

Contracts where there is a continuing commitment by the supplier (further deliveries, services to be rendered, maintenance agreements etc.) must be properly managed. The absence of proper contract management increases the risk of inefficiency and ineffectiveness with consequential loss in value for money.

It is important that at the time of award, all elements of a contract are agreed – this should include confirming the contract term (start date/end date), pricing, roles and responsibilities, delivery milestones, staged payment arrangements (if required), schedule of reviews, etc. so that both parties fully understand and agree to what is covered under the contract.

In some instances, it may be appropriate to agree a Service Level Agreement with the supplier so that the responsible department and all end-users know what standards to expect and remedies are available.

Depending on the length of the contract, it is advised that face-to-face contract reviews (i.e. price / contract operation/performance) should take place at regular intervals during the contract period, for example if the contract is with a new supplier. This regular contact provides an opportunity for both sides to ensure they are keeping to their side of the agreement.

Prior to the meeting, if possible, it is useful to get feedback from the regular users, so that any issues/problems experienced in the service delivery can be highlighted and procedures introduced/reviewed to avoid future occurrence.

For the “centralised / call-off” contracts, the Procurement & Contracts Office endeavours to meet suppliers bi-annually. An email is sent to all staff giving notice of such reviews and requesting “feedback” on a particular list of contracts. This feedback can take the form of an email message. All issues are then discussed with the relevant suppliers.