

**BC Bid
Commodity
Code Guide:
Buyer
Guidance &
Training**

Table of Contents

About The Commodity Code Guide	3
What is a Commodity Code?	3
What is the UNSPSC?	3
How Are Commodity Codes Used in BC Bid?	4
Why Use Commodity Codes in BC Bid?	4
Steps for Adding Commodity Codes to an Opportunity in BC Bid	4
Step 1	4
Step 2	5
Step 3	9
Buyer vs. Supplier – Commodity Code Selection	9
Tier 1 Commodity Codes	9
Tier 2 Commodity Codes	10
Tier 3 Commodity Codes	10
Tier 4 Commodity Codes	10
Buyer vs. Supplier Commodity Code Tier Comparison Chart	10
Commodity Code Case Studies & Activities	13
Case Study 1	14
Case Study 1 Discussion Point	14
Case Study 2	15
Case Study 2 Discussion Points	16
Case Study 3	17
Case Study 3 Discussion Points	17
Case Study 4	18
Case Study 4 Discussion Points	19

Case Study Answer Key	19
Answers to Case Study 1	19
Answers to Case Study 2	20
Answers to Case Study 3	22
Answers to Case Study 4	23
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ).....	24
What happened to the GSIN commodity codes?.....	24
Is there a list of UNSPSC commodity codes?.....	24
What if a suitable commodity code cannot be found? Can one be added to the system?.....	24
Are there any wildcard keys in the commodity code search within BC Bid?	25
Resources.....	25

About The Commodity Code Guide

This learning guide will help buyers who post solicitations using the BC Bid application to identify the necessary steps to correctly categorize their solicitation with the appropriate UNSPSC commodity code(s). This guide will also provide some FAQ information for commodity code use within BC Bid, as well as the opportunity to test knowledge about commodity codes and how to use them in BC Bid.

What is a Commodity Code?

A commodity code is a standard system of numbers that are used to identify the goods and services that are being purchased.

What is the UNSPSC?

The United Nations Standard Products and Services Code (UNSPSC) is a hierarchical convention that is used to classify products and services. It is an eight-digit numeric code that identifies products or services and is used as a global standard.

How Are Commodity Codes Used in BC Bid?

The UNSPSC commodity codes are built into the BC Bid application, and when creating a solicitation, buyers can categorize their solicitation with the appropriate commodity code based on the good or service that the government is looking to procure. More information and steps on how to use commodity codes within BC Bid can be found in the following [commodity code video](#).

On the supplier side of BC Bid, suppliers can subscribe to certain commodity codes to be notified of opportunities that are posted in BC Bid, categorized with the commodity codes that match their subscriptions. Commodity codes trigger the notification emails to subscribers and are the main way notification emails are populated within the BC Bid system.

Why Use Commodity Codes in BC Bid?

Commodity codes are a globally recognized means of identifying products and services and serve a two-fold purpose. They help suppliers identify the types of opportunities that they can respond to, as well they can help your organization with analytics and reporting on the types of purchases being made.

Steps for Adding Commodity Codes to an Opportunity in BC Bid

Step 1

From the main BC Bid interface screen, click on the 'Sourcing' tab along the top left of the application, and then click on [Create Sourcing Project](#) from within the sourcing dropdown menu.



Step 2

On the first screen of creating a new sourcing project, there are two options to search for and add a commodity code or codes.

A screenshot of a form with two dropdown menus. The first is labeled 'Main Commodity*' and the second is labeled 'Other Commodities'. Both dropdown menus are currently empty and have a downward-pointing arrow on the right side.

Method 1: The first method is to click inside either the 'Main Commodity' dropdown menu or the 'Other Commodities' dropdown menu and then search based on keywords. For example, if you were purchasing a variety of live plant and animal materials, you could type in Live plant and animal material into the field and then click on live plant and animal material to add this to your opportunity as a commodity code. In the 'Other Commodities' dropdown menu you can add multiple commodity codes from the list to your opportunity. For example, here you could search and add cats, dogs, and horses, and add all three.

