

**SUI SOUTHERN GAS COMPANY LIMITED
PROCUREMENT DEPARTMENT**

BLACKLISTING MECHANISM

1. BACKGROUND

In pursuance of Rule-19 of Public Procurement Rules, 2004 read with Rule-2(f) and the criteria for Blacklisting of Suppliers and Contractors doing business with the SSGCs is reiterated hereafter to eliminate unfair trade practices.

2. SCOPE

The procedure shall be applicable and remain in force, along with any amendments thereto, within Sui Southern Gas Company Limited (“SSGC”) until any clear instructions or guidelines are impacted by the Government through Public Procurement Regulation Authority (PPRA), Pakistan Engineering Council (PEC) , or any other competent forum. The procedure shall also be applicable on the pre-qualified firms. The procedure shall be applicable on any “Person”, which for the purposes of this Mechanism shall inter alia include suppliers, bidders, contractors, consultants, firms, individuals, and organizations transacting business with SSGC. Wherever any provision of this Mechanism shall be in conflict with provisions of any applicable guidelines of donor agencies, or any other applicable Statute / Law or Rule enforced at the time in Pakistan, the provisions of such applicable guidelines, laws, or rules shall prevail. This SOP shall become a part of the future Bidding Documents.

3. DEFINITION OF TERMS

- 3.1 "Appellate Authority" - Authority to Appeal against issuance of Blacklisting Order.
- 3.2 "Appeal" - Right of firm/individual to lodge protest against the issuance of Blacklisting Order.
- 3.3 "Procuring Agency" - Any department/division/factory/project exercising general and/or administrative control over the unit.
- 3.4 "Blacklisting Order" - An administrative penalty disqualifying a firm/individual from participating in procurement for a given period. .
- 3.5 "Suspension" - The administrative penalty imposed for infractions committed during the competitive bidding stage, whereby such firms/individuals are prohibited from further participation in the bidding process of Procuring Agency.
- 3.6 "Contract Implementation" - A process of undertaking a project or contract in accordance with the contract documents.
- 3.7 "Termination of Contract" - Extinction of contract by reason or resolution or rescission under applicable rules/regulations/laws arising from the default of the firms/individuals.
- 3.8 "Delist" - Removal of supplier/contractor from blacklisting.
- 3.9 “PC-Project Committee-” – A three-member committee comprising of User, Audit & Procurement Deptt. to address the issue.
- 3.10 RPC-SSG’s Rights Protection Committee – To examine the justification of PC.

4. REASONS FOR BLACKLISTING

- 4.1 The following shall comprise the broad multilateral guidelines for blacklisting:

- 4.1.1 "Corrupt Practice" means the offering, giving, receiving, or soliciting, directly or indirectly, of anything of value to influence the action of a public official in the procurement process or in contract execution;
 - 4.1.2 "Fraudulent Practice" means a misrepresentation or omission of facts in order to influence a procurement process or the execution of a contract;
 - 4.1.3 "Collusive Practice" means a scheme or arrangement between two or more bidders, with or without the knowledge of the Purchaser, designed to establish bid price at artificial, non-competitive levels, and
 - 4.1.4 "Coercive Practice" means harming or threatening to harm, directly or indirectly, persons or their property to influence their participation in the procurement process or affect the execution of a contract.
- 4.2 In addition to above, blacklisting of firms/individuals may be resorted to when the charges are of serious nature, which include but are not limited to the following:

4.2.1 Competitive Bidding Stage

During the competitive bidding stage, the Procuring Agency shall impose on bidders or prospective bidders the penalty of Suspension from participating in the public bidding process, without prejudice to the imposition of additional administrative sanctions as the internal rules of the agency may provide and/or further criminal prosecution, as provided by applicable laws, for violations committed which include but are not limited to the following:

