

OFFICE OF THE PROCUREMENT OMBUD

FOLLOW-UP REPORT TO THE 2021-2022
PROCUREMENT PRACTICE REVIEW OF
THE NATIONAL RESEARCH COUNCIL
CANADA

SEPTEMBER 2025



Government
of Canada

Office of the
Procurement Ombud

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du Canada

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de l'approvisionnement

Canada The wordmark for Canada, with a small red maple leaf icon to the right of the word.

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Introduction

1. In accordance with paragraph 22.1(3)(a) of the *Department of Public Works and Government Services Act*, the Procurement Ombud has the authority to review the procurement practices of departments to assess their fairness, openness and transparency and to make any appropriate recommendations to the relevant department for the improvement of those practices. Such reviews, which are performed by the Office of the Procurement Ombud (OPO), are referred to as Procurement Practice Reviews (PPRs).
2. In 2021-2022 OPO conducted a PPR entitled "Procurement Practice Review of the National Research Council Canada," which included 8 recommendations to address identified issues. A final report was issued in September 2022 and published on OPO's website.
3. As a standard practice, OPO follows up on recommendations resulting from PPRs to determine whether federal departments have implemented their management action plans in response to the Procurement Ombud's recommendations. This Follow-up Review includes a summary of results from the initial PPR and OPO's assessment of progress made by the National Research Council Canada (NRC) in response to the Procurement Ombud's 8 recommendations. This report also includes an organizational report card that facilitates comparisons across federal departments over time.

Results from initial Procurement Practice Review

4. The objective of the initial PPR of the NRC was to determine whether the Department's procurement practices pertaining to evaluation criteria and selection plans, solicitation, and evaluation of bids and contract award, supported the principles of fairness, openness and transparency.
5. For the PPR, OPO analyzed the NRC's procurement practices under 3 Lines of Enquiry (LOE). Below are descriptions of the LOEs, a brief summary of observations for each, and the Procurement Ombud's 8 recommendations included in the initial PPR report.
LOE 1: Evaluation criteria and selection plans were established in accordance with applicable laws, regulations and policies.
6. For LOE 1, OPO's initial review found that mandatory criteria were not overly restrictive and, for the most part, were aligned with requirements; however, a majority of files did not define mandatory criteria in a clear, precise and measurable manner. Furthermore, it found that point-rated criteria and rating scales were not overly restrictive, were appropriate to the requirement, and reflected the relative importance of the criteria. Most files, however, contained point-rated criteria and scoring grids that lacked clarity and were unnecessarily subjective. Finally, the review found that the selection methodology was clearly communicated and aligned with the requirement in most solicitations, with some exceptions.

7. The Procurement Ombud made 2 recommendations to address the issues identified under LOE 1:

Recommendation 1: NRC should establish a quality control process to ensure that mandatory and point-rated evaluation criteria and scoring grids are communicated in solicitations in a clear, precise and measurable manner.

Recommendation 2: With respect to its Request for Quotation (RFQ) processes, NRC should establish a process to ensure that solicited suppliers are informed of the competitive nature of the processes and the method by which the successful supplier will be selected.

LOE 2: Solicitation documents and organizational practices during the bid solicitation period were consistent with applicable laws, regulations and policies.

8. For LOE 2, OPO's initial review found that solicitation documentation was in most instances complete; however, several issues were noted regarding the provision of a clear description of the requirements and instructions for submitting bids. In addition, most communications with suppliers were found to be appropriate and supported the preparation of responsive bids; however, issues regarding fairness, documentation and the communication of solicitation results were also noted.

9. The Procurement Ombud made 3 recommendations to address the issues identified under LOE 2:

Recommendation 3: NRC should establish mechanisms to ensure [Request for Proposals] RFPs and RFQs contain complete information and instructions for submitting bids. In addition, when soliciting bids using [Public Services and Procurement Canada] PSPC supply arrangements, NRC should ensure it complies with all bid solicitation document and process requirements established in these methods of supply, including minimum solicitation periods and publication requirements.

Recommendation 4: NRC should establish a process to ensure that all relevant information is shared with all suppliers simultaneously and that all relevant communications with suppliers are properly documented.

Recommendation 5: NRC should establish a process to ensure that applicable contract award notices are published within the required timeframe and regret letters are sent to unsuccessful suppliers.

LOE 3: Evaluation of bids and contract award were conducted in accordance with the solicitation.

