



Home Office

Request for Information  
Test facility for the assessment of police irritant sprays

## **Home Office - S&T Commissioning Hub**

**Test facility for the assessment of  
police irritant sprays in accordance  
with the Home Office Standard (23/14)**

**Request for Information**

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# Introduction & Background

## 1.1 Terminology

When reading this document, the following terms apply:

“**Authority**” – means the Home Office.

“**You**”/ “**Your**” or “**Potential Provider**” – means the organisation, business or company which is completing this Request for Information (“RFI”).

## 1.2 Introduction

The Authority seeks to determine market potential and consider market views on the requirements with a view to ensure such views are considered for any potential procurement that the Authority may wish to launch.

No information contained in this RFI, or in any communication made between the Authority and any Potential Provider in connection with this RFI, shall be relied upon as constituting a contract, agreement, or representation that any procurement or contract may result from this RFI. Under no circumstances shall the Authority incur any liability in respect of this RFI or any supporting documentation.

The Authority will not reimburse any costs incurred by Potential Providers in connection with preparation and submission of their responses to this RFI.

## 1.3 Background

The Home Office publishes and maintains a Standard for Police Chemical Irritant Sprays: CS and PAVA. Testing, in accordance with this standard, is currently conducted by the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (Dstl).

The testing requirements are set out in Section 5 of the standard, which is available online at the following link:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/337910/standard-police-irritant-sprays-2314.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/337910/standard-police-irritant-sprays-2314.pdf)

The Authority is considering options for external test facilities able to conduct testing according to Section 5 of the Standard. The Authority will retain the responsibility for checking requirements detailed in all other sections of the Standard, except for Section 5.

The Authority is issuing this Request for Information gauge the interest and to understand the capabilities in relation to undertaking this work.

## 1.4 Aims and Outcome of this Request for Information

The Home Office is seeking input from test facilities that would be able to undertake testing to defined specifications in accordance with Section 5 of the Home Office Standard for Police Chemical Irritant Sprays: CS and PAVA (Publication Number: 23/14).

## 1.5 Current Position and Potential Scope

Certification testing of police irritant sprays are currently conducted within government. The Authority is exploring options for partnering with independent test facilities that are capable of conducting certification testing of irritant spray products.

Assessments would be conducted against defined test methods as described Section 5 of the Home Office Standard for Police Chemical Irritant Sprays: CS and PAVA (Publication Number: 23/14).

CS and PAVA Irritant Sprays are classified as Prohibited Weapons under Section 5 of the Firearms Act 1968, which should be considered by any test providers. UK based test facilities will need to be able to safely store and handle Section 5 weapons and such facilities will need to obtain and hold appropriate authority / licenses.

## 1.6 Indicative Timetable

Set out below, in Table 1.4, is an indicative timetable to allow the Authority to progress the RFI investigation at a desired pace. The Authority reserve the right to amend the schedule at any time.

Date	Activity
09/08/23	Publish 'Prior Information Notice (PIN)' – request for information
11/09/23	<b>Return RFI by 12 noon.</b> Responses are required as soon as possible to inform next steps, but the RFI will remain open until 11/09/23

## 1.7 Authority Named Contact Point

The Authority named contact point for the RFI is:

email: [Collaborativeprocurement@homeoffice.gov.uk](mailto:Collaborativeprocurement@homeoffice.gov.uk)

## 1.8 Guidance for Completing the RFI

Please observe the following:

- Recipients are invited to complete the RFI, Sections A and B below and to return it, together with any relevant supporting information, to the Authority by the due date for return.
- Please ensure that ALL questions are fully completed in English. Please answer all questions as accurately and concisely as possible in the same order as the questions are presented.
- Where a question is not relevant to your organisation, this should be indicated by entering N/A, (not applicable) with an explanation as to why this is.
- All digital Annexes must be supplied in MS Office format (MS Word, PowerPoint, Excel or Project) or .pdf
- Please be as explicit and comprehensive in your responses to this RFI as this will be the single source of information on our assessment of the potential solutions marketplace will be based.
- Please return the completed RFI in electronic form to the person detailed in paragraph 1.7 above.