Set up Project

General Information

Code

Sourcing Project Type* Status*

Opportunity Description* Date Created ⓘ*

Confidential Sourcing Project

Issued By*

Issued For

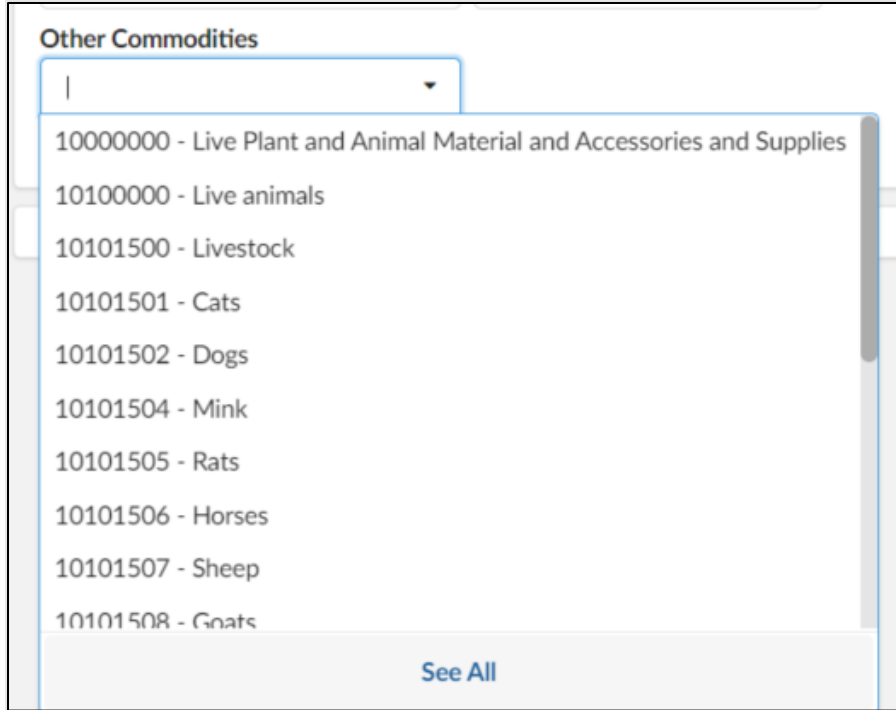
Main Commodity* Program ⓘ

- 10000000 - Live Plant and Animal Material and Accessories and Supplies
- 10100000 - Live animals
- 10101500 - Livestock
- 10101501 - Cats
- 10101502 - Dogs
- 10101504 - Mink
- 10101505 - Rats
- 10101506 - Horses
- 10101507 - Sheep
- 10101508 - Goats

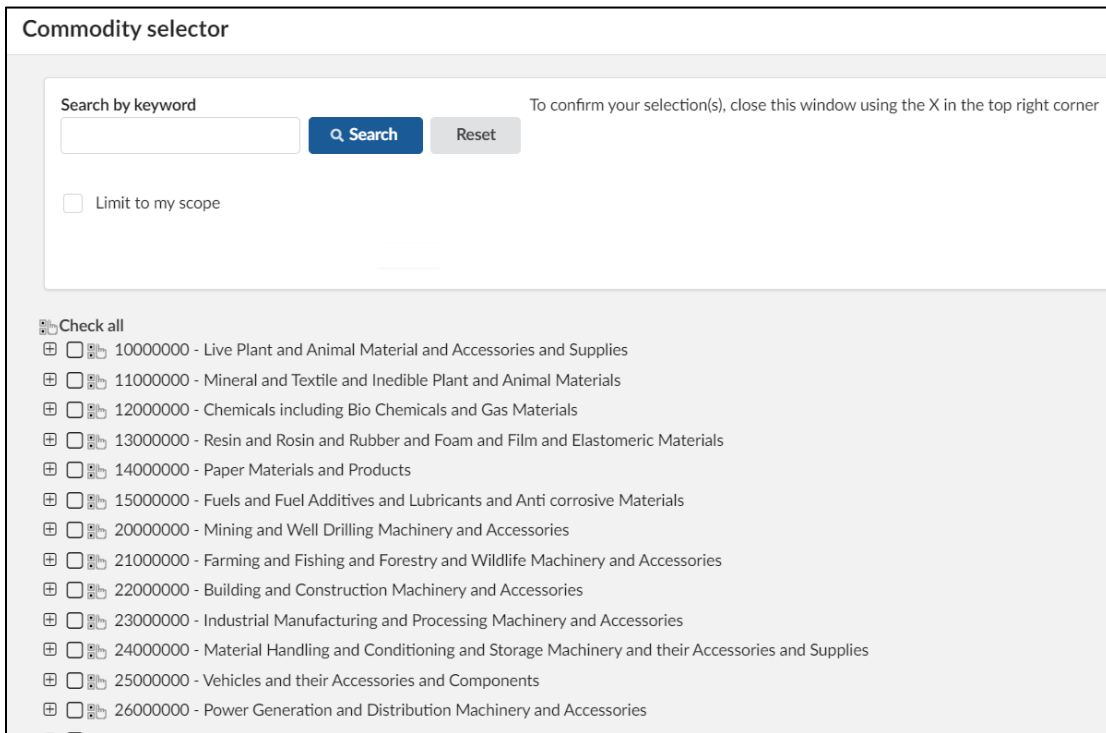
[See All](#)

Please note: You can only have one main commodity code, and then as many other commodity codes as you wish.

Method 2: The second method would be to add commodity codes to the opportunity using the tiered dropdown list. To do this, click inside the 'Main Commodity' or 'Other Commodities' dropdown menus and then at the bottom of the shortlist, click 'See All' to open the commodity selector window.

