

Customer guide to running a direct award through Network Services 2 (RM3808)

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This is a practical guide to running a direct award through Network Services 2. For a more general introduction to the framework, please refer to the [buyer's guide to Network Services 2](#).

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What is a direct award and when should it be used?

Direct award is suitable for simple, easily defined requirements or services where no additional benefit would be derived from running a further competition.

Suppliers provide a range of services and products from each lot on our online catalogue (the 'eMarketplace').

Contracts can then be awarded on the basis of price only or a combination of price and quality elements.

Direct award should be used if you can determine that:

- its deliverables can be met by the catalogue and description of the deliverables as set out in Framework Schedule 1 (Specification); and
- all of the terms of the proposed call-off contract are laid down in this contract and do not require amendment or any supplementary terms and conditions (other than the inclusion of optional provisions already provided for in the order form template)

Direct award should **not** be used if:

- your procurement is complex and you require suppliers to develop a proposal or solution to meet your requirements
- you want flexibility with optional Schedules (for more on this, read our [guide to the Public Sector Contract](#))
- you want to run a multi-stage competition
- you require a call-off longer than 5 years in total contract duration (the maximum for any lot 6 award is 3 years)

In these situations, further competition may be required. For more information, read the [Buyer's guide to further competition](#).

Key stages of running a direct award

1. Deciding if a direct award through Network Services 2 is the most suitable procurement route for your requirements

Read through the framework terms and conditions (see the ‘Contract terms including all schedules’ available from the [documents section of the Network Services 2 webpage](#)). Consider how long your contract will need to run as this may impact the award route you can use (direct award or further competition). The maximum possible contract period varies by award route and by lot.

Lot	Maximum call-off contract period (years)												
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Direct award	5	5	5	5	5	3	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Further competition	10	10	7	10	7	3	7	7	7	7	7	7	7

The maximum contract length includes both the initial call-off length, plus any optional extensions. You must include the initial term and any optional extension term(s) in your completed direct award order form. Where an optional extension term is included on your order form you will need to notify your supplier at least 90 days before the end of the initial term if you wish to make use of the optional extension term.

If an extension term is not included on your order form, you cannot continue with the call-off contract beyond the initial term.

The call-off contract term must include implementation, delivery, business as usual, exit management and termination of all services.

While opting for the maximum term might deliver more competitive pricing initially, it is important to balance that against the ability to re-tender, moving your network to the latest solutions and the latest pricing, bearing in mind any potential early-termination fees. Opting for a realistic timeframe for the initial term and including optional extensions with pricing adjustments in your tender, can help to deliver the flexibility and benefits your organisation requires.

There is no minimum contract term through Network Services 2. Suppliers can choose to stipulate minimum terms in their service offers, but this is at their discretion, and not dictated by the framework terms.

2. Choosing the right lot or lots

Network Services 2 is made up of 13 lots (groupings of goods and services) offering a wide range of telecommunications and network services. A summary of what can be bought from each lot is provided in the [buyer's guide to Network Services](#).

Full specifications for each lot are defined in Framework Schedule 1 (Specification), which can be found in the Documents section of the Network Services 2 webpage under '[RM3808 Contract terms including all schedules](#)'.

In the majority of cases, you will be able to procure what you need through a single lot. However if you require services from more than one lot and there is a reason this needs to be under a single contract, this is possible by running a cross-lot procurement. This option can be used for direct award and further competition across all lots of Network Services 2.

The two caveats are:

1. A supplier must be present on both/all the chosen lots in order to bid for the contract
2. The maximum contract term is limited by the lot with the shortest maximum term

More information on running a cross-lot procurement is available from the '[guidance on compliant procurement options](#)' document.

3. Writing your statement of requirements

This describes what you want your supplier to do, to achieve and to provide. This could be a full technical specification where you have clear technical standards that must be met or require specific technologies. Using outcome-based requirements which focus on the outcome, not on who this should be achieved, can also be beneficial as it allows a wider range of supplier service offers to be considered.

