

Request for Information Temporary Help Services Questionnaire for Client Departments

Background

Public Works and Government Services Canada (PWGSC) is committed to Smart Procurement principles. The objective of this Request for Information (RFI) is to engage with stakeholders to obtain a better understanding of the Temporary Help Services (THS) needs of client departments and agencies, gain more knowledge of supplier capabilities and views, and improve the procurement processes for THS. In order to do this, PWGSC is reviewing the present THS procurement processes, and using a scenario based approach to determine federal department and agencies' needs for THS. This RFI contains two sets of questions concerning THS. The first set pertains to the present THS procurement processes, and the second pertains to various THS scenarios. The scenarios represent different situations in which federal departments and agencies may need or could use THS. The scenarios will help to align the THS needs of federal departments and agencies with procurement trends, supplier capacity and business dynamics. They will also help to identify business opportunities that could allow THS to be procured and managed more effectively and efficiently. The THS scenarios have already been reviewed and discussed in consultation with the Temporary Help Services Advisory Committee, which consists of THS industry and federal government client representatives. It is important to note that when reading the scenarios, the following three reasons define the context for when clients may use THS and should be taken into consideration when responding to the scenario based questions. When a public servant is absent for a temporary period of time. When there is a requirement for additional staff during a temporary workload increase. When a position is vacant and a staffing action is being completed. While THS procurement processes across Canada are currently supported through existing methods of supply (i.e. Standing Offers and Supply Arrangements) and tools, the THS scenarios were developed in the absence of restrictions based on pre-established methods of supply and tools. Client departments and agencies and suppliers are encouraged to respond to the questionnaire as the responses will have an impact on the development of a Procurement Strategy for THS. Why Is Your Feedback Valuable and Important? Feedback from federal government clients and the THS industry regarding present THS procurement processes and the scenarios will be taken into consideration in the development of a responsive Procurement Strategy for THS. PWGSC will be in a better position to review and as necessary, modify procurement processes to support federal government clients' needs for THS, taking into consideration how suppliers can meet those needs. The final strategy will support the development of a robust framework for the procurement of THS on a going forward basis.

Part I – Respondent Profile

1. Title of your position

- Director General
- Director
- Manager
- Team Leader
- Administrative Officer
- Project Manager or Project Officer
- Other, please specify... _____

2. Indicate the name of your federal department or agency.

3. Identify the province or region in which your place of work is located:

- National Capital Region (Ottawa, Gatineau and surrounding area)
- Alberta
- British Columbia
- Manitoba
- New Brunswick
- Newfoundland and Labrador
- Northwest Territories
- Nova Scotia
- Nunavut
- Ontario (excluding NCR)
- Prince Edward Island
- Quebec (excluding NCR)
- Saskatchewan
- Yukon

4. Indicate your role regarding the procurement of THS in your department or agency. Please select all that apply.

- Contracting Authority
- Project Authority or Project Lead
- Material Management
- Administrative Officer
- Other, please specify... _____

Part II – Present processes for the procurement of THS for the Government of Canada
Please respond to the questions related to your experience within the last 12 months.

1. Indicate the number of call-ups you issued against the THS Standing Offer (i.e. in the last 12 months).

- 0
- 1-4
- 5-10
- 11-20
- More than 20
- Not applicable

2. Indicate the number of contracts you awarded under the THS Supply Arrangement (i.e. in the last 12 months).

- 0
- 1-4
- 5-10
- 11-20
- More than 20
- Not applicable

3. Were there any THS classifications that did not meet your requirements in terms of their description and/or specified requirements (e.g. education, experience, asset qualifications)?

- Yes
- No
- Not applicable

4. If “Yes”, list up to 10 classifications that did not meet your requirements, explain for each what was not met (maximum of 50 words per classification), and rank them in the order of priority for review by the THS Authority (i.e. 1 highest priority and 10 lowest).

5. Did you have any THS resource requirements in the last 12 months that are not described by an existing THS classification?

- Yes
- No

- Not applicable

6. If “Yes”, describe up to 3 new classifications (maximum of 250 words) which could have met your requirement(s) for a THS resource(s), and rank them from 1 to 3 in order of interest to you (i.e. 1 of most interest and 3 of least).

7. What is the estimated percentage of THS resource(s) provided to you in the last 12 months that met your requirements?

- 1-19%
- 20-39%
- 40-59%
- 60-79%
- 80% or more
- Not applicable

8. Please identify whether you experienced any of the situations below in the last 12 months. Select all responses that apply.

- Encountered one or more resource and/or supplier performance issue(s)
- Replaced a temporary resource before call-up issuance or contract award, or within the first month of the call-up or contract
- Terminated a THS call-up or contract because of poor vendor or resource performance
- Reported performance issues to PWGSC’s THS Authority
- Encountered resource and/or supplier security clearance issue(s) or delay(s)
- Did not experience any of the above in the last 12 months

9. Did you experience challenges with the current THS methods of supply, that if addressed would ease your utilization and/or provide you with better value.

