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Planning

Technical Support to Regulatory Assessments of Solid Radioactive Waste Disposal Framework

ENVIRONMENT AGENCY

UK3: Planned procurement notice - Procurement Act 2023 - [view information about notice types](#)

Notice identifier: 2025/S 000-078259

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Scope

Reference

P-37412

Description

The Environment Agency is the independent environmental regulator for the nuclear industry and for radioactive substances regulation in England. It regulates a range of activities, depending on the type of site, but in all cases it regulates the disposal of solid radioactive waste on or from the site, as well as discharges to air and water (which are also defined as disposal under the Environmental Permitting Regulations 2016 (EPR2016)). Its remit covers England, but the Environment Agency works closely with the Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR), Natural Resources Wales (NRW) and Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) on matters of mutual interest, including those relating to the management and disposal of solid radioactive waste.

The Authority is seeking to establish an Open Framework, for up to an 8 (eight) year period, with multiple suppliers across 3 (three) technical Lots, that have the capability to

provide expert technical advice and scrutiny across several areas of regulatory assessments of solid radioactive waste disposal.

Suppliers appointed to the framework will support the Environment Agency in meeting its statutory obligations in the regulation of solid radioactive waste disposals. Framework suppliers will have the capability to provide expert advice and scrutiny on solid radioactive waste disposal and support in the technical evaluation of Site-Wide Environmental Safety Case (SWESCs) from operators of nuclear licensed sites and Environment Safety Cases (ESCs) from developers and operators of radioactive waste disposal facilities. The scope of services will also encompass advice relating to the Environment Agency's remit in pre-disposal management and materials not yet formally declared as wastes, such as spent fuel and separated plutonium.

The full Technical Specifications will be provided in the Bidder Pack which will be made available via the Authority's eSourcing portal at the commencement of the of the tendering procedure.

Suppliers are not required to register their interest in tendering for this opportunity at this stage but to participate in the tendering procedure you must be registered on the Defra eSourcing Portal to access the opportunity and submit a Tender Response. Details of how to register your organisation can be found at <https://atamis-9529.my.site.com/s/Welcome>

Commercial tool

Establishes an open framework

A series of frameworks with substantially the same terms. Awarded suppliers are carried over and new suppliers can bid.

Total value (estimated)

- £9,750,000 excluding VAT
- £11,700,000 including VAT

Above the relevant threshold

Main procurement category

Services

CPV classifications

- 71621000 - Technical analysis or consultancy services
- 98113100 - Nuclear safety services
- 71313000 - Environmental engineering consultancy services
- 90713000 - Environmental issues consultancy services
- 71351220 - Geological consultancy services
- 90711000 - Environmental impact assessment other than for construction

Contract locations

- UK - United Kingdom

Lot constraints

Description of how multiple lots may be awarded:

The Framework will be structured in 3 (three) technical Lots. Lot 1 and Lot 2 will be divided into 2 (two) further sub-lots. The Lots and sub-lots will be awarded as follows:

Lot 1 - Specialist Support to Solid Radioactive Waste Regulation:

Sub-lot 1.1 Technical Secretariat for Expert Advisory Panel will be awarded to a single (1) supplier that receives the highest total evaluation score, i.e. ranked 1st (first), for this sub-lot.

Sub-lot 1.2 Topical Review Services – the successful suppliers appointed to sub-lots 2.1, 2.2 and Lot 3 will automatically be offered a Framework Agreement to provide Services for sub-lot 1.2.

Lot 2 - Specialist support to regulation of solid radioactive waste near-surface disposal:

Sub-lot 2.1 LLWR 2026 Environmental Safety Case will be awarded to a single (1) supplier that receives the highest total evaluation score, i.e. ranked 1st (first), for this sub-lot.

Sub-lot 2.1 Radioactive waste disposal at landfills, decommissioning sites and other facilities will be awarded to up to 5 (five) suppliers that receive the 5 (five) highest total evaluation scores, i.e. ranked 1st – 5th (first to fifth), for this sub-lot.