You will refer to your statement of requirements when comparing and evaluating supplier service offers. A template for writing your statement of requirements is available in the documents section of the [Network Services 2 webpage](#).

When establishing your requirements you may wish to consider the following:

- your organisational strategy and refresh cycle
- market trends and innovation
- total cost of ownership, factoring in running costs
- compatibility with other in-house systems
- what your budget parameters are
- your contractual landscape including exit of current services and considerations for implementation
- evaluate your current estate and consider possible future scale of requirement
- social value (this would have to be evaluated as a 'quality' criterion)

We recommend that you review the guidance document 'Creating your Statement of Requirements' (available from the Documents section of the [Network Services 2 webpage](#)). Make sure you have captured all the details of your requirements before reviewing the catalogue service offers.

4. Accessing the eMarketplace

The eMarketplace is a live online catalogue listing service offers published by suppliers. All service offers live on the eMarketplace have been audited by the Network Services 2 to ensure they comply with the framework terms and conditions.

[Register for access to the eMarketplace](#). You will need your organisation's DUNS number. If you do not have this information, you can [find out your organisation's DUNS number on the Dun and Bradstreet website](#).

5. Identifying service offers that meet your needs by browsing the eMarketplace

- log in to the eMarketplace
- click on the 'Shopping' tab
- click on the 'Marketplace' tab
- in the search bar type 'RM3808'
- on the next page click on the lot number in the 'content tag' area to reduce your search results to the lot you're interested in.
- click into each result and open the PDF in the 'linked media' section to view the full details of each service offer

For a visual step-by-step guide to navigating the eMarketplace, see [Annex 2](#).

6. Optional: Issuing a request for information (RFI)

If there are a limited number of service offers that meet your needs or you would like all suppliers on your chosen lot to be aware of your procurement, you can issue a 'request for information' (RFI).

An RFI lays out your requirements and gives suppliers the opportunity to create new service offers that meet your needs, or flag service offers currently live that could provide the products or services you are looking for.

Create your RFI using our template (available from the Documents section of the [Network Services 2 webpage](#)) and then email it to every supplier on your chosen lot. Contact information for each supplier is provided in the 'Supplier by Lot matrix' on the [Network Services 2 webpage](#).

We would recommend you give suppliers 10 working days to respond, or 5 at the absolute minimum. Newly created service offers are audited by the Network Services 2 team before they are published to the eMarketplace. This process should be factored in when setting deadlines for suppliers.

In response to your RFI, suppliers may email you a newly created service offer that meets your requirements. However, you can only evaluate service offers which are live on the eMarketplace.

7. Completing a desktop evaluation of the service offers

It is important to complete a fully documented desktop evaluation as this provides an auditable record of your due diligence when evaluating the service offers and determining the successful service offer. This document should be kept on file.

Download a copy of all the service offers that meet your requirements. Next you must complete a desktop evaluation of these service offers. This can be done on the basis of price only or price and quality elements. For a full list of these criteria, see [Annex 3](#).

We provide a desktop evaluation template in the Documents section of the [Network Services 2 webpage](#). If your organisation has an existing template, this can be used instead.

8. Identifying the most advantageous service offer

Completing the desktop evaluation will result in a ranked list of service offers that meet your needs. You must award to the supplier whose service offer has been ranked in first place.

9. Completing a direct award order form, and sending this to the successful supplier

The direct award order form template is available from the Documents section of the [Network Services 2 webpage](#).

The order form template identifies sections that must be completed by you and sections that the supplier is required to complete. We strongly recommend that the completion of the order form is led by you and not the supplier. This will ensure you're fully aware of the content of the order form and the rights and obligations of both parties prior to signing.

Follow the instructions highlighted in green and delete any yellow sections you do not need. More detailed guidance is provided in the ['how to complete the call-off order form' section](#).

