Public Sector Travel and Venue Solutions RM6016

Customer guide





Contents

[Purpose of this guide 2](#_gjdgxs)

[Key abbreviations, terms & glossary 2](#_1fob9te)

[Introduction to Crown Commercial Service (CCS) 3](#_2et92p0)

[What are the benefits of using PSTVS? 7](#_4d34og8)

[How to use this Commercial Agreement 8](#_17dp8vu)

[Additional information 13](#_26in1rg)

[Background to the Public Sector Travel & Venue Solutions Commercial Agreement 13](#_lnxbz9)

[Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) 16](#_35nkun2)

[Annex 1: How DigiTS streamlines your travel requirements 19](#_44sinio)

[Annex 2: The Public Sector Programmes 20](#_z337ya)

[Annex 3 – Glossary of terms 22](#_1y810tw)

[Annex 4: Who can use RM6016 PSTVS? 23](#_4i7ojhp)

# Purpose of this guide

This guide for RM6016 provides information on four key areas:

* + it sets out the key benefits of the solutions that are available within RM6016
  + it sets out the various processes that you will follow to obtain travel, accommodation and venue booking services under the Commercial Agreement (the “Enabling Agreement” process)
  + it shares the high level procurement process undertaken to provide assurance that your needs have been accommodated during the specification and tender process
  + it shares frequently asked questions along with up to date answers

# Key abbreviations, terms & glossary

Listed below are a number of key abbreviations and terms which we use in this document that you may find helpful.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Abbreviations | |
| * ALB – Arms’ Length Body (of a Central Government department) * CCS - Crown Commercial Service * CG - Central Government * CTVS – Crown Travel and Venue Services * FAQs - Frequently asked questions * KPI - Key Performance Indicators * NDPB - Non Departmental Public Bodies | * OJEU - Official Journal of the European Union * PSTVS – Public Sector Travel and Venue Solutions (RM6016) * SLA - Service Level Agreement * SME – Small and Medium-sized Enterprise * TUPE - Transfer of Undertakings Protection of Employment * WPS – Wider Public Sector |

**There is a full list of terms and definitions at the end of this document, in Annex 3 – Glossary of terms.**

# Introduction to Crown Commercial Service (CCS)

We’re the biggest public procurement organisation in the UK. We help organisations across the whole of the public sector find the right commercial solutions for over £12 billion of spend each year.

We cover everything from temporary staff and electricity to laptops and cars. Our customers include NHS trusts, local authorities, police forces, emergency services, schools, colleges, government departments, housing associations and charities across the UK.

We know that tight control over budgets and resources is a key priority and we want to help you save time and money when buying everyday goods and services, so that you can focus on the things that really matter to your organisation.

You can use our commercial solutions free of charge, and we’re committed to helping you achieve maximum value by leveraging our commercial expertise and national buying power.

As we’re an Executive Agency of the Cabinet Office, we also lead on developing and implementing the UK’s public sector procurement policy and delivering government’s commercial policy priorities.

**Why choose us?**

* we put our customers first, working in partnership to help you achieve best value we help our customers save millions of pounds every year
* we’re making public sector procurement simpler
* we’re making it easier for smaller businesses to win contracts
* we’re committed to continuously developing our commercial expertise and seeking innovative solutions for our customers

We recognise the need to transform business processes to align with the public sector digital agenda. Our commercial agreements encompass new technologies and products to support you with achieving best value and innovation, while future proofing your processes.

**What is Public Sector Travel and Venue Solutions (PSTVS)?**

Also known as RM6016, PSTVS is a suite of five Commercial Agreements with a duration of 3 + 1 years. The Commercial Agreements within RM6016 are designed to enable CCS to work with customers to identify the most suitable Solution, or combination of Solutions, to meet their travel booking needs. For example:

* if you primarily require rail travel and accommodation in the UK, Solutions 1 and 2 will meet these needs.
* if you need a quick and easy route for booking simple air travel you may use Solution 3.
* if you have a broader requirement for global travel and/or more complex bookings, needing some offline support via a call centre, Solution 4 will meet these needs.
* for a booking service for off-site meetings and/or group accommodation bookings, you can use Solution 5.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Solution** | **Key Provisions** | **Supplier** |
| **1** | Online booking system for booking rail travel | Trainline.com |
| **2** | Online booking system for booking accommodation | HRS |
| **3** | Online booking system for booking air travel | Diversity Travel |
| **4** | Online booking system and an offline booking service for booking business travel and supporting services | * Hogg Robinson Group * Corporate Travel Management (North) Limited (“CTM”) * Agiito |
| **5** | Venue finding services for meetings, booking of group accommodation and supporting services | Calder Conferences |

The choice of Solution(s), and of Supplier on Solution 4, is your decision as the Customer. By selecting specific requirements on each Solution’s Pick List the services can be tailored to your specific needs. You do not need to have a “one-size-fits all” service - you can choose any number of the Solutions, in any combination, depending on your travel needs.

