

New Zealand Fire Service Procurement Ethics

1. The Fire Service Commission expects behaviour and management practices of the highest standards, within a culture of accountability, honesty, and responsibility.
2. NZFS procurement must be, and publicly be seen to be, beyond reproach. To this end staff involved in procurement must perform their duties and conduct themselves in a manner which ensures that they maintain a reputation for fair dealing, without bias, in respect of all potential suppliers. NZFS personnel must also not obtain any direct personal gain through NZFS procurement activities.
3. NZFS has a zero-tolerance policy towards fraud. Fraud being considered behaviour that involves an individual or group of individuals dishonestly obtaining property or some personal benefit directly or indirectly by means of deception or some other unlawful act or omission. Fraud may include, but is not limited to:
 - a. Misappropriation of assets or funds;
 - b. Substituting new goods with old;
 - c. Bribery, corruption;
 - d. Conversion, failing to account;
 - e. Making a false statement (oral or written) whether or not intended to further or conceal other improper acts or omissions;
 - f. Using any document to obtain a direct or indirect financial/promotional/other advantage improperly e.g. NZFS credit cards, order forms etc;
 - g. Using NZFS assets for private profit; and
 - h. Inappropriate use of NZFS resources.
4. To ensure impartiality and integrity, staff are to observe the following precepts:
 - a. Confidentiality and Accuracy of Information. The confidentiality of information received in the course of duty is to be respected and is not to be used for personal gain. Information given in the course of duty is to be true and fair and never designed to mislead.
 - b. Disclosure of Information. To maintain impartiality, care must be taken when releasing information to any vendor. During a tender no information with respect to a tender is to be disclosed except through the defined procurement/tender process. Information must be considered “Commerce in Confidence”, as this is critical to NZFS’s relationship with suppliers and information must only be released when approved by the procurement manager responsible for managing the tender or the subsequent contract.
 - c. Conflict of Interest. Personnel involved in any procurement activity are required to declare any personal interest that may affect, or could be perceived to affect, their impartiality in any aspect of their work. Conflict of Interest declaration templates are available from Commercial Support, NHQ – a sample is attached as Appendix 1. Once completed, signed declarations are to be reviewed by the Commercial Support Manager, Chief Financial Officer or Project Sponsor as appropriate and held on the relevant project file.
 - i. Previous Employment. Where a staff member becomes aware that an organisation which previously employed them has responded to a tender they must declare this immediately. If the employment terminated less than two years prior to the date of the tender the staff member is not to be considered as part of the evaluation team unless approved by the National Procurement Manager.

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- ii. Upon such a declaration and removal from the evaluation team, the Sponsor must also ensure the staff concerned are not placed in any role which could lead to a perception of influence. This policy is designed to equally protect the NZFS, the respondent and the individual staff members from any potential criticism or allegation.
- d. Business Gifts. Reference should be made to POLFA 8.4 – Gifts & Prizes Policy. Specifically with regard to the likely gifts that may be offered during procurement activities, items other than those of small intrinsic value are not to be accepted.
 - i. The definition of the term "gift" is deemed to be any article, sum of money or provision of a service at no cost to an employee of the NZFS, whether or not as an inducement or bribe, by any individual or company.
 - ii. NZFS staff can accept the following or similar business gifts on which the company's or organisation's name or trade mark is clearly enfaced for the purpose of advertising:
 - 1. Calendars,
 - 2. Diaries and notebooks,
 - 3. Pens,
 - 4. Ties,
 - 5. Cufflinks,
 - 6. Paperweights, and
 - 7. other items of little intrinsic value.
 - iii. Under no circumstances is money to be accepted, however insignificant the sum of money is.
 - iv. Similarly, a service is not normally to be accepted, unless it is in the form of transport provided as a courtesy during a visit by an NZFS staff member to a commercial installation. It is also acceptable to accept a 'firm's rate' for accommodation during a visit providing the offer is unsolicited and payment of the rate is made by NZFS or by the individual officer.
- e. Hospitality. Staff members are not to allow themselves to reach a position where they might be deemed by others to have been influenced in making a business decision because of accepting hospitality.
 - i. Hospitality in the form of meals and drinks can be accepted where they are designed to facilitate the introduction of products or personnel, are offered during a visit to industry, form an integral part of facilitating/establishing a business relationship, or in the celebration of the successful conclusion of an agreement between the NZFS and another party. Hospitality must not be accepted from any party involved in a tender process or where it could be seen to be an attempt to influence a forthcoming decision. Hospitality in the form of entertainment is not normally to be accepted unless it directly facilitates the introduction of products or personnel, or forms an integral part of facilitating/establishing a business relationship.
 - ii. When it is not easy to decide between what is and is not acceptable in terms of gifts or hospitality, the offer is to be declined or advice sought from the staff member's superior.

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- iii. No hospitality is to be accepted for any reason at any time during the tender process or contract negotiation.
- f. Prizes Resulting from NZFS Funded Activities. Reference should be made to POLFA 8.4 – Gifts & Prizes Policy. Increasingly, firms are introducing incentive programmes where customers become eligible to win prizes or points towards a reward. Depending on the firm's offer and the size of the customer's participation, these prizes can be quite valuable or simply offers of better access to facilities. NZFS personnel are not eligible for and are not to accept any prize incentive scheme or participate in any reward scheme for activities which are funded by NZFS.
- g. Air Points and other Purchase Benefit Schemes. No member of NZFS must derive personal benefit either directly or indirectly as a result of NZFS expenditure. All Air Points or other Purchase Benefits received in relation to NZFS funded activity must only be redeemed against other NZFS related activity. Where accumulated benefits are recorded against an individual NZFS members name, and as long as every reasonable attempt has been made to utilise these accumulated benefits prior to leaving NZFS, personnel can retain these accumulated benefits for personal use after they leave NZFS.
- h. Overseas Activities. The principles embodied above apply both in New Zealand and overseas.
- i. Resolution of Problems. Where any doubt exists in the application of these principles, the matter is to be referred to the appropriate senior manager.