Refer to the schedules (available from the [Documents section of the Network Services 2 webpage](#) under 'Contract terms including all schedules') when completing the order form. Sign and email this order form to the supplier whose service offer was ranked first in your desktop evaluation.

A list of suppliers by lot, including contact information, is available from the [Documents section of the RM3808 webpage](#).

How to complete the call-off order form

To make a direct award you must complete a direct award order form and send it to your chosen supplier.

The call-off order form, when completed and signed by both you and the supplier, forms the call-off contract.

The following points provide a guide on how to complete **PART B: Direct Award Order Form Template** within Framework Schedule 6 (Order Form Template and Call-off Schedules).

Call-off reference: A unique reference which will identify this requirement. This assists you and the supplier with tracking your project from its procurement to award and then on an on-going basis through invoices, this could be your purchase order for your project.

The buyer: Your organisation name

Buyer address: Your organisation's business address

Supplier reference: A unique reference will be populated in this field by the supplier and assists the supplier and CCS with tracking your project from award to invoicing via the Management Information requirements.

The supplier: Your supplier's name. This can only be updated once you have completed your desktop analysis of service offers and identified the successful supplier.

Supplier Address: The successful supplier's registered address.

Registration Number: The successful Supplier's registration number.

DUNS Number: The successful supplier's DUNS number.

SID4GOV ID: The successful supplier's SID4GOV ID.

Call-off lot (s): State which lot or lots this procurement is using

Call-off incorporated terms: The order form lists all the Joint and Call-Off Schedules that are relevant to direct awards. The listed schedules are mandatory, with the exception of those that are highlighted yellow, which are optional.

We strongly advise that you review and familiarise yourself with all the schedules and decide if the optional schedules are applicable for your requirements.

It is essential that if you add to or amend any aspect of any call-off schedule, you must send the updated schedule with the order form to the supplier.

Also refer to the [**Buyer's guidance to the Public Sector Contract**](#) which provides further details on the options within the mandatory schedules.

Bear in mind that optional schedules or bespoke requirements may incur additional costs

Call-off special terms: This is not applicable when the call-off contract is awarded through direct award.

Call-off start date: The start date of the call-off contract between buyer and supplier

Call-off expiry date: The expiry date of the initial call-off contract term

Call-off initial period: The period in years and months of the call-off contract. This will be the period between the start and expiry dates

Call-off optional extension period: Any additional months and years required after the initial call-off contract. Extension periods must be updated on the call-off contract before being sent to the successful supplier. They cannot be added at a later date.

Minimum period of notice for without reason termination: Where you may need to terminate the contract without reason, the Core Terms at Clause 10.3 requires that you give the supplier at least 90 days notice. You can amend this notice period here. Consider the amount of time you will require to re-procure and implement a replacement service.

Caution: A reduction in the notice time to less than 90 days may impact the number of suppliers interested in your opportunity and significantly increase the price.

Call-off deliverables: There are two options for you to update the details of your requirements:

- Option A - insert the details from the supplier's service offer; or
- Option B - if your deliverables are more complex, you can update the details within Call-Off Schedule 20 (Call-Off Specification). You must not include any deliverables that are not included within the supplier's service offer

Remember to delete the option not used on the order form.

Maximum liability: Refer to the Core Terms clause 11.2. You must make an appropriate risk assessment if you wish to change the liability stated within the Core Terms, and update in the order form where requested.

Call-off charges: There are two options for you to update the charges for the deliverables:

- Option A - you can update the details on the order form
- Option B - if the charging model is too complex, you can update the details within Call-Off Schedule 5 (Pricing Details)

Reimbursable expenses: Not recoverable when conducting a direct award.

Payment method: Update your payment method of invoices to the supplier.

Buyer's invoices address: Include all the contact information that the supplier requires to send their invoices to you.

Buyer's authorised representative: The contact within your organisation that will be the contact for the supplier in relation to the call-off contract.

