eProcurement User Guide

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What is eProcurement?

eProcurement applies supplier-friendly eCommerce technology **to simplify and streamline the purchasing process** and to integrate suppliers' & IEC business processes. This means that suppliers can now interface with the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) with little effort once registered, and they can quickly and reliably submit quotes. The eProcurement system includes features such as:

- *Supplier Registration* – for suppliers to do business with the IEC, they must register online and complete the registration process by sending the original documents to the IEC. A supplier must register for all product categories they want to do business with the IEC to receive automated notices (sms, email or fax) of running auctions and eTenders.
- *Supplier Approval process* – your supplier status on eProcurement will depend on progress made with registration process and documents received by the IEC. You may not bid if your status is not Approved or Limited Approval (no TCC). For status Limited Approval (no TCC) you may only place bids up to R30,000. It is important to keep documents with the IEC updated as your approval status may regress e.g. expiry of TCC.
- *Reverse Auctions* - suppliers bid the price down: bidder with the most bid points wins. Suppliers can reduce their prices but may not increase or withdraw their bids once placed. An automated proxy bidder may be activated on behalf of a supplier guided by a minimum unit price. Auction may be Open or Restricted.
    - o *Open* - In an open auction, any supplier who is registered and status Approved or Limited Approval (no TCC) may bid on an auction.
    - o *Restricted Auctions* - With a restricted auction, pre-selected suppliers on a panel are given the opportunity to bid on the auction.
- *eTenders* – suppliers may place tenders online.
- *Unsolicited Proposals* – suppliers who have unique products relevant to the IEC may propose their goods / services to the IEC without a request for a quote by the IEC.
- *Award of Auction / eTender* – After the bidding process is closed, the leading bids are adjudicated further by the Procurement Committee and the auction / eTender awarded. Rejected bids are indicated in the system with reasons for the rejection. Suppliers can view the outcome of an auction / eTender award online.

WAP interface - suppliers who are registered may bid on auctions / eTenders on their mobile phones.

Benefits

The eProcurement system offers the following benefits to the supplier:

- An open and transparent system –All submitted bids (quotes) can be viewed by all approved suppliers at any stage of the bidding process. Suppliers can compete openly for business.
- An efficient & objective process– The new system aims to eliminate any possibility of irregularities and subjectivity in the Electoral Commission's procurement process.
- Reduced costs for the suppliers – Suppliers save on time and travel costs because they no longer need to leave the workplace to submit, update or follow up on quotes, or to inquire on outcome of quotes and eTenders – all can now be accessed online.
- Broadest possible competition by automated notification – All registered suppliers and some selected non-registered ones will receive email, fax or SMS messages notifying them of relevant auctions. The eProcurement system is designed to ensure approved suppliers are informed and can bid (quote) on auctions.

What is Vota Quotes?

The Vota Quotes solution is in essence a quotes gathering system based on the principles of a reverse auction. Auctions on which registered suppliers can bid will be created in the Vota Quotes system for approved requisitions.

Most purchasing processes at the IEC, such as requisition creation, approval via workflow, purchase order creation and receiving, are automated through the IEC's Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system.

This diagram shows the purchasing process and where the Vota Quotes system fits in:
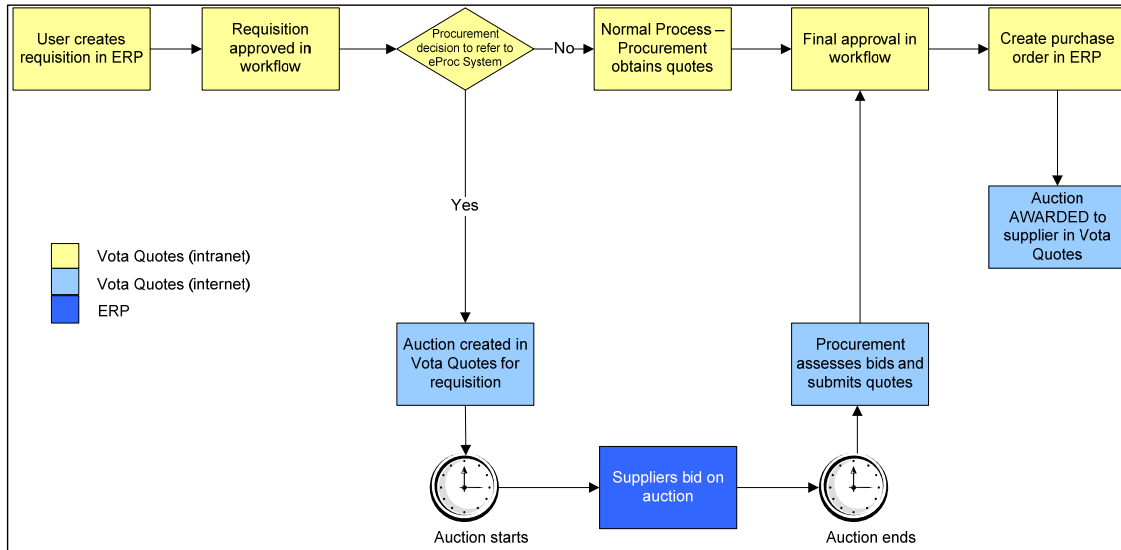
How does this affect me?

