



Implementation example for the CFIT Commitment

“We operate behavioural mechanisms for care and ownership and protect products adequately”



Buy better



Use better



Use longer

Case study

Promoting reparability when purchasing and using smartphones

Viken County | Norway
Based on 2021 tender

Impact categories:



Product categories:



For additional information, please contact:

CFIT Secretariat: cfit@rws.nl or consult the tender text in the EU Tenders Electronic Daily platform (265409-2021) and in the Norwegian public procurement information platform (2021/26459).

This case illustrates elements of the following CFIT Commitments:

- We extend the lifespan of our devices, through for example extended service agreements covering longer warranties, repair and replacement, increased timespan for operating systems, data security, or options for upgradability, etc.
- We operate behavioural mechanisms for care and ownership and protect products adequately.
- We aim to ensure that products are fully utilised over their functional life, and maximum value is retained. We routinely assess our IT products for reuse, repair or refurbishment. In doing so, we make sure that products get either reused, repaired, refurbished and ultimately recycled through verifiable partners and supply chains.
- *The purpose of this series of cases is to illustrate what the implementation of commitments of the CFIT framework for circular and fair procurement of ICT can look like. Please note that these case descriptions focus on one element of a tender or process which generally includes many more sustainability requirements.*

Promoting reparability when purchasing and using smartphones

Introduction

In 2021, the procurement department of Viken County launched a call for tenders for the acquisition of smartphones, with associated accessories and services. The intended outcome of this call was a framework contract for the supply of about 16.800 smartphones to Viken County, the high schools under its jurisdiction, and 25 participating municipalities. The contract with the supplier runs for two years, with the option of two one-year extensions and has an estimated budget of 200 million NOK (19,6 million euros) for the whole four-year period.

Viken County required bidders to offer two options: the traditional purchase of smartphones as well as a new rental option. In addition the supplier has to set up an online platform or web shop where employees can select and order devices.

The call for tenders included strict environmental criteria to reduce consumption of energy and resources, and put special emphasis on the durability, reparability, proper care, and longer use of the products. It also aimed to discourage duplication of devices, i.e. users having both a phone for work and one for private use. An important element of this tender is to ensure a longer lifetime for smartphones. This is important, given the fact that the majority of environmental impacts (about 80%) in the life cycle of a phone takes place in the production stage. The aim of including these criteria in the call for tenders was on the one hand to extend the period of use within the organisation, and on the other to incentivize the supplier to sell the phones again as second hand or refurbished products after they were handed in.

With this approach Viken County has implemented CFIT's Use Longer strategy to help optimize product lifetime and reduce the carbon impact of ICT products, which are two of CFIT's central ambitions.

About Viken: The County of Viken includes a total of 51 municipalities and hosts about 1,2 million inhabitants (representing 23% of Norway's population). Viken County's main responsibilities include the management and oversight of the county's roads and public transport, high schools and dental clinics, natural areas as well as culture and cultural heritage.

What was implemented?

To raise awareness and encourage better selection and care by the users, the call for tenders included several criteria geared at promoting product repairs, both for purchased and rented devices. The clauses were:

Requirements for the products and assortment

The supplier must deliver a recommended product range that contains at least 5 smartphone models of each operating system, at least iOS and Android, as well as accessories such as chargers, ear plugs and headsets. [...]

This assortment can be reassessed monthly, or as needed. The framework agreement is not limited to recommended products. The supplier must be able to deliver a wide range of products at all times. [...]

The assortment must be presented in the form of either a document or access to a web platform/ online store where at least the following must be displayed:

- Name of model
- Image of model
- Brief overview of specifications
- Selling price and rental price
- Reparability index

Reparability Index

The information provided for each unit (in the online platform/store) must include the numerical figure for repair friendliness. The value indicates how easy or difficult it is to repair the device and they should be the same as those shown in French online stores.

www.tek.no/nyheter/nyhet/i/nA98yl/europaparlamentet-stemte-for-right-to-repair

www.ifixit.com/News/49158/france-gave-apple-some-reparability-homework-lets-grade-it

Spare parts

For all offered units, the following spare parts must be available:

- Display (front)
- Casing (back)
- Battery

The following should be available in the assortment:

- Charger
- Additional protective glass (extra glass that can be glued to the screen)
- Lid/ Cover/ Wallet

Spare parts shall be available for at least 3 years after the product is delivered. The parts shall be equivalent to original parts and shall not entail a change of warranty.

