Office of Government Commerce

Procurement Efficiency and Value for Money Measurement

Efficiency Programme – Measurement Guidance

Efficiency Programme – Releasing Resources to the Front Line

Contents

1 Introduction

1.1 Spending Review 2004 (SR04) included two HM Treasury (HMT) targets that relate to improving procurement in the public sector:

- to improve public services by working with departments to help them meet their PSA targets (joint with Cabinet Office), and efficiency targets amounting to £20bn a year by 2007/08, consistently with the fiscal rules, and;

- to deliver a further £3bn saving by 2007-08 in central civil government procurement, through improvements in the success rate of programmes and projects and through other commercial initiatives (this is referred to below as the 'Value for Money' or 'VfM' target).

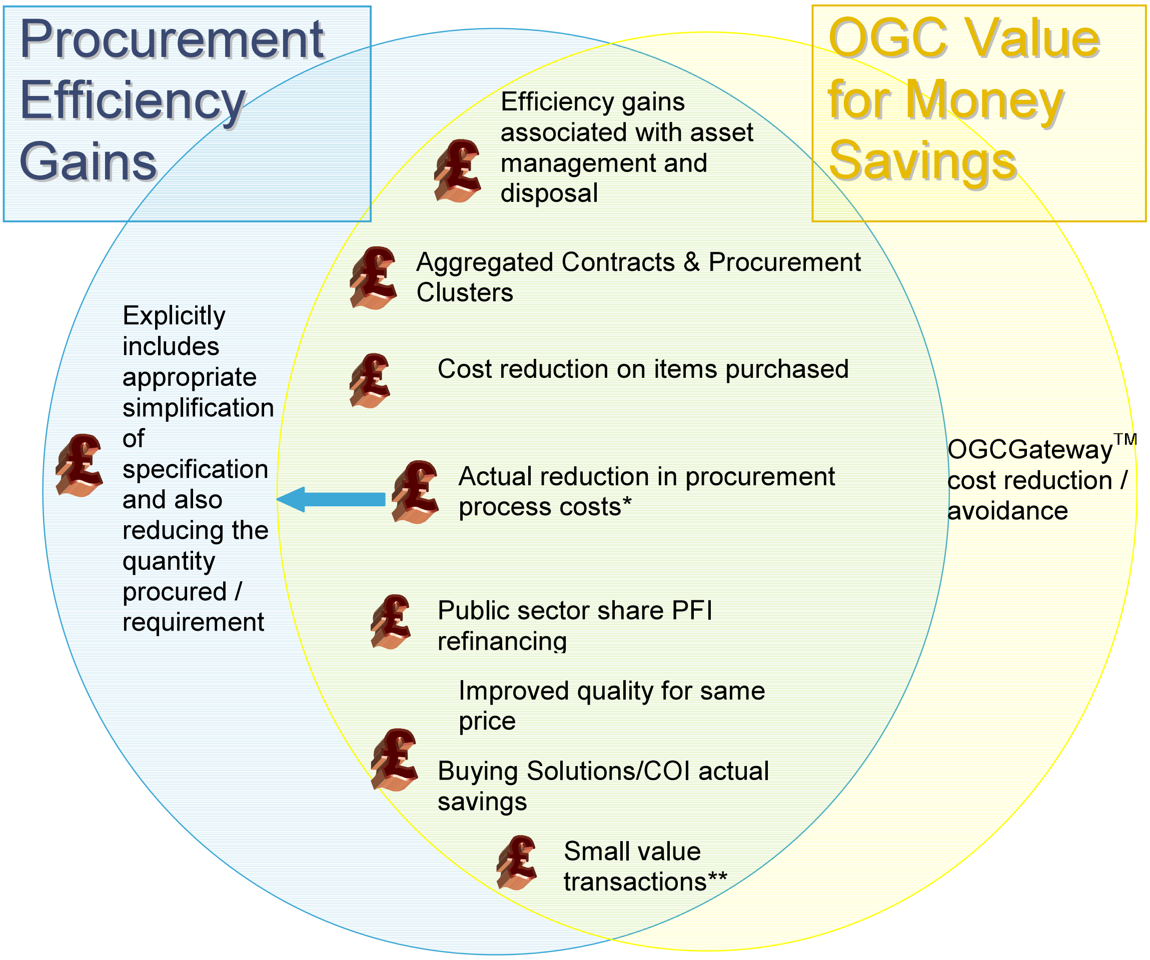
1.2 The first target applies to the entire public sector and progress is reported by Departments to the Efficiency Team in the Office of Government Commerce (OGC), and by Local Authorities in their Annual Efficiency Statements (AES). The efficiency gains agreed by each Department will be achieved from six workstreams, one of which is procurement. Whilst there is no requirement to report savings by workstream heading, a number of Departments have indicated that they will do so. This guidance therefore sets out the approach to the measurement of these procurement efficiency gains.