10. For LOE 3, OPO's initial review found inconsistencies in the evaluation of bids and deviations from the planned approach and noted that in 3 instances a contract or standing offer was incorrectly awarded or issued. The review also found incomplete procurement file documentation.

11. The Procurement Ombud made 2 recommendations to address the issues identified under LOE 3:

Recommendation 6: NRC should implement appropriate supervision and review mechanisms to ensure that evaluations are carried out in

accordance with the planned approach and that contracts or standing offers are not awarded or issued to non-compliant bidders.

Recommendation 7: NRC should establish a mechanism to enforce the requirement to document every decision of business value and maintain up-to-date and complete electronic procurement files.

12. Finally, OPO's initial review noted issues outside the three LOEs, captured under "Other Observations," including non-contracting officials conducting contracting activities.
13. The Procurement Ombud made 1 recommendation to address issues noted under "Other Observations":

Recommendation 8: NRC should ensure that any officials engaging in the procurement process receive adequate support and training to ensure that sound stewardship practices are followed and that Canada's obligations under the *Government Contracts Regulations*, applicable sections of national and international trade agreements, and the Treasury Board Directive on the Management of Procurement are respected.

Methodology and management action plan assessment summary




14. When launching this Follow-up Review, OPO asked NRC to self-assess their progress in implementing the 8 recommendations stemming from the initial review, using a progress scale provided by OPO. This scale ranged from "No progress" (level 1) to "Full implementation" (level 5), as outlined in Appendix 1. Furthermore, NRC was asked to provide OPO with documentation to support their self-assessment. OPO reviewed NRC's self-assessment and supporting documentation for their overall reasonableness and credibility.
15. NRC self-assessed the level of implementation of their actions at level 5, i.e., "Full implementation" for all 8 recommendations. Substantiating documentation provided by NRC demonstrated that progress has been made, structures and processes are mostly implemented and operating as intended, and that results have been identified. Therefore, OPO agreed with almost all aspects of NRC's self-assessment and assessed the level of implementation at level 5 "Full implementation" for 7 recommendations, and at level 4 "Substantial implementation" for 1 recommendation (recommendation 2). Details of OPO's assessment are provided in Appendix 3.
16. The Follow-up Review showed that NRC has implemented a series of new tools, programs and processes that support fairness, openness, and transparency in the procurement process with the purpose of meeting the intent of each of the 8 recommendations of the initial review. Some of these include:
 - o A new Contract Advance Approval (CAA) Form and Guide
 - o Updated forms and guides for technical authorities


- o Strengthened quality assurance (QA) processes at both the pre- and post-contract award stages
 - o Trained procurement officers to ensure that procurement practices, as well as Canada's obligations under the applicable regulations, directives and international trade agreements are properly followed.
17. OPO is encouraged by the department's efforts to further improve on existing initiatives such as the electronic repository for all official procurement documents and a training program for procurement staff.

Report card

18. OPO's Follow-up Reviews include a report card with a rating that depicts the department's performance, taking into consideration the results from the initial review and the actions taken by the department in response to the recommendations under each LOE. The assessment ratings are as follows:

	Satisfactory Plus (four star)
	Satisfactory (three star)
	Partially Satisfactory (two star)
	Unsatisfactory (one star)

Report card		
Line of Inquiry (LOE)	Rating	Assessment
1. Evaluation criteria and selection plans were established in accordance with applicable laws, regulations and policies.	Satisfactory 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendations 1 and 2 applied to this LOE. • NRC has applied a series of new tools, programs, and processes to address these recommendations, including updated Terms of Reference (ToR) of the Contract Review Committee (CRC), a new Contract Advance Approval (CAA) Form and Guide, and a new Process Street system. • Quality assurance (QA) reviews are completed at both the pre and post - contract award stages. The reviews include monitoring of quality and compliance around high-risk areas.
2. Solicitation documents and organizational practices during the bid solicitation period were consistent with applicable laws, regulations and policies.	Satisfactory 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendations 3, 4 and 5 applied to this LOE. • NRC has applied a combination of new and existing tools, programs, and processes to address these recommendations. • Some of these include an updated Decision Tree for Goods Requisition over 25K, an updated Checklist for Goods Requisition over 25K, a new CAA Form and Guide, a new Questions and Answers Template, as well as training for procurement officers.
3. Evaluation of bids and contract award were conducted in accordance with the solicitation.	Satisfactory 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendations 6 and 7 applied to this LOE. • NRC has applied a combination of new and existing tools, templates and products to address these recommendations. • Some of these include launching a new Process Street system, followed by instructions for team leads and procurement officers on revised onboarding material, updated DocZone content and its accompanying guide, and updates to the electronic repository of official procurement documents.

