

EVIDENCE SPECIFICATION

<i>Evidence Specification Reference</i>
FS315019
<i>Evidence Specification Title</i>
SERVICES FOR DELIVERY OF PROVISIONAL REPRESENTATIVE MONITORING POINT AND PROVISIONAL BOUNDARY ASSESSMENT FOR NEW SHELLFISH HARVESTING AREAS IN UK
<i>Contract Duration</i>
1 April 2017 to 31 March 2019 with option to extend for a further 12 months.

This evidence specification, which forms part of the Invitation to Tender (ITT), comprises of three individual sections: -

- A. SPECIFICATION:** An outline of the requirement
- B. PROCUREMENT TIMETABLE:** An estimated timetable for the procurement of the proposed requirement
- C. TENDER REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATION CRITERIA:** Provides guidance to applicants on the information that should be included within tenders and on the evaluation criteria and weightings used by appraisers when assessing and scoring tenders

Tenders for FSA funded projects must be submitted through the FSA E-sourcing and contract management system, ECMS, using the following link: <https://food.bravosolution.co.uk/web/login.html>. Failure to do so may result in the tender response not being processed by the system or the response being automatically disqualified during the evaluation stage of the tender process.

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THE SPECIFICATION, INCLUDING PROJECT TIMETABLE AND EVALUATION OF TENDERS

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

The Food Standards Agency is a non-ministerial government department governed by a Board appointed to act in the public interest, with the task of protecting consumers in relation to food. It is a UK-wide body with offices in London, Cardiff, Belfast and York.

The Agency is committed to openness, transparency and equality of treatment to all suppliers. As well as these principles, for science projects the final project report will be published on the Food Standards Agency website (www.food.gov.uk). For science projects we will encourage contractors to publish their work in peer reviewed scientific publications wherever possible. Also, in line with the Government's Transparency Agenda which aims to encourage more open access to data held by government, the Agency is developing a policy on the release of underpinning data from all of its science and evidence gathering projects. Underpinning data should also be published in an open, accessible, and re-usable format, such that the data can be made available to future researchers and the maximum benefit is derived from it. The Agency has established the key principles for release of underpinning data that will be applied to all new science and evidence gathering projects which we would expect contractors to comply with. These can be found at <http://www.food.gov.uk/about-us/data-and-policies/underpinning-data>

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) is a non-ministerial department, accountable to the Westminster Parliament, the National Assembly for Wales, and the Northern Ireland Administration through the relevant Health Ministers. The FSA's main purpose as defined in the Food Standards Act 1999 is "to protect public health from the risks which may arise in connection with the consumption of food, and otherwise to protect the interests of consumers in relation to food."

A. THE SPECIFICATION

Background

Regulation (EC) 853/2004 specifies the health conditions for the production and placing on the market of live bivalve molluscs, tunicates, echinoderms and marine gastropods, such as mussels, oysters, scallops and razor clams. Under Regulation (EC) 854/2004, the Food Standards Agency (FSA) as a central competent authority, must establish the location and fix the boundaries of classified shellfish harvesting

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areas. On the basis of the bacteriological criteria, using the faecal coliform indicating bacteria, *Escherichia coli* (*E. coli*), the competent authority must list and classify these harvesting areas according to the degree of contamination as determined by samples of mollusc flesh collected from a Representative Monitoring Point (RMP – for managed aquaculture and wild fisheries) at frequencies prescribed in classification protocols¹.

The Specification

Tenders are invited to carry out:

PROCEDURE FOR DESIGNATING PROVISIONAL REPRESENTATIVE MONITORING POINTS AND UNDERTAKING PROVISIONAL BOUNDARY ASSESSMENTS

Prior to a full sanitary survey being undertaken, a provisional Representative Monitoring Point (pRMP) is designated to enable sampling to be initiated at the area for classification purposes. The pRMP is set to provide the most suitable representation of the microbiological quality of the area where the shellfish is grown, based on a desk top review, assessment of publically available information on the geographical characteristics of the area and potential sources of pollution, as well as any existing sanitary surveys and/or *E. coli* data relating to the area (if available) or any neighbouring classified harvesting areas (where relevant).

