

Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) has unveiled its plans for the future provision of billion-pound facilities management across the English regions, and has begun inviting industry to submit expressions of interest in three new regional prime contracts.

Developed under the Next Generation Estate Contracts (NGEC) programme, the contracts have an estimated combined value of up to £4.35 billion over a minimum of five years and a maximum of 10 years. Individual contract values range between £500m and £1.8 billion, depending on potential contract extensions.

The contracts are:

- Regional Prime Central (North of England, Wales, the Midlands and East Anglia)
- Regional Prime South West (Southwest England)
- Regional Prime South East (Southeast England)

The successful bidders will provide maintenance and repairs to the Defence estate. Other services will include a 24/7 helpdesk for estate-users, a regional energy management bureau, grounds maintenance, and snow and ice clearance. Each contract also includes options for land management services and construction projects valued below £3.93m.

Major sites covered by the contracts include:

- Central - Catterick Garrison, Beacon Barracks Stafford, RAF Shawbury and RAF Valley training bases, DST Leconfield, Wattisham Airfield, RAF College Cranwell, and the intelligence and security centre at Chicksands
- South East - RMA Sandhurst, DMRC Headley Court, HQ Land Forces Andover, Hyde Park Barracks, Woolwich Barracks, Horse Guards, RAF High Wycombe and RAF Northolt
- South West - various Royal Marines bases, RNAS Yeovilton, RNAS Culdrose, Defence Equipment and Support (DE&S) headquarters

Regional Prime Central will replace two separate regional prime contracts - RPC Central and RPC East - currently in service. The other two contracts will replace arrangements over comparable geographical areas.

The new contracts are expected to be awarded in early 2014.

Steve Rice, the NGEC programme director, said:

"In each of these regions we are determined to find the right industry partner to manage these facilities to the standards expected by our military customers. Successful bidders need to be armed with innovative ideas and a willingness to respond flexibly to the evolving needs of the Defence frontline."

Gill Hodson, senior NGEC project manager, said:

"This is an important milestone in the NGEC programme with our foremost regional prime contract - for Scotland and Northern Ireland - having paved the way for procurement of the remaining three regional contracts.

"We look forward to widening our procurement work across these three regions for England and Wales, and hope the contracts will generate a healthy response from supply chain businesses and prime contractors alike."

Under the NGEC programme, all prime contractors will be required to operate project bank accounts (PBAs), ensuring prompt payment to all suppliers and subcontractors.

Contract notices have been issued to the Tender Electronic Daily (TED) service (ted.europa.eu) under the Official Journal of the European (OJEU), the Government Contracts Finder, and the Defence Contracts Online (DCO) facility. It is expected that these will be published in the next few days.

The closing date for expressions of interest is 23:59hrs on 23 March 2012.

Following expressions of interest DIO will issue Pre-Qualification Questionnaires, and host an industry day at a venue and date to be confirmed.