<p>4. Other Observations</p>	<p>Satisfactory</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendation 8 applied to OPO's "Other Observations." • NRC has followed up on its commitment to continue with training for its procurement staff to ensure that procurement practices, as well as Canada's obligations under regulations, directives and trade agreements are properly followed. Some examples include a new training strategy and plan, and delivery of a training program for procurement staff. • Furthermore, NRC has updated forms and guides for technical authorities, including guides for business owners for the development of Statement of Work (SoW), Statement of Requirements (SoR) and Evaluation Criteria.
<p>NRC's overall report card rating is "Satisfactory." The key factors contributing to this rating include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The initial review resulted in one or more recommendations under each of the three LOEs, thus precluding a rating higher than "Satisfactory"; • NRC's Management Action Plan has achieved a level 5 implementation for 7 recommendations and a level 4 for 1 recommendation, meaning for the most part structures and processes are fully implemented, operating as intended and results have been identified. • Overall, measures taken by NRC demonstrate that structures and processes are in place, followed and integrated within the organization and applied in a consistent manner. 		

Conclusion

21. NRC has used a combination of existing and new tools and training to support fairness, openness, and transparency in the procurement process, and to address the 8 recommendations of the Procurement Ombud following the release of the initial NRC PPR report in September 2022. The evidence provided shows that NRC has taken the necessary measures designed to meet the intent of each of the 8 recommendations stemming from the initial review.
22. The Follow-up Review concluded that NRC's self-assessment and substantiating documentation demonstrated that progress is made in relation to all 8 recommendations in the initial PPR report.
23. OPO found that structures and processes are in place, followed and fully integrated within the organization. A few minor issues, such as the lack of a written record of mandatory training attendance or a more comprehensive

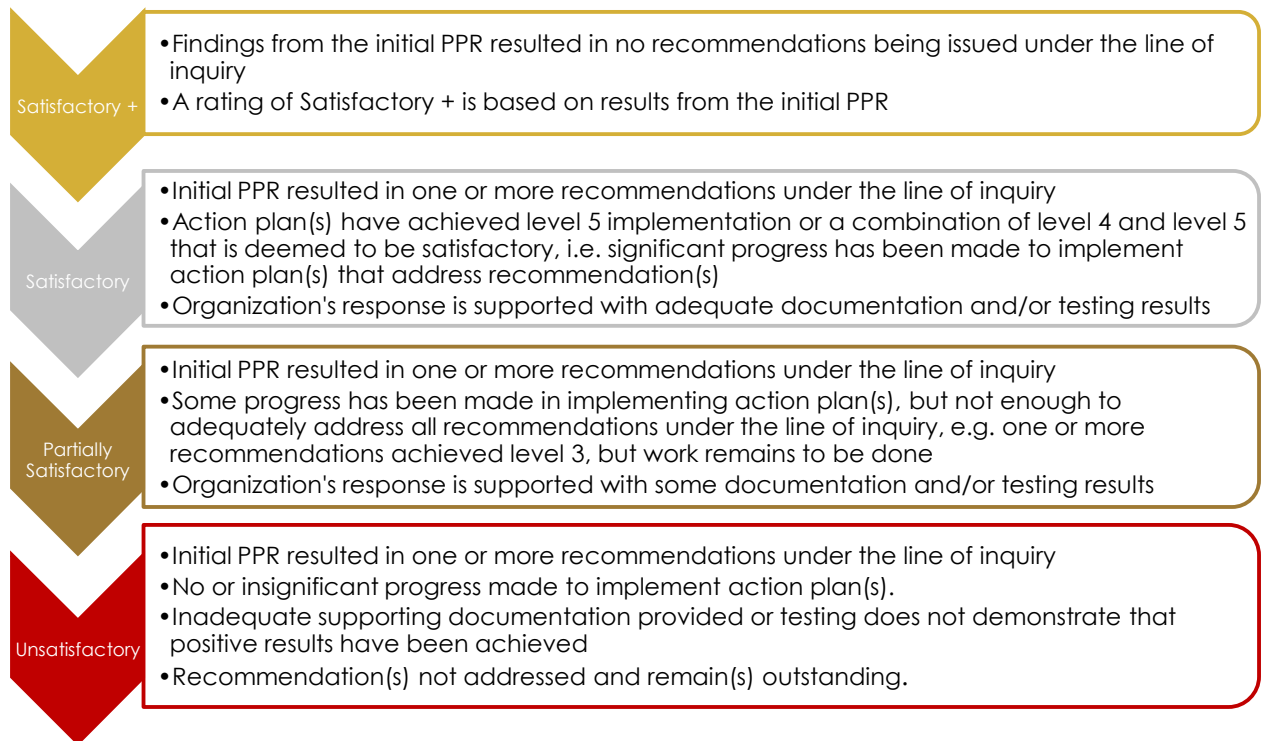
record of verbal briefings to staff, were also noted. Therefore, OPO concludes that the progress noted is at level 5 "Full implementation," for 7 recommendations, and at level 4 "Substantial implementation" for 1 recommendation, resulting in an overall report card rating of "Satisfactory."