Lot 3 - Specialist support to regulation of geological disposal will be awarded to up to 5 (five) suppliers that receive the 5 (five) highest total evaluation scores, i.e. ranked 1st – 5th (first to fifth), for this Lot

There is no restriction on the number of Lots or sub-lots tenderers may bid for. Tenderers may be offered a framework agreement/contract for multiple or all Lots/sub-lots if their tender for the Lot or sub-lot(s) is ranked as set out above.

Not the same for all lots

Contract dates and options are shown in Lot sections, because they are not the same for all lots.

Lot 1.1 (was 1). Technical Secretariat for Expert Advisory Panel

Description

The Authority will appoint a single supplier to provide technical secretariat support to establish and maintain an Expert Advisory Panel. The Environment Agency Expert Advisory Panel (EAEAP) will provide independent advice and expertise in the following areas relating to the regulation of solid radioactive waste disposal and pre-disposal management.

The full Specification will be included in the Bidder Pack.

Lot value (estimated)

- £1,350,000 excluding VAT
- £1,620,000 including VAT

Framework lot values may be shared with other lots

Contract dates (estimated)

- 1 September 2026 to 31 August 2034
- 8 years

Options

The right to additional purchases while the contract is valid.

The sub-lot may be re-tendered at the framework re-opening point in Year 3 (three) to establish a follow-on framework for up to a further 5 (five) years at the discretion of the Authority and subject to a continued business need.

Same for all lots

CPV classifications and contract locations are shown in the Scope section, because they are the same for all lots.

Lot 1.2. Topical Review Services

Description

The Authority will appoint the successful tenderers for sub-lots 2.1, 2.2 and Lot 3 to establish access to expert Services under sub-lot 1.2 to support the continued development and enhancement of its internal processes and/or external regulatory guidance related to the disposal of solid radioactive waste. Over the lifetime of the Framework, there may also be a requirement for Environment Agency to develop new guidance in response to evolving government policy, operator proposals, international recommendations, or scientific developments.

Lot value (estimated)

- £356,000 excluding VAT
- £427,200 including VAT

Framework lot values may be shared with other lots

Contract dates (estimated)

- 1 September 2026 to 31 August 2034
- 8 years

Options

The right to additional purchases while the contract is valid.

This sub-lot may be included in the framework re-opening in Year 3 (three) to continue the services for up to a further 5 (five) years.

Same for all lots

CPV classifications and contract locations are shown in the Scope section, because they are the same for all lots.

Lot 2.1. LLWR 2026 Environmental Safety Case

Description

The Authority will appoint a single Contractor, with the required skills and experience, to assist the Environment Agency in its detailed review of the 2026 Environmental Safety Case (ESC) for the Low Level Waste Repository (LLWR) facility in Cumbria, England. The Authority expects to benefit from the Contractor bringing to the review their experience from involvement in other near-surface radioactive waste disposal safety assessments. The Contractor should also bring specific capabilities in facility design and substantiation, materials performance, conceptual environmental model review, safety assessment calculation specification and undertaking of assessment modelling (e.g. using GoldSim and or other suitable software).

The exact nature, scope and specification of the Services required from the Contractor will be finalised following receipt of the 2026 ESC, expected in May 2026.

Lot value (estimated)

- £3,460,000 excluding VAT
- £4,152,000 including VAT

Framework lot values may be shared with other lots

Contract dates (estimated)

- 1 September 2026 to 31 August 2030
- Possible extension to 31 August 2031
- 5 years

Description of possible extension:

The contract may be extended for up to a further 12 (twelve) month period at the discretion of the Authority.

Same for all lots

CPV classifications and contract locations are shown in the Scope section, because they are the same for all lots.

Lot 2.2. Radioactive waste disposal (landfills, decommissioning sites & other facilities)

Description

The Environment Agency anticipates receiving applications from operators for either the disposal of LLW to existing landfills or for the construction of a new dedicated disposal facility on nuclear sites which may require input from expert external consultants.