- Yes
- No
- Not applicable

10. If “Yes”, please list up to 3 challenges experienced (maximum of 250 words) and rank them from 1 to 3 in the order of priority for consideration (i.e. 1 highest priority and 3 lowest).

Part III – THS ScenariosPlease review the scenarios described below and answer the related questions.**1. Long Term Absence Scenario**The Long Term Absence Scenario describes the situation when a supplier provides a temporary resource based on an individual need, and when it is necessary to have a temporary resource replace a federal employee for the full duration of time that the employee is away from the office (e.g. on extended leave, language training, assignment, maternity leave, etc.). For the purposes of this scenario, “long term” is defined as more than 48 weeks. A department may require a temporary resource to replace an employee for the full duration of time (eighteen months) that the employee is on education leave. Retention of the same temporary resource throughout the entire period that the federal employee is away from the office will reduce indirect costs related to losses in productivity, slips in schedules, loss of corporate knowledge, etc. At the same time, a contract for the full duration of time will be more effective and efficient and reduce the number of contract amendments and further competitive processing to cover the extended period of time when the employee is on leave.

1. Is there a need in your organization to replace employees who are on extended leave, language training, assignment, maternity leave, etc. with temporary resources.

- Yes
- No
- Do not know

2. Please identify potential risks associated with the Long Term Absence Scenario. Select all responses that apply.

- Difficulty retaining the same temporary resource throughout the duration of the contract.
- Development of an employer-employee relationship between the temporary resource and the federal government supervisor.
- Other risk(s): _____
- No foreseen risk(s)

3. If you have indicated potential risks associated with the Long Term Absence Scenario, identify how the risks could be mitigated. Select all responses that apply.

- There are incentives to retain temporary resources on assignment throughout the entire duration of the contract (e.g. pay incentives).
- Measures are in place to prevent a potential or perceived employer-employee relationship developing between federal government supervisor and the temporary resource
- Other: _____

4. Please select statement a or b, whichever you think best describes the Long Term Absence Scenario.

- A temporary resource(s) complements an internal team(s), and a federal government project authority commits to providing the strategic direction, oversight and monitoring of the work for which the resource is contracted.
- A federal government project authority seeks a solution to its departmental or agency business requirement(s), and therefore needs support from a supplier with expertise in a specific area.

2. Project Team ScenarioThe Project Team Scenario describes the case when a federal government organization requires a team of temporary resources (with different skill sets) to support a project. For example, Department "X" will be implementing a major IT project and needs to assign a team of temporary resources with different skills to work in the Project Office. For this particular requirement, there is a need for a senior project officer to manage the project and 4 officers to handle the administration. All the temporary resources would be retained for pre-determined timeframes throughout the life of the project. The department would save time and costs if it were able to hire a team of resources and award a contract to one supplier to provide an entire team to handle the logistics of a project.

1. Does your department or agency ever require temporary resources that have different skills to support a project?

- Yes
- No

- Do not know

2. If “Yes”, indicate the service types for which your department or agency would benefit from a Project Team Scenario. Select all responses that apply.

- Clerical Services
- Administrative Services
- IT Technical Services
- Procurement Services
- Health or Scientific Services
- Engineering or Technical Services
- Professional Services – Business, Financial or Human Resources
- Other, please specify... _____

3. Please identify potential risks associated with the Project Team Scenario. Select all responses that apply.

- A supplier may not be able to commit resources for pre-determined timeframes throughout the life cycle of the project.
- A single supplier may not be able to provide all of the required resources.
- Other risks, please specify... _____
- No foreseen risks

4. Please Identify how the risks associated with the Project Team Scenario could be mitigated. Select all responses that apply.

- There are incentives to commit resources for pre-determined timeframes throughout the life cycle of the contract.
- Allow qualified suppliers to compete for some of the required resources.
- Federal departments clearly indicate when and where resources are required during the life cycle of a project.
- Other, please specify... _____

5. Please select statement a or b, whichever you think best describes the Project Team Scenario.

- A temporary resource(s) complements an internal team(s), and a federal government project authority commits to providing the strategic direction, oversight and monitoring of the work for which the resource is contracted.
- A federal government project authority seeks a solution to departmental or agency business requirement(s), and therefore needs support from a supplier with expertise in a specific area.