1.3 The second VfM target builds on a target set in Spending Review 2000 and again in 2002. It applies solely to Central Civil Government procurement and is measured by an established methodology, agreed by a Central Government interdepartmental group with representation from the National Audit Office (NAO), following wide consultation with academia, the private sector and professional bodies. The methodology includes savings reported by Departments from their own direct procurement, savings achieved by central collaborative projects OGCbuying.solutions (OGCb.s) and Central Office of Information (COI) contracts) and cost avoidance made by undertaking Gateway reviews.

1.4 The types of procurement improvement that count as efficiency gains or value for money savings are, to a considerable extent, synonymous, as the diagram overleaf illustrates. However, there are some differences in the calculation of each. The following table sets out which savings categories should be recorded for each target and how the process is expected to operate. Detailed guidance on how to calculate savings for each category is set out in Section 5 of this guidance, with examples of how different procurement scenarios generate efficiency gains provided in Annex 2.

1.5 Given the overlap between the two, it is envisaged that Departmental returns for the VfM target will also be used by Departments as a contribution to their calculation of procurement efficiency gains for their efficiency target. Savings that are calculated centrally for the VfM target – OGCb.s, COI contracts and Public Private Partnership (PPP) refinancing – will be disaggregated so that Departments can also report these as part of their efficiency gains.

1.6 The following guidance therefore sets out the high-level approach to the measurement of procurement efficiency gains as well as VfM returns. This guidance builds on the established VfM methodology, OGC's ongoing metrics work, and HM Treasury Efficiency Technical Notes (ETN) guidance. We are grateful to procurement experts from Departments who have helped refine this methodology.



£ = cashable

* part of this gain might be attributed to the Efficiency Programme

** procured collaboratively or calculated using the Low Value Calculator where gains make up no more than 20% of total expenditure

Savings Category	Efficiency	Methodology	VfM	Methodology
Cost reduction on items purchased (paragraph 5.4)	✔	Actual price saving (cashable gain)	✔	Actual price saving
Improved quality for same price (paragraph 5.4)	✔	Saving made against price (non-cashable gain)	✔	Saving made against price
Price saving from collaborative contracts / aggregated purchasing (non-OGCb.s/COI) (paragraph 5.5)	✔	Actual price saving (cashable gain). Calculated by lead procurer and disaggregated to users	✔	Actual price saving. Calculated by lead procurer and disaggregated to users
Price saving from collaborative contracts / aggregated purchasing (OGCb.s/COI) (paragraph 5.5)	✔	Actual price saving (cashable gain). Calculated by OGCb.s/ COI and disaggregated to users	✔	Actual price saving. Total calculated by OGCb.s and COI and reported to OGC
Procurement process or transactional savings (paragraph 5.6)	✔	Actual staff time saved or stock reductions (cashable gain). Better use of time through process improvement (non-cashable gain)	✔	Actual staff time saved or stock reductions. Better use of time through process improvement
Assessment of OGCGateway cost avoidance (paragraph 5.8)	✘	Not included	✔	Calculated by OGC from sample data
Assessment of improved project management delivered by the implementation of best practice	✔	Actual price saving (cashable gain), savings made against price and better use of time (non-cashable gain) should be included under the first five categories noted above	✔	Actual price saving, savings made against price and better use of time
Quality cross-checks	✔	Required in return	✘	Not required in return

2 Background

2.1 The 1998/99 Gershon Review examined the whole process of central government civil procurement: including goods, services and large capital projects. It spanned the complete life cycle from initial inception through to the end of the useful life of the asset or completion of the contract. The Review identified areas where improvements could be made in central civil procurement and made recommendations covering organisation, process, people and skills, measurement and the contribution of the 'centre'.