The Authority will appoint up to 5 (five) suppliers to provide technical support to assist in the review of ESCs submitted in support of permit applications for the disposal of solid LLW to landfill. Outputs would inform the Environment Agency's determination of the ESC review or permit variation. The number and timing of these reviews is not currently known.

Lot value (estimated)

- £246,000 excluding VAT
- £295,200 including VAT

Framework lot values may be shared with other lots

Contract dates (estimated)

- 1 September 2026 to 31 August 2034
- 8 years

Options

The right to additional purchases while the contract is valid.

The Authority may, at its discretion, re-open the Framework in Year 3 (three) to establish a follow-on framework for up to a further 5 (five) years, subject to a continued business need.

Same for all lots

CPV classifications and contract locations are shown in the Scope section, because they are the same for all lots.

Lot 3. Specialist support to regulation of geological disposal

Description

The Authority appoint up to 5 (five) suppliers to provide specialist expertise and advice to the Environment Agency related to the regulation of geological disposal. Framework Suppliers will provide technical support to supplement internal Environment Agency capability during both the pre-application stage and the review of the first permit application for intrusive site investigations.

Lot value (estimated)

- £4,339,000 excluding VAT
- £5,206,800 including VAT

Framework lot values may be shared with other lots

Contract dates (estimated)

- 1 September 2026 to 31 August 2034
- 8 years

Options

The right to additional purchases while the contract is valid.

The Authority may re-open the Framework in Year 3 (three) to establish a follow-on framework for up to a further 5 (five) years at the discretion of the Authority and a continued business need.

Same for all lots

CPV classifications and contract locations are shown in the Scope section, because they are the same for all lots.

Framework

Open framework scheme end date (estimated)

31 August 2034

Maximum number of suppliers

12

Maximum percentage fee charged to suppliers

0%

Further information about fees

No fees will apply

Framework operation description

The Authority anticipates the framework will operate for 8 (eight) years in total commencing 1st September 2026 until 31st August 2034. The Authority anticipates the framework will be re-opened in its third year with a further tender process undertaken to establish a follow-on framework for up to a further 5 (five) years to 2034 at the discretion of the Authority and subject to a continued business need.

At the re-opening point incumbent framework suppliers will have the opportunity to revise their tender response, leave their offer as per their last framework tender submission or voluntarily exit the framework. Tenderers should be aware that at the re-opening point new suppliers will have the opportunity to tender to be included on the framework. All tender responses from incumbent and new suppliers will undergo an evaluation process to select the successful suppliers for the follow-on framework. Incumbent suppliers may be replaced by other suppliers with higher scoring tenders.

Award method when using the framework

Either with or without competition

Contracting authorities that may use the framework

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) and Defra group bodies.

Participation

Legal and financial capacity conditions of participation

Lot 1.1 (was 1). Technical Secretariat for Expert Advisory Panel

Lot 1.2. Topical Review Services

Lot 2.1. LLWR 2026 Environmental Safety Case

Lot 2.2. Radioactive waste disposal (landfills, decommissioning sites & other facilities)

Lot 3. Specialist support to regulation of geological disposal

Information will be provided in the Bidder Pack Pt.1

Technical ability conditions of participation

Lot 1.1 (was 1). Technical Secretariat for Expert Advisory Panel

Lot 1.2. Topical Review Services

Lot 2.1. LLWR 2026 Environmental Safety Case

Lot 2.2. Radioactive waste disposal (landfills, decommissioning sites & other facilities)

Lot 3. Specialist support to regulation of geological disposal

Information will be provided in the Bidder Pack Pt.2 and Technical Specifications

Particular suitability

Lot 1.1 (was 1). Technical Secretariat for Expert Advisory Panel

Lot 1.2. Topical Review Services

Lot 2.1. LLWR 2026 Environmental Safety Case

Lot 2.2. Radioactive waste disposal (landfills, decommissioning sites & other facilities)

Lot 3. Specialist support to regulation of geological disposal

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SME)