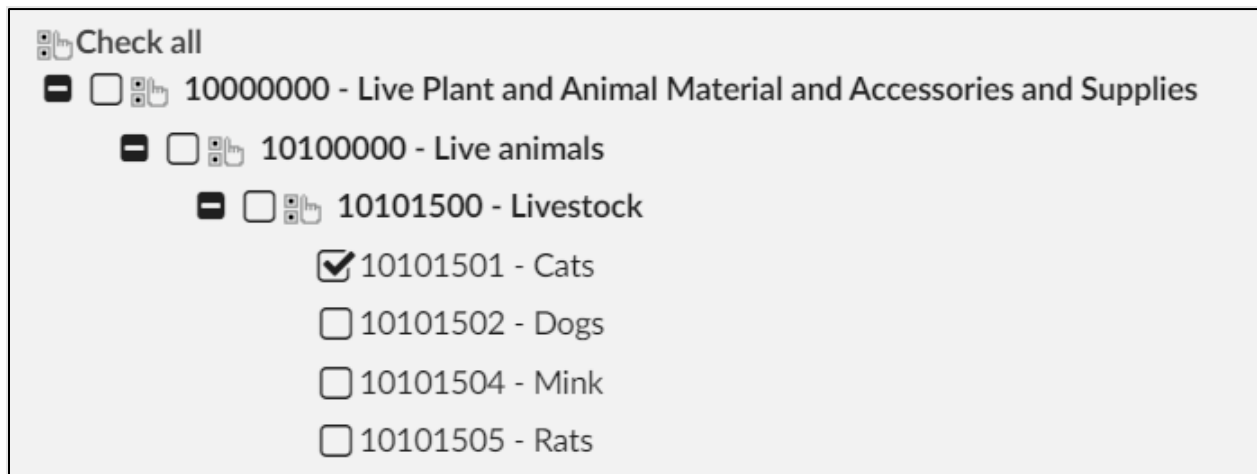


In the commodity selector window, you will see a tiered list of commodity codes available to use in BC Bid.



From within the commodity code selector window, you can click the plus buttons on the left-hand side of the window, to expand any goods or services dropdown category and reveal more specific sub-codes in tiered lists.

There are 4 tiers of specificity within the commodity selector window. For example, tier1 would be "Live Plant and Animal Material and Accessories and Supplies", tier 2 would be "Live Animals", tier 3 would be "Livestock" and then tier 4 would be a specific livestock choice like "Cats" for example.



Checking the box for the code you wish to use adds it to the opportunity, and as seen in the previous image, if selecting a more specific code, in this case a level 4 code "cats", then the previous 3 category headings become bolded to indicate that a code within that dropdown menu is selected.

Please note: Goods related codes are listed in the first half of the list (up to musical instruments) and then services codes begin after that, in the second half of the list.



Supplier Experience: Once a buyer has selected a commodity code for their opportunity, eNotification subscribers will be notified of an opportunity that matches their subscription once the opportunity is posted. Those suppliers who subscribe to the specific commodity on the opportunity or the top-level codes this list falls under, will also be notified.

Step 3

Once you have selected the appropriate commodity code(s) for your opportunity, please continue with the regular steps to create and post an opportunity in BC Bid. You can find these steps on the BC Procurement Resources Website in the [BC Bid Buyer Guide section](#).

Buyer vs. Supplier – Commodity Code Selection

The screenshot shows a hierarchical list of commodity codes. A red arrow points to the top-level code '44000000 - Office Equipment and Accessories and Supplies', labeled 'Tier 1'. An orange arrow points to the code '44120000 - Office supply', labeled 'Tier 2'. A green arrow points to the code '44121700 - Writing instruments', labeled 'Tier 3'. Another green arrow points to the code '44121704 - Ball point pens', labeled 'Tier 4'. The interface includes expand/collapse icons and checkboxes for each code.



- Tier 1:** Categorizing or subscribing at a tier 1 level should generally be avoided as it is too broad.
- Tier 2:** Categorizing or subscribing at a tier 2 level is still very broad and should be used cautiously.
- Tier 3:** This is generally the best tier to use as it balances specificity while still leaving room for capturing interested parties.
- Tier 4:** Choosing at the tier 4 level allows you to be specific enough to avoid unnecessary notifications.

Tier 1 Commodity Codes

This is the highest-level commodity code, and the broadest. These are the main categories that one can see when looking at the overall list, before drilling down into more specific goods and services. These are arranged into overarching categories based on the good or service type being procured.

An example of a broad, tier 1 code would be: **Office Equipment and Accessories and Supplies.**

Tier 2 Commodity Codes

After drilling down one layer into the commodity code list, Tier 2 commodity codes are slightly more specific and refined, and expand upon the broader, over-arching categories of the Tier 1 codes. Most Tier 1 codes have multiple Tier 2 options when drilling down, and the Tier 2 level allows for buyer to get more specific, in weeding out categories that don't concern their solicitation, but keeps options broad for related goods/services.