2.2 The 2004 Efficiency Review built on the original Gershon report but was extended to cover six workstreams and the wider public sector. These workstreams cover corporate services, transactional services, policy funding and regulation (public sector), policy funding and regulation (private sector), productive time and the implementation of the Lyons Programme that recommended moving civil service jobs from the south east, in addition to procurement. The 2004 Review defined efficiency as follows:

Efficiency in the public sector involves making best use of the resources available for the provision of public services. This review has defined as 'efficiencies' those reforms to delivery processes and resource (including workforce) utilisation that achieve:

- reduced numbers of inputs (e.g. people or assets), whilst maintaining the same level of service provision; or
- lower prices for the resources needed to provide public services; or
- additional outputs, such as enhanced quality or quantity of service, for the same level of inputs; or
- improved ratios of output per unit cost of input; or
- changing the balance between different outputs aimed at delivering a similar overall objective in a way which achieves a greater overall output for the same inputs ("allocative efficiency").

2.3 The Review team considered with Departments a number of key procurement markets, including as appropriate: size and planned growth of the supply and demand side; past and likely future price trends; the degree of fragmentation of overall public sector purchasing; the degree of professionalisation and involvement of the procurement function; the degree to which the market was effectively being managed, for example to ensure efficient supply chain management; and the make-up of the supplier base. It concluded that in general significant scope exists for delivering procurement savings in particular through:

- better supply side management: seeking to communicate and manage likely aggregate public sector demand in a strategic way with the supply sector, thereby enabling the supply side better to anticipate and plan for shifts in public sector demand; and
- further professionalisation of the procurement function within the public sector through either use of shared procurement models, or the enhancement of procurement skills.

2.4 Departments published their Efficiency Technical Notes in autumn 2004, setting out in more detail their plans for achieving their efficiency gains targets and how they should be measured. A number of Departments explicitly referred to using the VfM guidance in evaluating and reporting savings from the procurement workstream. This and further discussions with Departments have underlined the need for simple, consistent guidance as to how procurement efficiency should be measured across Central Government and the Wider Public Sector. The methodologies described in this guidance will help public sector organisations measure progress in delivering their planned procurement efficiencies.

3 Development of the Guidance

3.1 The original VfM guidance was developed by a Central Government interdepartmental group with representation from the National Audit Office following wide consultation with academia, the private sector and professional bodies.

3.2 It has been further developed to meet the needs of the Efficiency Review and the Wider Public Sector and has been validated by a representative group.

3.3 The methodologies recommended have been selected on the basis of being simple, robust and auditable. They provide common principles and specified processes only to the extent necessary to allow aggregation of data to support the measurement of achievement against Public Service Agreement (PSA) targets. This is to ensure that Departments and other wider public sector organisations take a consistent and robust approach, but have sufficient discretion to develop performance measures and metrics and reporting systems that are appropriate to the type of project and procurement being undertaken.

4 Applicability

4.1 The measurement methodologies can be applied to all procurements of goods, services and works and include those for projects, IT, construction and property; and to any programme spend where there is a proactive and definable procurement influence.

4.2 This methodology is to be used by all public sector procurement organisations. The application of these methodologies need to be proportionate to the size of the procurement spend. We would expect that for most Departments and other public sector organisations savings will be calculated:

- separately for significant expenditure items;
- by the lead organisation managing a framework contract/buying consortium and disaggregated to members;
- using the low-value procurement calculator for the remaining small value items.

4.3 Project-specific measurement of efficiency gains should be targeted at significant expenditure items. Whilst the size of significant expenditure items will vary from organisation to organisation, the rules of thumb are:

- for many organisations, a small proportion of transactions (20%) frequently cover a large proportion of spend (80%). These higher value transactions can be translated into a financial value, but this value will depend on the size and complexity of the organisation. For large organisations an expenditure of over £500k over the life of the contract or asset may be appropriate. For smaller organisations £50k may be more relevant;
- if the procurement is significant enough to justify its own project, the savings should be calculated and assigned to that project.

