



Preparing your Ministry for the Revised Procurement Regulations and Procurement Guidelines

1.0 Embracing Change for Enhanced Public Procurement

Public procurement is an important lever for governance, economic development, and effective service delivery. The revised regulations and guidelines transform public procurement in Fiji from a transactional process into a strategic tool, recognizing its crucial role in achieving wider policy objectives, governance, economic development, and service delivery.

As the Government of Fiji prepares to gazette the revised Procurement Regulations, Ministries and Departments must proactively adapt their processes to ensure seamless compliance and maximize public value. This guide provides a structured approach to transforming procurement operations in anticipation of these changes, focusing on transparency, efficiency, and alignment with the new regulatory framework.

2.0 Understanding the Motivation for Transformation: Anticipating the Revised Regulations

The upcoming revised Procurement Regulations are designed to enhance accountability, promote sustainable practices, and streamline procurement processes. Ministries should understand that this transformation involves strategic shifts to:

- Strengthen compliance and ethical standards in alignment with the revised framework.
- Enhance supplier engagement and competition to foster a more inclusive and competitive market.
- Implement modern and flexible procurement methods to improve efficiency and transparency.
- Develop a strategic procurement plan that reflects the new regulatory requirements and Ministry objectives.
- Increase focus on local content and local economic development.

3.0 Establishing a Proactive Procurement Strategy: Preparing for the New Landscape

Strategic Procurement Planning: Aligning with the Revised Mandate

- Ensure the development of a comprehensive Annual Procurement Plan (APP) is aligned with the Ministry's budgetary allocations and **the requirements of the forthcoming revised regulations.**
- Establish process for thorough needs assessments, identifying procurement requirements based on long-term policy objectives and **the specific changes outlined in the new regulations.**
- Engage stakeholders in the planning process, including legal teams, to ensure alignment with the revised legal framework.
- Document the planning process, and include a forecast for the upcoming years, to allow for better market analysis, and to prepare for changes in market conditions due to the new regulations.

Defining Key Procurement Principles: Reinforcing Best Practices

- Value for Money (VfM): Emphasize total cost of ownership (TCO), quality, risk, and sustainability, with a focus on any new value for money definitions or requirements in the revised regulations.
- Fair Competition: Implement open, transparent, and non-discriminatory bidding processes, ensuring equal opportunities for all qualified suppliers, adhering to any new fairness standards in the regulations.
- Transparency: Maintain meticulous documentation, publish procurement information, and establish clear reporting mechanisms, paying close attention to any new transparency requirements.
- Sustainability: Integrate environmental and social considerations into procurement decisions, promoting responsible sourcing and reducing environmental impact, in line with any new sustainability directives in the regulations.
- Accountability: Establishing clear lines of responsibility, and audit trails, with increased focus on any new accountability measures.

4.0 Reviewing Human Resources: Building Capacity for Change

Capacity Building and Training: Preparing for the New Requirements

- Establish a robust continuous training for officers involved in the procurement process, specifically addressing the changes introduced by the revised regulations.
- Arrange for specialized training on emerging areas, such as risk management, sustainable procurement, contract management, and compliance with the evolving regulatory landscape.
- Encourage professional development
- Implement a knowledge management system, so important information is retained within the ministry, even when personal shifts.
- Ensure sufficient human resources are available to manage the procurement process

Ethical Standards and Compliance: Upholding Integrity in a New Era

- Implement and enforce a comprehensive Code of Conduct for Procurement Officials, emphasizing integrity and impartiality, **aligned with any new ethical standards in the revised regulations.**
- Conduct regular integrity assessments and conflict of interest checks, promoting a culture of ethical behaviour.
- Establish and promote whistle-blower protection mechanisms, encouraging the reporting of unethical practices.
- Include training on how to handle gifts, and hospitality, to avoid the appearance of impropriety.

Leadership and Governance: Driving Transformation from the Top

- Appoint dedicated Procurement Champions within the Ministry, responsible for driving procurement transformation initiatives and ensuring compliance with the revised regulations.
- Assess the need for a Procurement Review Committees and/or Ministry tender Committee to manage procurement below the tender threshold
- Clearly define roles and responsibilities for all officers involved in procurement, promoting accountability and efficiency.
- Ensure that senior management is involved and supportive of the procurement transformation.

5.0 Strengthening Procurement Resources: Investing in the Future

Financial Resources and Budgeting: Allocating for Compliance and Efficiency

- Ensure adequate budget allocation for procurement-related activities, including training, technology, and supplier development, considering the costs of implementing the revised regulations.
- Adopt a total cost of ownership (TCO) approach, considering long-term costs and benefits rather than just initial expenses.
- Improve funding mechanisms for supplier payments, minimizing delays and fostering positive supplier relationships.
- Implement a system for tracking and reporting on procurement expenditure.

Supplier and Market Engagement: Fostering Inclusive Growth

- Establish supplier development programs, particularly for SMEs and disadvantaged groups, promoting inclusive economic growth, with a focus on any new supplier engagement requirements in the regulations.
- Conduct thorough market assessments to ensure diverse supplier participation and competitive bidding.
- Maintain an approved supplier list based on performance evaluations and ethical standards.
- Develop supplier relationship management strategies, to ensure good communication, and mutually beneficial relationships.

6.0 Ensuring Compliance: Navigating the New Regulatory Landscape

Adhering to Legal and Regulatory Frameworks: Adapting to the Revised Mandate

- Ensure strict adherence to the upcoming revised Fiji Procurement Regulations and other relevant legal frameworks.
- Conduct regular compliance audits and performance evaluations, identifying and addressing areas for improvement.

- Establish robust procurement risk assessment protocols, proactively mitigating potential risks.
- Maintain updated copies of all procurement laws, and regulations, and ensure all procurement officers have easy access to these documents.

Monitoring and Evaluation: Tracking Progress and Ensuring Accountability

- Define clear Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for procurement efficiency, effectiveness, and compliance, aligned with the new reporting requirements in the revised regulations.
- Utilize procurement dashboards and reporting tools for real-time tracking and performance analysis.
- Report procurement activities to Fiji Procurement Office in a timely and accurate manner.
- Conduct post procurement reviews, to determine if the procurement met the needs of the ministry, and if lessons can be learned for future procurements.

7.0 Conclusion: Embracing Transformation for Sustainable Growth

The potential of public procurement to drive sustainable development, economic growth, and improved public service delivery in Fiji is directly tied to the efficient execution of the Revised Procurement Regulations and Guidelines by Ministries. This ongoing transformation requires strategic planning, strong governance, and a dedication by Ministries. Transformation is needed for the benefit of the people of Fiji.

8.0 More Information

For more information, visit www.fpo.gov.fj