An example of a Tier 2 code would be: **Office Supply**

Tier 3 Commodity Codes

Expanding a Tier 2 category may yield one or more Tier 3 options within the commodity code tree. Tier 3 commodity codes are getting into more specific goods and services and are more refined and narrow in scope but are not quite the most specific of codes. Buyers will often pick a Tier 3 code as it balances reaching the target audience without being so specific as to exclude potential suppliers.

An example of a Tier 3 commodity code would be: **Writing Instruments**

Tier 4 Commodity Codes

Tier 4 codes are the most specific codes and represent a specific and highly focused good or service. Buyers might choose a Tier 4 code when they have a very clear idea of a unique or specific good/service they need, and only want to reach those who provide exactly what they're looking for.

An example of a highly specific, Tier 4 code would be: **Ball Point Pens**

Buyer vs. Supplier Commodity Code Tier Comparison Chart

In this side-by-side comparison (Fig. 1), each tier of commodity code is listed and the behaviour of selecting that tier of code as a buyer or supplier is explored. Furthermore, the pros and cons of selecting or subscribing to that tier of code are listed.

Fig 1. Buyer vs. Supplier Tier Codes Comparison Table:

Commodity Code	Buyer Selection	Supplier Selection
<p>Tier 1 Commodity Code</p> <p>Example: Live Plant and Animal Material and Accessories and Supplies</p> <p>Notifies anyone subscribed to any Tier 2, 3 and 4 level code within this broad category (ex: livestock, silkworms, fish food flakes, pest control devices, fresh cut cream rose, dried cut vanda orchids etc. all get notified).</p>	<p>Best practice is to avoid selecting a commodity code this broad. It is very rare that a buyer would need to label their solicitation with a Tier 1 code.</p> <p>Pro: Reaching the broadest audience possible (everyone).</p> <p>Con: Might not be the right audience and notification will potentially go to everyone subscribed to any code beneath this Tier 1 code (could be thousands).</p>	<p>Best practice is to avoid subscribing to a Tier 1 code. It is very rare that a supplier would subscribe to a Tier 1 code.</p> <p>Pro: You will get every notification related to this broad category.</p> <p>Con: You will likely receive a significant number of notifications that don't relate to what you're offering as you will get notifications for everything that falls under this broad category.</p>
<p>Tier 2 Commodity Code</p> <p>Example: Live animals</p> <p>Notifies anyone subscribed to any Tier 3, and 4 level codes within Live Animals (ex: livestock, birds and fowl, live fish, shellfish, insects, wild animals, etc. and all their subcodes all get notified).</p> <p>As well, anyone subscribed to the Tier 1</p>	<p>The Tier 2 codes get more specific, but still encompass a variety of different goods/services. These codes should be cautiously selected.</p> <p>Pro: Ability to get more specific and eliminate items that don't concern your solicitation but still reach a broad audience.</p>	<p>Subscribing to tier 2 codes gets more specific but still encompasses a variety of goods/services. You may subscribe to a Tier 2 code if you offer a broad range of goods/services.</p> <p>Pro: If you offer a broad range of goods and services, you will get all the notifications for all the different items within this subcategory.</p>

<p>header code Live Plant and Animal Material and Accessories and Supplies gets notified.</p>	<p>Con: You are still likely capturing people who are not the right audience due to the code being broad.</p>	<p>Con: You will likely get more notifications than match what you offer. This is still a broad level code, so if you offer more specific goods/services, you will potentially get 100s of unrelated notifications.</p>
<p>Tier 3 Commodity Code</p> <p>Example: Birds and fowl</p> <p>Notifies anyone subscribed to any Tier 4 level codes within Birds and Fowl (ex: Live chickens, live ducks, live turkeys, live geese, live pheasants etc. all get notified).</p> <p>As well, anyone subscribed to the Tier 2 header code live animals, or the Tier 1 header code Live Plant and Animal Material and Accessories and Supplies gets notified.</p>	<p>This is the sweet spot. Selecting a tier 3 code allows you to reach the audience that will most likely be able to sell you what you're looking for, whilst still not being too specific.</p> <p>Pro: You reach the most likely audience whilst not getting so specific to exclude target suppliers.</p> <p>Con: You may still send notifications to some suppliers that cannot provide what you're looking for.</p>	<p>This is the sweet spot for subscribing. Subscribing to a tier 3 code allows you to see notifications for a more nuanced subset of goods/services but still lets you see everything in that category.</p> <p>Pro: Allows you to see all notifications for the specific tier 3 category, in case you offer those goods/services, or want to do market research.</p> <p>Con: You may still get notifications that don't pertain to your good/service as you will get notifications for all the tier 4 codes beneath this tier 3 code.</p>
<p>Tier 4 Commodity Code</p> <p>Example: Live chickens</p>	<p>This allows you to be very specific in what your solicitation is looking for. If you know exactly what</p>	<p>This allows you to be notified about very specific solicitations labelled with the same tier 4 code. You would</p>

