



GUIDANCE FOR THE RELEASE OF INFORMATION OR DOCUMENTS RELATED TO COMPETITIVE PROCUREMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The province of B.C. is committed to the principles of fair, open, transparent, and non-discriminatory procurement processes. The following tables describe when commonly requested information and documents can be routinely released to a participant (sometimes also called bidder, proponent, vendor, or respondent) during the course of a competitive procurement process run by the Province, and conversely when a formal Freedom of Information (FOI) request to [Information Access Operations](#) is required.

This document:

- covers procurement processes across a wide range of goods, services, and industries. Some sectors, mainly construction, have industry-specific requirements or best practices which should be followed whenever possible, but which are not applicable to all procurement types.
- applies only to participants involved in a particular procurement process. For non-participants, publicly available information is typically available through BC Bid. Non-participants who seek additional information not available on BC Bid may need to make a formal request under the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FOIPPA).
- is specific to the competitive procurement process only and does not include any information or documentation created after any contract originated by the procurement is signed.
- covers standard Provincial solicitation methods such as RFQs, RFPs, ITTs and ITQs but does not cover specialized, negotiated solicitation methods.
- is not intended to be and should not be construed to be contrary to any provisions of Core Policy and Procedures Manual (CPPM), or any applicable legislation such as FOIPPA.

References to CPPM apply to ministries, while other public sector organizations are encouraged to follow its guidance.

NOTE: “Routinely Released” means that the information and/or documents can be provided upon request, within any limitations noted. Information and documents that are not routinely released may still be disclosed but would require a formal FOI request to Information Access Operations, who would determine what, if any, of the request is releasable. If in doubt, contact Information Access Operations for assistance.

A. Release of Information (Either: verbally or via email, during de-briefing or in response to inquiry; or, in the context of a release of a document)

Information	Timeframe	Routinely Released?	Notes
1. Ministry cost estimate	At any time	No	
2. Budget	At any time	Depends	<p>For procurements involving general goods or services, disclosure of the budget may not be appropriate.</p> <p>In the construction industry, it is recommended for solicitation documents to include a project budget, order of magnitude, a construction budget, affordability ceiling, or a range of expected costs. The inclusion of this information helps to attract capable and interested participants as cost estimates help to define the scope.</p> <p>The routine release of this information is contextual and is at the discretion of the procuring entity.</p>
3. Evaluation criteria and weightings	At time of posting	Yes	Disclosure of evaluation criteria and weightings is required under section 37 (b) of CPPM Chapter 6. Participants must be evaluated based on the criteria described in the solicitation document (see section 41 of CPPM Chapter 6).
4. Names of participants that responded to a procurement that has been posted to BC Bid	Prior to closing	Depends	<p>Disclosure of participant names is not always appropriate in all types of procurements. In addition, FOIPPA requires written consent from the participant if they are acting as an individual rather than an organization.</p> <p>However, some procurements, mainly in the construction industry, can be structured in a way:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that a list of “planholders” or a “bidders list” may be released, although participants, should be aware of this process. • that firm/company attendees' names at a site visit or participants' meetings may be released (i.e., because it is disclosed in the solicitation, noting that written consent is required only for releasing individual's names). Only those on the list or who attend the meeting would be included, which may or may not include potential sub-contractors.
	After contract is signed	Yes	Written consent is required only for individual's names, not for organization names.

