



Oifig um Sholáthar Rialtais
Office of Government Procurement

Ireland : Covid & Public Procurement

Paul Quinn

Government CPO

8th June, 2020

OGP.GOV.IE

Delivering Sustainable Procurement Solutions



Key Challenges

- **Early Uncertainty and Problem Definition** – ‘More than a health crisis?’
 - Early efforts were correctly focussed on increasing capacity and equipping the health system
 - Ireland has considerable logistical challenges and exposure to global supply chains – island-nation with a high reliance on UK land-bridge and relatively small indigenous manufacturing base
 - Country shut-downs and substantial risks to freight movements due to loss of people traffic created significant broad supply chain risk for essential goods
- **Planning challenge** - difficult for public bodies to plan response and associated procurement needs given the evolving nature of situation and public health advice
- **Reliance on far-shore manufacturing** for key medical equipment and deterioration in market dynamics created significant risks in securing supplies
- **Volume explosion**
- **Skills** - Public procurement rarely involves direct sourcing skills, particularly far-shore sourcing. Usual ‘in-country’ agents unable to supply at volumes demanded.

Strategies and Responses

- Government CPO part of **Senior Officials Group** advising Government
- Cross-Government **supply chain group** to monitor situation and advise Government on risks, issues and actions
- CPBs coordinated **demand aggregation** - Office of Government Procurement for non-health essential services (Fire Services, Prisons, Uniformed Services, etc.) and Health Service CPB aggregated demand for health system
- Industry and diplomatic **channels leveraged** to support far-shoring sourcing
- CPBs mobilised **additional resources** to support health system in establishing additional capacity
- **North-South cooperation** with Northern Ireland's Department of Finance
- **'Offers of Support'** website established to capture commercial offers and donations
- Calls for increased **indigenous supply** met with limited success

Key Reflections

- **Centralised Procurement Structures (CPB's)** have assisted a speedy, coordinated and effective response Irish Government response to the crisis
 - **Moving at pace** through **established structures** for collaboration and coordination
 - **Navigating** Government, Diplomatic and Industry Structures
 - Leveraging **category specialism** and deep understanding of supply market and intelligence network
 - **Influencing and advising** into the centre of Government's decision making structures
- **Greater understanding** by Government of global supply chain risks
- **Brexit** preparations have helped Government prepare
- Existing flexibility within the EU Procurement Directives have supported necessary emergency actions
- **International joint procurement** has yielded little product for Ireland but may be critical in future de-risking

Future Challenges

- Increasing challenges and competing demands
 - Global supply chain risks and industrial policy
 - Brexit risks
 - Social Considerations and Environmental Sustainability
 - Likely budget challenges
 - Potential increased level of supplier insolvencies
- Impact upon public procurement practitioners
 - Recruitment, induction and training in a sustained remote working environment
 - New ways of working – more digital, more risk?



Oifig um Sholáthar Rialtais
Office of Government Procurement



An Roinn Caiteachais Phoiblí
agus Athchóirithe
Department of Public
Expenditure and Reform



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

Delivering Sustainable Procurement Solutions



ogp.gov.ie



support@ogp.gov.ie



+353 76 100 8000



[@procurement_ie](https://twitter.com/procurement_ie)