

User Guide: Developing Specifications

The standard market approach documents have a section for the **Specification** as 'Part B.' An optional format for a specification, and suggested content, is provided below.

1. Introduction

- Briefly explain the requirement and the context of the requirement.
- Explain the public authority's role and the policy and operational objectives to be met by the proposed procurement.

2. Scope and Context

Scope

- Document a sufficiently detailed scope to support accurate pricing by the respondents, and easier contract management.
- Provide a summary description of the desired outcomes, or if appropriate, the range and type of goods and services that are required, for example:
 - the problem to be addressed, or outcomes required from supplier's solutions
 - a statement as to whether the supplier is to only supply the requirement, or is also to install, commission, support, and provide training or documentation (e.g. review, recommend and report; review, recommend, report and train; design only; design, deliver and assess; review, recommend, report and implement; design, develop and present)
- Advise on anything the supplier is not required to do or provide which might otherwise normally be considered to be part of the requirement.

Context

- Describe the context of the procurement, such as any unique or pertinent factors about the conditions/environment which can affect the design or performance of the offered solution/methodology. For example factors may include:
 - physical environment (eg. ambient temperatures, altitude, geographic conditions such as inclines, descents, dusty environment, rainfall, remote access)
 - operating and/or storage conditions to be observed (eg. existing site dimensions, ceiling clearances, available space, access, security features, air conditioning)
 - availability of energy and other services at site
 - compatibility with existing equipment, systems, etc. (eg. ICT security platforms or operating systems, interfaces)
 - site access constraints (eg. shared use rights, easements, lease restrictions, requirement for ongoing public use/access during service delivery)
 - existence of unique, important or potentially dangerous site conditions (eg. heritage items, significant trees, asbestos)
 - personnel safety aspects (eg. confined spaces, hot work)
 - servicing or maintenance requirements or limitations.
- If there are limitations imposed by users, explain what they are (for example, limited access to and within a building, the requirement for work to be undertaken in parallel with public access to site, or a new service to cutover from an existing service seamlessly).
- Provide contextual information (which can be sourced from the approved Acquisition Plan) such as:
 - research undertaken into the requirement

- the public authority's historical spend data and usage (eg. value of previous purchases, location of purchases, site information)
- description of current delivery methods to compare and contrast with the new requirement
- options (if any) considered in the development of the requirement and any options dismissed and why
- the relationship of the requirement to other requirements and acquisitions, whether already purchased and implemented, or planned for the future.
- Refer to relevant documents to avoid duplicating content and provide clear list of these documents (and their location) which may include:
 - policies and procedures
 - white papers/discussion papers/background reports
 - site lists/technical drawings/maps/diagrams/data
 - concept designs or preliminary designs
 - previous research/reference publications
 - Codes of Practice
 - Acts of Parliament/Government directives.

Please note:

By referring to a document, it is incorporated into the specification. If only part of a document is relevant, then only that part should be referred to. The following should also be considered:

- Does the public authority own them and can they issue them?
- Are any details confidential or sensitive and should only extracts be issued?
- Do the documents include financial information that relate to future projects or other form of confidential information and therefore, may not be suitable to be released without editing?

If the document is sensitive, consideration should be given to its inclusion for respondents to respond properly. If it is essential, an additional confidentiality process may need to be put in place.

3. Requirements (Goods and Services)

- Consider whether use of functional characteristics, performance characteristics and/or technical characteristics are appropriate to describe the requirements.
- Provide adequate details to describe the requirements and allow respondents to develop an accurate cost to deliver the requirements.
- Document detailed requirements that vary depending on the scale and complexity, and whether the purchase is for goods or services.

Functional characteristics:

- Outline the proposed function or role of the goods and services in helping the end-user achieve a desired outcome. It defines a desired result and may describe the general form of the goods and services required. It focuses on what is to be achieved rather than the method of achieving it, for example:
 - protective headgear that is highly visible and manufactured from high quality, durable materials that are fit for purpose
 - clothing: lightweight, waterproof, reflective, breathable, high visibility
 - office equipment functionality: scan, print, copy, fax or services
 - develop an organisation structure that is fluid, flexible and responsive to the needs of the community
 - the supplier is required to overhaul the equipment

- to design a wetlands of sufficient area and diversity of vegetation to improve water quality standards.

