

Commerce Decisions supports the Defence College of Electro-Mechanical Engineering in the mission critical technical training of front line troops

Customer profile

The Defence College of Electro – Mechanical Engineering (DCEME) was established on 1 April 2004 in order to bring together a number of separate Service training organisations, all of which were delivering forms of electro-mechanical engineering. By bringing these schools together and exploiting synergies, training delivery and output were improved and efficiency and effectiveness increased.

The College consists of a Headquarters based at HMS SULTAN, Gosport; Royal Naval School of Marine Engineering (RNSME), also at HMS SULTAN; the School of Electrical and Mechanical Engineering (SEME) based at Bordon; the School of Electronic and Aeronautical Engineering (SEAE) at Arborfield; the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers (REME) Arms School also at Arborfield; and the Number 4 School of Technical Training based at MOD St Athan.

While each of the schools has specific aims, set by customers covering all three Services, the principal task of DCEME as a whole is to deliver the trained and motivated technicians and engineers to meet the demands of the Armed Forces.

The college seeks to do this in partnership with other training providers, including external companies, in order to deliver the best value for money without compromising standards.

DCEME Mission

To deliver the required number of competent and highly motivated technicians and engineers to the Armed Forces, in partnership with other training providers.

Objectives

- Deliver the required training output taking account of input and resources.
- Improve the quality of life for trainees and staff.
- Prepare for transition to Defence Training College, following the Defence Training Rationalisation (DTR) programme.
- Enhance the reputation of the Armed Forces.

- Achieve value for money in relation to training delivered.
- Deliver training and support services to commercial and international customers where spare capacity exists.

About the project

The delivery of training, training support and technical and establishment support at Arborfield and Bordon were previously provided by one contract at each site. These contracts ended on 31 July 2011. The project team was charged with putting in place a four year Technical and Establishment Support Contract (TESC) for Arborfield and Bordon.

Technical and establishment support comprises activities such as the administration of staff and students; general support covering IT, media and printing; equipment support; primary health care; materiel support and other miscellaneous services including the management and control of 25m ranges and the provision of postal and vergers services.

The procurement followed the Restricted Procedure process.



MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

Project procurement challenges

The key challenges of this project were:

- Extracting establishment support elements from the existing contracts
- Uncertainty surrounding Defence Training Rationalisation (DTR) Package 1 scoping.
- Tight 15 months timescale, further pressurised by the fallout from the failure of DTR Package 1 PFI project

“I would not contemplate letting another similar contract without using a tool such as AWARD®”

Project Manager
Lt Col Chris Walch



- Getting agreement on the Procurement Strategy
- Significant number of stakeholders spread across the Defence community

Role and Value of Commerce Decisions and AWARD®

Initial engagement

Commerce Decisions became involved with the project following the receipt of responses to the Expressions of Interest and prior to the issue of an Invitation to Tender (ITT) to the down-selected companies.

Commerce Decisions assisted the Customer in finalising the evaluation plan. This included the provision of a quality assurance audit on both the scoring methodology and also on the question set, which encompassed the technical questions, risk, commercial and soft issues.

A bespoke training package was then delivered to key personnel, including briefings to a large number of evaluators and stakeholders on the use of AWARD®.

"The support and training packages delivered were excellent - QCDL ensured that the ITT phase proceeded smoothly," commented Lt Col Chris Walch, TESC Project Manager.

Use of AWARD®

The AWARD® system was then configured ready for the evaluation. The ITT responses and supporting documentation were loaded into AWARD®. The bidders had responded using AWARD's electronic questionnaires (the OLAS or 'off-line answer sheet'), meaning that the responses could be imported straight in to the AWARD® tool.

"The use of AWARD® along with the electronic questionnaires made the process so much more effective, providing a structured way of conducting the Assessment Phase"

Lt Col Chris Walch
TESC Project Manager

The TESC project was working to very challenging and rigid timescales. Once the tenders were returned by the bidders, there was only a very short period of time allocated for the evaluation process.

Use of the electronic questionnaires issued to bidders as part of the ITT

allowed the process to be accelerated and also reduced the complexity for the evaluation team. It enabled the answers and supporting documentary evidence to be loaded into AWARD® for the project team to access and view. AWARD® enabled the evaluators to search the considerable volume of documentation easily, and to cut and paste relevant evidence to demonstrate why an individual score was achieved.

"By using AWARD®, the Technical evaluation was completed in less than three weeks by allowing the close monitoring of all activity on a daily basis. I could produce reports at any time, detailing progress to date," commented Lt Col Chris Walch, TESC Project Manager.

AWARD's capabilities, including the reporting functionality, allowed senior management full visibility and control of the process. The all-important audit trail built up automatically as the evaluation progressed.

The Project Manager's overall view of Commerce Decisions and AWARD®

- With the limited resources available, the project team would not have been able to meet the challenging timescales without using AWARD®.
- AWARD® encouraged an effective and structured process that underpinned the Assessment Phase.
- Evaluators were able to conduct their evaluation tasks from their workplace at times to suit them.
- As Project Manager, I had total visibility of the process, increasing my effectiveness and efficiency.

AWARD® Benefits

AWARD® delivers a transparent audit trail that underpins the bidder debriefing process and manages any challenges to the outcome of the procurement.

AWARD® is highly flexible, enabling full integration of the tender requirements and policies.

AWARD® enables project users to be managed centrally, optimising the time spent on evaluating suppliers.

AWARD® is delivered via a security accredited hosted service. Users can access AWARD® from any workstation with an internet connection and web browser.

Powerful reporting capabilities allow a range of selected reports to be generated quickly and tailored to your project.

Enhanced controls allow better management of tender stages leading to efficiencies and on time project delivery.

AWARD® provides a structured and compliant approach to the execution of a procurement.