
FACTSHEET

December 13, 2005

Ministry of Attorney General and
Minister Responsible for Multiculturalism

REVIEW WILL BEGIN ON OPEN TENDERING PROCESS FOR BC SETTLEMENT AND ADAPTATION PROGRAMS

- On December 1, 2005, the BC Government sent a Request for Proposal (RFP) to approximately 35 pre-qualified suppliers to submit a proposal to conduct a review of the RFP process used in awarding of funds for the BC Settlement and Adaptation Programs in 2004 and 2005. The commitment to conduct this review was made in early 2005.
- The provincial government remains committed to fair, open and competitive tendering for acquiring services. The Province is conducting the review of this RFP process to determine whether there are adjustments or changes to the way it procures services in the settlement and language training services within open tendering that could make it best suit the particular circumstances of this sector.
- The BC Settlement and Adaptation Program provides funding for information and support services and English language training for new immigrants to help them adapt to life in their new home.
- Over the past three years, funding for these groups has shifted from a direct application process to an open solicitation process where agencies compete for contracts based on their qualifications and ability to provide the service. Over 66 agencies were awarded approximately \$19 million for BCSAP services.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

When will the review begin?

- The Request for Proposal for the contractor to conduct the review closes on January 4, 2006. The contract award is anticipated for mid to late January.
- The review itself is expected to occur between February and March. The final report is expected to be submitted to the Ministry by March 31, 2006.

Will service-providers be able to provide input?

- Yes. The review will include a consultation with immigrant and settlement services providers to determine their views on the RFPs and other procurement methods when acquiring Settlement and Language services.

How will the contractor be chosen?

- The contractors will be evaluated based on the following criteria:
 - Knowledge of and experience with procurement policies and processes and competitive procurement legislation and practice,
 - General knowledge of the multiculturalism and immigrant services sector.

Who will choose the contractor? Who does the evaluation?

- The RFP establishes certain mandatory and desirable criteria that each proposal will be evaluated against and assigned a score.
- The proponent that meets all the criteria and has the highest overall score will be awarded the contract.
- The evaluation of each proposal will be conducted by an evaluation team consisting of a minimum of three individuals.

Why did government select a pre-qualified list of candidates? Why didn't government post this as an open RFP?

- Earlier this year, the province posted a number of Request for Qualifications (RFQ) on the BC Bid website (www.bcbid.ca) to establish lists of qualified suppliers in the anticipation of future work in a number of government service areas.
- Any supplier or service provider who wanted to be included on a list of qualified suppliers could respond to the RFQ by submitting a response for evaluation and scoring.
- The RFQ and subsequent qualified supplier list approach streamlines the solicitation process by screening potential suppliers based on qualification criteria.
- The province invited suppliers from pre-qualified supplier lists specific to policy and procurement to respond to the Request for Proposal for the settlement and language services review.
- The RFQ is a common process used across government to reduce the time and resources required in solicitation process while ensuring government opportunities remain fair, open and competitive.

When will the RFP document be made public?

- The RFP document is now available for review on the Settlement and Multiculturalism Branch website at <http://www.ag.gov.bc.ca/sam/bcsap/index.htm> Please note that the RFP document has already been provided to qualified suppliers and proposals will only be accepted from those qualified suppliers.