



Case study: Dorset Police

Dorset Police Adopts EGS Bluelight Marketplace to Streamline Purchase-to-Pay Efficiencies

Police Force Plans to Achieve £350,000 Annual Savings on 25,000 Purchases and Provide a Secure Procure-to-Pay Solution Across the Entire Organisation

Dorset Police spends £30 million on purchases every year, processing 25,000 orders annually. The force wanted to implement an automated purchase-to-pay system that would reduce maverick spending, enable better supplier controls, create greater efficiencies for the procurement process, and facilitate Shared Services and collaborative working initiatives with other police forces.

In particular, Dorset Police wanted the ability to check that funds were available for allocated purchases before orders were completed, which meant implementing a Real-Time Commitment Accounting system that would seamlessly integrate with its existing Oracle-based financial system.

Dorset Police's involvement in this is part of a South West & Wales Regional Force project, lead by Dorset Police's Assistant Chief Officer, John Jones, and working closely with Devon & Cornwall Police.

Real-Time Commitment Accounting

"We have large regional contracts with a number of suppliers, and we also work closely with Dorset County Council," said Shona Campbell, Contracts Officer and Project Manager for Dorset Police. "We wanted to automate our whole purchase-to-pay process through eProcurement and eInvoicing, and in particular wanted to build Real-Time Commitment Accounting into this process.

"We needed a system that would automatically verify that the person ordering goods has the authority for those budget codes, that there are funds allocated to those specific budget codes, and that the companies we are ordering from are in fact active suppliers with us.

Proven track record

"EGS already has a proven track record of delivering eProcurement and eInvoicing solutions, and were able to build an interface into our financial system so that we can seamlessly automate real time budget checks. We also consulted other EGS reference sites who were taking a similar approach to Commitment Accounting. "Overall, we hope the system will deliver a return on investment within six to twelve months, depending on how quickly it becomes fully deployed."

Paperless system

Dorset Police initially implemented the EGS Bluelight Marketplace without the Commitment Accounting feature while the interface was being built, in order to get staff familiar with using the system. Now fully live and operational, Campbell and her team will be deploying the EGS system to the entire force over the coming months, and will be implementing EGS' eInvoicing system later this year to create a paperless system.

"The manual buying process was costing us about £28 per transaction to process, and we process around 25,000 purchase orders per year," added Campbell. "With the EGS Bluelight Marketplace, we expect to reduce this cost by at least 50 per cent, if not more, resulting in non-cashable annual savings of around £350,000 per year. These savings will increase even further once we deploy EGS' eInvoicing system.

Internal stores

"Moving forward, we plan to set up an internal stores for internal customers within the force. The internal stores will be listed as a local supplier within the EGS system and will include an internal catalogue of items, such as uniforms, to make it easier for personnel to order goods. At the moment we spend a considerable amount of time on paper and processes.

"The internal stores will make it easy to see what's available and simplify the ordering process. We will be one of the first police forces in the country to do this, and it will enable officers to process orders at any time, regardless of whether they're working on a day or night shift."

Negotiated contracts

EGS' Bluelight Marketplace specialises in supporting the electronic trading requirements of the Police and Emergency Services. The Bluelight Marketplace provides Police Forces across the country with online access to national and regionally negotiated contracts and to specialised suppliers of goods and services.

Through full and seamless interconnectivity with the IDeA:marketplace and other exchanges, Police Forces also have wide access to general national and regional framework contracts. This means Forces can collaborate nationally, regionally, and with, for example, neighbouring local authorities.

Cultural change

"Implementing eProcurement and technology requires a cultural change that has to be carefully managed," said Campbell. "With EGS, we've found a market-leading system that's both easy to use, easy to manage and provides us with a more controlled, efficient and automated purchase to pay system which reduces cumbersome processes, verifies authorisation, and reduces off contract spending. It also means we can consolidate the number of suppliers and work with other forces to collaborate on best practice."

Summary of Business Benefits:

- Reduction of purchase-to-pay process from £28 to £14 or less, resulting in more than £350,000 non-cashable savings on 25,000 purchase orders processed per year.
- Savings will increase even further once eInvoicing is deployed.
- Return on Investment from e-invoicing of just 6-12 months.
- Significant reduction in off contract spend
- Greater control and consolidation of suppliers
- Full management insight, detailed analysis and control on spend at strategic level
- Strategic foundation for implementing successful change to processes and culture
- Ability to streamline processes with key suppliers and inclusive of suppliers of all sizes
- Facilitates collaboration between other police forces, the council and other authorities, leveraging aggregated purchasing.

About EGS

Founded in 2000, EGS is the UK's leading supplier of eCommerce marketplaces for the public sector. Its shared solutions are used by around 150 buying organisations. EGS operates a series of inter-locking regional and sector-focused eCommerce marketplaces, providing services designed to automate and reduce the costs and time-scales associated with the procurement-to-pay lifecycle. Our services save considerable time and cost for buying organisations and suppliers. EGS has more than 50% market share in the UK, making it the leader in its field and the most successful business of its kind in Europe.

For more details, visit www.egsgroup.com

For more information please contact:

Adrian Gibson by email at adrian.gibson@egsgroup.com or call 020 7539 2828.