Buyer's environmental policy: There are two options for you to update your organisations environmental policies:

- Option A - insert your organisation's documents or insert your website URL into the order form
- Option B - update the details as an additional item within Call-Off Schedule 4 (Call-Off Tender)

Additional insurances: Not applicable when conducting a direct award.

Guarantee: Not applicable when conducting a direct award.

Social value commitment: To add anything additional to the call-off contract, the supplier should use Call-Off Schedule 4 (Call-Off Tender) to provide the details to the buyer.

Staff transfer: As a buyer, you will need to ensure appropriate provisions are included for any staff transfer requirements. Refer to and fully understand the details within Call-Off Schedule 2 (Staff Transfer) and delete the options on the order form that are not required.

Quality plan: Not applicable when conducting a direct award.

Maintenance of ICT environment: Not applicable when conducting a direct award.

Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery: Refer to Call-Off Schedule 8 (Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery (BCDR)). Only Part A - the Supplier's standard BCDR Plan at Annex 1 - will apply. You can ask the supplier to provide this to you.

Security requirements: Refer to Call-Off Schedule 9 (Security). There are two options to consider: Part A - Short Form Security and Part B - Long Form Security.

Part B should only be considered if there is a high level of risk to personal or sensitive data. Also refer to the options regarding Information Security Management Systems (ISMS) for further options when choosing Part B - Long Form Security.

Delete the option that is not applicable to your requirements.

Buyer's security policy: Not applicable when conducting a direct award.

Information Security Management Systems (ISMS): If you have opted for Part A - Short Form Security as part of your security requirements within Call-Off Schedule 9 (Security), you must insert 'Not Applicable' to this section. If Part B - Long Form Security is applicable to your requirements, the bespoke ISMS option is not applicable when conducting a direct award.

Clustering: Refer to Call-Off Schedule 12 (Clustering) This schedule provides the ability to have other contracting authorities join with the buyer to collectively contract under a single call-off contract. The supplier will provide the same level of service to the cluster members

and provide individual reporting and invoicing. All cluster members must be updated within the order form. Cluster members cannot be added to the call-off contract once awarded.

Service levels and service credits: Refer to Call-Off Schedule 14 (Service Levels).

Only Part B - Long Form applies when the call-off contract is awarded through the direct award procedure. Review the service maintenance levels within the supplier's service offer. The service credit cap has been set within the Definitions of this Call-Off Schedule 14. The service period is one month.

Supplier's authorised representative: The supplier's named contact for the framework.

Supplier's contract manager: The supplier's named contact to oversee the call-off contract.

Progress report frequency: Is the first working day of each calendar month.

Progress meeting frequency: Four times per year, on the first working day of each quarter (1 April, 1 July, 1 October and 1 January).

Operational board: Not applicable when conducting a direct award.

Key staff: Refer to Call-Off Schedule 7 (Key Supplier Staff). If key staff is important to your delivery, the supplier should list the contact details within this schedule.

Key subcontractors: The supplier will notify you of the key subcontractors that will support the deliverables of the call-off contract.

Commercially sensitive information: If applicable, the supplier will update the information as listed within Joint Schedule 4 (Commercially Sensitive Information).

For and on behalf of the supplier / buyer: Both parties must sign and date the order form to finalise the call-off contract.

Useful links and how to contact us

Network Services

Visit our [webpage](#) to read more about our other commercial agreements, and access webinar recordings, whitepapers and case studies.

Our other commercial agreements include:

- [Gigabit Capable Connectivity DPS](#)
- [HSCN Access Services DPS](#)
- [Crown Hosting](#)
- [PSN Core Services](#)
- [Audio Visual Technical Consultancy and Commissioning](#)
- [Technology Expense Management](#)

To get in touch, email networkservices@crowncommercial.gov.uk

Or call the Customer Service Centre on 0345 410 2222.

