

Session 2: Guidelines and best practice

Overview of draft guidelines

Introduction: what is the problem?

- ICT procurement inherently highly complex
- Context of legacy systems and risk of lock-in
- Need for explicit evaluation and consideration of options
- Public access and availability/re-use of data
- Difficulties with standards

Know your standards

- Potential benefits of standards but many different types and ... standards
 - How widely they are accessed/used/implemented?
 - How open they are?
 - Guarantee interoperability?
 - Overlap?
 - Exist?

Know your standards

1. Develop/maintain expertise
2. Keep up to date with developments
3. Engage the market
4. Pay attention to government recommendations/architectures

Sources of information: e.g.

- The Netherlands Standardisation Board and Forum.
- The Danish OIO Committee
- The Norwegian Agency

Identify ICT need

1. Evaluate need afresh rather than simply rolling existing systems forward
2. Specify objectives not methods
3. Consider ICT purchase as an investment:
 1. Conduct business case appraisal, including long term implications (exit costs/use of data)
 2. Include value of options being open
 3. Include risk and uncertainty
 4. Benchmark

Sources of information:

- UK HM Treasury 'Business Case Guidance'
- OSOR Guideline on public procurement of open source software
- UK Cabinet Office guidance on life cycle costing and procurement of open source software

Moving away from legacy systems

- Think about the impacts of operating within a legacy system – does this inefficiently constrain procurement decisions?
- Compare the future costs of remaining within the system with moving to more open system
- Develop a (long term?) implementation plan
 - Engage market for solutions
 - Benchmark costs
 - Other barriers e.g. institutional
 - Change management
- Coordinate with other organisations
- Inform the market

Define User Requirements

- Understand the wider context need:
 - Interoperability: reference architecture
 - Future use of the data generated or stored
 - Public access by businesses or citizens
 - Sharing and redistribution
 - Legal framework

Sources of information

- European Interoperability Framework is an example of an ICT reference architecture.
- The Smartcities' guide to ICT architectures
- Licensing guidelines (e.g. EUPL) OSOR guidelines for procuring open source

The available budget

- Know the limits!
- The upfront costs of redeveloping an open system may seem high in comparison with remaining with the legacy system – but take long-term interests properly into account
- Need for large upfront investment will have to be discussed well in advance
- Need for policy-level agreement

Find out what the market can provide

- What standards are supported by the market?
- Work with the market to develop suitable solutions
- Use information from the engagement process to develop technology-neutral specifications

Sources of information:

- Ireland's Buying Innovation guidelines
- STEPPIN project handbook
- Dutch manifesto template

Writing the tender

- Where possible avoid using brand names and proprietary technical specifications
- Be aware of the consequences of compatibility requests
- Include all necessary requests for openness
- Be aware of the standards used and reference them properly
- Where possible use templates to help to express the ICT product or system in technology-neutral terms

Sources of information

- Germany's BITKOM guides on wording tenders in a non-proprietary manner for desktop PCs, notebooks and servers
- UK forthcoming guidance on end-user devices
- OSOR guidance on requesting open standards and licence conditions
- eProcurement templates and software?

Evaluation of the procurement exercise

- Self-evaluation to record outcomes
- Write up case studies of procurement exercises to share best practice
 - What standards were used and what effect this use had
 - How well the procured product or solution was designed and delivered.
 - How the overall costs of the procurement compare to the initial benchmarking exercise, and
 - What adjustments need to be made to future benchmarking exercises.

Conclusion

- Reactions very welcome
- What practical examples are there of public authorities:
 - Conducting full business appraisals of ICT investments
 - Successfully moving away from legacy systems
 - Using templates or guides for technology-neutral specifications and referencing standards
 - Other best practice?