If using Solution 4, your organisation (or CCS acting on your behalf if requested) can undertake a further competition between all three Suppliers to refine your requirements. This could include the provision of Customer-specific processes, services and/or additional commercial benefits, but **must be compliant** with Public Contract Regulations and **must not** **substantially change** the original terms of the procurement.

Table 1 below provides an overview of the key service provisions available on individual Solutions:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Service Item** | **Solution Number** | | | | |
| **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
| Significant bespoke ‘Offline Service’ – primarily global travel, including account management |  |  |  | **✓** |  |
| UK domestic rail | **✓** |  |  | **✓** |  |
| Rail - Eurostar |  |  | **✓** | **✓** |  |
| Accommodation – UK and international |  | **✓** |  | **✓** |  |
| Air – point to point i.e. depart one airport arrive another |  |  | **✓** | **✓** |  |
| Air – multi sector i.e. multiple stopovers/connections |  |  | **✓** | **✓** |  |
| Visa / passport services |  |  |  | **✓** |  |
| Travel Implant Service |  |  |  | **✓** |  |
| Air chartering |  |  |  | **✓** |  |
| Oyster Cards |  |  |  | **✓** |  |
| Coach tickets |  |  |  | **✓** |  |
| Taxi booking |  |  |  | **✓** |  |
| Executive VIP services |  |  |  | **✓** |  |
| Currency Purchase Service |  |  |  | **✓** |  |
| Ferry booking – UK and international |  |  |  | **✓** |  |
| Ancillary services i.e. airport and railway station car parking |  |  |  | **✓** |  |
| Ancillary services i.e. ferry port parking, airport lounges / bus / coach hire with driver / rail travel cards |  |  |  | **✓** |  |
| Vehicle hire (through an enabled CCS framework) |  |  |  | **✓** |  |
| Group Air (1-9 traveller(s)) |  |  | **✓** | **✓** |  |
| Group Air (10 or more traveller(s)) |  |  |  | **✓** |  |
| Group Rail (1-9 traveller(s)) | **✓** |  |  | **✓** |  |
| Group Rail (10 or more traveller(s)) |  |  |  | **✓** |  |
| Venue finding service for meetings & conferences |  |  |  |  | **✓** |
| Group accommodation (1-8 rooms) |  | **✓** |  | **✓** | **✓** |
| Group accommodation (9 or more rooms) |  |  |  | **✓** | **✓** |
| Booking of free Government Estate meeting space (subject to availability) |  |  |  |  | **✓** |
| Meetings & conference support services e.g. audio/visual/presentation facilities, video conferencing facilities, webinar facilities**\*** |  |  |  |  | **✓\*** |
| Covert operatives’ travel booking service |  |  |  | **✓** |  |
| Overseas point of sale bookings |  |  |  | **✓** |  |
| Out of Hours support services |  |  |  | **✓** |  |
| Rail ticket printers**^** | **✓^** |  |  | **✓^** |  |

**Table 1 .**

**\***N.B. Solution 5 should not be used for the purpose of processing payments for venue bookings which have been agreed direct with the provider, as this is outside of the scope of the Agreement.

**^** Please note that Department for Transport have an ongoing Smart Ticketing ongoing project which seeks to introduce Smart Cards to gradually eliminate paper ticketing across the UK Rail network, expected to be implemented by the end of 2019. Following completion of this project is it is expected that there will be no need for rail ticket printers.

**Digital Travel Solution (DigiTS)**

Customer access to PSTVS Suppliers’ Online Booking Tools and all Management Information will be via the CCS Digital Travel Solution (DigiTS) platform. DigiTS is a single sign on platform, meaning that a user logs in at one central point and can then access all of your online booking tools (including access to a venue enquiry form for Solution 5).

We have provided a diagram showing how DigiTS can help streamline your travel booking and reporting requirements at Annex 1: How DigiTS streamlines your travel requirements.

We have made a video explaining the benefits of the new agreement and providing a brief demonstration of the platform, which is available to view [here](https://youtu.be/ZoGiZG8DI1g).

The DigiTS platform was developed in line with the Government Digital Service (GDS) requirements, including Accessibility. More information on the technical specification for the DigiTS platform is available in the Commercial Agreement, under Schedule 21 – Customer Journey; Access to Digital Travel Solution.

**Security assurance**

DigiTS has been reviewed and accredited by the CCS Senior Information Responsible Owner (SIRO), following a security risk assessment using the 2T Consulting Risk Tree methodology.