Information	Timeframe	Routinely Released?	Notes
5. Names of participants that responded to a procurement in the context of a procurement that has not been posted to BC Bid	Included in or provided after releasing procurement documentation.	Depends	<p>Disclosure of participant names is not always appropriate in all types of procurements. In addition, FOIPPA requires written consent from the participant if they are acting as an individual rather than an organization.</p> <p>However, some procurements, mainly in the construction industry, can be structured in a way:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that a list of “planholders” or a “bidders list” may be released, although participants, should be aware of this process. • that firm/company names at a site visit or participants’ meetings may be released (i.e., because it is disclosed in the solicitation, noting that written consent is only required for releasing individual’s names). Only those on the list or who attend the meeting would be included, which may or may not include potential sub-contractors.
	After contract is signed	Yes	Written consent is required only for individual’s names, not for organization names.
6. List of pre-qualified suppliers/vendors from a multi-use RFQ (MURFQ)	Open and on-going	Depends	The list of pre-qualified participants is released as part of the qualification process and posted on BC Bid. In some cases, written consent from the pre-qualified participant may be needed if they are named as an individual rather than an organization.
7. List of pre-qualified suppliers/vendors from a single-use RFQ (SURFQ)	After the request for qualifications	Depends	The list of pre-qualified participants is released as part of the qualification process and posted on BC Bid. In some cases, written consent from the pre-qualified participant may be needed if they are named as an individual rather than an organization.
8. Questions received from participants	Prior to closing	Yes	Prior to closing, questions submitted in writing to the official contact for the procurement (subject to the particular enquiries process set out in the procurement’s process rules), and the answers to those questions by the official contact, should be posted on BC Bid or sent to all participants.
9. Confirmation that submissions met all mandatory requirements	After closing	Yes	Numbers of submissions that met and did not meet only; do not disclose the names of any participants, merely the number of participants that did or did not meet mandatories.

Information	Timeframe	Routinely Released?	Notes
10. Name of successful participant	After contract is signed	Yes	This information should be included in the announcement to unsuccessful participants.
11. Names of evaluators	Before evaluations are completed	No	
	After evaluations are completed	Yes	Once this information can have no influence on an award, it can be released if requested.
12. Overall score: successful submission	After evaluations	Yes	The overall score that the successful participant received from evaluators can be disclosed to other participants if requested.
13. Overall price: all submissions	After closing	Depends	<p>Best practice is that unverified bids should be posted within 24 hours of public opening.</p> <p>For construction procurements the timely posting of unverified bids is important to enable participants to allocate resources to other solicitations if they are not the successful participant.</p> <p>Aggregate pricing only, and participants should be aware of this process (e.g., public openings, unverified bid results).</p>
14. Overall price: successful submission	After contract is signed	Yes	No unit prices; aggregate pricing only.
15. Unit / breakdown price: all submissions	After closing	No	
16. Ranking of evaluation of participant's own submission	After evaluation	Yes	A participant should be promptly informed in writing of its own ranking once the evaluation phase is complete.
17. Summary of evaluation of participant's own submission	After contract is signed	Yes	Summary information can be provided as part of the oral debrief process to that participant and should include all scores achieved and the weightings relative to the scores related to the participant's own submission evaluation and how the participant might improve in the future.
18. Ranked order: participant's own submission evaluation	After evaluations	Yes	To that participant. For further clarity, the participant will be informed of its own ranking among evaluated submissions.

Information	Timeframe	Routinely Released?	Notes
19. Scores or ranked order: other participants	After evaluations	Depends	Ranked order should be released, but ministries can use their discretion to release actual scores of all submissions when someone other than the participant themselves request this information.
20. Negotiation information: outside of the parties involved	At any time	No	
21. Overall value of contract	After contract is signed	Yes	Public disclosure of the total overall value of the contract is a requirement under trade agreements and Core Policy.
22. Contract start and end date	After contract is signed	Yes	The dates that set out the term of the contract.
23. Sub-contractors named in the contract	After contract is signed	Yes	Only applicable in instances where sub-contractors are specifically named in the contract between the government and the prime contractor, such as the result of a construction procurement .
24. Name(s) of contractor employees	After contract is signed	Depends	Usually, this information is not routinely released. However, if the solicitation process included naming key individual(s), these names can be provided if any of the solicitation documents stated that they would be released or written consent from the named individual(s) has been obtained.
25. Security in place in lieu of performance holdback	After contract is signed	No	
26. Value of performance or bid bonds	After contract is signed	Depends	Aggregate amounts only can be provided if the Province holds the bond. If the bonds are between third parties (e.g., P3 private sector financed projects may include third party bonding) where the Province is not involved, this information is not routinely released.