The purpose of the pRMP assessment is to determine the location of a pRMP to inform the sampling plan; it also confirms the provisional boundary of the area to be classified. Although the boundary of the harvesting area is suggested in the harvester's application, it is necessary to define the boundary co-ordinates of the water body based on the available evidence to ensure any identified sources of pollution are considered and excluded.

The provisional sampling plan includes details on the pRMP location, tolerance for deviation from the prescribed sample collection point (pRMP), depth of sampling, frequency of sampling and production area boundary (see Annex 1).

pRMP assessments may also be required:

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Classification Of Live Bivalve Molluscs In England and Wales

<http://www.cefias.defra.gov.uk/media/748069/20141029%20classification%20protocol%20revised%20version%2010%20final.pdf>

Classification Of Live Bivalve Molluscs In Northern Ireland

<http://www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/multimedia/pdfs/sampling-ni-protocol.pdf>

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- Where different species require classification in an existing classified area, or
- Where changes are made to the boundary of existing classified area, or
- For re-evaluation of existing boundaries due to the movement of stock or changes to harvesting requirements

SERVICE REQUIREMENTS

Based on the number of applications for previous years, and current intelligence on harvesting activity, the following **estimated** numbers of pRMP assessments for each country are presented in a table below. A degree of flexibility may be required with regards to numbers of assessments required under this contract. Tenders should state if FSA would have flexibility to either reduce or increase volume in comparison to that suggested in the requirement.

Tenders should give a base price per assessment (with a breakdown of the staff and other elements) but also indicate any volume discounts that are available.

Estimated figures for 2017/18 and 2018/19.

Country	2017/18	2018/19
England and Wales	10	10
Northern Ireland	3	3

Tenders are invited to provide a service to identify suitable pRMPs and provisional boundary assessments for all applications submitted to FSA between 1 April 2017 and 31 March 2019 (with option to extend for a further 12 months) for shellfish harvesting areas across 'England and Wales' and 'Northern Ireland'. Separate bids covering each geographical area will also be considered.

Tenders are invited for the following areas:-

- I. England and Wales
- II. Northern Ireland

- Maximum of 2 and minimum of 1; please provide details of any applicable discount for multiple awards.
- Please state in your application if you would consider undertaking the project for 'England and Wales' or 'Northern Ireland' only or for both areas.

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The aim of this programme is to provide the FSA with a preliminary assessment and recommendations with regards to setting a pRMP, a provisional boundary and, where necessary advice on a provisional sampling plan for new areas or amendments to existing classified areas to allow commencement of official control *E. coli* monitoring as soon as possible on receipt of application for classification or notification of changes to classified areas.

Specification

The FSA requires the following service for provision of pRMP assessments:

1. For each new area to be classified, or existing classified area where changes to classified species, area boundaries or location of RMP are required, identify a pRMP (where relevant), a provisional boundary and a provisional sampling plan
2. One or more pRMP(s) and the boundaries of an associated zone or zones (for England and Wales) and production areas/beds (for Northern Ireland) to be classified will be identified on the basis of an assessment of the information from the classification application form provided by the FSA and information identified by the supplier as described in paragraphs 3 and 4.
3. The supplier will consider the location, extent and nature of the proposed shellfishery in conjunction with readily available information on permitted sewage discharges in the area, location of major watercourses, harbours and any other potential sources of microbiological pollution.
4. This information will be considered in conjunction with geographical information obtained from sources such as Ordnance Survey maps or UK Hydrographic Office charts and any other readily identifiable internet sources.
5. The supplier will provide recommendations for the potential use of shellfish indicator species where appropriate, that can be used within the area to classify/monitor other species.
6. The FSA will provide the supplier with a catalogue of available sanitary surveys and surveys reviews and access to microbiological data from historical monitoring of the area or surrounding waters.
7. The location of the pRMP (expressed in both WGS 84 latitude/longitude and NGR measurements) will be communicated to the FSA, along with a written pRMP assessment report for each location. The written report shall detail the following:

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- a. A summary of the major potential faecal pollution sources;
- b. A summary of potential significant chemical pollution sources;
- c. Information on nearby existing classified areas;
- d. A summary of historical microbiological data (if available);
- e. An assessment of principal sources of faecal contamination;
- f. Recommendations on proposed pRMP(s), provisional boundaries for the area and sampling plan (see Annex 1 for an example of a sampling plan);
- g. Recommendations on the potential use of indicator species (where relevant);
- h. Items e and f will be documented in text and accompanied by associated data tables and map or maps.

CAPACITY

Capability

FSA requires the Contractor to provide the following levels of capability:

Provide and maintain suitable equipment for carrying out service. This will include but is not restricted to: suitable GIS/mapping technology.

Provide and maintain suitably qualified and trained personnel for carrying out the service;

Liaise with shellfish farmers in relation to carrying out the assessments, as necessary;

Liaise with relevant sampling contractors, local authorities, Government Departments and Agencies and other partners as necessary;

Details of quality control procedures shall be made known to the Agency and be available for audit if requested;

The contractor will submit written pRMP assessment reports to the Agency within 15 working days of the assessment agreed initiation date.

The Contractor will communicate any deviations to standard procedure in writing to the Agency.

Contingency

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It is essential that the following contingency planning can be provided:

Develop and maintain contingency arrangements for the completion of pRMP reports.

Consideration of capacity and timescale to undertake more than one assessment at a time if this is urgent and necessary.

Future Provision

On an ongoing basis, the Agency will review the delivery of this contract to optimise efficiency. Should this identify other locations within the UK, or duties appropriate to the skills utilised in this contract these may be added by the means of Variation to Contract

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Annex 1

An example of a provisional sampling plan

PRODUCTION AREA	TBC by FSA
SITE NAME	TBC by FSA
SIN (Site Identification Number/Reference)	TBC by FSA
SPECIES	e.g. Common mussels
TYPE OF FISHERY	e.g. Long-line aquaculture
LOCATION OF RMP	Provide NGR/WGS 84
TOLERANCE (meters-M)	e.g. 40
DEPTH (meters - M)	e.g. 1
METHOD OF SAMPLING	e.g. Hand
FREQUENCY OF SAMPLING	e.g. 10 monthly samples
PRODUCTION AREA BOUNDARY	The area bounded by lines drawn from - provide NGR/WGS 84 for each point of reference

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B. PROCUREMENT TIMETABLE

Table 1 details an **estimated** project timetable for the project. Tenderers should however be aware that the Agency needs to acquire the evidence outlined in this ITT in a timely manner and you should justify your timings in your work plan.

TABLE 1. ESTIMATED PROJECT TIMETABLE

EXPECTED DATE	INVITATION TO (ITT) TENDER
16-Sep-2016	Invitation to Tender (ITT) issued by the Agency
16-Sep-2016	ITT Clarification period opens*
18-Oct-2016	ITT Clarification period closes**
25-Oct-2016 at 12 Noon	Closing date for submission of ITT responses***
Nov 2016	Evaluation of ITT responses
Nov – Dec 2016	Tenderers contacted with points raised by appraisers for clarification on their tender, with 2 weeks to respond
Jan 2017	Appraisal panel meeting held to consider clarified ITT responses
Jan 2017	Tenderers notified of outcome of appraisal and preferred Tenderer (or Tenderers) identified
Feb 2017	Clarification meeting with the preferred Tenderer(s). Agreement of Final Specification; Project Plan; Price and Contract Terms
March 2017	Contract awarded and signed
April 2017	Project commences

* If a Tenderer wishes to raise any points of clarification over the procurement process, the actual project objectives or any other query these must be raised through the ECMS by the date specified.