More information on the Security accreditation process for CCS suppliers is available in the Commercial Agreements, as follows:

**Solution 4** - Schedule 5: Security Requirements For Solution 4

**All other Solutions** – Schedule 20: Security Requirements For Solutions 1, 2, 3 & 5

# What are the benefits of using PSTVS?

PSTVS will deliver commercial benefits to Customers through:

* Reducing the cost of service by shortening the supply chain and removing layers of cost, leading to **low cost and/or zero online booking fees** (dependent on Solution and Supplier)
* transparent **sharing of Commissions** between Customer and Suppliers for Solutions 2, 4 & 5
* providing access to an unparalleled range of negotiated rates and fares through the **Public Sector Negotiated Programmes** for transportation and accommodation
* enabling access to industry **special offers**, promotional rates and fares
* delivering online Solutions for all Customers booking travel, increasing online adoption, reducing booking costs and/or adopting **more cost-efficient ways to book** travel
* maximizing the use and scope of **technology** where available in the market place, for example, using barcode ticket technology to reduce printing costs
* on-going pro-active **Supplier and market engagement** to ensure emerging trends and technologies are incorporated into the Commercial Agreements as quickly as possible.
* encompassing **data security (including GDPR)** requirements written by a subject matter expert from the National Cyber Security Centre and assured by CCS
* comprehensive **performance management**, including application of service credits
* choice of three suppliers with **global travel reach** under Solution 4 (offline and online travel booking services)
* **Price Match Promise** for all solutions (see page 15 for more details)

Additional customer benefits PSTVS will deliver:

* support for government agendas on SME growth and Greening Government Commitment
* improved access and timeliness of Supplier management information through the DigiTS platform
* increased utilization of the government estate for meetings, conferences and venues, reducing external venue costs
* assurance that the provision of travel, accommodation and venue booking services are fully accessible to all users and comply fully with the Equality Act 2010 and other relevant legislation

# How to use this Commercial Agreement

Pricing for Solutions 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 are available on the CCS [eSourcing Tool](https://crowncommercialservice.bravosolution.co.uk/web/login.html?_ncp=1630500588776.35417-1). The pricing for this Commercial Agreement is considered to be commercially sensitive and could prejudice the commercial interests of the Suppliers involved if the information were to be made publicly available.

This Commercial Agreement can be accessed in a number of different ways, dependent on different factors including scope of requirements, transaction volume and spend, customer drivers and targets, customer market knowledge, and customer preference.

You must consider your organisation’s requirements in accordance with this guidance and the requirements of the Public Contract Regulations 2015.

All customers must undertake the following process:

**Award options for Solutions 1, 2, 3 and 5**

Direct award is the only award option under these Solutions as there is only one Supplier available on each. To access these solutions, you should work with the supplier(s) to complete your Enabling Agreement.

**Award options for Solution 4**

This Solution can be accessed in two ways - either by direct award or by running a further competition amongst the three suppliers.

Direct Award Route

You can opt to direct award an Enabling Agreement to a Supplier if you can determine that:

* your service requirements can be met by the specification for this Solution
* you can demonstrate and evidence that the selected supplier demonstrates best value for money (in line with your organisation’s criteria and/or process)
* all of the terms of the proposed contract are laid down in the Commercial Agreement, and:
* the Enabling Agreement terms do not require amendment
* you don’t require any supplementary terms and conditions

Advantages of the direct award include:

* agreements may be entered into more quickly than when further competitions are conducted
* you don’t need to engage the travel market (or evaluate suppliers) again
* there’s no need to write a specification – the core statement of requirements can be used
* ideal for less-complex travel requirements and smaller expenditure

Further competition route – Solution 4 only

Further competitions are permitted under Solution 4 for Customers who have additional service requirements that are not covered by the original scope. You can opt to conduct a further competition if you require the Supplier to develop proposals or a solution in respect of your service requirements that is not already covered by the original specification.

You can run your own further competition using the template provided in the CCS [eSourcing Tool](https://crowncommercialservice.bravosolution.co.uk/web/login.html?_ncp=1630500588776.35417-1) or your own template and/or processes. You can also contact CCS to discuss how we can help you run your further competition by emailing [info@crowncommercial.gov.uk](mailto:info@crowncommercial.gov.uk). While CCS can manage your further competition on your behalf, you will need to provide a completed specification of your travel requirement to CCS in order for us to support you and provide subject matter experts for technical evaluation of the Suppliers’ bids.

Timescales for further competitions can vary depending on customer requirements.

Suppliers can decline to participate in a competition if they wish, as this can be a costly exercise for them, given they have already completed the full OJEU-compliant tender process.

Advantages of further competitions include:

* you can add to the core specification if you have bespoke requirements
* you only need to evaluate suppliers on how they propose to deliver your specific service as their capability to meet the service requirements in the Commercial Agreement have already been assessed in the original tender

To view our video on how to run a further competition, please click [here](https://youtu.be/L5zEQNvIGb4).

|  |
| --- |
| **Have you considered aggregating your requirements?**  **You may choose to join with other public sector organisations that you work closely with, and who have a similar travel profile to you, to carry out an aggregated further competition.**  **For more information on how you can run an aggregated further competition, please contact** [**info@crowncommercial.gov.uk**](mailto:info@crowncommercial.gov.uk)**.** |

**Further competition award criteria**

When running a further competition, customers should award on the basis of the most economically advantageous tender and must provide suppliers with the methodology behind the evaluation, including the evaluation criteria and the weightings that are applied to each criterion.

