

NEWS RELEASE

21 February 2007

UAE Armed Forces GHQ to launch e-tendering portal

The UAE Armed Forces General Headquarters (GHQ) will soon launch its new electronic tendering portal, enhancing the efficiency, speed and transparency of its procurement process and bringing the system on par with international standards.

This was announced on Wednesday at a joint press conference attended by the Armed Forces and ITQAN, UAE's leading IT solutions provider, which implemented the project in association with its international partner BiP Solutions Ltd. of the United Kingdom. The press conference was held on the sidelines of the International Defense Exhibition (IDEX) in Abu Dhabi.

The e-tendering portal is expected to provide high-quality information and services to the Armed Forces' Purchasing Directorate. It aims to modernize its purchasing and supply and reduce the paper trail. The Armed Forces' e-tendering and supplier services will be managed through the portal, which supports the applied electronic systems of various branches. The portal will also enable the Directorate to disseminate important information to its suppliers.

His Excellency Brigadier General Obeid Al Ketbi said: "This initiative of the UAE Armed Forces is in line with the national trend of using electronic technology to enhance efficiency and performance. We are pleased that ITQAN has offered us the best procurement solution which addressed our specific but diverse requirements. I am also proud to say on behalf of the UAE Armed Forces that this e-tendering system is the first of its kind in the region and we are pleased that our system is on par with international standards."

The portal's capabilities will be enhanced in the future for use by other directorates of the Armed Forces, ITQAN said.

Feras Al Jabi, General Manager of ITQAN, said: "ITQAN and its strategic partner BiP were entrusted by the UAE Armed Forces to provide a state-of-the-art IT solution to automate the GHQ's procurement process. The GHQ Purchasing Directorate deals with hundreds of transactions every week and needs a system that will enhance and optimize its operations. ITQAN brings to this project its vast knowledge and experience of the UAE e-government initiatives as well as the understanding of the local processes and procedures.

"ITQAN has played a major role in the deployment of this project and has mapped the best technology to serve GHQ's business needs. ITQAN professionals are also tasked to Arabize this solution and make the system user-friendly for Arabic users."

Al Jabi said the regional market is hungry for rightly packaged e-tendering solutions in both public and private sectors. "The ITQAN-BiP partnership will provide the much-needed solutions to the public and private organizations within the GCC which are eager to implement modern supplier sourcing and tender management programs," he added.

Scott Smith, Commercial Director of BiP, said: "The e-tendering portal will provide a common face to the Armed Forces' supply base and will help make the process of RFQ (request for quotation) and tendering more effective and efficient for both the procurement teams and their suppliers."

As the pioneer in e-tendering and supplier sourcing, BiP has modeled the best practice processes into a fully functioning web based e-tendering service, Smith said. BiP's modular internet based electronic tendering suite of applications, DELTA, is in daily use across the UK public sector. DELTA is based on the EU Procurement Directives and best practice in public sector procurement. It provides open competition and transparency and reduces discrimination through simple and user-friendly processes.

BiP's longstanding experience and in-depth knowledge of public procurement makes it the natural choice for the provision of procurement services to both the public and private sectors in Europe and beyond. BiP currently hosts public procurement portals for a number of procurement consortia and awarding authorities including the UK Ministry of Defense.