

News story: Suppliers announced for housing and facilities management contract framework

The FDIS contracts will provide FM services across the UK defence estate, replacing existing arrangements when they come to an end. Each contract will be seven years in length, with options to extend up to a further three years, subject to satisfactory performance and other considerations.

The contracts are being procured as part of the CCS workplace services FM marketplace framework. This is a new way of working for DIO and enables access to a more diverse supplier base, while improving value for money for the taxpayer by leveraging government buying power.

This phase of the FDIS programme will procure new hard FM arrangements for 4 regional contracts and 5 contracts that will replace the current National Housing Prime. The replacement for the current national training estate prime will be procured through a subsequent framework during the next phase of the programme.

[Video: The FDIS programme will provide improved value for money for the taxpayer](#)

DIO's Commercial Director Jacqui Rock said:

DIO spends around £3 billion every year buying infrastructure services for our armed forces both in the UK and overseas. These new contracts will form a significant part of this and will provide improved value for money for the taxpayer. They will also allow us access to a wider supply base including both large multinational companies and small and medium enterprises.

Sam Ulyatt, CCS's Buildings Strategic Commercial Director, said:

CCS has engaged extensively to design a framework structure which meets the needs of customers and incorporates social value. Our public sector contract has also been simplified to aid procurement for customers and suppliers alike.

The next stage of the process is the call-off or Invitation to Tender for the suppliers who were awarded a place on the CCS FM Marketplace Phase 2 framework, to be able to bid for the new contracts. This is currently scheduled to begin with the Built Estate competition in spring 2019, followed by the accommodation management and maintenance competition in summer 2019.

News story: Cleaning chemicals companies' merger probed

The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) has been investigating Ecolab's acquisition of Holchem.

The companies make and supply cleaning chemicals for businesses that manufacture food, drink and dairy products. Access to competitively-priced, safe and effective cleaning products and services is an important part of the supply of food and drink within the UK.

Following its Phase 1 investigation, the CMA has identified concerns that the acquisition could adversely affect these businesses as a result of higher prices or lower quality services. This is because Ecolab and Holchem are two of the largest suppliers of cleaning chemicals and would face limited competition from other suppliers after the merger.

Ecolab now has until 17 April to offer a solution to the CMA's concerns. Otherwise, the merger will be referred for an in-depth Phase 2 investigation, to be carried out by a group of independent CMA panel members.

Further information can be found on the [Ecolab/Holchem case page](#).

Press release: Small business shines light on success of automatic enrolment

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The Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) found the revolutionary reform had brought almost half of the country's small business workforce into workplace pensions, increasing participation rates by a huge 44%.

With more than a quarter of private sector employees in the UK working for a small business, the figures shine a light on how automatic enrolment is improving the pension prospects of millions of people.

While fewer than 1 in 6 of these workers were saving for retirement before automatic enrolment was introduced in 2012, that figure has now reached 7 in 10. The IFS study asserts that just 26% of small business workers would have been saving into a workplace pension today without the dawn of automatic enrolment.

The research also revealed 91% of private sector employees work for an employer that offers a workplace pension.

Minister for Pensions and Financial Inclusion Guy Opperman said:

Automatic enrolment has been an extraordinary success, transforming pension saving and improving the retirement prospects of more than 10 million workers already.

As this report shows, small business owners all over the UK have made this possible, with participation rates estimated to have been increased from 26% to 70% due to automatic enrolment. This radical reform is creating a new relationship between the employee and their employer.

This government is committed to making sure that small business owners throughout UK are able to thrive and grow.

Official research shows that 70% of small and micro employers found the ongoing administration of their workplace pension scheme easy.

[Employers' pension provision survey 2017](#)

[Automatic enrolment: quantitative research with small and micro employers](#)

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