The Commercial Agreement procurement process undertaken was in accordance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (the Regulations), specifically the Open Procedure (Regulation 27 of the Regulations) and the requirements relating to Framework Agreements (Regulation 33 of the Regulations).

Table 2 shows the weighting criteria that must be used in the further competition process under this Commercial Agreement in line with the above regulations:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Criteria Number** | **Criteria** | **Percentage Weightings set by the Customer conducting the further competition**  **(Total weightings must equal 100%)** |
| Quality | | 60% + / - 10%  *i.e. range between 50% - 70%* |
| A | Technical capability |
| B | Service Levels |
| C | Implementation / mobilisation |
| Price | | 40% +/- 10%  *i.e. range between 30% - 50%* |

**Table 2**

If you require additional support and procurement guidance on running a further competition, please contact us at [info@crowncommercial.gov.uk](mailto:info@crowncommercial.gov.uk)

**Finalising the Enabling Agreement**

If you are direct awarding, contact your chosen supplier to begin completing your Enabling Agreement. Once completed, you should send this to your Supplier for signature.

If you are following the further competition route, it is best practice to run a ten day standstill period. If doing this, customers should send out an intention to award notice to the successful supplier and an unsuccessful award notice to other suppliers that submitted a response. These letters should provide details of the scores awarded for each weighted criteria compared to the successful potential provider and a rationale for each score. The rationale should be objective, and care needs to be taken to ensure that the scores and rationale is in line with your original further competition documentation.

Once the ten day standstill period is complete, customers should then send an award letter and begin completing the Enabling Agreement with the successful Supplier before sending to the Supplier for signature.

|  |
| --- |
| **Access to your chosen Supplier(s)’ Online Booking Tools will be via the CCS Digital Travel Solution (DigiTS) platform.**  **CCS must receive a copy of your completed and counter-signed Enabling Agreement in order to set up access to the DigiTS platform. Your Supplier(s) will guide you through all the information you need to provide in order to be set up on DigiTS and access PSTVS.** |

CCS will set up Customers on DigiTS a minimum of five (5) working days before the Enabling Agreement go-live date, to allow for system testing and training before the Supplier Booking Tool goes live.

Fig. 2 below outlines the process of awarding an Enabling Agreement under PSTVS.

**Y**

**N**

Was your organisation listed in the OJEU Notice? (See Annex 1 if you are unsure)

Please contact our Customer Service Centre for advice on whether your organisation may use the agreement

The CCS eSourcing Tool and website provide access to draft Enabling Agreements and the Specification of Requirements for each Solution. Pricing for Solutions 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 is available within the eSourcing. **Please review these against your Business Travel requirements.**

Does your Service Requirement match the Specification of Requirements of one or more Solutions, under the terms set out in the Enabling Agreement?

**Draft Enabling Agreements are available to download from the CCS eSourcing Tool and website.**

.

**Y**

**N**

**Y**

**N**

You will now be able to access the service via the DigiTS single sign-on platform. CCS will register your organisation’s first nominated Admin user, who will be sent guidance on how to use the platform and manage the registration of additional users.

Liaise with your chosen new Supplier and existing Supplier to agree an implementation plan to transition to the new Commercial Agreement. CCS can provide you with a draft implementation plan to assist with this.

**Both Customer and Supplier must sign the Enabling Agreement**. **Your Supplier(s) will guide you through all the information you need to provide in order to access PSTVS.**

Is your chosen Supplier your incumbent (i.e. do you need to change supplier)?

You can elect to use any combination of the Solutions as best suits your requirements by direct awarding Enabling Agreements to the relevant Supplier(s).

CCS can provide supporting evidence to help you complete your internal approvals/ business case

If you need the Supplier to develop a solution for your Services Requirements; and/or need to amend or refine the Enabling Agreement, you can carry out a Further Competition under Solution 4 to select a Supplier **(see Schedule 2, Part A of the Commercial Agreement).**

CCS can provide supporting evidence to help you complete your internal approvals /business case

**Access to your chosen Supplier(s)’ online booking tools will be via the**

**CCS Digital Travel Solution (DigiTS) platform**

We will set up your organisation on DigiTS a minimum of 5 working days before your chosen go-live date with the supplier

Your supplier will email a copy of your counter-signed Enabling Agreement to the CCS Travel team. We must receive this in order to provide access to the DigiTS platform.

Agree a go-live date for the new Commercial Agreement T&Cs with your Supplier. Any transition activity will be minimal. CCS can provide you with a draft implementation plan to assist with this.