24. The Procurement Ombud commends NRC for its commitment to supporting fairness, openness, and transparency in the procurement process and for the progress noted to date. NRC's responses to OPO's requests and follow-up questions pertaining to this review were appreciated and demonstrate NRC's commitment to fairness, openness, and transparency in procurement-related activities.

Appendix 1: Assessment of implementation level

Assessment of implementation level	
Level 1	No progress or insignificant progress. Actions such as establishing a new committee, conducting meetings, and generating informal plans have not advanced, or insignificant progress has been made.
Level 2	Planning stage. Formal plans for organizational changes have been created and approved.
Level 3	Preparations for implementation. Preparations for implementing a recommendation are in progress – e.g., hiring or training staff, developing necessary resources, etc.
Level 4	Substantial implementation. Structures and processes are in place and integrated within at least some parts of the organization, and some achieved results have been identified.
Level 5	Full implementation. Structures and processes are fully implemented and operating as intended and results have been identified.
Obsolete	Recommendation is no longer applicable due to new policies, procedures, etc.

Appendix 2: Overall performance assessment scale



Appendix 3: Assessment of recommendations

OPO's detailed assessment and summary of recommendations		
<p>Recommendation 1: NRC should establish a quality control process to ensure that mandatory and point-rated evaluation criteria and scoring grids are communicated in solicitations in a clear, precise and measurable manner.</p>		
NRC's action plan	OPO's assessment	Level
<p>NRC will enhance its quality control process to ensure that mandatory and point-rated evaluation criteria and scoring grids are communicated in solicitations in a clear, precise and measurable manner. All solicitations prior to posting will require approval by a Team Lead at the Purchasing and Supply PG-5 level. Quality control will require the final approval of the Procurement Manager. The approval process will be monitored by the Policy team responsible for the monitoring and compliance.</p> <p><u>Timeline:</u> September 2022</p>	<p>NRC developed several tools and implemented a series of measures to address the intent of recommendation 1.</p> <p>As per the updated Terms of Reference (ToR) of the Contract Review Committee (CRC), the Recommendation of Award (RoA) form and CRC form are completed by the contracting authority and reviewed by the Team Lead, Manager or Director. Signed original templates are provided to the Policy, Systems and Monitoring officer for inclusion in records. As per the ToR, all RFPs and Advance Contract Award Notices (ACANs) require approval prior to posting on CanadaBuys.</p> <p>OPO notes that NRC has taken several measures to enhance the quality assurance and monitoring processes at both the pre- and post-contract award stages. For example, a new Contract Advance Approval (CAA) form and process were introduced in April 2023. As of April 2024, higher-risk procurement practices are discussed at the Procurement Manager meetings and a summary of the discussions and action(s) required for each procurement file is documented.</p> <p>Post-award activities include monitoring of quality and compliance on higher-risk areas. Findings from these reports are recorded in DocZone and are shared with the procurement managers for follow-up action.</p> <p>NRC provided OPO with two quarterly monitoring reports prepared by the Policy, Monitoring and Reporting team. These reports monitor and deliver data on contract activities in higher-risk areas, including</p>	5