- i. Submission of eligibility requirements containing false information or falsified documents.
- ii. Submission of bids that contain false information or falsified documents, or the concealment of such information in the bids in order to influence the outcome of eligibility screening or any other stage of the public bidding.
- iii. Submission of unauthorized or fake documents for pre-qualification/ tendering i.e. without specific authorization from the principals/ manufacturers etc.
- iv. Failure of the firm to provide authentic Warranty Undertaking and Performa Invoice of the manufacturers / Principal / Trading house.
- v. Failure of the firm to submit specific authority letter of the Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) for participation in a particular tender;
- vi. Unauthorized use of one's name, or using the name of the name of another for purpose of public bidding.
- vii. Deviations from specifications and terms & conditions of the purchase order/contract.
- viii. Withdrawal of a bid, or refusal to accept an award or refusal to perform the job or enter into contract with the government without justifiable cause, after he had been adjudged as having submitted the Lowest Calculated Responsive Bid or Highest Rated Responsive Bid.
- ix. Refusal or failure to post the required performance security within the prescribed time.
- x. Refusal to clarify or validate in writing its Bid during post qualification within a period of seven (7) working days, or as may be specifically prescribed, from receipt of the request for clarification.
- xi. Any documented unsolicited attempt by a bidder to unduly influence the outcome of the bidding in his favor.
- xii. Any attempt to give illegal gratification to any representative of the purchaser to influence the process of procurement.

In addition to the penalty of suspension, the bid security posted by the concerned bidder or prospective bidder could also be forfeited / encashed.

4.2.2 Purchase Order / Contract Implementation Stage

During the Purchase Order / Contract implementation stage, the procuring entity shall impose on contractors after the termination of the contract the penalty of suspension from participating in the public bidding process, without prejudice to the imposition of additional administrative sanctions as the internal rules of the agency may provide and/or further criminal prosecution, as provided by applicable laws, for violations committed which include but are not limited to the following:

- i. Failure of the contractor, due solely to his fault or negligence, to mobilize and start work or performance within the specified period in the Letter to Proceed.
- ii. Failure by the contractor to fully and faithfully comply with its contractual obligations without valid cause, or failure by the contractor to comply with any written lawful instruction of the Procuring Agency or its representative(s) pursuant to the implementation of the contract. For the procurement of infrastructure projects or consultancy contracts, lawful instructions include but are not limited to the following:
 - a. Employment of competent technical personnel, competent engineers and/or work supervisors;
 - b. Provision of warning signs and barricades in accordance with approved plans and specifications and contract provisions;
 - c. Stockpiling in proper places of all materials and removal from the project site of waste and excess materials, including broken pavement and excavated debris in accordance with approved plans and specifications and contract provisions;
 - d. Deployment of committed equipment, facilities, support staff and manpower; and
 - e. Renewal of the effectivity dates of the performance security after its expiration during the course of contract implementation.
 - f. Non-Performance of the supplier in respect of tender terms & conditions and the delivery / supply of material.
- iii. Assignment and subcontracting of the contract or any part thereof or substitution of key personnel named in the proposal without prior written approval by the Procuring Agency.
- iv. For the procurement of goods, unsatisfactory progress in the delivery of the goods by the manufacturer, supplier or distributor arising from his fault or negligence and/or unsatisfactory or inferior quality of goods, as may be provided in the contract.
- v. For the procurement of consulting services, poor performance by the consultant of his services arising from his fault or negligence, any of the following acts by the consultant shall be construed as poor performance:
 - a. Defective design resulting in substantial corrective works in design and/or construction;
 - b. Failure to deliver critical outputs due to consultant's fault or negligence;
 - c. Specifying materials which are inappropriate, substandard or way above acceptable standards;
 - d. Allowing defective workmanship or works by the contractor being supervised by the consultant; and
 - e. Submitting CV's of key personnel in the prequalifying process or bid documents of professionals that are not in actual employment of the bidder.

- VI. For the procurement of infrastructure projects, poor performance by the contractor or unsatisfactory quality and/or progress of works arising from his fault or negligence.
- vii. Willful or deliberate abandonment or non-performance of the project or contract by the contractor resulting to substantial breach thereof without lawful and/or just cause.

In addition to the penalty of suspension, the performance security posted by the contractor could also be forfeited.

