

Expression of Interest: Home Office Body Armour Test House Accreditation

The Home Office invites expressions of interests from prospective Test Houses located in the UK, European Economic Area, USA or Canada for the testing of body armour to the Home Office Body Armour Standard (2017) and portable ballistic protection to the Portable Ballistic Protection Standard (2011). The Home Office is seeking to accredit up to 6 Test Houses, however, only test houses meeting the requirements of the accreditation process will be accepted.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/home-office-body-armour-standard-2017>

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/115680/cast4711.pdf

Background:

The government is committed to ensuring the police have the best possible equipment to protect themselves and the public from harm. As part of this, the Home Office works closely with the National Police Chiefs Council and Home Office's Technical Partner to produce standards for Police Personal Protective Equipment, including body armour. Standards are reflective of police operational requirements ensuring the appropriate levels of protection are provided.

The Requirement:

Home Office standards set out the testing and approval process any new protective equipment for use by UK Police must follow in order to be certified. In broad terms:

- Commercial body armour and portable ballistic protection manufacturers develop products to meet the specifications for their respective ballistic or stab protection levels.
- Manufacturer provides the Home Office's Technical Partner with a declaration of construction and technical file for a given product, including details of its construction, technical drawings, and associated information.
- Home Office's Technical Partner will review the technical file, and if acceptable, inform the manufacturer and the independent accredited Test House, chosen by the manufacturer of the product, of approval to test.
- Manufacturer independently contacts the accredited Test House to arrange a test slot.
- Manufacturer sends samples of the product requiring accreditation to the accredited Test House, which independently conducts the testing to the standards specified and reports back to Home Office's Technical Partner for review.
- Certification is issued if the relevant requirements of the standard are met.

Additionally, an accredited Test House must:

- Ensure all staff are trained and competent to conduct testing.

- Have no commercial interest in the items being tested.
- Be accredited to the ISO 9001, or ISO 17025.
- Enter into a formal agreement with the Home Office once approved as an accredited Test House. Agreements will run for an initial period of two years, with an option to extend for a further 2 + 2 years. Any extension will be subject to agreement by both parties and an audit by the Home Office Technical Partner every 2 years.

Submission – PHASE 1

Please respond to this Expression of Interest (PHASE 1) by **13:00 on 21/04/2023** with confirmation of interest via e-mail to:
CollaborativeProcurement@homeoffice.gov.uk

Please provide a contact name and email address, as well as evidence of the below:

- ISO17025 or ISO9001 accreditation.
- Legally operating as a test range (licenses etc.).

Digital copies of the above documentation must be provided by a Test House in order to progress to PHASE 2. Failure to provide the above listed documents will result in automatic exclusion from this process.

Please note that the evidence returned should be restricted in file size to a maximum of 20mb per email. Responses must not exceed the stated file size and therefore may need to be submitted in 2 or 3 separate emails.

Note: Only those Test Houses that respond by 13:00 on 21/04/2023 with all necessary evidence, will be eligible to progress to PHASE 2 - Capability Assessment.

Indicative timeline of activity

Please refer to attached document

Note: The Authority reserves the right to change or amend the timetable.

Enquiries

Queries should be directed to: CollaborativeProcurement@homeoffice.gov.uk.

Please note that Test Houses must not contact any employee, agent or consultant of the Home Office or the Home Office Technical Partner who is in any way connected with this exercise, unless instructed otherwise by the Home Office or Home Office Technical Partner.