In order to continue doing business with the Electoral Commission, you are required to register on the Vota Quotes site. Suppliers who do not register will not be listed on our database of suppliers and may miss out on business opportunities.

Once registered, you will be notified of running auctions related to your business on which you can bid.

How do I register as a supplier?

A supplier must register to participate in auctions and eTenders appearing on the Vota Quotes site. Registration can take up to 30 minutes if all documentation to refer to is available. However, remember that you may quit the registration at any point and be able to log back in with your username and password and continue from where you would have left.

- Open your Internet browser (Microsoft Internet Explorer versions 6 to 8 are supported. Other browsers supported are Mozilla Firefox, Apple Safari and Opera).
- Type https://votaquotes.elections.org.za in the address field.
- The Vota Quotes Home Page will be displayed.
- Click on **Register** button on the left side of the screen.
- In order to complete the registration process, you will require the following……

  - Certified copies of the ID books of all executive managers
  - Certified copy of Company Registration Form

- - Copy of founding statement
  - Copies of Share Certificates
  - Certified copies of the ID books of all owners
  - Certified copy of Partnership agreement (in case of partnership)
  - Original Tax Clearance Certificate
  - Signed Registration Form
- You will be guided through a six-step process to complete your registration. It is important that you read the terms and conditions. Make a note of your user-name and password since you will need these in future to log into the system and bid on auctions. A confirmation email of your login and password will also be send to your registered email.
- Print and sign the registration form.
- Send through to the IEC the signed registration form and other requested documentation. These must be hand-delivered, couriered or posted by registered mail.

Approval Process for Supplier

It is important to understand your status as a supplier at any given time. This has a bearing on what a supplier can do in the eProcurement system.

- Once you have completed your online registration, you will have a supplier status of "Awaiting Approval" and will NOT be able to bid on auctions yet.
- Once the required documentation is received, the IEC will verify your registration details and change your status to one of the following:
  - Awaiting Approval" ,
    - Suppliers are given this status when they have just registered. This status will not allow you to bid on an auction.
  - "Approved",
    - This status is set by the IEC once all of your details have been checked and approved. This status will allow you to bid on an auction.
  - "Limited Approval (no TCC)",
    - "This status is set by the IEC once all of your details have been checked and approved, however, your Tax Clearance Certificate has expired or you are not registered for tax. This status will allow you to bid on auction auctions below R30 000. "
  - "In Process",
    - "The IEC will give you this status when there is outstanding matters they need to verify with you or receive from you. This status will not allow you to bid on an auction."
  - "De-Registered", or

- "This status indicates that you were no longer interested to use the eProcurement Internet site and you deregistered on the site. This status will not allow you to bid on an auction."
  - "Dormant".
    - "The IEC will give you this status after they tried several times to contact you to submit outstanding matters with no success. This status will not allow you to bid on an auction."

- Suppliers must note that their status may regress, e.g. from "Approved" to "Limited Approval (no TCC)" if the TCC expires.

- If supplier opts to de-register at any point, their registration details are not deleted from the eProcurement system but the supplier status is set to "De-registered". The supplier may not access their profile with that status. Only IEC eProcurement staff can re-activate such an account, Supplier will not have to re-register.

How do I use my Supplier Home Page?

Once a supplier is registered, all actions to do with maintenance of details and bidding on auctions, eTenders and placing of unsolicited proposals can be viewed, monitored and accessed from one place. This place is called Supplier Home Page.