4.2.3 In addition to above, other grounds for blacklisting of firms/individuals include but are not limited to the following:

- i. Obtaining fraudulent payments;
- ii. Obtaining contracts by misleading the purchaser;
- iii. Refusal to pay SSGC dues etc.;
- iv. Failure to fulfill contractual obligations;
- v. Changes in the status of firm's ownership/partnership etc. causing dissolution of the firm which existed at the time of inspection / bidding prior to original registration of the firm;
- vi. Registration of a firm with a new name by the Proprietor or family or a nominee thereof of a firm that has been already blacklisted;
- vii. Consequential operational damages caused to SSGC equipment or infrastructure as a result of equipment or parts thereof supplied on trial basis or due to failure of such equipment;
- viii. Contractors who have negotiated Plea Bargain under the National Accountability Ordinance 1999, or contractors involved with any other criminal proceedings conducted by any investigation agency where default has been proved specifically in relation to supplies made to or contracts concluded with SSGC.
- ix. Involved in litigation or needless petitioning to influence or obstruct the procurement process either on his own behalf or at the behest of any other vested interest;
- x. A firm may be disqualified for a period extendable to two years in case a decision by a court is awarded against the said firm after litigation, or where the firm is involved in litigation at least three times during two financial years, or where a firm has on account of litigation caused substantial financial losses to SSGC;
- xi. Blacklisted by other Federal and Provincial Government Ministries / Divisions / Departments and organizations / autonomous bodies subordinate thereto; and
- xii. Blacklisting in case of Joint Venture firms will also result in termination of the concerned Joint Ventures Partners.

5. SYSTEM OF PENALTIES

For the purpose of uniformity, following system of penalties shall be adopted for procurement of goods, works and services:

- 5.1. For two defaults the firm may be temporary blacklisted for doing business with SSGC for one year; the case to be communicated to PPRA for uploading of temporary blacklisting.
- 5.2. For three defaults the firm may be permanently blacklisted from doing business with SSGC; and their registration may be cancelled. the case to be communicated to PPRA for permanent blacklisting, uploads on PPRA website.

- 5.3. In case of fraud, concealment of fact etc. the firm may be permanently blacklisted for doing business with SSGC and their registration may be cancelled.

6. SUSPENSION AND BLACKLISTING PROCEDURE

1. The supplier or contractor who is to be blacklisted either temporarily or permanent is given adequate opportunity of being heard.
2. The supplier or contractor who is to be blacklisted either temporarily or permanent is called for meeting by providing adequate time, so as to given him adequate opportunity of being heard before taking any action.
3. In case the supplier or contractor does not attend the meeting on the given date and time a final notice is served to him / her to attend the meeting on the revised date and time. Despite the final notice, if the supplier or contractor does not attend the meeting as per schedule, automatically be considered at fault. Action will be taken as per below clauses 5 to 9.
4. A three-member committee is formed comprising of User, Procurement and Internal Audit departments to address the issues in the meeting with the supplier or contractor.
5. In case the supplier or contractor is found at default based on the fact of the case as well as the tender terms and conditions, and do not justify the grounds of his default as per the tender terms and conditions, the approval is sought from the management for their temporary or permeant blacklisting alongwith encashment of bid bond or PBG as the case may be.
6. The decision of the management is communicated to the defaulted supplier or contractor through a formal letter.
7. A copy of the letter of the defaulted supplier / contractor alongwith covering letter with pertinent documents is / also forwarded to the Authority (PPRA) for uploading on PPRA website.
8. The blacklisting information of the supplier / contractor is uploaded on the websites.
9. Any bidder not satisfied with the decision of the procuring agency, may lodge an appeal in the relevant court of jurisdiction.
10. After coming into force the procurement contracts, the dispute between the parties to the contract shall be settled by arbitration.

7. STATUS OF BLACKLISTED FIRM/INDIVIDUAL

Blacklisting of a firm/individual will not affect other ongoing contracts/works/supply orders. However, such blacklisted firm shall stand barred from all future tender processes/participation and Standing Security, if any, could be confiscated until recovery of financial damages ascertained by the authority while issuing Blacklisting Order.