	<p>contract splitting, contracts over 25k, sole source, and emergency contracts. Data from these reports are instrumental in making informed decisions.</p> <p>NRC has re-enforced messaging about quality assurance and monitoring on several occasions and via different channels, including written formats, via newly developed tools and training material and verbally during all-staff meetings.</p> <p>The changes implemented over the last few years in the area of quality assurance and monitoring, including a more rigorous review of procurement processes at the pre-contract award stage as well as improvements in the quality of solicitation documents, will likely result in evaluation criteria and scoring grids being communicated in a clear, precise and measurable manner.</p> <p>OPO finds that NRC has fulfilled all components of its proposed action plan related to this recommendation and agrees with Level 5 - Full implementation rating for this recommendation.</p>	
<p>Recommendation 2: With respect to its RFQ processes, NRC should establish a process to ensure that solicited suppliers are informed of the competitive nature of the processes and the method by which the successful supplier will be selected.</p>		
<p>NRC's action Plan</p>	<p>OPO's assessment</p>	<p>Level</p>
<p>For its RFQ processes, NRC will review its process and ensure it does not replicate the formal RFP process while remaining efficient in its application and preserving the principles of openness, fairness and transparency.</p> <p><u>Timeline:</u> September 2022</p>	<p>The RFQ process was covered as part of the training NRC procurement staff received from Supply Chain Canada in June 2022, with over 30 procurement professionals invited to participate. Going forward, NRC should maintain a record of the procurement officers who successfully completed the program in addition to meeting invitations and training material. This will help track completion rates and assist with any future efforts to measure training effectiveness.</p> <p>The department also specifically notes that the RFQ process is embedded within the new Procurement Case Management system</p>	<p>4</p>

	<p>(Process Street) launched in May 2024. In addition, NRC stated that procurement staff were briefed at staff meetings about the new Procurement Management Framework, which includes a specific piece concerning the RFQ process. While it is likely that the RFQ process is integrated in the Procurement Case Management system and addressed during formal meeting discussions, it must be noted that no specific record was made available to OPO that actively substantiates that the subject matter was covered. NRC would benefit from ensuring their Procurement Case Management system is able to demonstrate its RFQ processing capabilities, and that subject matter discussions from formal staff meetings are accurately recorded.</p> <p>OPO finds that NRC has fulfilled most of the elements of the proposed action plan resulting in a Level 4— Substantial implementation rating for this recommendation.</p>	
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Recommendation 3: NRC should establish mechanisms to ensure RFPs and RFQs contain complete information and instructions for submitting bids. In addition, when soliciting bids using PSPC supply arrangements, NRC should ensure it complies with all bid solicitation document and process requirements established in these methods of supply, including minimum solicitation periods and publication requirements.

NRC's action Plan	OPO's assessment	Level
<p>Compliance to the PSPC supply arrangements will be monitored by the Team Leads at PG-5 level as per action plan in recommendation #1.</p> <p>Refresher supply arrangement training will be made mandatory where appropriate.</p> <p><u>Timeline:</u> September 2022</p>	<p>OPO found evidence that compliance with the PSPC supply arrangements is properly monitored. As noted in the CAA form guide, the purpose of the new CAA form - implemented in May, 2023 - is to tell the story of the procurement process and help management make informed decisions. This form is required when seeking pre-approval on the procurement plan; requesting contract approval; or requesting a revision. The guide also notes that all contracts against supply arrangements require a CAA form.</p> <p>Signature boxes in the CAA form demand that if the requirement is within one's contracting authority, the procurement officer recommends, approves and signs in the</p>	5

