

SME Steering Group - North

Meeting 8 – 15.7.14 Graham Engineering, Nelson, Lancashire

MINUTES

Attendees

SMEs: Chair: Mark Beirne (MB), Cara Mark Taylor (MT), ITS Ltd Jon Myers (JMy), Abbot Risk Consulting Taylor-Jayne Fox(TF), Graham Engineering	Tier 2s: Gill Jakeman (GJ), Atos Support Organisations/Guests Martin Booth (MBh) Witt UK - guest SME Dave Boxall (DB) K Home International – guest SME Stephen Davies (SDs) – DECC
SLCs: Chris Stanger (CS), LLWR	NDA: Pippa Kelly (PK) Sam Dancy (SD)
Apologies: Ron Gorham (RG), NDA; NDA Charlotte McLaren (CMc), Atos; Paul Read (PR), James Fisher; Nigel Routledge (NR), Jacobs; Jonathan Evans (JE), LLWR	

1) Welcome and Introductions

Thank you to Graham Engineering for hosting the meeting. Welcome to Martin Booth from Witt UK and Dave Boxall from K Home International both SME's who attended the SME Day in Warrington. Also welcomed Stephen Davies, Procurement Business Partner, DECC as a visitor for the meeting.

2) Review of SME Day – 16th June

Results of the survey conducted following the SME Day were circulated prior to the meeting and discussed in detail. Some of the points raised coincided with the issues raised within the Steering Groups – Security clearances (lead times), Tier 2's not outsourcing work, concerns of bias in contract awarding (anon bidding?), lack of awareness of the Steering Groups, consistent platform for accessing potential work (Achilles expensive), SME's becoming agencies supplying workers to Tier 2's, how to raise concerns with SLC's or Tier 2's, are enough companies are considering the Nuclear Decommissioning area/how to reach them?

Some of the above have been discussed in detail in previous meetings and are being addressed. Other points resulted in the following action points :

Action : GJ to provide SD with examples of security issues on software access for staff working on SLC contracts.

Action : SLC's to consider how to avoid bias using anonymous bidding processes – potential for a bid to be technically assessed and then final decision to be anonymised before a final decision panel.

Action : Improve visibility of Steering Groups to new entrants into the Nuclear Decommissioning industry – all to use Linked In and to publicise the regular steering group meetings and ask people to forward concerns for raising at the meeting.

Action : Contact LEP's to suggest that they consider promoting the Nuclear industry when asked for support/help by local companies. Steering Group members would be happy to speak to companies to explain further.

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Action : Contact the Institute of Directors, BIS, NAMRC to find other interested companies.

Action : Mail to all attendees of the SME Day to thank them for coming, join the Linked In group, link to the NDA website and make note of the NDA Supply Chain Event – now live on website – MB

3) SME Collaboration Guide

Copies of documents provided by the Institute of Collaborative Working were circulated for information. The Institute was born from a DTI initiative and has created a standard (BS11000: Collaborative Business Relationship Framework) this is planned to be incorporated into an ISO in the near future.

Due to the comprehensive nature of the documents provided, the group discussed how the SME Guide could avoid reworking the same information. The conclusion was to make the guide more specific towards the Nuclear Decommissioning industry and cover more basic questions over when or where collaboration is appropriate.

Flip chart notes were taken on content that should be covered in the guide and these will be used to allocate specific sections of the guide to members of the committee.

Elements to be included :

Definition of collaborative work – Joint ventures, consortium etc

Using collaboration as a means to gain experience on site

Route to market for an SME – combine with other SME's or Tier 2's

Barriers to collaboration and how to overcome them

Case studies of good collaboration and equally examples of when it hasn't worked and why.

Action : PK to type and MB to circulate the flip chart notes and create contents list

Action : SDs to forward copy of a graphic on collaboration.

Action : PK to doodle a meeting date for 2nd or 3rd week in August to divide contents to members at Hinton House, Warrington

4) AOB

SDs thanked the committee for invitation to attend the meeting and offered his support in future to update the group on what is happening elsewhere in HMG. MB asked if the group could learn from other departments in HMG on SME issues and SDs explained that the SME Steering Groups in the NDA Estate have better communication than other departments and it is more likely that HMG will learn from these committees!

SDs updated the group on the opportunity for funding from the SBRI (Small business Research Institute) to support companies with new ideas to prove concepts. And SME's IP is protected within the programme.

JG updated the group on the development of Cloud Store for standard procedures.

SDs gave an explanation of the planned changes to EU regulations to bring in more 'dynamic' purchasing.