**Both Customer and Supplier must sign the Enabling Agreement. Your Supplier(s) will guide you through all the information you need to provide in order to access PSTVS.**

**Fig. 2: Enabling Agreement award process**

Working with Crown Commercial Service

**Agreement & performance management**

CCS will manage the performance of this agreement by:

* undertaking regular reviews with Suppliers to:
  + review SLAs / KPIs measures, complaints, implementation and go live progress and monthly data provision.
  + identify opportunities for greater contractual efficiencies and Supplier continuous improvements
  + identify areas where customers can improve efficiency
* working closely with our customers to:
  + share supplier feedback on potential efficiencies, supporting savings and best buying practice
  + gain feedback on supplier performance under Solutions 1, 2, 3 and 5 to support performance management and ensure Customer satisfaction.
  + act as an escalation point for Solution 4 contractual or performance issues - the CCS travel team will work with both you and your Supplier(s) to resolve issues / concerns.

**The Travel Category Board**

Our Travel Category Board is established to drive forward the travel category strategy across the public and third sectors. The board comprises of representatives from central government departments, wider public sector organisations and Crown Commercial Service.

Its purpose is to:

* drive forward the travel category strategy across the public sector and third sector.
* ensure continuous sustainable rigorous peer review of category strategies with customers, the market and the private sector
* sustain board membership and engagement to continuously update and mature the strategy in line with internal and external developments
* execute and maintain exceptional category management with CCS being the natural go to provider for travel solutions
* deliver commercial benefits, added value and customer service excellence to public sector customers
* ensure continuous improvement is achieved and programme performance is benchmarked within the travel sector
* deliver ongoing education with Customers to enhance policies, procedures and best booking practice

# Additional information

# Background to the Public Sector Travel & Venue Solutions Commercial Agreement

PSTVS was created to replace a number of legacy (expired) commercial arrangements, including:

* + - RM3735 Crown Travel and Venue Services (CTVS)
    - RM1034 Wider Public Sector Travel Management Services (WPSTMS)

CCS developed a procurement strategy to combine all spend under one Commercial Agreement, maximising our leverage of economies of scale to the total public sector spend on travel and venue find services. When buying common goods and services, bringing together customers’ needs provides several advantages - including commercial benefits to the public purse and a simpler tender process. The level of public sector spend on travel in the UK makes this procurement the largest Supplier opportunity in terms of volume and value in the UK travel market.

During the management of the various legacy agreements the CCS travel team, in partnership with key customers, identified a number of opportunities to further achieve and deliver maximum value and efficiency.  Combining these lessons learnt from previous Commercial Agreements with current market knowledge and innovation will enable CCS, through this Agreement, to deliver additional benefits and an improved service offering to Customers.

Public Sector Travel & Venue Solutions offers a Commercial Agreement to succeed previous Travel contracting arrangements upon their expiry, and it offers both new customers and those on legacy arrangements the opportunity to move to a market-leading new way of sourcing business travel, accommodation and venue find services.

Customers of PSTVS will gain access to the Public Sector Negotiated Programmes for transportation and accommodation, which are the largest programmes of their kind in the UK. CCS is negotiating these deals directly with the end providers on your behalf - enabling us to achieve the best value fares and rates for the entire public sector.

More information is available at **Annex 2: The Public Sector Programmes**.

**PSTVS procurement approach**

CCS followed an Open Procedure procurement process in line with the Public Contract Regulations 2015. Figure 1 below provides an overview of the process for your information.

**SPECIFICATION PLANNING**

Customers, Travel Category Board and Market Engagement

**SPECIFICATION REQUIREMENT**

Customer requirements translated into refined specifications for five Solutions

**Invitation to Tender**

Via the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU)

**EVALUATION**

Of tender submissions by CCS and customer representatives

**ONLINE BOOKING SYSTEM CAPABILITY ASSESSMENTS**

**CCS APPROVALS BOARD**

CCS Approvals to issue Intention To Award Letters

**AWARD**

Formal Intention To Award Commercial Agreements & standstill period

**COMMERCIAL AGREEMENTS**

Signing of Commercial Agreements between CCS & Suppliers

**IMPLEMENTATION**

Customers sign Enabling Agreements with chosen Suppliers and transition onto Commercial Agreement

Fig.1 – PSTVS procurement process

**SLAs & KPIs**

Within the suite of Commercial Agreements we have incorporated a number of SLAs, Service Credits and KPIs. An overview is included below and full details are included as part of the Commercial Agreement (Schedule 3 - Service Levels and Service Credits, and Schedule 9 – Key Performance Indicators).

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Item | Details |
| Service Level Agreements (SLAs) | * Online Booking System (Booking App) Availability * System maintenance * Security Breaches * Telephone answering times / abandoned calls * Booking completion times * Accuracy of documentation * Management information * Savings reporting * Complaints management * Supplier review meetings * Effective delivery of account management * Traveller and or travel / venue booker surveys * Ticket refunds * Rate availability * Price match |
| Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) | * Delivery of management information * Delivery of ad hoc reports * Supplier action plan deliverables * Commissions collection * Business review |
| Service Credits | * When SLAs fail, Service Credits will apply * Designed to drive Suppliers to deliver contract obligations and excellent Customer service |

**Price Match promise – RM6016**

Within RM6016 Commercial Agreements the Suppliers have incorporated a ‘Price Match Promise’. An overview of the process is included below:

* The Supplier(s) will provide an assurance to the Customer that the lowest available fare/rate is always offered to Bookers to make a booking in a secure and fully bonded environment. If a Booker finds a rail ticket, airfare or hotel rate that is cheaper than that presented by the Supplier **with the same terms and conditions**, the Supplier will action a “Price Match”.
* This means the Supplier will be given the opportunity to match the cheaper fare/rate via secure channels using secure/approved payment means in UK Sterling only, within realistic timelines. If the Supplier cannot match the price, then the Supplier must refund the difference in fare or rate to the Customer.
* Please note that the fare or rate must be ‘like for like’ (i.e. exact origin, destination and routing) in the same class, at the exact same times and dates of travel, and with the same ticketing restrictions and penalties, including any ancillary fees and taxes.
* The Supplier(s) will offer a Price Match guarantee on all fares/rates it supplies to each Customer to guarantee the Supplier is offering the lowest cost options for travel. Price Match fares/rates are those that are available to the general public online. This **does not include** fares/rates offered on membership only websites, reward programs, incentives, via a consolidator or fares obtained via e-auctions, or sites requiring a code to access.
* A Price Match challenge must be flagged to the Supplier within 30 minutes of receiving the Supplier’s quoted fare by email.
* No additional transaction or amendment fees will be applied when a Price Match is implemented.
* Price Match is only available for fully IATA and ABTA bonded distribution channels and only where the UK is the point of origin and the point of sale.
* The Price Match will not apply in situations where the Customer has requested that Inventory channels and availability displays be limited to exclude the fares being challenged under Price Match.
* Price Match will not apply where the Customer or Customer representative has negotiated a fare/rate programme where the lowest available fare/rate is higher than the benchmark fare/rate or fare/rate quoted by the Customer.

# Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

We have provided answers to some of our customer’s most common questions below.

Why do I need to sign an Enabling Agreement?

It is a legally binding document defining the roles and responsibilities between the Customer and the Supplier. CCS own and manage the actual Commercial Agreements. CCS must receive a copy of your countersigned Enabling Agreement in order to set you up on the Digital Travel Solution (DigiTS) platform to access your booking tool(s).

What is the maximum term we can stipulate for the Enabling Agreement?

The maximum length of the RM6016 Commercial Agreements is 3+1 years i.e. 26th February 2021. The Enabling Agreement term applies from the date you begin your Enabling Agreement, and unless stated otherwise will end on the main Commercial Agreement expiry date, though you have the option to request Termination/Exit Assistance for a maximum of twelve (12) months.

How do I know which Solution(s) to select?

There are a number of solutions available to you, depending on your organisation’s travel booking requirements. If you need online booking services only, consider using Solutions 1, 2, 3 and/or 5. If you have more bespoke requirements, e.g. Passport/Visa services, you may choose Solution 4 and carry out a Further Competition to select a provider. For more information please see **How to use this Commercial Agreement**.

If you prefer, you can split your requirement, putting one or more travel type(s) via an online-only Solution (1, 2 or 3), and placing the rest of your requirement through a Solution 4 provider.

My travellers need to travel overseas, do I need to select a particular Supplier’s Commercial Agreement to support this need?

International requirements are supported by Solutions 2, 3 and 4. If the majority of flights are point-to-point (from A to B) then Solution 3 may be most suitable, but if you have a mixture of point-to-point and more complex requirements you may consider that Solution 4 is the best option for you.

Is there a minimum spend level for a Further Competition?

There is no minimum spend for a Further Competition, although suppliers may decline to bid for low value requirements due to the cost of participation in competitions. Therefore this route should only be used if:

(a) you require the Supplier to develop proposals or a solution to meet your requirements; and/or

(b) you need to amend or refine the Enabling Agreement to reflect your Service Requirements

If you have a total spend of under £500k, and want to run a Further Competition procedure, you can work with our Further Competitions team to investigate the potential for an aggregated competition with other Customers

Can I alter the pricing on my Enabling Agreement?

Pricing is fixed for Solutions 1, 2, 3, and 5. The pricing for Solution 4 may be altered through a Further Competition procedure, however maximum prices for these services are set at Commercial Agreement level.

What are my options for invoicing and payment?

The Commercial Agreement sets out a number of options, which you can select when completing your Enabling Agreement. Please refer to the draft Enabling Agreements available on the CCS [eSourcing Tool](https://crowncommercialservice.bravosolution.co.uk/web/login.html?_ncp=1630500588776.35417-1).

Crown Commercial Service provides a range of [Payment Solutions](https://ccs-agreements.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/contracts/rm3828), including Purchasing Cards, which you may consider using.

How do I access my new online booking tool?

DigiTS is the CCS single sign-on platform for all travel Online Booking Tools. CCS must receive a copy of your countersigned Enabling Agreement in order to set your organisation up on DigiTS. Please work with your chosen supplier(s) to complete and sign this.

