



Metropolitan Police Service

The Metropolitan Police Service (MPS), the UK's biggest police force, expects to spend around £850m on equipment and services this year – and responsible procurement is playing an increasingly central role in all of its buying activities.

Overview

Responsible procurement's social, environmental and economic principles have been embedded in all tender processes and are now standard features in most new MPS contracts.

In turn, MPS's suppliers are being encouraged to adopt them in contracts with their own suppliers, extending the reach and effects of responsible procurement along the supply chain.

The MPS is taking a lead in promoting responsible procurement among other police forces in England and Wales. Under an initiative by the Association of Chief Police Officers, a national Police Sustainable Procurement Working Group has been established this year to share ideas and best practice, and encourage adoption of responsible buying policies.

As part of this, the MPS has been instrumental in creating a standard Responsible Procurement 'toolkit' for use in police contracts by other forces.

To reward her efforts in leading this agenda, Fay Davis, Supplier Diversity and Environmental Manager at the MPS, has won the 2010 Personal Achievement and Exceptional Police Procurement awards from the Association of Police Procurement and Contract Professionals. Her MPS colleague, Allan Sneller, won the award for Best Sustainable Procurement Initiative for his work in reusing parts of riot shields.

Internally, too, the MPS is constantly looking for ways to improve and extend its own sustainability practices. One such idea is its 'Swap Shop', an intranet-based sales-and-wants service which enables police stations and other departments to advertise small items of stationery and other goods they no longer need.

By encouraging re-use, they not only save on the cost of buying new goods but also avoid wastage and possible landfill disposal charges. Since the Swap Shop was set up earlier this year it is estimated to have saved more than £17,000 in new purchases, with £6,000 saved in the past three months alone as staff become more familiar with the service.

MPS by numbers

- Biggest of UK's 43 area police forces
- 53,000 staff
- 32,500 uniformed officers
- Policing 620 square miles of Greater London
- £850m annual expenditure on procurement
- 15,000 suppliers
- More than 900 contracts
- 140 suppliers account for 80 per cent of spend

Case study

Metropolitan Police Service: **Are you sitting comfortably?**

Mention police equipment and most people probably think of radios, cars, handcuffs and helicopters. Tables and chairs are likely to come way down the list, if they come to mind at all.

However, with over 600 operational offices including police stations and 150 safer neighbourhood offices to equip and maintain, furniture figures prominently on the list of essentials.



Moving around – furniture removals from Wagstaff

MPS case study

For the first time, the contract for supplying office furniture to the MPS has been shaped by responsible procurement provisions. Significantly too, it has been won by a local SME – Wembley-based Wagstaff Interiors Group.

The contract covers the supply of all items of office furniture – chairs, tables, desks, pedestals and storage units – plus related logistic and design services.

Another ‘first’ with this contract, which took effect in July this year, is that it incorporates a hire facility under which items can be obtained for anything from one day to 12 months.

This gives the MPS the flexibility and convenience of having the items it needs, just when needed, without all the capital and storage costs. It also frees up valuable space at MPS premises. Additionally, MPS and Wagstaff have introduced a re-use facility through which furniture that may no longer be wanted at one location can be redeployed to another where it is needed.

Social and environmental considerations featured heavily in the contract. One example is that, where appropriate, furniture materials should be from sustainable sources. Bidders were also questioned about their carbon emissions – and those of their transport operators if deliveries were being sub-contracted.



Out on patrol

Responsible procurement principles are extended along the supply chain. Wagstaff is working with its delivery sub-contractor to sign up to the Mayor's Green Procurement Code and also to meet TfL's Freight Operator Recognition Scheme. This sets health and safety and quality standards for operators, and provides eco-driver training and tips on route management which can create efficiencies.

Although Wagstaff was pitching against large businesses, the firm won not just on price but crucially on its ability to meet both the MPS's furniture requirements and responsible procurement demands.

For Wagstaff, as an SME with an annual turnover of £35m, the MPS contract represents a major commitment. But Fay Davis, Supplier Diversity and Environmental Manager, believes SME's often display the responsiveness and attention to detail necessary with responsible procurement. 'We asked Wagstaff the other day about an aspect of their carbon footprint and within days received a detailed report setting everything out. For us it's been an excellent start, working in true partnership,' says Fay.



Clockwise from top: Measuring up, installation and on patrol