4.4 The 2004 review of efficiency anticipated growth in the number of framework contracts and buying consortia, both in Central Government and the Wider Public Sector. Established frameworks and buying consortia, such as OGCb.s and the COI already calculate savings against an accurate benchmark of price, and in these cases the annual saving will be reported back to Departments for inclusion in their overall return. Newer developments such as regional centres of procurement excellence and sector-specific change agents are also working towards achieving efficiency improvements partly through aggregated purchase. We would expect in these cases that the lead member or the organisation that holds the framework would develop the methodology and reporting procedures in line with this guidance and agreement with OGC.

4.5 There remain a large number of low value transactions that will also contribute to efficiency gains but it is not worthwhile to calculate these individually. It is anticipated that these low value transactions will in the main be procured collaboratively and the gains identified accordingly. VfM gains from any remaining low value transactions should be calculated using the low value calculator – but this should not cover more than 20% of the organisation's total expenditure without the express agreement of HMT and the OGC's central Efficiency Team.

5 Methodologies For The Calculation of Procurement Efficiency Improvements

5.1 The methodologies for the calculation of procurement efficiency improvements have been categorised to reflect procurement professionals' experience of where gains can be made. There are a number of typical procurement scenarios in which value for money savings or efficiency gains might be made:

- continuing purchase of commodity goods either separately or jointly;
- new or repeat contract for goods or services that have been previously procured either separately or jointly;
- one-off contracts for new goods or services;
- on-going contracts, agreed before the beginning of the Spending Review period, and which continue throughout the Spending Review period, that are renegotiated.

5.2 In these scenarios, four main categories of efficiency or value for money gains from procurement activity have been identified. These are:

- negotiating an improved deal with a supplier;
- aggregating demand to exert greater leverage on suppliers;
- reducing process or transaction costs;
- improving project, contract and asset management.

These will lead to genuine efficiency gains from paying a better price or obtaining a better quality product; decreasing procurement process or transaction costs; or ongoing management costs. It is crucial to ensure that only genuine procurement efficiency gains are identified, and that quality is maintained.

5.3 Methodologies have been developed for identifying and calculating **value for money gains** in each of these four categories in the following sections of this guidance. The table in Annex 2 to this guidance sets out some examples of how **efficiency gains** might be made for each category in each scenario, and how they might be measured.

5.4 Negotiation of an Improved Deal with a Supplier

VfM gains negotiated with a supplier by a procurement organisation may be realised in the following areas:

- price saving/reduced unit price – the amount by which the last price paid for the goods or services (if one exists) or the current best value market price (based on tenders received and whole life costing) is improved by negotiation;
- price avoidance – the amount by which a contractual price increase is reduced – aiming towards zero;
- better terms – warranties or guarantees resulting in reduced whole life costs, more advantageous payment bases, reduced stock holding;
- improved quality – based on reducing whole life costs;
- change in specification – capturing the savings achieved by procuring a good or service using a simpler more generic or broadly defined specification rather than a very specific or heavily customised one.

5.4.1 Calculating the Benefits

- price savings/volume gains – these should take account of inflation/deflation, (see Technical Notes);
- better terms/improved quality – these will be realised through the saving of staff time (based on full costs or 2 x salary if these are not available) or on reducing whole life costs;
- e-auctions should take account of a price saving/reduced unit price – the amount by which the initial e-auction bid, or the last price paid for the goods or services, is improved by the successful bid.

5.5 VfM Gains through Aggregation

These will be realised through aggregation of demand following centrally awarded call-off contracts set up by specialist procurement agencies or a procurement organisation acting as lead buyer. The contracts may be national and available to organisations throughout the country, e.g. stationery or more locally based such as a taxi contract. The ability to aggregate may be triggered by a change in specification to meet a more broadly based requirement.

