

LONDON FIRE AND EMERGENCY PLANNING AUTHORITY (LFEPA)

The London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority (LFEPA) provides community fire safety, and fire and rescue emergency response services, together with emergency planning. Its main aim is to make London a safer city by minimising the risks and the social and economic costs of fire and other hazards. LFEPA is the UK's largest fire and rescue service. It employs approximately 7,000 staff of whom 5,800 are operational firefighters and officers. It is the third largest firefighting organisation in the world, protecting people and property from fire within the 1,587 square kilometres of Greater London.

LFEPA's procurement spend

LFEPA's annual procurement spend is approximately £86 million, the majority of which is on fire fighting operational equipment and personal protective equipment (PPE). This figure includes spend on a PFI project that covers the provision and maintenance of the vehicle fleet. It does not include the PFI project under development for the future construction of nine new fire stations.

“Our top-down commitment to responsible procurement is delivering real benefits to London. Through increased trading with SMEs and our leading carbon reduction initiatives we have maintained both the Gold standard of the Mayor of London's Green Procurement Code and our ISO 14001 EMS certification.”

Barbara Riddell
Director of Resources, LFB

Embedding Responsible Procurement

We have made efforts over several years to embed responsible procurement guidelines and practices into standard procurement procedures. We specify environmentally and socially acceptable products, services and ways of working in our contract conditions and specifications. We seek to include environmental and social appraisal criteria during tender evaluation. We are improving how we identify opportunities for improvement on responsible procurement through a risk register that reviews our forward plan of new and existing contracts due for renewal. This register was first developed by the procurement department to address environmental issues. It has been expanded to cover all the responsible procurement themes and extended for use across all major spending departments following an initial pilot phase.

We have tasked one of our Directors with championing sustainability and promoting action on how responsible procurement forms a major aspect of this role. Heads of Service with significant procurement spend have also had responsible procurement included in their work objectives.

The steps taken by LFEPA to integrate RP considerations into its activities were recognised in 2008 in winning two categories in the Mayor's Green Procurement Code awards. In 2007, the London Fire Brigade won the overall award and the award in the sustainable procurement category in the City of London sustainable city awards.

Case study

Delivering efficiencies: the Brigade Distribution Centre

To increase efficiency and deliver cost and environmental savings, LFEPA has changed its method and approach to distributing goods to its sites across the capital. The Brigade Distribution Centre (BDC), based in Croydon, provides a single repository for the delivery and return of the goods required by the network of 112 fire stations across the Greater London area, and other locations such as LFEPA headquarters and training centre in Southwark.

Key themes

The transformation has involved changing from a direct-to-station delivery service to cross-docking. Suppliers now deliver so that goods are ready for distribution to wherever they are needed, packed and picked. A day van service makes the deliveries and

covers routine delivery requirements, such as internal mail, or respiratory equipment in need of repair or testing. Fast moving consumables, such as stationery, were transferred across first and now we are moving to lower volume items such as clothing.

In the new approach, fire stations receive a single delivery of whatever they need and benefit from a take back service in which items such as mail, respiratory equipment for repair, or anything that needs recycling (such as batteries, uniforms, and print cartridges) can be returned to the distribution centre.

Outcomes

The BDC has delivered efficiencies. These include reduced supplier delivery miles, brigade stock levels, 40% less warehousing space, lower handling costs and »



Delivering responsible procurement Functional body overview – LFEPA

faster invoice payment. Cost savings have amount to approximately £97,000 through the vendor pre-pick. In operational terms, LFEPA has been able to reduce stock, specifically the number of items held by stores, by 74%. Further product categories to investigate and make improvements have been identified.

The BDC has also helped to provide a more secure and reliable method of delivery. As van drivers are LFEPA staff and can enter our premises, the problem of external suppliers being unable to make deliveries

when stations are closed because brigades are out on call has been eliminated. New goods are delivered to site faster and stock availability has improved.

As a result of the change, just one delivery per week is made by each of the cross-docking suppliers to the site at Croydon. While the existing vehicles being used meet the capital's low emission zone requirements through to 2010, we have been examining options for reducing emissions further, and recently trialled a state-of-the-art electric van for London-wide deliveries.



Team effort: the brigade distribution centre in Croydon is increasing the efficiency of LFB deliveries across London.

Delivering responsible procurement
Functional body overview – LFEPA

Securing greater efficiencies in procurement is often the result of introducing new requirements or provisions within a specific contract. Such an approach is clearly of value, and LFEPA (like other GLA functional bodies) will continue to look for ways to embed good practice within specific contracts. In this case, however, the approach has been different, in which procurement and supply chain efficiencies have been incorporated within a more systemic review of systems for purchasing, logistics and distribution, making improvements across a broad range of contracts.



“Implementation of LFB’s cross-docking process has enabled us to reduce our delivery destination from more than 30 locations to one – dramatically reducing our delivery costs and lessening the impact on the environment by driving fewer miles.”

Ian Dickinson
Government Sales Manager, Suppliers Team