8. DELISTING

A temporary blacklisted firm / individual shall be automatically restored after the period for the penalty has elapsed, unless the procuring agency wants to maintain the blacklisted status of firm / individual due to justifiable reasons with the prior approval of Appellate Authority. In the latter case, the temporary blacklisted firm / individual shall be restored.

9. AMENDMENTS

9.1 In the implementation of Blacklisting Mechanism, the modifications may be introduced thereto through the amendment of its specific provisions as the need arises.

9.2 Any amendment to this Blacklisting Mechanism shall be applicable to tenders advertised for bid after the effectivity of the said amendment.

10. EFFECTIVITY

The Blacklisting Mechanism or any amendments thereof shall take effect immediately and from the date of its issuance. All future tender documents must be governed by these instructions. However, these cannot override the provisions of Public Procurement Rules, 2004.

11. The Steps to be Followed are As Under

The causes and reasons to be taken into consideration for Debarment / Blacklisting of any person are given as under:

1. PRE-AWARD STAGE:

The following shall be considered, inter alia, the events / reasons for initiating proceedings under this Mechanism at the Pre-Award Stage:

- i Indulging in Corrupt: Fraudulent as well as Collusive practices.
- ii Submission of false and spurious documents, making false statements, making frivolous complaints and allegations to gain undue advantage.
- iii Commission of embezzlement, criminal breach of trust, theft, cheating, forgery, bribery, falsification or destruction of records, receiving stolen property, false use of trademark, securing fraudulent registration, giving false evidence, furnishing of false information of serious nature.
- iv Submission of false bid security or infringement of documents to get undue monetary or any other benefit.

- v Breach of confidentiality of evaluation process based on illegal access or in any way to get undue benefit or to provide benefit or to frustrate the bidding/evaluation process. This will also include attempts to sabotage the bidding process directly or indirectly.

2. POST- AWARD STAGE:

The following shall be considered, inter alia, the events / reasons for initiating proceedings under this Mechanism at the Post-Award Stage:-

- i. Extraordinary delay in signing or refusal to accept the Notification of Award and/or the contract without any cogent reason.
- ii. Misconduct, i.e., failure to proceed with the signed contract, withdrawal of commitments, quoting an unreasonably and unfairly low financial offer and subsequently withdrawing such an offer, frustrating the evaluation/bidding process and not responding to written communication in a reasonable time.
- iii. Causes mentioned in Sub-Clauses i, ii and iii above.
- iv. Submission of fake / frivolous or mutilated Performance Guarantee or Advance Payment Guarantee etc.
- v. Non-satisfactory performance during the execution of the contract / purchase order.
- vi. Non-performance or Breach of provisions / clauses of the contract agreements/tender terms.
- vii. Notwithstanding the warranty/defect liability period, any defect in a product, equipment, plant, facility or services rendered that may subsequently surface during field operations within 5 years of its commissioning.
- viii. Failure to honour obligations within warranty period or defect liability period as defined in the contract.

3. OTHER CAUSES :

- i. The person is blacklisted by any Government department in Pakistan, or it is established that the firm is involved in any kind of corruption or corrupt practices anywhere in the world.
- ii. Violations of provisions / instructions set down in the Bidding Documents.
- iii. Any attempt / activity to malign or bring SSGC into disrepute and harm its interest(s).
- iv. Person(s) blacklisted by International Financial Institutions (donor agencies) will be liable to be blacklisted after receipt of confirmation from the donor agencies without any further proceeding.

v. Any other cause deemed just and appropriate by CPPA in the given circumstances.

Note: (1) If above mentioned causes occur either on part of the principal bidder or the local agent, both shall be considered for blacklisting / debarment.

(2) The authorization of the foreign bidder to local agent shall contain his complete particulars including the name of the company, name of the owner, National Tax number (NTN), CNIC (Computerized National Identity Card) No. etc. In case, the said information is found to be missing, even after calling for the same within a reasonable time, the authority letter shall not be accepted.

