

PUBLIC PROCUREMENT TRAINING STRATEGY

I. Background

For any country, especially with a growing economy it is absolutely imperative to have a professionally managed Public procurement system in place. Global trends show that 10% to 20% of the GDP of a country goes to public procurements. Therefore an efficient public procurement mechanism can be instrumental in saving enormous national resources, and enhance governance effectiveness.

In Pakistan, Public Procurement has not been considered a specialized profession with the result that there is neither a required qualification nor a systematic training mechanism for officials engaged in procurement process. The gap is being filled to a certain extent by trainings imparted by the PPRAs, but as the procurement functionaries are not required to be trained, the efforts put in training are not optimized. Realizing these needs the National Procurement Strategy (2013-16) developed by PPRA has highlighted the need of capacity building of procuring entities as well as contracting industry.

II. Salient Features of the Strategy

A follow up Training Needs Assessment and Training Strategy was developed which pivots on the idea of professionalization of the procurement cadre. Three major strategic actions include:

- i. Training and capacity building of existing government officials engaged in procurement process.
- ii. Developing a mechanism for newly recruited government officials and having an ongoing system of procurement training.
- iii. Incorporating public procurement modules in academic institutions for the continuous availability of trained man-power on public procurement.

Following the implementation of the above, it will be mandatory for every officer and official to have certain mandatory procurement certification in order to conduct a procurement function.

III. The Details

Existing Public Procurement Officers/Officials

The major focus is on training of the existing government officers/officials. There would be a suite of courses of varying lengths; a free online course for basic procurement information, half day course for Senior Approving Authorities, a three –five day separate training programs for mid-level officers, and procurement execution and support officers. PPRA will develop these courses and place them with various training institutions/academia preferably in public sector. All of these courses conclude on certification after due diligence. The respective departments

shall be responsible for sending their relevant staff for these procurement trainings, using their departmental training budget.

It is envisaged that once these courses are fully operational, the departments would be required to ensure under an agreed action plan that procurement is conducted by only certified procurement officers.

Entry Level Public Procurement Officers/Officials

There would be a procurement module for the new inductions of government officers to be taught at the relevant academies of public service commission. PPRA will develop this course and provide resource persons for conducting it.

Long term engagement and higher level courses

As a long term and continued education aspect, PPRA would engage with universities to provide specialized courses in supply chain management, project and contract management, intellectual property rights, incoterms etc. Inclusion of procurement as a course in engineering and management degree courses would also be very helpful in developing better procurement understanding in professionals in public as well as private sector. PPRA will coordinate with universities as well as HEC for such facilitation.

IV. Estimated Costs

Public procurement training strategy highlights funding requirement for successful implementation. Training cost for Half Day training is estimated to be PKR 2000 per person for senior procuring authorities and cost of conducting three day training for Mid-level procurement officers is estimated to be PKR 4000 per person. E-learning will be free of cost. Initial costs for developing the courses will be borne by the procurement regulatory authority.