<p>Notifies anyone with that specific tier 4 code subscribed to (ex: notifies everyone who subscribes to live chickens, but won't notify live ducks, live turkeys etc.)</p> <p>Also notifies anyone who has the tier 3 header birds and fowl, the tier 2 header live animals and the tier 1 header Live Plant and Animal Material and Accessories and Supplies, but not other tier 1, 2 or 3 codes that aren't in this chain.</p>	<p>it is you need, you would select a tier 4 code.</p> <p>Pro: You will reach the exact audience you intend, if you only have one thing you're looking for and avoid spamming other suppliers.</p> <p>Con: You may miss some suppliers who can provide what you need, due to being so specific. This is a low risk.</p>	<p>subscribe to this if you offer a very specific good or service and don't want any other notifications that don't match what you offer.</p> <p>Pro: You would get only notifications that match exactly what it is you offer and this specific tier 4 code you've subscribed to.</p> <p>Con: If you offer one or two goods, you will likely miss notifications for anything other than this one tier 4 code, unless you are also subscribed to those other tier 4 codes individually.</p>
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Commodity Code Case Studies and Activities

Below we have provided 4 different case studies to assist you in practicing the skills and best practices related to commodity code use in BC Bid. Each scenario takes you through a real-life approximation of a procurement that could happen. You will be given details about the procurement and then asked questions about what you've just read.

Try your best to work through and answer the questions as best you see fit based on the information and guidance provided to you in this guide. There will be answers provided to each of the 4 case studies at the end of this section. You can then compare the answers you came up with against the answers for the case studies to see if you came up with the same course of action or learn about what the best possible action would be in each case.

Case Study 1

Jakob works for the Ministry of Public Assistance and has been tasked with posting a new Request for Proposal solicitation on the BC Bid platform. Jakob's office is responsible for assisting small businesses with procuring items that are challenging to gain access to, based on the business location, and a request has come in for assistance in procuring janitorial supplies (47120000). Jakob has gathered information from his client necessary for the procurement and has learned that they require cleaning pails or buckets, a mop wringer and cleaning dusters. Ideally if there is a supplier that provides all these products, it would be a bonus, but not required. As Jakob is posting the solicitation on BC Bid, he reaches the point where he needs to select a main commodity for the sourcing project and decides to select the tier 2 code, janitorial equipment. This way, he is confident that the notifications will go out to any suppliers who can provide these services, and no one who could potentially bid on this solicitation is missed. Jakob posts his solicitation and waits for proposals to be submitted.

- 47000000 - Cleaning Equipment and Supplies
 - 47100000 - Water and wastewater treatment supply and disposal
 - 47110000 - Industrial laundry and dry cleaning equipment
 - 47120000 - Janitorial equipment
 - 47121500 - Cleaning and janitorial carts and accessories
 - 47121600 - Floor machines and accessories
 - 47121700 - Waste containers and accessories
 - 47121800 - Cleaning equipment
 - 47121801 - Cleaning dusters
 - 47121802 - Lint removers
 - 47121803 - Squeegees or washers
 - 47121804 - Cleaning pails or buckets
 - 47121805 - Pressure or steam cleaners
 - 47121806 - Mop wringer
 - 47121807 - Drain or toilet plunger
 - 47121808 - Drain or pipe cleaning equipment
 - 47121809 - Degreasing pans

Case Study 1 Discussion Point

Answers provided on page 19

Question 1 – Is the tier 2 code janitorial equipment (47120000) the best main commodity code to select for this solicitation? Why or why not?

Question 2 – Using janitorial equipment (47120000), which suppliers will be notified of this solicitation once it is posted in BC Bid (based on commodity codes various suppliers may be subscribed to)?

Question 3 – Is there a better code that Jakob might have picked as his main commodity code for this solicitation (which code and why)?

Case Study 2

Tabita works at the Ministry of Nature and has a few upcoming projects she is juggling. One of the projects is a new community garden that is being put into a remote community to commemorate a historical event. She will be putting a request for proposals out onto BC Bid, and she is looking for some suppliers who are able to supply a variety of gardening tools for the project. After taking stock of the various tools, she needs to procure, she begins creating her sourcing project in BC Bid. She has all the information she needs, and now she needs to select a main commodity code for the sourcing project. She looks at the commodity selector and is initially unsure of how to categorize this RFP. Her first thought is to categorize it with the tier 1 code tools and general machinery (27000000). She feels like she has a pretty good idea of the tools she needs, but she doesn't want to miss any suppliers who might possibly bid. She then thinks maybe the tier 2 code hand tools (27110000) would be better, as all the supplies she is procuring for are hand tools. She then notices the tier 3 code agriculture, forestry and garden hand tools (27112000) and remembers that all the tools she needs are specifically for gardening. She then notices the tier 4 codes for spades (27112002), shovels (27112004), axes (27112005), and hoes (27112008) which are most of the tools she needs. She puzzles a bit as to how best to label this solicitation as she wants to notify the correct suppliers without sending too many erroneous notifications.

