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Award

BVLOS Drone Operationalisation

NATIONAL GRID ELECTRICITY TRANSMISSION PLC

UK5: Transparency notice - Procurement Act 2023 - [view information about notice types](#)

Notice identifier: 2025/S 000-025236

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-051f03 ([view related notices](#))

Published 22 May 2025, 4:14pm

Scope

Description

Continued development of an autonomous drone capability to scale routine BVLOS operations across the NGET network.

Contract 1

Supplier

- sees.ai Limited

Contract value

- £22,950,000 including VAT

Above the relevant threshold

Earliest date the contract will be signed

23 June 2025

Contract dates (estimated)

- 23 June 2025 to 31 March 2026
- Possible extension to 31 March 2032
- 6 years, 9 months, 8 days

Description of possible extension:

Option for 3 x 2 year extensions. Decisions on whether to utilise extension options will be based on a number of factors including supplier performance, budgetary considerations and market considerations.

Main procurement category

Services

CPV classifications

- 73100000 - Research and experimental development services

Contract locations

- UK - United Kingdom

Participation

Particular suitability

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SME)

Other information

Conflicts assessment prepared/revised

Yes

Procedure

Procedure type

Direct award

Special regime

Utilities

Direct award justification

Single supplier - technical reasons

Competition is absent for technical reasons and there are no reasonable alternatives (Procurement Act 2023, Schedule 5, paragraph 6): Through extensive work with National Grid since 2021, sees.ai has developed a distinct operational capability for conducting close-quarter, detailed Beyond Visual Line of Sight (BVLOS) inspection missions on live transmission network assets from a remote location, including extended transits and the use of advanced communications links. As of May 2025, we understand Sees.ai to be the only company holding the specific and advanced Operational Authorisation from the UK Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) required to deploy an exclusive capability critical for the delivery of National Grid's specific, advanced network inspection requirements. Operationalisation of this capability is enabled by continuation of joint intellectual property (IP) rights development; advanced proprietary technology; unique operational methodologies; and specialised in-house expertise, cultivated since 2018.

National Grid undertakes Visual Line of Sight (VLOS) network asset inspections internally. Other inspection methodologies do not meet National Grid's complex and evolving demands for routine, scalable, and data-rich network oversight. The technical complexity and demonstrated operational safety maturity required by the CAA for the issue of the requisite Operational Authorisation to deliver this work establishes a high technical barrier, resulting in an absence of competition from other third-party suppliers. There are no other reasonable alternatives to Sees.ai currently offering a service of directly comparable scope, precision, safety, or operational efficiency; nor has it been demonstrated to the CAA the critical technical infrastructure, proven methodology, and requisite safety case to meet the standards for obtaining authorisation to carry out this work.

Supplier

sees.ai Limited

- Companies House: 10143962

Lavant House

Chichester

PO18 9AB

United Kingdom

Email: info@sees.ai

Region: UKJ27 - West Sussex (South West)

Small or medium-sized enterprise (SME): Yes

Voluntary, community or social enterprise (VCSE): No

Contract 1

Contracting authority

NATIONAL GRID ELECTRICITY TRANSMISSION PLC

- Companies House: 02366977
- Public Procurement Organisation Number: PHHJ-6513-BWZT

1 - 3 Strand

London

WC2N 5EH

United Kingdom

Email: box.GP.UKBuyerNGET@nationalgrid.com

Region: UKI32 - Westminster

Organisation type: Private utility