Submission

Publication date of tender notice (estimated)

15 December 2025

Submission type

Requests to participate

Deadline for requests to participate

6 March 2026, 3:00pm

Submission address and any special instructions

All Tender Submissions must be made through the Defra eSourcing Portal, Tenderers must be registered on the portal to access the opportunity and submit a Tender Response. Details of how to register your organisation can be found at <https://atamis-9529.my.site.com/s/Welcome>

Tenders may be submitted electronically

Yes

Languages that may be used for submission

English

Suppliers to be invited to tender

Lot 1.2. Topical Review Services

3 to 11 suppliers

Selection criteria:

The Authority will appoint the successful tenderers for sub-lots 2.1, 2.2 and Lot 3 to this sub-lot. There will be no additional selection or award criteria.

Award decision date (estimated)

1 July 2026

Award criteria

Lot 1.1 (was 1). Technical Secretariat for Expert Advisory Panel

Name	Description	Type	Weighting
Technical	Evaluation criteria are set on in the Bidder Pack Pt.2 Document. The Technical Criteria will account for 60% of the overall evaluation score.	Quality	60.00%
Commercial	Evaluation criteria are set on in the Bidder Pack Pt.2 Document. The Commercial evaluation will account for 30% of the overall evaluation score.	Price	30.00%

Name	Description	Type	Weighting
Social Value	Evaluation criteria are set on in the Bidder Pack Pt.2 Document. The social Value will account for 10% of the overall evaluation score.	Quality	10.00%

Lot 1.2. Topical Review Services

Name	Description	Type
Technical	This sub-lot will not be evaluated. Suppliers appointed to sub-lots 2.1, 2.2 and Lot 3 will automatically be offered a framework agreement to provide services for this sub-lot.	Quality
Commercial	This sub-lot will not be evaluated. Suppliers appointed to sub-lots 2.1, 2.2 and Lot 3 will automatically be offered a framework agreement to provide services for this sub-lot.	Price

Weighting description

The Authority will appoint the successful tenderers for sub-lots 2.1, 2.2 and Lot 3 to this sub-lot. There will be no additional Award Criteria.

Lot 2.1. LLWR 2026 Environmental Safety Case

Lot 2.2. Radioactive waste disposal (landfills, decommissioning sites & other facilities)

Lot 3. Specialist support to regulation of geological disposal

Name	Description	Type	Weighting
Technical	Evaluation criteria are set on in the Bidder Pack Pt.2 Document. The Technical Criteria will account for 60% of the overall evaluation score.	Quality	60.00%
Commercial	Evaluation criteria are set on in the Bidder Pack Pt.2 Document. The Commercial Evaluation will account for 30% of the overall evaluation score.	Price	30.00%
Social Value	Evaluation criteria are set on in the Bidder Pack Pt.2 Document. Social Value will account for 10% of the overall evaluation score.	Quality	10.00%

Other information

Payment terms

With 30 days of receipt of a valid invoice

Applicable trade agreements

- Government Procurement Agreement (GPA)
-

Procedure

Procedure type

Competitive flexible procedure

Competitive flexible procedure description

Open Tender Stage, followed by Price Negotiation Stage

Contracting authority

ENVIRONMENT AGENCY

- Public Procurement Organisation Number: PNWW-1475-NYLN

Seacole Building, 2 Marsham Street

London

SW1P 4DF

United Kingdom

Contact name: Carol Caddick

Email: carol.caddick@defra.gov.uk

Website: <https://defra-family.force.com/s/Welcome>

Region: UKI32 - Westminster

Organisation type: Public authority - sub-central government

Other organisation

These organisations are carrying out the procurement, or part of it, on behalf of the contracting authorities.

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Summary of their role in this procurement: Defra group Commercial (DgC) will manage the procurement on behalf of the Contracting Authority

- Public Procurement Organisation Number: PNBD-3289-CDGX

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Contact organisation

Contact ENVIRONMENT AGENCY for any enquiries.