- 27000000 - Tools and General Machinery
 - 27110000 - Hand tools
 - 27111500 - Cutting and crimping and punching tools
 - 27111600 - Forming tools
 - 27111700 - Wrenches and drivers
 - 27111800 - Measuring and layout tools
 - 27111900 - Rough and finishing tools
 - 27112000 - Agriculture, forestry and garden handtools
 - 27112001 - Machetes
 - 27112002 - Spades
 - 27112003 - Rakes
 - 27112004 - Shovels
 - 27112005 - Axes
 - 27112006 - Scythes
 - 27112007 - Secateurs or pruning shears
 - 27112008 - Hoes
 - 27112009 - Scrapers
 - 27112010 - Garden forks
 - 27112011 - Tool handles

Case Study 2 Discussion Points

Answers provided on page 20

Question 1 – Which subscribers would be notified if Tabita chooses the tier 1 commodity code tools and general machinery (27000000) as the main commodity code on her solicitation?

Question 2 – Which subscribers would be notified if Tabita chooses the tier 2 commodity code hand tools (27110000) as the main commodity code on her solicitation?

Question 3 – Which subscribers would be notified if Tabita chooses the tier 3 commodity code agriculture, forestry and garden hand tools (27112000) as the main commodity code on her solicitation?

Question 4 - Which subscribers would be notified if Tabita chooses the specific tier 4 commodity code spades (27112002) as the main commodity code, and then shovels (27112004), axes (27112005), and hoes (27112008) as other commodity codes on her solicitation?

Question 5 – Which would be the best code to select as the main commodity for her procurement and why?

Case Study 3

Kamaljit is currently managing a procurement for the City of Long Bay and has been tasked with assisting a small community gain access to food related health services via a 3rd party provider. She is putting out a request for proposals to locate a supplier who can provide a variety of food related services and is confident that she will be able to find the best suited supplier if she ensures that her notifications reach those who are qualified to provide the services she is seeking. Kamaljit needs to find the best suited supplier who can provide food and nutrition services specifically and the community requires assistance with the following: food hygiene control, food contamination control, food preparation counselling, food research services, food analysis services and food legislation assistance. She doesn't really need studies on foods, or food habits, and doesn't need quality standards services either, but she wouldn't be mad if the successful supplier did have those skills. She is looking at the commodity selector and trying to decide which would be the best commodity code to select as the main commodity code for the sourcing project in BC Bid?

- 85000000 - Healthcare Services
 - 85100000 - Comprehensive health services
 - 85110000 - Disease prevention and control
 - 85120000 - Medical practice
 - 85130000 - Medical science research and experimentation
 - 85140000 - Alternative and holistic medicine
 - 85150000 - Food and nutrition services
 - 85151500 - Food technology
 - 85151501 - Food hygiene control services
 - 85151502 - Food contamination control services
 - 85151503 - Food preservation management or control services
 - 85151504 - Food preparation counseling or control services
 - 85151505 - Food research services
 - 85151506 - Studies on foods or food habits
 - 85151507 - Food additive or quality standards services
 - 85151508 - Food analysis services
 - 85151509 - Food legislation services
 - 85151600 - Nutrition issues
 - 85151700 - Food policy planning and aid

Case Study 3 Discussion Points

[Answers provided on page 22](#)

Question 1 – Which would be the best commodity code for Kamaljit to select as the main commodity code for this procurement and why?

Question 2 – What would be the result of Kamaljit selecting a more generalized commodity code such as a tier 2 for this solicitation?

Question 3 – What would happen if Kamaljit selected the tier 3 code food technology (85151500) as the main commodity code, but then also included the specific tier 4 codes she’s looking for in the other commodities field on the sourcing project as well?

Case Study 4

Isagani works for the Ministry of Business and is looking at bringing in some management advisory services for his branch to assist with some skill building and development for his team. He has the go ahead from his manager and has the project underway. He has created his scope for the project and is looking for services to assist with project administration, project monitoring and evaluation, project impact assessments, and economic or financial evaluation. He knows that he does not need help with feasibility studies, regional studies or temporary drafting services, and doesn’t want to notify those suppliers. He already has colleagues signed up to attend the coming classes, and everyone is eager to grow their skillset, but first he must source a supplier who can provide these guiding services. He has created a sourcing project in BC Bid and is ready to select the main commodity code as well as any other commodity codes for this solicitation to ensure it goes to supplier who can potentially provide these services. He is torn between selecting the tier 3 code project management, and the specific tier 4 codes that match the services he is looking to procure. He comes to you to ask your advice.