Your Supplier Home Page is unique to you and allows you to:

- View your current supplier status.
- View a list of auctions and eTenders you have placed on your Hotlist (click on **My Hotlist**). This will provide you with a quick link to any auctions you are interested in.
- View a list of auctions on which you have placed bids (click on **My Auctions**).
- View a list of eTenders on which you have placed bids (click on **My Tenders**).
- View a list of unsolicited bids you have placed with the IEC. (click on **My Unsolicited Bids**)
- View and make changes to your registration details (click on **Maintain My Details**).
- View all Auctions (click on **View Auctions**).
- Print the registration form with all your registration details as well as the site terms and conditions (click on **Print Registration Form**).
- Print the TCC Request form for Application for a Tax Clearance Certificate-in Respect of Tenders (click on **Print TCC Request Form**).
- View a list of any outstanding issues the IEC has with your registration (click on **Outstanding Issues**).
- View the Dummy Auction to familiarize yourself with the process of placing a bid on an Auction (click on **Dummy Auction)**.

- View and complete Supplier Surveys (click on **Complete Surveys**).
- De-register from the site by clicking on the De-Register button. This will remove you from the system.

What is a Reverse Auction system?

It is imperative to understand how a reverse auction system works before committing to use the eProcurement auction / eTender system. It is important to read through the terms and conditions to understand fully the legal implications of participating on this system, such as the binding nature of the bids you place as a supplier.

- Normal auctions are where an organisation sells off goods / products to the public at prices determined by the bidders under the direction of an auctioneer. The auctioneer calls the price and the bidders take it up until the highest bidder is found.

- In a reverse auction, the goods are held by various suppliers who offer the same product to the IEC. The supplier offers a price and can take it down if another bidder offers a lower price. This process continues until the supplier with the highest bid points in terms of price and other bid parameters prevails. The system can automate this process through a function called proxy bidding.

- Other considerations besides price are the PDI composition of the organisation, the Women and Disabled composition in the ownership, the location of the organisation, whether owners are involved in daily running of the company and whether more than 25% of the contract will be sub-contracted if awarded.

- Provided all auction conditions are met, the supplier with the highest bid points will become the leading bidder and after an adjicating process, the leading bid may be awarded the bid and become the winning bid.

How do I bid on an Auction?

A supplier who is registered and is approved (or Limited Approval (no TCC)) may bid on an auction or place an eTender. If you are not registered yet, please complete the registration process and submit the necessary documentation to have status 'Approved' or 'Limited Approval (no TCC)'.

1. Go to votaquotes.elections.org.za.
2. The Vota Quotes Home Page will be displayed.
3. The login section is to the left of the Home Page. Type your username and password in the Login frame and tick the checkbox to accept the Terms and Conditions. Click Login.
4. Your Supplier Home Page will be displayed.
5. Click on the View Auctions link displayed on the left of the screen.

6. A list of all running auctions will be displayed. You can also use the Browse Auctions screen to find and view closed and awarded auctions.
7. Click on the auction you are interested in.
8. The Auction Details page will be displayed.
9. Click on Add to Hotlist to add this auction to your personal Hotlist. This will allow you in future to access this auction quickly from the Hotlist on your Supplier Home Page.
10. Click on Remove from Hotlist to remove this auction from your personal Hotlist.
11. Click on Bid on Auction to start placing your bid.
12. The Auctions Compliance page will be displayed. You must answer all auction condition questions at this point so that you can confirm compliance with the auction conditions and indicate whether more than 25% of the work will be done by contractors. After compliance is checked, the Price, Compare and Bid page will be displayed on click of Next button.
13. Enter your bid in the Unit Price field for each of the items in the auction. You may elect that the system does proxy bidding for you by ticking the proxy check box. In this case, for each line item, you must enter an absolute minimum unit price including VAT, and the system will automatically reduce your quoted price to keep your bid one bid point higher than the leading bid in the event of another supplier placing a bid that has a higher point value than your current bid. The reduction in price will stop once your minimum unit price has been reached.
14. Click on the Compare Bid button to compare your bid with the bid of the leading suppliers. You will see your bid highlighted and how it compares with others already placed. This will not place the bid.
15. Click on Refresh button will check the bidding activity on the system and give updated positions of bids. This will NOT place the bid.
16. Click on the Place Bid button to place your bid. If the prices for all line items are captured, and all minimum prices are captured in the case of a proxy bid, the bid will be placed and this message will display: "Your bid has been successfully placed/updated".

How are bid points calculated?

According to the *Preferential Procurement Policy Framework Act, (Act 5 of 2000)* as read with the *Preferential Procurement Regulations, 2001*, *organs of state* may use other criteria other than price in the award of procurement contracts / tenders. The organs of state are given discretion to determine the make-up of the other criteria according to preset guidelines. The guidelines seek to advantage Historically Disadvantaged Individuals (HDI).