Performance characteristics:

- Detail required performance characteristics of the goods, for example:
 - ability to lift a certain loads – e.g. 10 tonnes
 - system availability – e.g. 99.99% availability
 - ability to achieve a minimum speed – e.g. printing 100 pages per minute
 - service availability – e.g. helpdesk services available 8 am-5.30 pm
 - service response – e.g. response to a query within 5 minutes
 - satisfaction levels – e.g. minimum satisfaction of 4 / 5 (80%)

Technical characteristics:

- Detail the physical aspects of the goods and services:
 - dimensions/colour
 - fonts / logos
 - material properties (e.g. metal, wood, plastic, steel, aluminium, cotton, wool, synthetic materials)
 - protective headgear that is fluorescent orange and made from reinforced plastic
 - license requirements – e.g. Builder’s license, practising certificate; training qualifications
 - work to be undertaken in accordance with a particular Australian standard

Services

- Provide adequate details to fully describe the services and allow respondents to develop an accurate cost to deliver the requirements.
- Describe various services and deliverables that the supplier is required to deliver.

Services these are all of the tasks, activities and overall work (including deliverables) that are described in or reasonably inferred by the contract.

Deliverables these are the reports, documents and other items that the supplier will develop and deliver/hand over to the public authority as a requirement of the contract.

- Communicate other specific requirements to respondents about the delivery of the services, for example:
 - capability: circumstances where special skills, experience, knowledge or qualifications are required, e.g.: current certificates, professional qualifications
 - due diligence: circumstances where additional checks into specific personnel are required, e.g. security clearances, background checks or police checks; vetting processes such as psychometric testing, participation in simulated service provision (e.g., mock training sessions, problem solving scenarios)
 - aspects regarding the premises where the services are to be provided (e.g. security levels) or equipment or information to be utilised
 - privacy or confidentiality of information
 - the supplier to not have any actual or perceived Conflict of Interest relating to the subject matter of the contract and the recommendations to be developed (e.g. especially for consultancies)
 - provision of ancillary goods (e.g. replacement parts, specialised equipment required to provide the service with).

- Review if some aspects of the requirement can be defined in broad terms to allow the respondents to determine its preferred solution as part of its methodology.

Services - Consultants

Common tasks for a consultant may include:

- inception and progress meetings
- stakeholder consultation
- literature reviews, various studies, research and analysis specific to the scope
- presentations of the outcomes at defined intervals and the conclusion of the project
- training sessions
- implementation/change management.

Common deliverables for a consultant may include:

- progress reports (e.g. weekly/monthly written progress reports)
- first draft (e.g. to be provided for review by public authority within 3 weeks of commencement)
- final draft (e.g. to be provided for review by Steering Committee within 3 weeks of the first draft)
- final report (e.g. to be provided for review by Steering Committee within 2 weeks of the final draft)
- submission requirements (e.g. format, sections to be included).

Other requirements for a consultant may include:

- qualifications (e.g. qualified engineer, qualified trainer)
- requirement for security clearances for access to premises where the services will be required
- requirement to sign a confidentiality deed and a conflict of interest declaration.

Goods

- Fully describe the goods to enable respondents to develop an accurate cost to deliver the requirements.
- Specify goods required as well as any ancillary services required to enjoy the benefit of the goods.
- Define some aspects of the requirement in broad terms to allow the respondents to determine its preferred solution as part of its methodology.

Common considerations for describing the required goods may include:

- the use of functional characteristics, performance characteristics and technical characteristics to describe the requirement as appropriate
- quality standards required for the goods (e.g. Australian Standards) or associated with the supplier (e.g. Certified Quality Management System e.g. ISO9001)
- delivery requirements including details of delivery locations (gate numbers, access restrictions, height clearances, hours of operation, unloading arrangements/ facilities, security clearances)
- interface/compatibility requirements for the goods to interface with or operate seamlessly with pre-existing equipment
- acceptance requirements such as tests that the goods must pass before being accepted (acceptance tests can range from simple inspections of deliveries to ensure the correct quantities/part numbers have been delivered to independent tests to ensure important aspects of the goods are working as intended e.g. test drive, operational trial, factory acceptance tests, provision of samples, etc.).

