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Planning

HMPPS Trace Detection Solution

Ministry of Justice

UK2: Preliminary market engagement notice - Procurement Act 2023 - [view information about notice types](#)

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Procurement identifier (OCID): ocids-h6vhtk-060cbe

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Scope

Description

Summary

The Ministry of Justice (MoJ) is exploring the capability and capacity of the market for the supply of a Trace Detection solution for HMPPS and Approved Premises sites. The intention is for a next-generation solution that will support HMPPS and Approved Premises sites in their efforts to detect and deter illicit substances within prisons and contribute to security and safety objectives as part of the operational policy framework.

Background

HMPPS continues to prioritise security measures across the prison estate to reduce harm caused by illicit substances and support safer environments by disrupting supply routes and inform intelligence-led decision making. The use of Trace Detection equipment in prisons, is a key element of the objective to 'manage significant and emerging risks related to drug and alcohol use and supply through effective risk management', as set out in the operational framework. While HMPPS currently employs a range of detection tools,

a mobile trace detection capability will look to strengthen operational capability on the ground through deployment of high-sensitivity detection tools where and when they are needed across multiple locations within prisons.

Indicative scope of requirement:

The requirements at this stage for a next-generation solution are subject to change but it is envisaged that the specification could include the following:

Rapid screening

- o Provide results within seconds to avoid operational delays
- o Suitable for high-throughput environments like mailrooms

Drug Library

- o Ability to regularly and quickly update the drug library to respond to emerging threats.
- o Ability to update devices remotely without the need to access prisons.
- o Broad drug library including SCRA and Synthetic Opioids

Accuracy

- o Ability to detect trace amounts of a wide range of illicit substances
- o Minimise false positives and co-alarms and false negatives

Portability and ease of use

- o Lightweight, handheld or easily moveable devices
- o Simple interface for non-technical staff with minimal training

Durability

- o Usable within non sterile prison environments, e.g. dust, humidity and temperature fluctuations

Low maintenance and cost efficiency

- o Minimal or no calibration requirements.

- o Affordable consumables and long operational life

Data Management

- o Ability to collect detection data and feed into a central data source for intelligence gathering
- o Secure storage of detection data

Discreet operation

- o Quiet and unobtrusive to avoid escalating tensions during checks.

Total value (estimated)

- £7,200,000 excluding VAT
- £8,640,000 including VAT

Above the relevant threshold

Contract dates (estimated)

- 1 February 2027 to 31 January 2032
- 5 years

Main procurement category

Goods

CPV classifications

- 38544000 - Drug detection apparatus

Engagement

Engagement deadline

3 March 2026

Engagement process description

The Authority is keen to further engage with suppliers who wish to participate in the market engagement exercise. To submit an expression of interest to take part in the engagement, suppliers will need to complete a Market Engagement Questionnaire in the below link by no later than Tuesday 3rd March 2026.

The engagement will take the form of an in-person session on Thursday 12th March 2026. Suppliers who are participating will be expected to showcase their solution to the Authority and take questions from key HMPPS stakeholders within the project. More details on the engagement including the location of the event will be issued to suppliers eligible to participate on completion and approval of the Market Engagement Questionnaire attached to this notice.

Please click on the link below to access the questionnaire:

<https://forms.office.com/e/izewubEkeW>

Please note- this engagement exercise does not commit the Authority to a formal procurement.

Participation

Particular suitability

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SME)

Submission

Publication date of tender notice (estimated)

21 September 2026

Contracting authority

Ministry of Justice

- Public Procurement Organisation Number: PDNN-2773-HVYN

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London

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United Kingdom

Email: Mojprocurementsecurity@justice.gov.uk

Website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ministry-of-justice/about/procurement>

Region: UKI32 - Westminster

Organisation type: Public authority - central government