Networks Community of Practice

We host quarterly workshops which allow public sector telecoms buyers to share best practice and influence the procurement landscape of the future. The events also provide opportunities to network with other public sector attendees who have similar challenges and experiences.

Check out Eventbrite for the [full list of upcoming Community of Practices](#).

Webinars

Further support and training is available through our regular webinars that provide an overview of the information given in this guide and use of the templates. Check out Eventbrite for the [full list of upcoming webinars](#).

There is also an [on-demand webinar that provides an introduction to Network Services 2](#).

Learn more about CCS

www.crowncommercial.gov.uk

Twitter: [@gov_procurement](#)

LinkedIn: [Crown Commercial Service](#)

Annex 1: FAQs

Where can I locate pricing/rates?

Live pricing for Network Services can be viewed on the eMarketplace - see the [instructions for registering for the eMarketplace](#).

Why aren't all the suppliers visible on the eMarketplace?

Unlike Network Services (RM1045), it is not a mandatory requirement for suppliers to list their products/services on the eMarketplace. This means not all suppliers who have a place on a lot will appear on the eMarketplace. However, they can make service offers at any time and upload them onto the eMarketplace. If a product or service that you're interested in does not appear on the eMarketplace, please [issue a Request For Information](#).

Is there a minimum period for suppliers to respond to Requests for Information (RFIs)?

There is no mandatory minimum time, however we would recommend 10 working days for suppliers to respond to Requests For Information or 5 working days at the absolute minimum

Can I direct award to my incumbent supplier via the eMarketplace?

Fair and open procurement practices requires that you engage with all the suppliers within your chosen lot or lots and complete a desktop evaluation of all suitable service offers to enable you to award to the most economically advantageous tender.

Who is the contact at [supplier organisation]?

Email addresses and phone numbers for all our suppliers are listed in the '[Products and suppliers' section of the RM3808 webpage](#)', and the Supplier by lot matrix in the Documents section of the same page.

How do I decide which lot to use?

Read the [Choosing the right lot or lots section](#). If you've read all the guidance and still aren't sure, email info@crowncommercial.service.gov.uk.

Is there a spreadsheet that lists all the live service offers, organised by lot?

This is not a functionality that we have on the eMarketplace platform as Service Offers are published all the time - it would be impossible to guarantee that any spreadsheet independent of the eMarketplace was up-to-date and accurate.

We encourage you to search for Service Offers and use the filter options to identify the suitable Service Offers that you can review as part of your desktop evaluation.

Annex 2: How to use the eMarketplace

Once logged in to the Government eMarketplace, the homepage will be displayed as follows:

The screenshot shows the Zanzibar eMarketplace homepage. At the top, there is a navigation bar with tabs: Dashboard, Documents, Shopping (which is highlighted with a red box), Product Manager, Directory, and Contracts. Below the navigation bar, a greeting "Hi XXXX" is displayed, followed by the heading "Welcome to the Basware Network.". A paragraph of text explains the purpose of the network: "Welcome to the Basware Network, the latest generation of online procurement tools designed to simplify the procurement process and enabling rapid benefits realisation. The Basware Network provides immediate and simple access to rich content provided by your suppliers on the Basware Marketplace. Its intuitive nature lets you buy what you need easily, while helping you to manage the end-to-end transaction process with your suppliers fully electronically and on-line. The Basware Network enables you to: Create requisitions from the catalogues available to you via the Basware Network or by using free-text ordering. Ensure that all requisitions are forwarded for approval by the appropriate budget holders. Generate purchase orders and other procurement documents and transmit these electronically to suppliers. Receive electronic invoices and other related procurement transactions from suppliers. Manage and view all of these documents in a simple inbox/outbox based environment. Control your spend using the document history and audit trails to provide easy visibility for you and your organisation." At the bottom of the page, there is a "basware" logo and links to Acceptable Use Policy, Accessibility Information, Privacy Notice, and Cookie Notice.

