



CONSULTANCY GATEWAY STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE (SOP)

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE			
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OWNER	Director of Finance		
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1.1	March 2010	N/A	Lisa Brooks Vicky Tanner



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CONSULTANCY GATEWAY SOP

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This procedure outlines the processes in place in order to request the use of consultants by all departments within British Transport Police (BTP).
- 1.2 It details the configuration of what will be termed as a 'Consultancy Gateway' in order to manage, control and monitor requests for external consultancy.
- 1.3 This SOP applies to Scotland, England and Wales commencing 01 April 2010. London Underground are currently excluded from this SOP.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Following reviews of the overall consultancy costs expenditure for 2008/2009 and the budget settlements for 2009/2010, it was apparent that a control strategy was required in order to better manage costs. The improved control procedures are intended to ensure that consultancy costs are kept to a minimum by scrutinising the need for engaging consultants and by maximising the use of in-house resources available in the Strategic Development Department (SDD).
- 2.2 In reviewing consultancy costs, it was recognised that improved clarity was required to distinguish between consultants and temporary staff engaged to fill roles normally undertaken by permanent appointments. This SOP therefore provides guidance and definitions of the relevant work.
- 2.3 It should also be clarified that the controls over consultancy apply to circumstances in which individuals are employed to undertake work on behalf of BTP in which payment is made primarily for the skills and time of the individuals involved. It does not apply where the contract involves provision of a service which requires a support infrastructure that does not exist within BTP.



- 2.4 Contracts for consultancy work may be with individuals operating as companies set up by them to supply their own services or with other organisations that employ the individuals for the purpose of providing consultancy services.
- 2.5 The circumstances in which individuals are covered by this SOP include the provision of advice to BTP in formulating its policy and strategy and also the provision of skills and resources to undertake activity that BTP has decided upon but for which specific resources and/or skills are required that are not available from the staff within the Requester's department/Area. Below are a few examples of the type of assignments that these resources would be carrying out. More detailed information can be found in Appendix A.

Examples of advisory services include:

- i) Provision of advice on the application of legislation, regulations or industry standards that impact on BTP in the delivery of its services.
- ii) Service reviews to consider the organisational structure within BTP and make recommendations for improved efficiency and service delivery.
- iii) Technical assessments of the infrastructure required by BTP to carry out its functions including buildings, information and communications services or vehicles.

Examples of specialist resources include:

- iv) Project management responsibilities for proposals being implemented by BTP.
- v) Additional work required in connection with projects and resolution of issues that require specialist skills not available in-house.



- 2.6 The use of consultants may be in relation to either revenue or capital funded proposals. For revenue items, the consultancy costs will be charged to the revenue account code E80000. Requisitions using this code will only be raised in SDD Corporate Support (CS).
- 2.7 Capital projects will use the codes set up for the project. CS will be notified of the relevant Capital Project/Job numbers by Finance. Clearance via the gateway will still be required for the engagement of specified professional services (subject to appropriate tendering arrangements), but generic approval can be requested for this type of engagement such as Quantity Surveyors.
- 2.8 The consultancy work outlined above can be distinguished from temporary staff engaged on contract to undertake work that is not materially different to that undertaken by staff occupying posts in the established staff structure. The terminology used to describe this situation is the engagement of a *contractor*. The processes for engagement of these individuals will be through liaison with the HR Business Centre.

3 DEFINITION

- 3.1 **Consultancy Gateway** - The mandatory process where all requests for consultants whether internal/external and generic/specialised, from across BTP are required to follow. The Gateway will be controlled and managed by CS based in SDD at FHQ.
- 3.2 **External consultant** – A person or entity that is engaged by BTP for a specified period to carry out a task either because in-house resources with suitable skills are not available or it requires specialist skills and knowledge not available within BTP.
- 3.3 **Temporary/Contract Staff** – A person employed by BTP through the sourcing of an external staffing agency, to perform tasks which in general do not differ materially from those employees working in the same area i.e. 'day to day' issues; not providing a service where the overall purpose is to make recommendations.



- 3.4 It is possible that a resource being engaged by BTP could fall under more than one of the above definitions such as a management accountant.

4 RESPONSIBILITIES

- 4.1 **Corporate Support Gateway SPOC** – To control and manage the use of the Gateway and to make essential decisions on the allocation of consultancy resources internally CS. CS will also raise the requisition charged to account code E80000 (external consultants) in respect of engagements funded from revenue sources. For Capital projects the relevant Capital project/Job number will be used.
- 4.2 **Procurement** – To ensure the procedure for the employment of external consultants is adhered to appropriately, and to procure external consultants in the most cost effective manner.
- 4.3 **Budget Holder** – The Requester of resources will assess the need for either a contractor or consultant, it is then the responsibility of the departmental budget holder to ensure that the procedures of this SOP are followed.

5 PROCEDURES

- 5.1 A BTP department will identify a need for a contractor/temporary staff or consultant. Appendix A will assist in the decision of whether a contractor / temporary staff or consultant is needed.
- 5.2 If the decision has been made that a consultant is necessary the Requester is required to complete Appendix B: Consultant Form. In this form the Requester will state if they believe the consultancy can be delivered by internal or external resources dependant on the skills required, possibly following consultation with CS. The expected timescale and experience likely to be needed by the resource should also be outlined.
- 5.3 If the Requester is not the budget holder he or she will need the budget holder to approve the form which then should be emailed to the consultancygateway@btp.pnn.police.uk account. (If it has been determined that a contractor/temporary staff is needed and not a consultant, then



the department or budget holder will need to contact the Human Resources Business Centre who will then action this request).

- 5.4 The Requester will receive a response within three working days.
- 5.5 If an internal consultant is requested and is available then they will be assigned and tasked with scoping the assignment. An Assignment Terms of Reference will be prepared which will clarify the scope of the assignment and deliverables as well as a more precise estimate for the timescale and resources required.
- 5.6 The Terms of Reference will then be completed and signed off. If the Assignment Terms of Reference indicates that more resources are needed from CS but they cannot be delivered within the required timescales, then the Requester may opt either to defer or cancel the assignment or use an external consultant.
- 5.7 If an external consultant is requested or would be more appropriate than an internal resource, the Requester must then prepare a Procurement Strategy if the transaction is £50,000 or above. (If the department does not have the funding available then the Requester must prepare a Business Case outlining the reasons why an external consultant is necessary, and that a request to CS has already been processed. This will then be assessed at Programme Board. If it is approved at Programme Board the Requester can then complete a Procurement Strategy).
- 5.8 The Procurement Strategy must include the scope, timescale of the assignment and any contractual implications. The Procurement Team will provide advice on completion of the Procurement Strategy. If satisfactory, the Procurement Strategy will be approved. (This is further detailed in Appendix C).
- 5.9 CS Gateway will have the responsibility for raising the E80000 requisition. This can only be done once the external consultant/resources has been chosen via the award recommendation paper (if the transaction is £50,000 or above), passed vetting and have signed a contract. MS may assist with the development of the terms of reference for the resource.
- 5.10 The Consultant will then be tasked with undertaking the assignment.



6 MONITORING AND COMPLIANCE

- 6.1 This SOP will be monitored for compliance through Programme Board and overseen by CS. Analysis of performance data will be presented to the Senior Command Team who will oversee the trend in performance of department's spending on external consultants.

7 APPENDICES

[Appendix A:](#)

Guidelines for Distinguishing between Consultants and Contractors/Temporary Staff

[Appendix B:](#)

Consultant Form

[Appendix C:](#)

Guidelines for engaging External Consultancy Services

[Appendix D:](#)

Process map of the Consultancy Gateway Procedures