## 1.9 Queries about the RFI

All requests for clarification or further information in respect of this RFI should be addressed to the Authority named contact point. No approach of any kind in connection with this RFI should be made to any other person within, or associated with, the Authority.

All queries must be submitted before noon on **21/08/2023** to [Collaborativeprocurement@homeoffice.gov.uk](mailto:Collaborativeprocurement@homeoffice.gov.uk)

This RFI is being provided on the same basis to all potential solution providers to facilitate the gathering of information related to the marketplace. The Authority will not enter into detailed discussion of the requirements at this stage.

## 1.10 Freedom of Information

In accordance with the obligations and duties placed upon public authorities, all information submitted to the Authority may be disclosed in response to a request made pursuant to the FoIA.

In respect of any information submitted by a Potential Solution Provider that it considers to be commercially sensitive the Potential Provider should:

- a) clearly identify such information as commercially sensitive;
- b) explain the potential implications of disclosure of such information; and
- c) Provide an estimate of the period of time during which the Potential Provider believes that such information will remain commercially sensitive.

**Please submit responses to a, b or c as an Annex with the completed RFI.**

## Section A

### Organisation Details

Q Ref.	Information required	
A 1-1	Full name of organisation	Organisation responding to the RFI
	Registered office address	Property name, street name, town, county, postcode, country
A 1-2	Type of organisation	E.g. PLC, limited company, LLP, other partnership, sole trader, other (please specify)  If PLC, limited company or LLP please provide Companies House registration number
A 1-3	Are you a Small, Medium or Large organisation	Enter the word 'Small', 'Medium' or 'Large' based on the following Companies House definitions:  To be a small company, at least two of the following conditions must be met: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual turnover must be £2.8 million or less</li> <li>• The balance sheet total assets must be £1.4 million or less</li> <li>• The average number of employees must be 50 or less</li> </ul> To be a medium-sized company, at least two of the following conditions must be met: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual turnover must be £11.2 million or less</li> <li>• The balance sheet total assets must be £5.6 million or less</li> <li>• The average number of employees must be 250 or less</li> </ul> To be a large company you will be greater than all of the foregoing.
A 1-4	Contact details for enquiries	Contact name, title, address, email, telephone number
A 1-5	Company operating address (if different from that of registered office, provided in response to A1-1)	Property name, street name, town, county, postcode, country

## Section B

### Technical & Professional Ability

Q Ref	Information required	
B1	Please supply examples of projects in which you have recently been involved that are of a similar nature to this project	<p><b>Example information to be included:</b></p> <p>Contract Start Date</p> <p>Contract End Date</p> <p>Contract Value</p> <p>Description of Contract (max one A4 page)</p>
B2	<p>Please provide details of your Section 5 authority to handle prohibited weapons to enable testing of irritant sprays.</p> <p>If you do not have Section 5 authority, please outline how and when you would gain such authority.</p>	<p><b>Example information to be included:</b></p> <p>Documents relating to existing Section 5 authority</p> <p>Project plan and timelines for obtaining Section 5 authority</p>
B3	Please provide details of relevant quality systems for test and evaluation of products within your facility (e.g. ISO9000 or ISO17025)	<p><b>Example information to be included:</b></p> <p>Documents issued by UKAS or a similar body relating to ISO or other certification</p>
B4	<p>Please outline the capability, including facilities, equipment, and competent staff that you:</p> <p><b>a)</b> currently have; or</p> <p><b>b)</b> would implement (and approximate timescales for this)</p> <p>to enable test and evaluation of police irritant sprays.</p>	<p><b>Example information to be included:</b></p> <p>Description of facilities and equipment (existing or proposed)</p> <p>Staff training or competence records / descriptions</p>
B5	<p>Please provide detail of the potential range of costs for a service like this.</p> <p>The Authority is interested in information on what would have an impact on the potential costs, any additional costs, and how costs are broken down.</p>	<p><b>Example information to be included:</b></p> <p>Cost breakdown including “standing” (facility) charges and/or costs for completing certification testing of a single product</p>