Benefits will vary from organisation to organisation but may include:

- unit price reduction;
- better terms, for example, warranties and guarantees;
- savings in transaction costs;
- shortened implementation timescales;
- improved quality.

Gains achieved through aggregation by using central procurement bodies, such as, OGCb.s or COI, will be measured by the central bodies and will be disaggregated to the organisations using their services. These gains will be reported on an at least six-monthly basis.

5.5.1 Calculating the Benefits

VfM benefits calculations must take account of the **full cost of purchasing** and should be calculated by comparing 'before and after' in a number of areas as follows:
Supplier charges/reduced prices:

- these should be assessed over the whole life of the contract/life of the asset acquired;
- charges/prices should be adjusted to take account of inflationary/deflationary price movements by using the GDP deflator or a sector-specific deflator as agreed with HMTreasury;
- benefits realised by each organisation should be calculated pro-rata for their spend compared to the total contract.

Staff time:
- savings in staff time should be calculated on the basis of full costs and overheads or 2 x salary (see Process costs above).

Added value – better terms and conditions:
- the evaluation of these will depend on the circumstances in the particular organisation but should show in lower maintenance i.e. whole life costs and organisation staff time.

Shorter timescales and saving in administration costs:
- these will be realised through savings in staff time (see above).

Lead buyer costs need to be deducted from the savings achieved.

5.6 Procurement Process or Transactional VfM Gains

The key activities where process VfM gains may be achieved are:
- sourcing;
- tendering;
- order and acknowledgement;
- receipt documentation and internal delivery or installation;
- invoice receipt matching and bill payment.

The benefits will be realised through:
- a reduction in operating costs through the ability to reduce staff time (internal or external) on that particular work;
- reduced stock holding (where relevant) due to reliability and speed improvements;
- avoiding the need to undertake a procurement or reducing the volume required.

Initiatives that may generate benefits are for example:
- use of Government Procurement Cards (GPC);
- electronic catalogues/e-commerce/tailored shipping lists;
- consolidation of delivery;
- consolidation of invoices;
- improved information systems;
- reduction in the number of consultants and advisers;
- reduction in queries/mistakes/mismatches;
- reliability and speed improvements – may generate both a time and stock saving;
- consolidation of payments;
- electronic tendering;
- standardisation of contract documentation;
- standard project methodology and approach;
- challenging initial requirements in terms of volume, quality etc;
- change in specification giving scope to use joint procurement or framework contracts.

5.6.1 Calculating the Benefits

Staff time:

- staff value should be calculated on the basis of full costs or 2 x salary.

Stock reductions:

- stock reductions should be taken as a one-off benefit and calculated on the basis of the current replacement value of stock reduced.

Other procurement process improvement:

- for quality improvements, for example, time reduced on procurement because an existing framework was used instead of undertaking a separate procurement, the savings should calculate an estimate of actual staff time saved plus savings in *transaction costs;*
- for eProcurement, the OGC eProcurement Assessment Tool (ePAT) is a self-assessment tool designed to assist organisations in determining their eProcurement position. It also helps to identify, plan and manage the transition from traditional (predominantly paper-based) procurement systems to an entirely electronically based method.

5.7 Projects and Contract Management

For the purpose of measuring VfM gains total project costs can be split into 3 components:

- the investment cost – consisting of the capital cost of the asset or service;
- the process management cost – this includes all the in-house and external costs of the procurement process;
- the lifetime operating or servicing costs – the costs of running, maintaining and disposing of the asset where appropriate.

Information on PRINCE 2 project management is available at www.ogc.gov.uk.

5.8 OGCGateway™ Reviews

A cross-departmental group, including the NAO, agreed a methodology for calculating benefits arising from OGCGateway reviews. The benefits are calculated centrally by OGC. You do not need to estimate benefits from OGCGateway reviews separately.

Information on the OGCGateway Process is available at www.ogc.gov.uk or by contacting the OGC Better Projects team via the OGC service desk on 0845 000 4999.

For projects and contracts which do not go through the formal OGCGateway review process the methodology for calculating VfM benefits, from process cost reduction and negotiation of an improved deal with suppliers, should be used.

