

Australia's Department of Defence uses AWARD® to support the evaluation of key maritime projects

Capability Acquisition and Sustainment Group selects AWARD® to support the evaluation of critical, complex projects in the maritime sector



Australian Government
Department of Defence
 Capability Acquisition and Sustainment Group

Client Profile

The Capability Acquisition and Sustainment Group (CASG) is part of the Australian Department of Defence and is responsible for the acquisition and sustainment of the Australian Defence Force (ADF) military equipment. CASG is involved in many of the largest and most demanding projects in Australia and is relied upon to provide ADF equipment on time, on budget and to the required levels of quality and safety. CASG's budget, totalling more than \$14 billion (2018) of goods and services, equates to about 40% of the overall Defence budget. It has more than \$200 billion in projects and maintenance investment on its books.

Overview of Projects

Commerce Decisions has been working with CASG since 2013, when AWARD® was selected to support the evaluation of the FFG Group Maintenance Contract (GMC). Following this successful initial project, AWARD® has since been deployed to support further projects including:

- SEA1778 Phase 1 Deployable Mine Counter Measures
- SEA1654 Phase 3 Combat Support Ship
- Armidale Class Patrol Boat In Service Support Contract (ISSC)
- SEA1180 Offshore Patrol Vessel
- SEA5000 Future Frigate
- Landing Helicopter Dock ISSC

Collectively these projects represent over **\$45 billion of acquisition** of capability and sustainment services.



The Procurement Challenges

Across these projects there were a number of common procurement challenges that had to be addressed:

- the criticality of **demonstrating a clear and transparent** decision-making process;
- the nature of the **contracts** were both **highly complex** and of strategic operational interest;
- a **large number of stakeholders** were involved who were **geographically dispersed** across Australia; including CASG, the RAN, and independent probity advisors;
- the proposed solutions had to be **evaluated in an effective and efficient** manner.

Role of Commerce Decisions

Commerce Decisions was engaged to provide tender evaluation support services through the use of its AWARD® evaluation system. AWARD® was selected to support the procurements based on Commerce Decisions' proven track record of delivering similar programs in the Defence sector globally.

Commerce Decisions provides experienced personnel with backgrounds in industry and Defence, who can contribute to the running and oversight of the evaluation. Our team works closely with the project teams to ensure AWARD® is configured and operating in a way that aligns with and supports CASG's processes and



"AWARD® more than paid for itself with savings harvested from TEWG members not needing to travel interstate. Lengthy travel approval processes were also avoided."

Rodger Phillips (Executive Director Contracting - Maritime CASG)

Addressing the challenges faced by the Projects

All of the CASG projects shared the same characteristics, having:

- **Tight timeframes** for the evaluation
- **Large response packs** from the bidders
- A number of **evaluators split across different specialties** within the evaluation, and sometimes based in different locations
- A need to provide **regular and complete reporting** to stakeholders

AWARD® was delivered to the projects as a secure hosted service or local service as required. Where AWARD® was used as a hosted service, the various stakeholders were granted access from pre-approved locations, at times that suited them and the projects' schedules.

This **saved significant time and reduced disruption** as the evaluators were able to fit their evaluation activities around other business commitments.

For the FFG GMC project, having access to AWARD® **drastically reduced the cost of travel and subsistence** by negating the need to regularly fly in and accommodate the teams in Sydney.

AWARD® was **configured to support the processes** and approach adopted by each of the projects. All associated reference and guidance documents were loaded into AWARD® - this ensured that evaluators would have access to consistent advice and direction.



Training in the use of AWARD® was provided on-site by the Commerce Decisions team. Most users learnt how to evaluate in AWARD® within 15 minutes.

They were provided with a number of 'How-To' guides to assist them with key activities such as Evaluation, Document Management and Clarification processes. These guides were also made available from within AWARD® for reference throughout the projects.

The Commerce Decisions team worked with the projects to define the reports that would be required. Report templates were configured to extract the relevant information as required by the project.

Once the evaluation commenced, Commerce Decisions personnel provided on and off site support for evaluators, on using AWARD®, clarifying issues and managing any other matters as they arose.

'Value Add' of AWARD®

Feedback from the projects that have used AWARD® has been overwhelmingly positive—the most frequent benefit cited is that of the time savings.

Teams also find significant value in having all the project information in a single database. This ensures that the evaluation documentation and information is always up-to-date and available. It also gives projects the ability to monitor progress and generate current reports in real-time—something that isn't possible using the traditional method of multiple spreadsheets and file stores.

Another benefit of using AWARD® is the reduction in paper – electronic versions of all documents are uploaded and stored in AWARD®. This means that evaluators can search responses and reference material to readily find and assess all information in a thorough and efficient manner.

Summary of the benefits of AWARD® and Commerce Decisions:

- A transparent audit trail that underpins the bidder debriefing process
- AWARD® is web enabled, allowing geographically dispersed users to work when and where they want to
- AWARD® supports and enhances the project and tender management process
- Powerful document management capability enables easy access to key documents as and when they are needed
- A highly flexible solution that can be configured to support a project or organisation's specific procurement processes
- Powerful reporting capabilities allow reports to be generated rapidly and in real time
- Improves the quality of the project outcome and reduces the time taken to run the project
- Enhances stakeholder buy-in. AWARD® enables a more efficient, effective, structured and better managed procurement process