	<p>appropriate signature box. When seeking approval at a higher level, the procurement officers must complete signature boxes as needed until the required approval level is reached.</p> <p>PSPC training on the Laboratory and Scientific Equipment, Parts and Accessories, Supplies and Services Supply Arrangement was provided to NRC staff in 2021. The action plan included an optional action for a refresher supply arrangement training, where appropriate. The department confirmed that no refresher supply arrangement training has taken place following the release of OPO's initial PPR report.</p> <p>The measures taken will likely support the proper completion of RFPs and RFQs by enabling a more rigorous review of procurement processes at the pre-contract award stage. The new CAA form contributes to an overall improvement in the quality of solicitation documents. Likewise, it guides the Department toward compliance with all bid solicitation documents and process requirements when using PSPC supply arrangements.</p> <p>OPO finds that NRC has fulfilled the mandatory elements of the proposed action plan resulting in a Level 5 - Full implementation rating for this recommendation.</p>	
<p>Recommendation 4: NRC should establish a process to ensure that all relevant information is shared with all suppliers simultaneously and that all relevant communications with suppliers are properly documented.</p>		
<p>NRC's action Plan</p>	<p>OPO's assessment</p>	<p>Level</p>
<p>NRC Procurement initiated in June 2022 a mandatory training program with Supply Chain Canada and the Canada School of Public Service. A workshop on competitive bidding, contract preparation and contract management was given to all of its PG staff. Questions and Answers templates during the RFP</p>	<p>NRC Procurement hosted in June 2022 a mandatory training program with Supply Chain Canada, to which more than 30 procurement staff were invited. While there is sufficient evidence in support of this action, keeping a record of training participants and post-training notes/reports is strongly recommended.</p> <p>NRC also finalized a new Questions and</p>	<p>5</p>

<p>process will be made mandatory for use in order to track and ensure the integrity of the process. Team Leads will be responsible to provide oversight during and before contract award to ensure that all relevant information is shared with all suppliers simultaneously.</p> <p>The Policy team responsible for monitoring will ensure the safekeeping of all communication with vendors in the electronic repository and will make the appropriate follow-ups.</p> <p><u>Timeline:</u> September 2022</p>	<p>Answers Template to be used during the RFP process. The use of this template facilitates simultaneous information sharing with all suppliers and proper documentation of all relevant communications with suppliers. While not providing additional evidence, the Department confirmed that the template was made mandatory in 2023.</p> <p>OPO finds that NRC has fulfilled the elements of the proposed action plan resulting in a Level 5 - Full implementation rating for this recommendation.</p>	
<p>Recommendation 5: NRC should establish a process to ensure that applicable contract award notices are published within the required timeframe and regret letters are sent to unsuccessful suppliers.</p>		
<p>NRC's action Plan</p>	<p>OPO's assessment</p>	<p>Level</p>
<p>The current checklist will be updated to ensure the applicable contract award notices are published within the required timeframe and regret letters are sent to unsuccessful suppliers.</p> <p>Compliance will be monitored by the Team Leads at PG-5 level as per action plan in recommendation #1. Monitoring will be done by the Policy team when a contract award is triggered to ensure compliance.</p> <p><u>Timeline:</u> September 2022</p>	<p>The updated Decision Tree for Goods Requisition over 25k was shared with staff in April 2023.</p> <p>As per the action plan, NRC updated the checklist for Goods Requisition over 25K in July 2023. The checklist is an automated form, designed to be adjustable in a way that accommodates different types of solicitations, including RFP, ACAN and non-competitive solicitations. It covers steps such as requisition, pre-planning, solicitation, evaluation and contract award. Contract award notice postings and providing regret letters to unsuccessful suppliers are also covered. The tool also includes useful links to reference documents and Procurement Services DocZone Library, such as CAA form or regret letters. Overall, this is a very useful tool to assist procurement officers with Goods Requisition over 25K as it facilitates the publication of the applicable contract award notices within the</p>	<p>5</p>

	<p>required timeframe. Furthermore, it enables the provision of regret letters to the unsuccessful suppliers, thus meeting the intent of Recommendation 5.</p> <p>Regarding compliance monitoring by team leads at PG-5 level and the Policy Team, observations discussed under Recommendation 1 apply here as well.</p> <p>OPO finds that NRC has fulfilled all elements of the proposed action plan resulting in a Level 5—Full implementation rating for this recommendation.</p>	
<p>Recommendation 6: NRC should implement appropriate supervision and review mechanisms to ensure that evaluations are carried out in accordance with the planned approach and that contracts or standing offers are not awarded or issued to non-compliant bidders.</p>		
<p>NRC's action Plan</p>	<p>OPO's assessment</p>	<p>Level</p>
<p>For every solicitation process, Procurement Officers are required to make written award recommendation for review and approval by the Contract Review Committee. The recommendation template will be reviewed to ensure compliance with the solicitation process.</p> <p><u>Timeline:</u> September 2022</p>	<p>NRC's procurement officers are required to prepare written award recommendations for review and approval by the Contract Review Committee for every solicitation process. The introduction of the new CAA form in April 2023 improved this process.</p> <p>Most recently, the process has evolved further through the use of the Procurement Case Management System (Process Street), introduced in May 2024 and the renewed internal governance of the Contract Review Committee in June 2024 in preparation for NRC's full procurement authorities.</p> <p>The measures taken will likely help ensure that evaluations are conducted in line with the planned approach and that contracts or standing offers are not awarded to non-compliant bidders thanks to enhanced monitoring and approval processes.</p> <p>OPO finds that NRC has successfully fulfilled the elements of the proposed action plan resulting in a Level 5—Full implementation rating for this recommendation.</p>	<p>5</p>