3. Administrative Support Pool ScenarioThe Administrative Support Pool Scenario describes the situation in which a supplier provides a pool of Temporary Help Services resources, with each resource pre-qualified to perform administrative work. Two types of Administrative Support Pool would be possible. One would consist of a pool of administrative resources accessible to different organizations within one federal department or agency at one geographic location, and a second would consist of a pool of administrative resources accessible to multiple federal departments and/or agencies within the same city. In the latter situation departments and/or agencies that may not have sufficient demand individually to require a pool of temporary resources, could combine their requirements with other departments and/or agencies in the same city in order that a supplier could be contracted to provide a single pool. Each temporary resource within a pool would have the necessary skills to allow them to perform various administrative tasks required for different assignments. For a pool accessible to different organizations within one federal department or agency at one geographic location, each temporary resource within the pool would also carry throughout the duration of the contract the necessary security clearance, building pass, departmental knowledge and IT Log in and Password. A readily accessible Administrative Support Pool would hasten the processing time to acquire the services of a temporary resource, and would guarantee a stable temporary workforce, which would result in a more knowledgeable temporary workforce, and produce better quality work. Presently, it may take a considerable amount of time and effort for a solicitation process and to award a contract for a supplier to provide a temporary resource to replace a federal employee who is on leave. Most departments and agencies contract temporary resources on an individual basis. Often they plan at least two months in advance to acquire a temporary resource to replace an employee who will be taking an extended leave. Federal departments and agencies would benefit from having contracts with suppliers who provide pools of temporary resources that immediately replace federal employees as required without having to go through the rigorous competitive process of hiring temporary resources whenever there is an individual need; thus saving a considerable amount of time and costs. Each supplier awarded a

contract for an Administrative Support Pool would also benefit by having one contract for multiple resources. This would reduce the supplier's time and effort by requiring the supplier to respond to only one solicitation for a multiple number of temporary resources.

1. Is there a need in your organization for a readily accessible pool of temporary resources to be shared within the same department or agency, and in the same geographical area?

- Yes
- No
- Do not know

2. Is there a need in your organization for a readily accessible pool of temporary resources to be shared amongst other organizations within other departments or agencies within the same city?

- Yes
- No
- Do not know _____

3. If a contract was awarded to a supplier to provide an Administrative Support Pool to which your organization would have access, indicate the preferred contract duration.

- 1 year
- 2 year
- 3 year
- 4 year
- Other (suitable length of contract (in months) _____)

4. Identify potential risks associated with managing a pool of temporary resources for the Administrative Support Pool Scenario. Select all responses that apply.

- Suppliers have difficulty maintaining a pool of available resources throughout the contract as there are no preset assignment period commitments.
- Difficulty administering payments for temporary resources working in different organizations within a federal department or agencies or within multiple departments or agencies.
- Underutilization of the resources in the pool, resulting in unnecessary costs being incurred.
- Difficulty coordinating when a temporary resource would be assigned to different organizations in a department or agency or within different departments or agencies.
- Other risk(s): _____
- No foreseen risk(s).

5. If you have indicated potential risks associated with the Administrative Support Pool Scenario, identify how the risks could be mitigated. Select all responses that apply.

- There are incentives to retain temporary resources on assignment for the duration of the contract (e.g. pay incentives).
- Ensure that a well coordinated process for payments is in place prior to contract award.
- Ensure sufficient planning to coordinate the assignment of temporary resources to different organizations within the department or agency, or to different departments and/or agencies.
- All parties understand how the contract will be managed and where resources will be assigned.
- Other, please specify... _____

6. Please select statement a or b, whichever you think best describes the Administrative Support Pool Scenario.

- A temporary resource(s) complements an internal team(s), and a federal government project authority commits to providing the strategic direction, oversight and monitoring of the work for which the resource is contracted.
- A federal government project authority seeks a solution to departmental or agency business requirement(s), and therefore needs support from a supplier with expertise in a specific area.

4. Senior Staff ScenarioThe Senior Staff Scenario describes the situation in which a federal department or agency requires a temporary resource to fulfill an assignment that would normally be fulfilled by an executive in the federal government. There is a lot of movement in the federal government, with new organizations, employees retiring and employees leaving their positions for other opportunities. This has created a gap in the public service workforce that has required the use of temporary resources until staffing is completed. For example, if Department "X" required a Director to lead an organization until a staffing process was completed, a temporary resource could fulfill some of the required tasks so that operations could continue.

1. Is there ever a need in your organization for a temporary resource to fulfill an assignment that would normally be fulfilled by an executive in the federal government?

- Yes
- No
- Do not know

2. If “Yes”, select the geographical location where the temporary resources would be performing the assigned work. Select all responses that apply.

- Atlantic Region
- Quebec Region
- Ontario Region
- National Capital Region
- Western Region
- Pacific Region

3. Identify potential risks associated with requirements for the Senior Staff Scenario. Select all responses that apply.

- Temporary worker is treated like a federal employee to the extent that employer-employee relationship develops between the temporary resource and the federal government supervisor.
- Suppliers inflate their rates because a temporary resource with significant expertise and

experience is required to fill an executive position.

- Temporary resource provides strategic direction to the organization.
- Other risk(s): _____
- No foreseen risk(s).