The 80/20 preference point system

The following formula must be used to calculate the points for price in respect of bids / quotes with a Rand value equal to, or above R 30 000 and up to a Rand value of R500 000. Organs of state may, however, apply this formula for procurement with a value less than R 30 000, if and when appropriate:

Price points = 80 x [1 - ((your bid - lowest bid)/lowest bid)]

- A maximum of 20 points may be awarded to a supplier for being an HDI and / or subcontracting with an HDI and / or achieving any of the specified goals stipulated in regulation 17 (giving HDI preference / advantages).
- The points scored by a supplier in respect of the goals to do with HDI considerations must be added to the points scored for price.
- The points for HDI factors (i.e. PDI, W, Location and DP) factors are calculated in the following way. The organ of state (IEC) must first give a weighting for each of these factors out of 20 for the 80/20 preference point system. This will vary from auction to auction or from tender to tender. In the following example, the following weights have been allocated:
    - PDI=15/20,
    - Women=4/20,
    - Disability=1/20

PDI points = 15 x (PDI% owned / 100)
W points = 4 x (W% owned / 100)
DP points = 1 x (DP% owned / 100)

- Only the bid with the highest number of points scored may be selected.

The 90/10 preference point system
The following formula must be used to calculate the points for price in respect of bids / quotes with a Rand value above R500 000:

Price points = 90 x [1 - ((your bid - lowest bid)/lowest bid)]

- A maximum of 10 points may be awarded to a supplier for being an HDI and / or subcontracting with an HDI and / or achieving any of the specified goals stipulated in regulation 17 (giving HDI preference / advantages and other considerations such as location, rural areas etc).
- The points scored by a supplier in respect of the goals to do with HDI considerations must be added to the points scored for price.
- For the 90/10 preference point system, the 10 points are also given weights for each auction or tender and the individual factors calculated as under 80/20 preference point system above.
- Only the supplier with the highest number of points scored may be selected.

The HDI advantage derived from the 80/20 or 90/10 preference point systems will not be awarded when one or more of these factors apply:

- Supplier has indicated that sub-contractors would do more than 25% of the work;
- Owners are not involved in the day-to-day running of the business; or
- Supplier is a public company, Section 21 company, parastatal, government department or NGO.

Who Qualifies to be a Historically Disadvantage Individual?

"Historically Disadvantaged Individual (HDI)" means a

South African citizen –

- who, due to the apartheid policy that had been in place, had no franchise in national elections prior to the introduction of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa,1983 (Act No 110 of 1983) or the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa,1993 (Act No 200 of 1993) ("the Interim Constitution"); and / or
- who is a female; and / or
- who has a disability: Provided that a person who obtained South African citizenship on or after the coming to effect of the Interim Constitution, is deemed not to be an HDI.

How do I bid on an eTender?

An eTender is a way by which the supplier is invited to bid for business with the IEC where the products / services are more complicated in nature. The main difference with auctions is that the pricing of such products / services is not pre-determinable; instead schedules, rates or pricelists are used. There are also performance issues and service level agreements to consider in eTender adjudication. The eTender life-cycle can be summarized as follows:

1. eTender is created in Vota Quotes by the Procurement Department;
2. Suppliers bid on the eTender;
3. Procurement assesses the bids and any other paper documentation; and
4. eTender is awarded to Supplier(s) in Vota Quotes.

The process to follow to place a bid on an eTender is very similar to the process for an Auction. The difference is that there are no prices to capture for eTender. To bid on an eTender follow these steps:

1. Go to votaquotes.elections.org.za.

2. The Vota Quotes Home Page will be displayed.

3. Click on the Login menu item. Type your username and password in the Login frame and tick the checkbox to accept the Terms and Conditions. Click Login.

4. Your Supplier Home Page will be displayed.

5. Click on the eTenders link displayed on the left of the screen.

6. A list of all running eTenders will be displayed. You can also use the Browse eTenders screen to find and view closed and awarded eTenders.

7. Click on the eTender you are interested in.

8. The eTender Details page will be displayed.

9. Click on Add to Hotlist to add this eTender to your personal Hotlist. This will allow you in future to access this auction quickly from the Hotlist on your Supplier Home Page.

10. Click on Remove from Hotlist to remove this eTender from your personal Hotlist.

11. Click on Bid on eTender to start placing your bid.

12. The eTender Bidding page will be displayed. Confirm compliance with the eTender conditions and indicate whether more than 25% of the work will be done by contractors. Respond to each of the other compliance questions.

13. Attach files and schedules that are related to your eTender proposal.

14. Click on the Place Bid button to place your bid. You might get message saying that your bid has been successfully placed/updated.

How are Auctions and eTenders Awarded?