What is DigiTS?

The DigiTS platform is an online "front end" to the suppliers' booking tools.  It provides a single sign on to all enabled booking tools and will allow your organisation to collate MI from all your providers into one report as needed. More information is available in Annex 1: How DigiTS streamlines your travel requirements.

Who do I contact if I’m having trouble accessing DigiTS?

If you experience technical issues within DigiTS, in the first instance please review our DigiTS User Guide. If this doesn’t help you resolve the issue, you can contact the CCS Customer Service Desk by emailing [info@crowncommercial.gov.uk](mailto:info@crowncommercial.gov.uk), with the subject line: “DigiTS Technical Support**”**, and provide a description of the problem you’ve encountered, attaching screenshots.

For problems that occur after the punch-out from DigiTS (in the supplier online booking tool) you’ll need to contact the supplier directly.

Can we simply stop supply from our existing agreement on its expiry date and start to use PSTVS immediately on the following day?

If you begin the implementation process as far in advance of your expiry date as possible, then a smooth transition to the new commercial agreement is more likely. Check your existing agreement to ensure you are aware of both your Supplier’s and your own obligations with regard to termination notice and transfer to new suppliers, then work with your chosen new supplier(s) to plan your implementation around this.

We recommend that you plan in a short testing/ familiarisation period on DigiTS before going live with your new online booking tool.

How will the implementation process be managed?

You will be supported through this process by our Travel Commercial Agreement Management Team and your new supplier’s implementation manager. Be sure to take note of your existing supplier’s obligations, and your own obligations, within your current agreement.

Do the Suppliers provide a 24-hour service in case of emergency travel requirements?

Solution 4 offers offline support with booking and other travel-related queries 24/7. While online booking is available 24/7 under Solutions 1, 2 and 3, offline support is not a mandatory requirement, so please check with individual suppliers what they offer.

Will the Suppliers be able to support our duty of care requirements?

Yes, reports will be immediately available to pinpoint the expected location of all travellers in the event of a security incident.

Who manages the suppliers?

Once the Enabling Agreement has been completed, the relationship in terms of day-to-day service delivery lies between the Customer and Supplier, with CCS acting as escalation point to deal with any contractual or unresolved issues.

Who is responsible for pricing negotiations with travel Suppliers?

CCS is the owner of the Commercial Agreements terms and conditions and all price negotiations, including the Public Sector Negotiated Programmes and Commercial Agreement pricing.

How much importance has been placed on the capability of the Suppliers’ online technology and how it delivers competitive rates / fares?

A key element of the procurement process was to ensure that the Suppliers have an extensive range of content within their online solutions. With reduced or free online booking fee driving increased online adoption, the ‘visual guilt’ element of an online booking tool when a traveller makes the final choice on which rate/fare to book, is proven to reduce overall travel costs.

I have an existing travel supplier – does TUPE apply?

We do not consider that TUPE will apply for Lots 1-3 as these are a new, online-only, service provision. However we recommend that all customers seek legal advice as to the relevance of TUPE to their current contractual arrangements.

Can my new supplier provide Vehicle Hire services?

All suppliers awarded on Solution 4 have the provision to offer car hire to customers. If you would like to access the Vehicle Hire commercial agreement (RM1062) through your appointed supplier, please contact us to discuss how this can be done.

How have the Government’s CO2 / Green agenda and SME objectives been considered?

Both have formed a key part of our procurement process. 2 out of the 7 Suppliers are SMEs. Inclusion of more independent hotels, B&Bs and apartments as part of the Crown Programmes for Accommodation will further support this. The drive to reduce the need to travel, or to travel in a more environmentally friendly way, has also been incorporated.

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| **Not found what you’re looking for?**  If you are still unsure please don’t hesitate to contact us via email: info@crowncommercial.gov.uk |

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# Annex 1: How DigiTS streamlines your travel requirements

# Annex 2: The Public Sector Programmes

Creating more opportunities for cost savings and added value benefits, CCS have agreed special pricing arrangements with a wide range of accommodation providers and airlines that make up a centrally managed and contemporary air and accommodation programme accessible through PSTVS commercial agreements.

The programs are inclusive of different fare and rate types, enhanced terms and conditions and available for worldwide travel requirements. To date, benchmark reports have told us that airfares through the programme are 9% lower than our peers and we pay lower rates for accommodation across major cities in the UK, for example; rates as low as 4% cheaper in London compared to peers.

**Accommodation Programme**

The Accommodation Programme, negotiated and managed by CCS for all public sector customers under PSTVS, is constantly expanding and evolving to adapt to changing travel requirements. Access to the programmes is via your appointed PSTVS supplier and is available for online and offline bookings.

The programme covers more than 670 locations with over 6,200 negotiated room rates across more than 2,600 accommodation providers. In addition to VAT inclusive rates, the programme also offers a variety of benefits to travellers such as room only or breakfast inclusive rates, rates for single and double rooms, last room availability and allocations\*.   
  