- 80000000 - Management and Business Professionals and Administrative Services
 - 80100000 - Management advisory services
 - 80101500 - Business and corporate management consultation services
 - 80101600 - Project management
 - 80101601 - Feasibility studies or screening of project ideas
 - 80101602 - Regional or location studies for projects
 - 80101603 - Economic or financial evaluation of projects
 - 80101604 - Project administration or planning
 - 80101605 - Temporary drafting service
 - 80101606 - Project monitoring and evaluation
 - 80101607 - Project impact assessment

Case Study 4 Discussion Points

Answers provided on page 23

Question 1 – What are the pros and cons of selecting the tier 3 commodity code project management (80101600) as the main commodity code for the sourcing project?

Question 2 – What are the pros and cons of selecting the specific tier 4 commodity codes that match the exact services that Isagani is looking for (ex: project administration or planning (80101604) etc.)?

Question 3 – Given what you’ve learned about commodity codes and their use, would you advise Isagani to go with the specific tier 4 codes or the tier 3 code for his sourcing project?

Case Study Answer Key

Answers to Case Study 1

Question 1

The tier 2 commodity code janitorial equipment (47120000) is not the best commodity code to choose for this solicitation. Jakob choosing a code at the tier 2 level is likely too broad for this solicitation and doesn’t get specific enough to capture only the core supplier pool that he is looking to reach.

Question 2

In choosing the tier 2 code janitorial equipment (47120000) as the main commodity code for his solicitation, Jakob will potentially notify a large pool of suppliers. Once the solicitation is posted in BC Bid, all the suppliers subscribed to all the tier 3 codes that fall under janitorial equipment will be notified. As well, all the suppliers subscribed to each of the tier 4 codes under each of the tier 3 codes will be notified. Finally, any suppliers subscribed to the tier 1 code that janitorial equipment falls under will also be notified.

As an example, using the tier 2 code janitorial equipment would notify anyone subscribed to the tier 3 codes: cleaning and janitorial carts and accessories, floor machines and accessories, waste containers and accessories, cleaning equipment, and cleaning equipment accessories. It would also notify anyone subscribed to any tier 4 codes under the ones just listed of which there are 50. Some of those who would be notified include vacuum cleaners, chemotherapy waste containers, drain and toilet plungers, pool cleaners, and degreasing pans.

Question 3

Yes, in this instance it would be better for Jakob to use the tier 3 code cleaning equipment (47121800) as the main commodity code on his solicitation. This will ensure that those suppliers who offer cleaning pails or buckets, a mop wringer and cleaning dusters are notified, but also doesn't eliminate other suppliers who might offer these products and more. In this instance each of the tier 4 subscribers below cleaning equipment will be notified, but it eliminates notifying those other others subscribed to the tier 3 codes cleaning and janitorial carts and accessories, floor machines and accessories, waste containers and accessories, and cleaning equipment accessories who don't have anything to do with what Jakob is looking for.

Answers to Case Study 2

Question 1

If Tabita selects the tier 1 code tools and general machinery (27000000) as the main commodity code for her sourcing project she will potentially notify those subscribers of 1000+ codes that fall at the tiers 2, 3 and 4 level below this tier 1

code. This is so broad that it would message every single person subscribed to any code in the tools and general machinery code tree.

Question 2

If Tabita selects the tier 2 code hand tools (27110000) as the main commodity code for her sourcing project, she will still potentially notify those who subscribers of 500+ codes that fall within that tier 2 code. The tier 2 level is still very broad, with the hand tool code comprising many tiers 3 and 4 codes beneath it who would all also be notified.

Question 3

If Tabita selects the tier 3 code agriculture, forestry and garden hand tools (27112000) as the main commodity code for her sourcing project, she has now narrowed the field significantly. In this case she will notify those subscribed to the 47 tier 4 codes that sit beneath that tier 3 code but has eliminated all other tier 2 and 3 code subscribers from being notified (those subscribed to the parent codes hand tools (tier1), and tools and general machinery (tier 2) will still be notified).

Question 4

If Tabita selects the tier 4 code spades (27112002) as the main commodity code, and then shovels (27112004), axes (27112005), and hoes (27112008) as other commodity codes for her sourcing project, this will only notify subscribers who are subscribed to those specific tier 4 codes selected. Those subscribed to the parent codes agriculture, forestry and garden handtools (tier 3), hand tools (tier 2), and tools and general machinery (tier 1) would also be notified, for a total of 7 code subscribers being notified in this instance.

Question 5

Tabita sees some of the tools she needs under the list of tier 4 codes. Ultimately however, she wants to narrow her scope, but not miss out on suppliers who could provide the other tools she needs, so the tier 3 code of agriculture, forestry and garden handtools would be the best choice for her. Selecting this, she would notify enough suppliers that she would likely get respondents who can provide all the

tools she needs, but she avoids notifying 500+ codes by labelling with a tier 2 code, and 1000+ codes by labelling with a tier 1 code.

Answers to Case Study 3

Question 1

The best commodity code for Kamaljit to select for her sourcing project in this case is the tier 3 commodity code food technology (85151500). This way, she would notify suppliers who are subscribed to all the tier 4 codes for the services she needs specifically but would also capture other suppliers who offer more services but can still satisfy her requirements. She gets the best potential pool of bidders by selecting this code but avoids sending notifications to other suppliers who offer completely different services.