Recommendation 7: NRC should establish a mechanism to enforce the requirement to document every decision of business value and maintain up-to-date and complete electronic procurement files.		
NRC's action Plan	OPO's assessment	Level
<p>An electronic repository for all official procurement documents was implemented along with a mandatory naming convention in 2021. Training and monitoring will continue to take place and is ongoing.</p> <p>Safekeeping of electronic official documents will continue to be included in the performance objectives of all PG staff.</p> <p><u>Timeline:</u> Completed and ongoing</p>	<p>An electronic repository (DocZone) for all official procurement documents was implemented before the release of the initial PPR in 2022. Since that time, updated procurement templates and quality assurance measures have also been implemented, including a new CAA form in May 2023, which aims, among others, to improve efforts to document decisions of business value.</p> <p>The Department has prepared guiding tools for procurement officers such as instructions for DocZone usage that outlines how to conduct various tasks such as uploading documents or sharing them via links.</p> <p>The Department confirmed that training was launched to all Procurement Officers in October 2023 on how to use DocZone. Follow-ups, coaching and additional training sessions for DocZone were also provided.</p> <p>OPO notes that monitoring of procurement documents in the DocZone library continues to be a high priority activity performed by the NRC's Policy, Monitoring and Reporting team.</p> <p>Procurement officers are regularly reminded to save documents on DocZone library, information is shared in different formats, verbally during staff meetings and in writing.</p> <p>NRC shared with OPO several samples of their monitoring activity over DocZone content from the period of January 2023 – November 2024. Review of these samples shows that the system to enforce the requirement to document every decision of business value and maintain up-to-date and complete electronic procurement files is fully implemented, operating as intended and already demonstrating results.</p>	5

	OPO finds that NRC has successfully fulfilled the elements of the proposed action plan resulting in a Level 5 - Full implementation rating for this recommendation.	
<p>Recommendation 8: NRC should ensure that any officials engaging in the procurement process receive adequate support and training to ensure that sound stewardship practices are followed and that Canada's obligations under the <i>Government Contracts Regulations</i>, applicable sections of national and international trade agreements, and the Treasury Board Directive on the Management of Procurement are respected.</p>		
NRC's action Plan	OPO's assessment	Level
<p>A mandatory training program for PG staff was initiated in June 2022 and will continue to ensure that sound stewardship practices are followed and that Canada's obligations under the <i>Government Contracts Regulations</i>, applicable sections of national and international trade agreements, and the Treasury Board Directive on the Management of Procurement are respected.</p> <p><u>Timeline:</u> Completed and ongoing</p>	<p>NRC has followed up on its commitment to continue with mandatory training for its procurement staff in order to ensure that procurement practices and Canada's obligations under the <i>Government Contracts Regulations</i>, international trade agreements, and the Treasury Board Directive on the Management of Procurement are followed.</p> <p>A comprehensive training strategy and program was developed and launched to the procurement team in the fall of 2023. Training sessions with technical authorities were launched in November 2023 and have continued.</p> <p>The Department has also updated several forms and guides for technical authorities, including guides for business owners for the development of Statement of Work (SoW), Statement of Requirements (SoR) and Evaluation Criteria.</p> <p>While not providing additional evidence, the Department confirmed that these forms are shared with their procurement clients and information sessions are delivered on an ad-hoc basis. OPO notes that the department would benefit from maintaining a comprehensive record of these best practices.</p> <p>Finally, the contract request form has been updated to guide the requirements with business owners and is available from the Requirements Checklist for Clients on MyZone.</p>	5

	<p>The measures implemented under this recommendation help ensure that procurement officials receive sufficient and continuous support and training, while also ensuring compliance with Canada's regulatory and trade obligations. OPO finds that NRC has successfully fulfilled all elements of the proposed action plan resulting in a Level 5—Full implementation rating for this recommendation.</p>	
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