

MOD: PROPOSED NEW GROUNDS MAINTENANCE CONTRACT

Contractor Guidance Notes

The proposed new contract for the MOD site is a “performance output” type of contract, where standards and suitability for purpose is specified rather than the “input of work” being detailed i.e. number of cuts, frequency of operations etc.

This performance contract gives responsibility to the contractor for operational matters and planning. The requirement for detailed supervision is reduced as the performance is judged by definable standards by the client.

This contract contains a lump sum performance element for the day to day maintenance operations supported by the PSA Schedule of Rates for Landscape Management (Third Edition 2005) for extra work over and above the lump sum element.

The site has been classified and zoned according to the overall standard of maintenance required in each zone, these are as follows :-

Prestige,
Amenity/Campus
Parkland/Rural

These classifications cover all items of work within the zone to ensure the whole location meets client requirements and covers all facilities within the zone. The first measure of contractor performance covers the overall presentation of the zoned areas.

Within these zone classifications various operations are required including grass cutting, shrub bed maintenance, site cleansing etc. The “performance output” specification for these operations is also given i.e. “Grass shall be cut using a cylinder-mowing machine fitted with 5-6 cutting blades”. “The frequency of cutting shall be regulated so that the height of grass shall not exceed 45mm at any time” “Machines shall be adjusted to a 20mm height of cut”. “The finish shall be even, regular and free from ribbing”; “maintain shrub bed in a weed free condition” “prune shrubs according to species” etc; this provides the standard of finish required for the individual facilities within the overall site zone classification and provides a standard that ensures all facilities are maintained to the correct standard.

In addition to the output standards specified for the various facilities i.e. grass, shrub beds, etc; there are requirements for additional cultural operations to be carried out to ensure the health and vigour of the sward/plants. The specification for these cultural requirements is also performance based with such statements as “cultural operations include mowing, scarification, aeration, top dressing etc” and has been included to ensure that contractors fully understand the scope of the item and that more than just “grass cutting” “shrub bed weeding” is required. These statements are inclusive but not limited to, and may require “additional work” than what is detailed to achieve “healthy plants/sward” any “additional work” would be carried out within the contracted price.

To ensure client expectations and standards for sports facilities etc are achieved, the contract requires operations/facilities that are “fit and suitable for the purpose”. This statement is the most robust contractual requirement and measure of performance that will be applied to ensure the success of the contract.

In addition, and to provide proactive maintenance, every 6 months, contractors are required to review current management plans and inspect facilities, or, have sports facilities inspected by an approved agronomist, and submit reports to the client. These reports are also to be reviewed by the contractor and method statements and work plans prepared.

These method statements and work plans will be thoroughly assessed by the client to ensure the contractor is achieving the full scope of the contract and that standards are maintained. The contractor will be advised if procedures need developing and strengthening; the submission of work plans and method statements does not relieve the contractor of his responsibilities of ensuring that the site is “fit and suitable”. The method statements and work plans submitted provide management tools for the supervisor in assessing and monitoring the contractors’ performance.

In addition to the above monitoring, regular monthly progress meetings are to be held. Standards, method statements and work programs will be reviewed and agreed as necessary at these meetings. Minutes will be taken and circulated to record the level of service and any failures etc.

In the event of a contractor failing to provide adequate service, verifiable minutes will provide evidence of failure for rectification processes. The submission of a simple site condition inspection report for record purposes and discussion at the progress meetings will also ensure standards are maintained.

The new contract also specifies the minimum qualifications for staff and that at least one qualified/experienced gardener and one qualified/experienced grounds man is employed full time on the prestige facilities.

With the provision of a robust performance specification, coupled with proactive management and supervision both by the client and contractor, the proposed new contract will provide excellent standards as would be expected at the renowned MOD site. Commendation for high standards of grounds maintenance will ensure the future success for both client and contractor.