Question 2

Kamaljit is looking for food and nutrition services, and so therefore she may be tempted to select the tier 2 code food and nutrition services (85150000) as it matches exactly what she needs. However, in doing so she would also notify all the tier 3 and tier 4 code subscribers below. This includes those subscribed to nutrition issues, diet control, breast feeding policy, food policy planning and aid, national food intervention policy, and assessment of emergency food requirements (to name a few) and none of which are matching the services she needs.

Question 3

If Kamaljit selected the tier 3 code food technology (85151500) as her main commodity code, then anyone subscribed to that tier 3 code, as well as any of the tier 4 codes that fall beneath it would be notified. If she then goes on to add some specific tier 4 codes beneath food technology as other commodity codes on the sourcing project, those subscribers are already notified by including food technology as the main code, so it would not notify anyone else that wasn't already included. The only reason she may do this is to visually include the specific tier 4 codes that she is most interested in on the sourcing project, however it is not required to do this.

Answers to Case Study 4

Question 1

If Isagani selects the tier 3 commodity code project management (80101600) as the main commodity code for his sourcing project, the benefit is that it will be send to subscribers of that code as well as subscribers of all the tier 4 codes below it. This means that with everyone notified, he has a chance to catch suppliers who may offer the services he needs and more. The con in this instance is that he knows he doesn't want to notify suppliers who offer feasibility studies, regional studies or temporary drafting services and in picking the tier 3 code, these suppliers would be notified.

Question 2

If Isagani selects tier 4 codes that match the specific services he is looking for as the main, and other commodity codes on the sourcing project, then only those suppliers who are subscribed to the codes of project administration, project monitoring and evaluation, project impact assessments, and economic or financial evaluation would be notified (and then the tiers 3, 2 and 1 header codes as well, if any). The pro of this is he gets notifications to subscribers who match exactly what he is looking for. The con in this instance is there may be some suppliers who offer those services, but haven't subscribed to all those codes, and in that case, they may be missed.

Question 3

Given the specific and narrow focus of Isagani's requirements for the procurement and the specific services he needs, in this case choose only those tier 4 codes as the main and other commodity codes on the sourcing project is the best course of action. If he were to choose the tier 3 code of project management he may catch more suppliers, but he would notify those who only offer services he doesn't need and he knows he doesn't want to include those individuals. Getting specific with the tier 4 codes eliminates that risk, and the risk of missing someone who offers services he needs but didn't subscribe to all those codes is relatively low.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

What happened to the GSIN commodity codes?

The Government of Canada recently adopted the [UNSPSC coding structure](#), and no longer maintains the GSIN classification system. Other Canadian jurisdictions, e.g., Province of Ontario, already use the UNSPSC structure. It is one of the more widely used product and service categorization systems.

Using a standardized and modern procurement taxonomy will:

- Allow for consistent recording and reporting of procurement information
- Help to meet reporting obligations established through policy and trade agreements
- Provide a navigation method for both buyers and suppliers and improve search functions

Is there a list of UNSPSC commodity codes?

We have an [Excel list of the 100,000+ UNSPSC commodity codes](#) on our BC Procurement Resources website. It can be downloaded from the resources section of the 'BC Bid user guides' page.

What if a suitable commodity code cannot be found? Can one be added to the system?

BC Bid uses UNSPSC commodity codes, which are governed by Trade Agreements under the UN Development Programme (UNDP). These codes are periodically updated and loaded in bulk into BC Bid. The BC Bid team coordinates these updates with the Corporate Financial System (CFS) to ensure our systems match. Unfortunately, BC Bid cannot create commodity codes independently.

We recommend checking similar historical opportunities to see what commodity codes were used for those, which could help you find a suitable code.

If the UNSPSC codeset does not contain the good or service that you supply, please email [BC Bid Support](#) with the following information.

- Segment: <The Segment the code should fall under>

- Family: <The Family the code should fall under>
- Class: <The Class the code should fall under>
- Commodity: <Name of the commodity you would like to add>
- Definition: <Definition of the commodity>
- Business Case: <Describe why a new code is required/why an existing code can't be used>

The support team will submit your request to UNSPSC for review (the UNSPSC codeset is updated annually).

Are there any wildcard keys in the commodity code search within BC Bid?

BC Bid's commodity code search does not support wildcard keys like "?" or "#." The system, however, is designed to accommodate minor spelling errors and still bring up related commodity codes.

Resources

- [Commodity Code Selection Video for Buyers](#)
- [Commodity Code Subscription Video for Suppliers](#)
- [UNSPSC Commodity Code Information](#)
- [UNSPSC Commodity Code List](#)
- [Online UNSPCS Commodity Code Search Tool](#)
- [Mapping GSIN Commodity Codes to UNSPSC Commodity Codes](#)