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# New report calls for greater flexibility within PFI projects

Thursday June 28th, 2012

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The Association for Consultancy and Engineering (ACE) has called for greater flexibility and the formation of a new central team to improve procurement of government infrastructure projects.

The proposed measures would apply to the new Public Private Finance Models replacing PFI, and help to strengthen expertise and eliminate key problems experienced in some past PFI projects as government seeks to bring down the cost of new infrastructure.

In a new paper on project procurement, ACE has proposed the creation of a Risk and Procurement Management Team (RPMT), within the Efficiency Reform Group. This team would work with HM Treasury to troubleshoot and advise on projects across departments to help resolve problems where they occur. It would be guided by a new Procurement Efficiency Mechanism (PEM), triggering intervention at key risk points in procurement, such as delays in negotiations or cost increases.

Nelson Ogunshakin OBE, chief executive of ACE, said: "Getting the procurement of projects right is crucial to ensuring value for money for the taxpayer. ACE's Performance of PFI study suggested a link between the procurement experience of different departments and the costs incurred by the taxpayer."

Nelson Ogunshakin OBE said: "The process of procurement must deliver what the public sector demands. However, the low efficiency and high cost of procurement is a significant factor in limiting private investment and driving up costs for industry. By introducing flexibility across a project a greater degree of certainty of return can attract additional bidders."

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