 \*Added Value benefits are dependent on the accommodation provider

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| **CCS Negotiated Accommodation Programme suppliers / locations include;** | |
| Suppliers include but are not limited to:   * Travelodge * IHG * Premier Inn * Accor * Jurys Inn * Hilton * Wyndham Hotel Group * Radisson * Millennium & Copthorne * Marriott * Village Hotels | Number of properties with negotiated rates in top 10 high volume locations:   * 600 in London * 92 in Birmingham * 89 in Manchester * 30 in Bristol * 45 in Leeds/Bradford * 62 in Newcastle * 60 in Glasgow * 55 in Liverpool * 25 in Cardiff * 90 in Edinburgh   \*programme subject to changes |

**Air programmes**

The Negotiated Programme - Air is a ‘Best in Class’ programme (peer benchmark by CTVS incumbent supplier), offering access to discounts over 3,900 routes across 48 airlines. In addition to the range of fares available, the programme also offers a variety of benefits that include; additional baggage allowance, reduced fees for excess baggage, waivers on change fees and reduced fees for ticket amendments, waitlist clearance and many more.

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| **\*CCS Public Sector Negotiated Air Programme suppliers include:** | |
| * Aer Lingus * Air Canada * Air France * Alitalia * All Nippon Airways * American Airlines * Austrian * AVIANCA * British Airways * Brussels Airlines * Cathay Pacific * China Airlines * Delta Air Lines * Easyjet * Emirates * Ethiopian Airlines * Etihad Airways * Eurowings * Finnair * Flybe * Gulf Air * IBERIA * Japan Airlines * Jet Airways * Kenya Airways | * KLM * Korean Air * LATAM Airlines Group * Logan Air * LOT Polish Airlines * Lufthansa * Malaysia Airlines * Oman Air * Philippine Airlines * Qantas * Qatar Airways * Royal Brunei * Royal Jordanian * SAS * Saudi Arabian Airlines * Singapore Airlines * South African Airways * SWISS * Thai Airways International * THY - Turkish Airlines * United Airlines * Virgin Atlantic * WestJet   \*programme subject to changes |

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# Annex 3 – Glossary of terms

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| **Parties to the Agreement:**  **The Authority (Contracting Authority):** means the Minister for the Cabinet Office represented by Crown Commercial Service (CCS), which is a trading fund of the Cabinet Office. The Authority acting as part of the Crown that owns and manages the RM6016 suite of commercial agreements and will be entering into a contractual relationship with the Supplier(s) on behalf of all Customers, acting as a central purchasing body.  **Customer:** means any CG department, ALB, NDPB, executive agency, wider public sector or third sector organisation that signs an Enabling Agreement under RM6016 – *see Annex 4 for a list of eligible Customers.*  **Supplier(s):** the company or companies contracted to deliver the Services to the Customer under the Commercial Agreement. |

**Commercial Agreement:** this is the Crown Commercial Service commercial agreement for Public Sector Travel & Venue Solutions (RM6016 – a suite of five commercial agreements).

**Covert operatives’ travel bookings:** are travel bookings made on behalf of an organisation’s covert operatives, to protect anonymity.

**Enabling Agreement:** an agreement providing access to PSTVS. A copy, signed by both Customer and Supplier, must be sent to CCS. The Enabling Agreement forms part of the Commercial Agreement, and defines the services you require and the way in which the Supplier will provide these. A Customer will have one signed Enabling Agreement per chosen Supplier.

**OJEU Notice:** the advertisement for the procurement issued in the Official Journal of the European Union.

**Overseas point of sale bookings:** A service whereby a travel booking is made and fulfilled outside of the UK, e.g. a member of staff posted overseas using a travel agency within the same country to make a booking.

**Pick List:** this forms part of the Enabling Agreement and allows the Customer to select required elements of the services (such as payment methods, MI Reports, invoicing) from a pre-defined list.

**Solution:** a group of services (similar to a traditional “lot”); in PSTVS there are five Solutions, each with a Commercial Agreement:

1. Online booking system for rail travel
2. Online booking system for accommodation
3. Online booking system for air travel
4. Online booking system and an offline booking service for business travel and supporting services
5. Offline venue finding service for meetings, booking of group accommodation and supporting services.

**Standstill Period:** is a period of at least ten calendar days between the intention notification of an award decision and the Commercial Agreement being issued to the successful Supplier. Its purpose is to allow unsuccessful bidders to review and challenge the decision before the Commercial Agreement is signed.

**Travel Implant Service:** Implants are travel agents located within a customer organisation who are on hand to deal with personnel travel requirements.  Often used by organisations with complex travel requirements, e.g. multi-sector journeys requiring visas, etc.

# Annex 4: Who can use RM6016 PSTVS?

This Commercial Agreement RM6016 is for use by Contracting Authorities in the United Kingdom and which fall into one or more of the categories listed in the embedded document.

Please download this on the documents tab on the website [here](https://ccs-agreements.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/contracts/rm6016).