5.9 Asset Management and Disposals

5.9.1 Asset Management

Guidance on Asset Management Efficiency savings is in development. Contact OGC GRAM team via the OGC service desk on 0845 000 4999

5.9.2 Asset Disposal

Guidance on Asset Disposal is in development. Contact OGC GRAM team via the OGC service desk on 0845 000 4999

5.9.3 Property Disposal Proceeds

Guidance specific to property asset disposal receipts is available from the OGC GRAM team by contacting the OGC Service Desk on 0845 000 4999

5.10 Public Private Partnership Refinancing

These gains will continue to be calculated centrally by HM Treasury. The HM Treasury website is www.hm-treasury.gov.uk.

The following notes provide guidance on the treatment of specific issues associated with assessing VfM gains.

Who should claim Procurement Efficiency or Value for Money Gains?

The guiding principle should be that the public sector body that finances the particular procurement should claim any VfM gains achieved. This is on the basis that it is only this body that is in a position to deploy any savings or benefits achieved. The Department will therefore report gains for itself and its sponsored bodies. Local Authorities will report their gains in their Annual Efficiency Statement. Some Departments in charge of change programmes may also report savings from that programme, though agreement with OGC should be reached on reporting to avoid double-counting. All gains must be verified by the organisation's Financial Director/Accounting Officer and are subject to audit.

Inflation/Deflation

The effects of price inflation/deflation should be taken into account when calculating VfM/efficiency gains in order to compare prices on a like-for-like basis. Charges/prices should be adjusted to take account of inflationary/deflationary price movements by using the GDP deflator or a sector-specific deflator as agreed with HMTreasury. GDP deflators are published at www.hm-treasury.gov.uk. Department Efficiency Technical Notes should set out any non-standard deflators to be used for specific procurement projects.

Value Added Tax (VAT)

VAT should be excluded from all value for money calculations when reporting gains to OGC for the purposes of cross-departmental aggregation. For internal departmental purposes, calculations may be presented on a gross or net basis to reflect local circumstances.

Avoidance of Double Counting

Where public sector bodies collaborate to effect a procurement there is a risk that the perceived benefits will be double counted. To avoid this, the following protocols are recommended:

Aggregation benefits

The Central Office of Information (COI) and OGC buying.solutions will calculate the VfM gains related to their activities, OGC will also calculate the gains from the principal aggregation deals

Retrospective Rebates:

- these should be recorded by the Lead Buyer but allocated to organisations based on their spend.

Six Separate Efficiency Workstreams:

- Procurement is one of six efficiency workstreams. Efficiency gains counted as procurement cannot also be counted as an efficiency gain under another workstream. If an efficiency project/programme includes efficiency gains that fall under more than one workstream, the efficiency gains will be apportioned across the appropriate workstreams.

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Future Year Gains

Where procurement efficiency and VfM gains fall within the Spending Review (SR) time horizon they should be claimed in the year in which the savings are achieved.

For VfM, if gains fall beyond the SR time horizon net present value (NPV) should be calculated, using standard HM Treasury methodology, and reported separately as part of the total gains for the year. Future year estimates will need to be periodically reviewed to verify they are still valid and being realised.

For Efficiency, future year savings should not be reported as part of gains over the SR04 period.

Low Value items

A simplified methodology has been developed to allow streamlined calculation of VfM gains associated with low value expenditures. This is based on agreed factors that determine the effectiveness of a procurement operation. The resulting index is then applied to the aggregate of the Departments low value expenditure. A ‘cap’ of just below 3% VfM gains is applied. This calculator is available in electronic spreadsheet form.

Cashable/non-cashable savings

For Efficiency returns Departments and Local Authorities are required to distinguish between cashable and non-cashable savings. Cashable savings are those, such as price savings, which generate cash that can be used by the organisation to resource additional delivery. Non-cashable savings are those, such as quality improvements, that are genuine efficiency savings but do not generate cash because the expenditure is already committed to that project.