** Queries will not be answered after this date.

*** Submissions must be uploaded onto the ECMS before the closing date and time.

§ These stages are optional

Further Information

For any technical queries, points of clarification regarding this specification, queries regarding the use of ECMS or the procurement procedures please submit through ECMS.

Closing Date

Tenders should be submitted on ECMS **by the date specified on ECMS.**

Tenders received after this time will not be considered or evaluated. Please allow sufficient time to upload your tender and all supporting evidence before the closing date.

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Notification of Submission of Tender

On successfully submitting your tender you should see a popup box appear on the screen indicating that your tender has been successfully submitted. In addition you will receive an automatic email from ECMS with a reference code.

C. EVALUATION OF TENDERS

The Tenderers Application consists of the:

- Technical envelope (80% of overall value), in which applicants should detail the approach, the work plan and their ability to undertake the work, and
- Financial envelope (20% of overall value), in which applicants should outline all costs to conduct the proposed work, and
- Any other relevant supporting information

Tenders will be evaluated by FSA internal appraisers and external experts using a numerical system. The table below shows the weightings that have been allocated to each section of the application form and these will be used by the appraisers:

TABLE 2. EVALUATION CRITERIA FOR SELECTION OF SUCCESSFUL TENDERER

CRITERIA	PERCENTAGE WEIGHTINGS
TECHNICAL CRITERIA – 80% overall Value	Made up of
1. Tender summary and objectives	10%
2. The scientific approach/scope of work	20%
3. The plan and deliverables	10%
4. Organisational experience, expertise and staff effort	15%
5. Project management	10%
6. Risk management	5%
7. Quality management	10%
FINANCIAL CRITERIA – 20% overall value	20%

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The Technical Envelope

The Technical envelope is split in to 7 sections for evaluation. Guidance on how to complete each section is provided within the actual application form.

A numerical appraisal scoring system will be used to assess the information given in the Technical envelope of the tender. Appraisers will allocate a score of 0, 30, 60, 80 or 100 to each part of the Technical envelope, depending on the quality and relevance of evidence provided. The scores will then be subjected to the weightings given in Table 2.

All technical criteria will be evaluated as follows:

SCORE	DESCRIPTION FOR SCORE OF EACH CRITERIA
100	Tender fully meets or exceeds the criteria set
80	Tender would require minor modification but almost fully meets the criteria with only a few gaps in the evidence remaining
60	Tender would require some modification but addresses most of the criteria, but may not be detailed enough and/or has several gaps remaining
30	Tender would require significant modification due to significant gaps
0	Tender does not meet the specification or policy

The Financial Envelope

The Financial envelope is split in to 5 sections. Guidance on how to complete each section is provided within the actual application form.

A numerical appraisal scoring system will be used to assess the information given in the Financial envelope of the tender. Appraisers will allocate a score of 0, 30, 60, 80 or 100 to the Financial envelope, depending on the quality and relevance of evidence provided. The scores will then be subjected to the weighting given in Table 2.

Requirement for the financial envelope

Please complete the Finance template provided. Costs should be quoted excluding VAT for the purpose of comparison of tenders. The Agency's financial year runs from 1 April to 31 March. All costings should be recorded in line with this timescale.

Evaluation of the financial envelope

Financial criteria will be evaluated as follows:

SCORE	DESCRIPTION FOR SCORE OF THE CRITERIA
100	There is full justification for the levels of staffing and the overall

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	resources are appropriate. The tender is the best value for money for the work proposed to meet the specific evidence requirement advertised
80	There is some justification for the levels of staffing and the overall resources requested. The tender is reasonable value for money for the work proposed to meet the specific evidence requirement advertised.
60	Limited rational is given for the resources requested and/or the tender does not offer very good value for money, but is not poor value
30	The tender is relatively poor value for money with little/no justification for costs or resources requested.
0	The tender costs are not considered value for money and the applicant provided no rationale for costs or resources requested