4. If you have indicated potential risks associated with the Senior Staff Scenario, identify how the risks could be mitigated. Select all responses that apply.

- Take measures to prevent a potential or perceived employer-employee relationship develop between the temporary resource and the federal government supervisor.
- There is integrity in the competitive process to ensure that the federal government is receiving “best value”.
- The project authority commits to providing strategic direction, oversight and monitoring of the work for which the resource is contracted.
- Other, please specify... _____

5. Please select statement a or b, whichever you think best describes the Senior Staff Scenario.

- A temporary resource(s) complements an internal team(s), and a federal government project authority commits to providing the strategic direction, oversight and monitoring of the work for which the resource is contracted.
- A federal government project authority seeks a solution to departmental or agency business requirement(s), and therefore needs support from a supplier with expertise in a specific area.

5. Recurring Workload Increase ScenarioThe Recurring Workload Increase Scenario applies when there is cyclical work volume increase in a federal department or agency. The department or agency could benefit from having one contract with one or more suppliers for multiple resources to handle the increase in workload during a specific period. For example, Department "X" has a seasonal need for additional personnel in Shawinigan, Quebec during tax season. An additional 30 temporary resources may be required to meet the demand for processing tax returns during this time. In this case, CRA has determined an estimated start date, duration of work, location of work, and the required tasks. Another example would be the requirement for temporary workers to do seasonal work or work that demands many temporary resources across many Canadian cities for agriculture programs, elections or census studies. With the Recurring Workload Increase Scenario, departments and agencies would need to plan ahead of time to anticipate the logistics necessary to acquire temporary resources for the increased workload or seasonal work. By awarding one contract to one or more suppliers who could provide multiple temporary resources that are assigned to a federal department or agency during certain seasons or periods of the year, several competitive processes to hire temporary resources on an individual basis would be eliminated. Suppliers would also benefit from having a sufficiently stable demand to allow for investment, remuneration, retention of quality staff and the ability to meet the department's or agency's needs as they change over time.

1. Is there a need in your department or agency for temporary resources to fulfill cyclical increased workload requirements as described for the Recurring Workload Increase Scenario?

- Yes
- No
- Do not know

2. If “Yes”, indicate the service types for which your department or agency would benefit from a Recurring Workload Increase Scenario. Select all responses that apply.

- Clerical Services
- Administrative Services
- IT Technical Services
- Procurement Services
- Scientific or Health Services
- Engineering or Architectural Services
- Professional Services – Business, Finance or Human Resources
- Other, please specify... _____

3. If you responded “Yes” to question 1, provide an estimate of the duration of an individual period(s) of workload increase (cyclical) for which your organization would require temporary resources. Select all responses that apply.

- Less than 1 month
- 1 month to less than 2 months
- 2 months to less than 4 months
- Other (in months) _____

4. If a contract was awarded to a supplier to provide temporary resources to meet your organization’s cyclical needs, indicate the preferred contract duration.

- 1 year
- 2 years
- 3 years
- 4 years
- Other (in months) _____
- Do not know

5. How many temporary resources would be required to meet the recurring workload increase in your organization?

- 1 to 5
- 6 to 10
- 11 to 25
- More than 25
- Do not know

6. Would each of the temporary resources for a Recurring Workload Increase Scenario perform the same type of work?

- Yes
- No
- Do not know

7. Identify potential risks associated with the Recurring Workload Increase Scenario. Select all responses that apply.

- Difficulty retaining the same temporary resources for the duration of the contract.
- The greater the number of temporary resources being hired, the greater the difficulty in managing the contract.
- Shifting government plans and priorities may have a direct impact on the cyclical workload resulting in either an under or over supply of resources.
- Other Risk(s): _____
- No foreseen risk(s).

8. If you have indicated potential risks associated with the Recurring Workload Increase Scenario, identify how the risks could be mitigated. Select all responses that apply.

- There are incentives to retain temporary resources on assignment throughout the duration of the contract (e.g. pay incentives).
- The number of temporary resources required must be carefully planned relative to anticipated client demand.
- Terms and conditions regarding liability issues with seasonal workers are clearly defined.

Other: _____

9. Please select statement a or b, whichever you think best describes the Recurring Workload Increase Scenario.

- A temporary resource(s) complements an internal team(s), and a federal government project authority commits to providing the strategic direction, oversight and monitoring of the work for which the resource is contracted.
- A federal government project authority seeks a solution to departmental or agency business requirement(s), and therefore needs support from a supplier with expertise in a specific area.

Part IV – Federal Government Clients’ Needs Not Identified in the Temporary Help Services Scenarios

1. Please identify other scenarios (up to 3 scenarios) that describe common situations in which the federal government requires temporary resources (maximum of 250 words per scenario).

2. If you have any further comments, please include comments (maximum of 500 words).