Annex 2

How efficiency gains are generated

	Improved deal with supplier.	Aggregating demand.	Reducing process or transaction costs.	Improving project, contract and asset management.
Ongoing purchase of commodities.	Improved contract terms and conditions, including price (cashable) and quality (non-cashable) improvements.	Joining/continuing to be a member of a buying consortium achieving efficiency savings.	Switch to more efficient procurement management, e.g. e-procurement or use of Government Procurement Card.	Improved contract specification leading to reduced stock holdings; reduced or simplified stock specifications; active contract management leading to improved deals.
New contract for similar previous activity.	Improved contract terms and conditions, including price (cashable) and quality (non-cashable) improvements.	Joining or setting up a framework agreement or buying consortium to achieve efficiency savings.	Switch to more efficient procurement management, e.g. e-procurement or use of Government Procurement Card.	Improved product or contract specification leading to efficiency savings.
New contract for new activity.	Improved contract terms and conditions, including price (cashable) and quality (non-cashable) improvements.	Setting up a buying consortium of purchasing partners with the same/similar requirements in order to buy and manage market more strategically.	Use of best practice or innovative procurement techniques may in some cases lead to reduced process or transaction costs.	Accurate benchmarking leading to better product or contract specification. Improved evaluation of costs and benefits leading to improved whole life costs.
Ongoing contract.	Improved contract terms and conditions, including price (cashable) and quality (non-cashable) improvements.	Extending framework contract/buying consortium to areas not previously covered.	Improved invoicing and checking processes.	More efficient mechanisms for measuring and rewarding/penalising performance.

How efficiency gains are measured

	Improved deal with supplier.	Aggregating demand.	Reducing process or transaction costs.	Improving project, contract and asset management.
Ongoing purchase of commodities.	Measured against price paid at beginning of SR04 period and/or using the low value procurement calculator. Cashable improvements in price; non-cashable improvements in quality.	Measured by lead organisation using agreed methodology – for OGC bs and COI this is benchmarked against actual price each year - and disaggregated to members.	Measure of staff time saved against staff time costs at beginning of SR04 period. Cashable if staff time saved is realised (i.e. staff reduction or reassignment to front-line services).	Measured against staff time, annualised total asset cost or other operating or servicing costs at beginning of SR04 period (inflator applied).
New contract for similar previous activity.	Measured against price paid at beginning of SR04 period. Cashable improvements in price; non-cashable improvements in quality.	Measured by lead organisation against average price paid previously by members at beginning of SR04. Cashable improvements in price; non-cashable improvements in quality.	Measure of staff time saved by against baseline of staff time costs over last contract period (inflator applied). Cashable if staff time saved is realised (i.e. staff reduced or reassigned to front-line services).	Measured against staff time, capital cost or operating or servicing costs over last contract period (inflator applied to baseline at beginning of SR04 period).
New contract for new activity.	Savings measured against best value market price (where there is a post-bid negotiation) based on tenders received and whole-life costing. Cashable improvements in price; non-cashable improvements in quality.	Measured against market price for individual tenders (if applicable) or best value market price based on tenders received and whole-life costing. Cashable improvements in price; non-cashable improvements in quality.	Measure of staff time saved by against baseline of staff time costs for a project of similar size and complexity at beginning of SR04 period (or with appropriate deflators applied). Cashable if staff time saved is realised (i.e. staff reduced or reassigned to front-line services).	Measured against capital cost of asset or service or lifetime operating or servicing costs apportioned annually – either appropriate sector benchmark or best value market price. Cashable improvements in costs, non-cashable improvements in quality.
Ongoing contract.	Measured against agreed contract cost profile over the SR04 period as set at beginning. Cashable improvements in price; non-cashable improvements in quality.	Actual price or quality savings against previous contract taking into account any costs of withdrawing from ongoing contract.	Measure of staff time saved by against baseline of annual staff time costs at beginning of SR04 period (inflator applied). Cashable if staff time saved is realised (i.e. staff reduced or reassigned to front-line services).	Measure of staff time, capital costs or other operating or servicing costs saved against agreed contract cost profile over the SR04 period as set at beginning of SR04 period.

OGC Contact Details

For general enquiries and hard copies of the majority of OGC and OGCbuying.solutions publications or to reach named contacts mentioned within specific OGC business areas, please contact the respective enquiry points.

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