds e.g. ISO 9000 or equivalent standard. Please include a copy of any certificate. If no accreditation held, please attach an outline of your quality assurance policy.
----	--

tt	Please provide details of any quality assurance certification for which you have applied
uu	Please provide details of your quality assurance programme.

HEALTH & SAFETY

vv	Please provide brief details of your Health & Safety policy, where relevant to the Department's requirements, on no more than a single side of A4 paper.
----	--

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

ww	Please provide brief details of your Environmental policy, where relevant to the Department's requirements, on no more than a single side of A4 paper.
----	--

OTHER GENERAL INFORMATION

xx	Does any senior executive/officer of the organisation named at "a" above have any relatives who work in the Office of Deputy Prime Minister or are involved in the HIP project? If Yes, please provide details.
yy	Within the past 12 months has any senior executive/officer of the organisation named at "a" above worked in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister or has been engaged in the HIP project? Is any senior executive/officer currently working in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister or is engaged in the HIP project? If the answer is yes to any of these statements, please provide details.

WHEN YOU HAVE COMPLETED THE QUESTIONNAIRE, PLEASE READ AND SIGN THE SECTION BELOW.

I/WE CERTIFY THAT THE INFORMATION SUPPLIED IS ACCURATE TO THE BEST OF MY/OUR KNOWLEDGE AND THAT I/WE ACCEPT THE CONDITIONS AND UNDERTAKINGS REQUESTED IN THE QUESTIONNAIRE. I/WE UNDERSTAND THAT FALSE INFORMATION COULD RESULT IN THE EXCLUSION OF THE PRIME CONTRACTOR FROM FURTHER PARTICIPATION IN THE PROCUREMENT.

Signed:

Name:

Position:

For and on behalf of:

Date :

APPENDIX 1 – QUERY SHEET

FAO:



Query Number:

[to be completed by the Contracting Authority]

Contract Reference Number:


06043

Prime Contractor Name:

Contact Person :

E-mail :

Date :

Please insert query in table below and email this page to
 :

Ref No.	Query

APPENDIX 2

Do any of the following apply to the organisation named at “a” of the questionnaire, or to any of its directors, senior officers or senior employees?

(a) is bankrupt or is being wound up, whose affairs are being administered by the court, who has entered into an arrangement with creditors or who is in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure under national laws and regulations;

(b) is the subject of proceedings for a declaration of bankruptcy, for an order for compulsory winding-up or administration by the court or for an arrangement with creditors or is the subject of any other similar proceedings under national laws or regulations;

I has been convicted of an offence concerning his professional conduct by a judgement which has the force of res judicata;

(d) has been guilty of grave professional misconduct proven by any means which the Department can justify;

(e) has not fulfilled obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions in accordance with the legal provisions of the country in which he is established or those of the country of the Department;

(f) has not fulfilled obligations relating to the payment of taxes in accordance with the legal provisions of the country in which he is established or those of the country of the Department;

(g) is guilty of serious misrepresentation in supplying the information required under the provisions of the Directive on the criteria for qualitative selection.