Click on 'Shopping' at the top of the page

Select the 'Marketplace' tab

The screenshot shows the Zanzibar eMarketplace marketplace tab. The navigation bar at the top has tabs: Dashboard, Documents, Shopping, Product Manager, Catalogue Shopping, Marketplace (which is highlighted with a red box), and Free text requisitions. Below the navigation bar, the word "Marketplace" is displayed. A search bar is present, containing the text "RM3808".

A search bar will appear to allow you to enter your search criteria.

The screenshot shows the Zanzibar eMarketplace marketplace search interface. The navigation bar at the top has tabs: basware, Dashboard, Documents, Shopping, Product Manager, Directory, Contracts, Catalogue Shopping, Marketplace (highlighted with a red box), and Free text requisitions. Below the navigation bar, the word "Marketplace" is displayed. A search bar is present, containing the text "RM3808".

Rather than searching for service offers using keywords such as mobile or WAN, it is strongly recommended that you enter the framework number ('RM3808') in the search bar and click the search button.

Once results are displayed, on the right of the screen you will find "Filters". Under "Content tag" you can filter by lot. This will reduce your search results to only show the lot you're interested in.

▼ Content Tag

- Lot01 (124)
- Lot02 (43)
- Lot03 (53)
- Lot04 (12)
- Lot05 (42)
- Lot06 (45)
- Lot07 (8)
- Lot08 (34)
- Lot09 (4)
- Lot10 (44)

[Show more](#)

▼ Contract Reference

- RM3808 (494)

The specifications for each lot are defined in Framework Schedule 1 (Specification), which can be found in the Documents section of the Network Services 2 webpage under '[RM3808 Contract terms including all schedules](#)'.

How to view the service offers

Having filtered on a lot, the list of published current service offers available will be displayed. To view an individual service offer, click on the name of the service offer or the supplier logo. This will take you through to a more detailed description. For full details of the service offer - including pricing - click on the PDFs in the 'Linked media' section.

The screenshot shows a web-based application for managing service offers. At the top, there's a navigation bar with links like 'Dashboard', 'Documents', 'Shopping', 'Product Manager', 'Directory', and 'Contracts'. Below the navigation, a breadcrumb trail shows 'Home > Back to Search Results'. The main content area is titled 'Item Details' and displays the following information:

- Supplier Logo:** A blue pentagonal logo for 'Jo Bloggs R Us'.
- Item ID:** RM3808-LP-
- Contract Reference:** RM3808
- Description:** (This field is empty in the screenshot).
- Additional Information:** Includes 'Classification Scheme: UNSPSC (v6)' and 'Classification code: 43000000'.
- Linked media:** A section containing two PDF files:
 - RM3808-LP...
 - RM3808-LP... Service Offer.pdf

It is recommended that you review all available service offers on the eMarketplace within the appropriate lot, and include all those that meet your requirements in your desktop evaluation.

Annex 3: Award criteria

The direct award criteria must be applied when conducting your desktop evaluation.

Full details of the call-off award procedure and criteria can be found within Framework Schedule 7 (Call-Off Award Procedure).

There are two options based on price only or price and quality evaluations.

1. If you can only differentiate the service offers that meet your requirements on the basis of price, the following criteria must be applied:

Criteria number	Criteria (ranked in order of importance)	Percentage weightings
1	Price (life cycle costs, cost effectiveness and price, price and running costs)	100%
2	Non-price (quality, technical merit, delivery lead times)	0%

2. If you can differentiate the service offers that meet your requirements on the basis of price and quality, the following criteria shall be applied:

Criteria number	Criteria (ranked in order of importance)	Percentage weightings
1	Price (life cycle costs, cost effectiveness and price, price and running costs)	25-75%
2	Non-price (quality, technical merit, delivery lead times)	25-75%

Scoring templates to use for both 'price only' and 'price and quality' are available within the Documents section of the [framework website](#).