

**WEST MIDLANDS FIRE SERVICE**

Making the West Midlands Safer, Stronger and Healthier

**wmfs.net**

**@WestMidsFire**

Fire Service Headquarters,  
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**West Midlands Fire Service**  
**Case Study: Framework Agreement**  
**for the supply of Gas Monitors**

## **Background**

Gas monitoring is essential to the safety of Emergency Service personnel to enable detection, identification and monitoring of harmful substances. Monitoring is key to determine the levels of PPE to be worn and the risk to firefighters, other Emergency Services and the public.

Emergency Service personnel frequently operate in a range of hostile environments, which place requirements on devices for ruggedisation and usability, which are not encountered for consumer devices. Some specific examples of these requirements are as follows:

- \* High levels of use requiring ingress protection and resistance to physical damage.
- \* The ability to use the devices while wearing gloves.
- \* Extended battery life, to allow high levels of device usage over a lengthy shift.
- \* Hydrogen Cyanide (HCN) detection, where required, following research <http://www.waterburyfire.org/Docs/providence.pdf>

Consultation took place with the Ambulance service due to the close working relationship the FRS have with the NHS HART Teams, and the close proximity in which we work together at incidents. Specialist responders within WMFS working with HART locally had identified that they were considering replacement of their current range of monitors. This led to wider consultation to replace their current gas monitoring capability, with a view of greater interoperability.

Consultation took place with the Police, due to a change in the level of PPE used at major incidents. This PPE has a requirement for continuous gas monitoring as part of a safe system of work. This was identified locally and jointly between WMFS and NHS HART West Midlands.

## **Process**

The scope of the Framework Agreement was to provide a mechanism for the three Emergency Services to establish call off contracts for the supply of gas monitors for operational staff to use at a range of incidents and training activities.

The Framework Agreement is based on a single Lot awarded to one supplier enabling direct award.

To ensure the gas monitors would be fit for purpose and meet all Services requirements WMFS' Procurement led worked with a Watch Commander from WMFRA's Research, Development, Technological and Innovation team, Officers from West Midlands Police and West Midlands Ambulance (HART).

Specifications and research gathered from FRS's, Ambulance and Police was used to produce the Framework Agreement specification.

The specification was developed taking into account: -

- Multi sensor monitors
- Single sensor monitors
- Replacement parts
- Life of product
- Standardisation of specification
- Standardisation of training and materials

- Aggregated demand

Due to the value of the procurement and as required by the Public Contracts Regulations the tender opportunity was published in the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU) in November 2017 as an open procurement procedure. Bids were evaluated based upon the following criteria/weightings:

- 50% price
- 45% quality
- 5% social value

The 8 bids received were evaluated by:

Devon & Somerset FRS; Kent FRS; Hampshire FRS; West Midlands Fire Service

Police National CBRN Centre

National Ambulance Resilience Unit

Samples were also requested from all bidders.

### **Outcome**

The Framework Agreement went live in March 2018. Two FRS's have called off from the Framework since it went live including WMFS and Hereford & Worcestershire Fire and Rescue. The Police National CBRN Centre have now also placed an order and other Services are expected to utilise the Framework shortly.

WMFS's Procurement section undertake the management of the Framework Agreement including monitoring the supplier's performance and the spend through the Framework.

The Framework Agreement provides the following benefits to participating FRS's:

- Higher level of discount offered due to collaborative approach (50% discount from the list price for framework orders compared to 25% to 35%)
- Savings to date (based on above) £30,000
- Free of charge user and technical level training, enabling each Service to carry out own calibration, saving £45 each monitor every 6 months
- Competitive fixed pricing
- No supplement for small orders
- Standardised specifications
- Reduced resources and time required to access goods
- No requirement to reopen competition
- Supplier Management - Performance monitoring by WMFS
- Greater interoperability between organisations

For further information on the Framework Agreement please contact Jacky Perkins, Senior Contracts Manager at: [jackie.perkins@wmfs.net](mailto:jackie.perkins@wmfs.net)