Ancillary services:

- Describe ancillary services to support the delivery and use of goods including:
 - installation and commissioning of the goods
 - ongoing support services for the goods (e.g. helpdesk services)
 - reporting by the supplier or attendance at milestone or planned meetings
 - training in the use of the goods
 - provision of documentation to allow the use of the goods (e.g. user manuals, warranty information, safety data sheets).

Timeframes

- Explain the proposed schedule, including commencement date, milestones, completion of deliverables, and a completion date
- Define some dates as indicative and others as set dates, depending on the requirements of the project
- Identify any critical time frames, key dates or periods of time that the supplier will be required to service or meet.

For example: The supplier is required to meet the indicative / key dates for the following tasks:

Task	Date / Time Frame
Inception Meeting	Within 7 days of contract commencement.

Performance

- Select KPIs / performance measures that are relevant and which can be measured - usually 3 or 4 KPIs / performance measures are sufficient. Potential examples include:
 - delivery or response times within agreed timeframe (eg. 1 hour response time)
 - timeframes or completion dates, eg.
 - % or proportion of milestones met on time
 - completion of performance by due date
 - complaint resolution – prompt advice of any problems and resolution
 - acceptance of deliverables (e.g. Recommendation Report)
 - customer satisfaction with the services delivered (e.g. satisfaction surveys)
 - cost tracking (e.g. % or proportion of costs that have been invoiced benchmarked against the agreed contract costs)
 - delivery accuracy (e.g. % of deliveries that match orders)
 - service resolution (e.g. % or proportion of issues resolved first time without follow up /escalation).

Contract Sites/Delivery Locations

- Explain the proposed location/s where the contract goods and services are required. For example this section can explain:
 - whether the contract is for the entire state, geographic regions, CBD offices, regional offices, business units or specific sites; and
 - if the supplier is required to travel (allowing respondents to adequately cost the travel and associated disbursement).

Contract Management

- Explain contract management arrangements to be established by the public authority to manage its responsibilities under the contract and also the requirements for

- management of the contract by the supplier.
- Explain contract management arrangements to be established by the supplier to manage its responsibilities under the contract.
- State the level of contract management that will take place, and what the supplier needs to do to facilitate the management of the contract which could include:
 - the contract management resources to be provided by the public authority
 - the level of authority the contract manager will have to manage the contract

Confidentiality

- Explain any specific confidentiality requirements or sensitive documents, information or aspects such as site access.

4. Transition

- Explain requirements to address the periods of transition - both transition in (start of contract) or transition out (end of contract),
 - e.g. a statement to the effect that the supplier will be expected to cooperate fully with the public authority and other organisations including a new provider and will take all reasonable steps to ensure the transition of the contract from itself to another provider or to staff of the public authority and shall minimise disruption to the public authority and all relevant stakeholders.
- Identify requirements to be addressed before and at the time of contract start-up which may include:
 - a description of how the contract is to be handed over to the supplier at contract commencement which states the responsibilities and tasks to be performed of the supplier and public authority
 - the development and submission of detailed Implementation Plans and the trigger for this activity
 - transfer or purchase of assets, equipment or materials
 - lease of office space
 - the recruitment or training of staff.
- Identify requirements to be addressed at the end of the contract which may include:
 - provision of requested information required by the public authority to re-tender
 - how the contract is to be handed on or handed back
 - development and submission of detailed Transition Out Plans and the trigger for this activity
 - handover of final reports / documents and data / intellectual property
 - return of loan items or unused materials
 - return of any electronic/hard copies of contract documentation, or documentation relevant to the provision of the contract
 - return of premises/infrastructure in equivalent condition to when it was handed over
 - confirmation of archiving or document destruction practices.

5. Glossary

- Attach glossary to ensure a common understanding of key terms.
- Define terms and acronyms that have been used in the document.

6. Appendices

- Attach relevant appendices, if any, to accompany the specification.