B: Release of Documents

This section relates to the release of *documents*.

If a document is requested and it is not routinely released, staff are to ask the person making the request whether they are submitting the request as a formal written FOI request. If the answer is yes, the matter must be referred to a manager, who must advise the Intake office of Information Access Operations as quickly as possible.

Documents	Timeframe	Routinely Released	Notes
1. Requisition	At any time	No	
2. Procurement documents, (e.g., Request for Proposal, ITQ, and any documents referenced in the solicitation documents)	Prior to issuance or posting on BC Bid	No	To ensure the fairness of the process, any individual or entity that has access to the solicitation document prior to its issuance or posting on BC Bid should be excluded from participating or having an affiliation with a participant. All participants must have access to the solicitation documents at the same time to ensure no unfair advantage (see CPPM 6.1 regarding procurement principles).
	After issuance or posting on BC Bid	Depends	Generally, procurement solicitation documents are considered public. However, some solicitations may contain confidential documents (e.g. floorplans, internal reports) that participants are required to access in a controlled manner subject to confidentiality requirements. Such confidential information should only be provided in the manner set out in the procurement solicitation documents.
3. Formal draft of procurement document posted to BC Bid or otherwise provided to all participants for comment	After posting	Yes	
4. Evaluation handbook for scored processes	Prior to closing	No	Solicitation document should include benchmarks (basic requirements for a ‘meets requirements’ score) and a high-level overview of how submissions will be evaluated, but details on evaluation criteria need to be withheld to avoid participants copying and pasting into submissions.
	After closing	Depends	Handbook template may be released if requested ONLY if it is generic OR if none of it can apply to future procurements. If it contains details that may be reused in the future, it requires a formal request to be considered for release.
5. Participant’s Meeting: List of participants	After meeting is held	Yes	Procurement documents should clearly state that this list will be disclosed, and a sign-in sheet should be used that states “Signing this form confirms your permission to disclose your name as an attendee at this meeting.”

Documents	Timeframe	Routinely Released	Notes
6. Participant's meeting: Minutes or Transcript	After meeting is held	Yes	Effort should be made to ensure minutes are recorded in such a way that specific statements are not being directly attributed to specific meeting participants.
7. Completed evaluation handbook	After evaluations	No	
8. Participants' correspondence and Province's responses	After closing	No	Requests for correspondence that occurs after the close of submissions should be routed through the formal FOI process. Correspondence prior to closing is generally either publicly posted with responses or summarized or reformulated and posted with responses (unless it relates to questions around potential conflict of interest, etc.). However, requests for correspondence with the Province should not generally occur after the close of submissions and should not be responded to by the Province in a general scenario.
9. List of subcontractors submitted with an unsuccessful proposal or response	After closing	Depends	Disclose if participants are aware of this process (i.e., because it a common construction procurement practice or is disclosed in the solicitation), noting that written consent is required from those sub-contractors who are identified as individuals rather than organizations. Otherwise, this information is not released.
10. Evaluation documentation: participant's own submission	After closing	Yes	Summarized documentation of participant's own submission can be provided as part of debrief process to that participant, which should include all scores achieved and brief notes specific to the reasons for the scores. Verbal discussion of scoring can include information related to submission evaluation.
11 Evaluation documentation: another participant's submission	After closing	No	Withhold any documentation related to the evaluation of other submissions.

12. Evaluation team notes	After closing	No	
13. Summary of all evaluations <i>[evaluation documents & project briefing note]</i>	After closing	No	Withhold any documentation related to the evaluation of other submissions.
14. Another participant's submission documents	After closing	No	
15. Internal documentation regarding recommendation to award (e.g., Briefing Note)	After closing	No	
16. Contract award letter	After announcements	Yes	No unit prices; aggregate pricing only.
17. Final Contract	After executing	No	Requests for the final contract should be referred to the FOI process.