As a supplier, you want to understand how the final award for an auction or eTender happens and how you get to know about it. It is important to understand that although the eProcurement system will indicate the leading bids at the close of an auction, the winning bid(s) always are the result of an internal IEC adjudication process. A Procurement Committee meets to consider and do the final award for every Auction and eTender. The following issues are considered in the final award:

- The bid points from the Auction process. This covers price and other auction parameters as determined from auction to auction e.g. PDI%, Women %, Disabled % and Location %.

- Compliance with auction / eTender conditions

- Adherence to any auction / eTender guidelines in terms of the product / services offer

- Pedigree of the company to be awarded. Due diligence on company may be conducted at any time from registration of the company on the IEC site.

- Approval status of the company, the status must still be "Approved" or "Limited Approval (no TCC)" and not have regressed in the interim period.

Once awarded, the eProcurement System will be updated and suppliers may be able to see who was awarded the auction / eTender online. Should a leading bid be rejected, reasons for the rejection are given and the supplier may see them. The award of an Auction or eTender by the IEC is final and no correspondence can be entered into with suppliers who may have lost out.

How do I lodge an Unsolicited Proposal?

According to the NATIONAL TREASURY PRACTICE NOTE NO 11 OF 2008/2009 on Unsolicited Proposals, a supplier can propose to sell specialised goods to the IEC that he knows the IEC may need although it has not requested quotes for as yet. The Unsolicited Proposal life-cycle is as follows:

1. A suppliers initiates the Unsolicited Proposal on eProcurement internet site;
2. Procurement assesses the proposal and any other paper documentation; and
3. eProcurement responds to the unsolicited proposal. eProcurement will acknowledge the proposal for assessment, and later reject the proposal or accept the proposal or contact the supplier for additional information.

The process to follow to place an unsolicited proposal is very similar to the process for an eTender. To place an unsolicited bid follow these steps:

1. Go to votaquotes.elections.org.za.

2. The Vota Quotes Home Page will be displayed.

3. Click on the Login menu item. Type your username and password in the Login frame and tick the checkbox to accept the Terms and Conditions. Click Login.

4. Your Supplier Home Page will be displayed.

5. Click on the Unsolicited Proposals link displayed on the left of the screen.

6. A list of all your Unsolicited Proposals will be displayed. You can also use the Browse Unsolicited Proposals screen to find and view previously submitted proposals.

7. Click on the Unsolicited Proposal you are interested in, or click on Create New unsolicited proposal.

8. The Unsolicited Proposal page will be displayed.

9. Capture Item details, specifications, quantities and prices to describe your unique offering to the IEC.

10. Upload files and images to fully explain your products unsolicited by the IEC.

11. Click on Submit Proposal to place your unsolicited bid.

Other functions

Beyond registering on the system and placing bids, the eProcurement system additionally allows you to do the following functions:

- You can visit related links by clicking on the **Links** button on the menu bar. This will allow you to navigate to the **IEC Homepage**, the **Official South Africa On-line** site, the **Department of Treasury**, the **Department of Trade and Industry** and the **South African Revenue Service**.
- You can obtain additional information about Vota Quotes by clicking on **About Us** on the menu bar.
- You can contact the IEC by clicking on **Contact Us** on the menu bar.
- You can view and complete Supplier Surveys by clicking on **Supplier Survey** on the menu bar.
- You can obtain additional information and help by clicking on **User Guide** or **Help** on the menu bars.
- You can view current IEC tenders or Auctions by clicking on the **Current eTenders or Auctions** hyperlinks on the Vota Quotes Home Page.
- You can view Media Releases by clicking on the **Media Release** button on the menu bar.
- You can view Auction Winner by clicking on the **Auction Winner** button on the menu bar.
- You can search for auctions by entering text in the **Auction Search** field on the Vota Quotes Home Page.
- The Vota Quotes Home Page will always display a list of **Running Auctions** and or **eTenders**. You can click on an item in the list to view the auctions or eTender
- From time to time the IEC will update the **Site News** on the Vota Quotes Home Page to communicate important information to you.

I want to de-register from eProcurement

If you should find yourself unable to continue to participate in our Auctions and eTenders for any reason, you are free to de-register from the eProcurement system at any time. This is possible from My Supplier Home Page. We would like you to state your reasons for de-registering if you can spare the time.

It may however happen that you accidentally de-register from eProcurement. The good news is that you do not automatically delete your profile from our system, only your status would have changed. Please contact the Vota Quotes team to have your profile re-instated.

Who can I contact?

Who can I contact with questions/problems/suggestions/comments?

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