

Policy Statement

Priority Saskatchewan

It is our position that the work being done by Priority Saskatchewan to implement best value and standardize procurement across government Ministries and Crowns is in the best interest of Saskatchewan taxpayers and businesses.

Policy Recommendations

- The provincial government should continue to support the mandate of Priority Saskatchewan as it relates to procurement process development and implementation to ensure structuring that enables competition.
- Priority Saskatchewan should continue to consult and engage with industry to ensure the best possible development process and outcomes as procurement issues are addressed.
- The provincial government should ensure that Priority Saskatchewan has the resources to monitor and manage the transition to best value procurement over the long term.
- Priority Saskatchewan should continue to monitor the success and issues encountered in provincial procurement and pursue continuous improvement.
- The provincial government should continue to work with industry through the Saskatchewan Construction Panel to recommend the new best practice in procurement to third party groups.

Rationale

Within the context of the New West Trade Partnership and the Agreement on Internal Trade (AIT) the procurement improvement represented in the work of Priority Saskatchewan presents an opportunity for transformational change that benefits all stakeholders – the government, taxpayers and industry. All by properly structuring public procurements to ensure fair competition.

Saskatchewan business can compete with anyone on a level, reasonable playing field that enables procurement officials to consider relevant factors – experience, capacity, creativity, partnerships and so on.

A model that acknowledges these factors also gives the government the opportunity to source the best solutions from companies they have confidence can and will deliver. At the same time, it provides industry the opportunity to deliver more creative and more meaningful solutions that match the business needs of government.

All together this supports a better business environment for Saskatchewan companies, a stronger local economy and arguably better solutions and outcomes.

Background

Priority Saskatchewan was brought into being in 2014 to harmonize Ministry and Crown procurement to ensure that public projects were structured in such a way that Saskatchewan companies could compete.

The foresight that drove the project was the simple realization that, although busy during the boom, Saskatchewan businesses could suffer in any slowdown because public procurements were often structured in a way that required or demanded non-Saskatchewan inputs.

When everyone had more work than they could handle, this was not an issue but in a slower climate it threatened to greatly disadvantage those Saskatchewan businesses who were not competing for government work at the time.

Many of these companies were smaller and lacked the capacity to navigate the 100+ procurement processes of Ministries and Crowns or could not compete on government jobs because they could not meet the specifications laid out in a tender even if they could deliver a quality solution that met the public need addressed by the procurement.

To address these shortcomings, the government of Saskatchewan initiated Priority Saskatchewan. In the process of standardizing government procurement processes it was recognized that a new approach to procurement could improve value for everyone.

In exploring procurement process improvements, Priority Saskatchewan has systematically engaged industry along the way and, consequently, created better materials and ideas that will save the government and taxpayers money.