(3) The Bidding Documents shall be issued against original authority letter or in case of scanned copy, the email of the foreign bidder shall be enclosed. However, at the time of bidding, the original authority letter shall be attached with the bid. In the absence of the same, the bid shall be rejected.

4. FORMULATION of SSGC's Rights Protection Committee: A permanent Committee namely "SSGC's Rights Protection Committee (RPC or Committee)" shall examine the justification of the reasons given by the Project Authority prior to blacklisting.

5. PROCEDURE FOR BLACKLISTING

Upon receipt of or obtaining information and/or knowledge that any person(s) is involved in practices mentioned in hereinabove under the heading of Pre-Award Stage; Post- Award Stage and Other Causes, the concerned Project Authority / formation shall promptly formulate its recommendations and submit through the Managing Director, SSGC to SSGC's RPC / Committee along with its findings, details of charges and documentary evidences to initiate proceedings under this Mechanism.

6. INITIATION OF AN ACTION

(i) Within a period of 15 days after receiving the recommendations of Blacklisting / Debarment from the concerned Project Authority, the Convener of the Committee shall issue a Show Cause Notice ("Notice") thereby informing the Person about the alleged charges and shall provide an opportunity to the defend said charges within a time period of 15 (fifteen) days.

(ii) The person(s) shall be accorded adequate opportunity of hearing in order to defend the charges within the given timelines.

(iii) The Notice to the Person shall be sent at the mailing/postal address as provided under the Contract or any other address provided by way of subsequent written communication by the Person. The non-receipt of the Notice due to incorrect / change in mailing address without any written communication shall not be attributable to SSGC. In case of non-receipt of any reply from the accused person within the formulated time, but not less than the time given in (i) above, the Committee shall have the right to proceed on Ex-parte basis.

7. DECISION

The committee shall hold an independent inquiry/investigation as the case may be, and, which may include site visits and interviews with the parties concerned. The Committee shall complete the entire inquiry/investigation, preferably within a period of 30 days after receipt of response from the person against whom proceedings under this Mechanism has been initiated and shall present the report to the Managing Director, SSGC. If required, the Committee may report the case to an appropriate law enforcement agency depending upon the nature of the case for detailed investigations with the prior approval of Managing Director, SSGC. iii. The person against whom proceedings have been initiated under this Mechanism shall not proceed for arbitration/litigation during the proceedings for blacklisting.

8. COMMUNICATION OF DECISION

After recommendation for temporary & permanent blacklisting by “SSGC’s Rights Protection Committee (RPC)”, the person concerned shall be informed within 10 days of such decision. The decision of the Committee will be notified on SSGC ‘s and PPRA’s websites and shall also be conveyed to Pakistan Engineering Council.

The temporary Blacklisting on the grounds and reasons specified herein above shall be for a reasonable specified period of time and as a general rule of prudence, the period may not exceed three years, except in cases where debarment/blacklisting has been done by any other government department or an International Financial Institution (Donor Agency). In case the person has been blacklisted by the government department or the International Financial

Institution (donor agency), the period of temporary blacklisting/debarment shall be for a maximum period of 3 years or the time period for which the concerned government department/International Financial Institution (Donor Agency) debarred the contractor (whichever is higher). However the permanent blacklisting cannot be revived.

Action after the Persons are placed on Blacklisting List:

- i. The decision of blacklisting will be immediately circulated to all concerned as mentioned herein above under the heading Communication of Decision.
- ii. In case of a contract already awarded to a person which has been blacklisted and termination is either not possible or not feasible, the concerned Project Authority may proceed in this case to complete the contract with the approval of Competent Authority. (iii)The blacklisted person shall stand disqualified from bidding from the date of decision against them. Any pending bids shall also stand rejected. If a contract has already been awarded to person, it shall be voidable at the option of SSGC. (iv) A separate register or data base will be maintained for blacklisted firms indicating reasons and period.

9. Effectiveness

This Mechanism or any amendments thereof shall take effect immediately with the approval from Managing Director of Sui Southern Gas Company Limited.