Repair

For the entire use period of the unit (3 years in the rental option), the service provider shall be able to offer the following:

- Repair of broken display
- Repair of broken backing or casing
- Battery replacement

The repaired unit must be returned with additional protective glass.

Bidders were asked to incorporate the most common repairs in the required price table, so that Viken County can also take the maintenance costs into consideration when evaluating the economic offers.

How was it put in place?

- Viken County started to prepare the call for tenders 12 months in advance to ensure that there was enough time for:
 - 1) internal consultations with high school representatives and the county's municipalities about their needs and interest in participating in the framework contract.
 - 2) a market analysis and consultation to assess current and innovative options for more efficient procurement and management of smartphones within the organisation.
 - 3) meetings with other counties about their solutions and experiences.
- The procurement documents were drafted by a project team with representatives from Viken's procurement and ICT departments and several high schools under the county's jurisdiction.
- In a desire to take steps towards circularity and sustainability through extending product lifetime, it was explored how repairing could be promoted over replacing phones. The procurement department was inspired by a French law[1] that requires, for certain appliances, the calculation and display in all sales points of a product's reparability index[2]. This index aims to inform consumers about the ability to repair a product based on the ease of disassembly, availability and price of spare parts, access to technical documentation and tools for maintenance, as well as other category-specific criteria. As smartphones are for the most part internationally available, Viken County considered this information to be readily available.
- To verify this and other reparability clauses, the procurement department conducted a market consultation to assess suppliers' opinions on the different sustainability requirements, including the feasibility of making the reparability index available on the online platforms/stores that the selected bidder had to set up for the contract. Five suppliers responded and they all reacted negatively to this requirement, arguing that it would be difficult to obtain the information as it was not a Norwegian norm nor an international practice.

- Despite the market reaction, Viken County decided to include the requirement anyway, as the information was readily available to all brand owners due to the French regulation.
- Regarding repairs, Viken added the most common repair (display repair) to the price table that bidders should include in their offers in order to be eligible for this contract. As an internal rule, the county or high school pays one repair per year and employees pay for any additional repairs, unless it is damage or a defect covered by the supplier warranty, in which case the supplier covers the cost. Repair costs are invoiced separately based on the number of repairs conducted.

Who was involved?

- Viken County's procurement department was responsible for the tender preparation, market consultation and managing the contract for the county and the high schools under its jurisdiction.
- The ICT-department was an important internal stakeholder and participated in defining the tender documents as well as implementing and deploying the phones.
- Several high school representatives participated in the team that was writing the tender documents.
- Five companies responded to the market consultation.

What were the outcomes and lessons learned?

Outcomes

- Despite the market consultation, only two companies submitted a tender, which is less than for the previous call for tenders. Viken County attributes this to overall changes and increased complexity of the service requirements (rental, purchase, etc.), rather than the changes specifically related to reparability. The overall changes may have increased the risks for suppliers, especially smaller ones, discouraging them to participate.
- Since the contract entered in effect, the selected bidder has included the French reparability index in their ordering platform without excessive difficulty. Even though it was easy to obtain the reparability index data, it took some time adapt the ordering platform to incorporate the new information.
- At the moment, it is too early to determine the actual sustainability benefits of the reparability requirements introduced. However, Viken County regards these requirements as a stepping-stone towards longer product lifespan and less premature replacements. That applies both not only to the organisations that chose to rent the phones, and to those that buy the phones, as repair services are also available for their staff.

Lessons

- Even though suppliers at first responded negatively to the reparability index requirement, if the information is readily available a contract such as the one from Viken can help to move to needle by making information more readily available and promoting good practices.
- An early start is essential when introducing new ownership arrangements and sustainability criteria. It generates time for the necessary internal and external consultations. This helps to reduce challenges, prepare the market, and allows for adjustments to the tender when required.
- It is important to combine the more 'informational' requirements (such as the reparability index) with other specifications (like the availability of spare parts and repair services) to facilitate and encourage actual repairs by the users.
- Depending on the effect of the reparability criteria, Viken County might set a minimum compulsory reparability index score for phones offered under the framework contract in the next smartphone tender.

References:

[1] Law No. 2020-105 of 10 February 2020 on the fight against waste and the circular economy, Article 16 ([FR](#)).

[2] The reparability index was deployed on 1 January 2021 for five product categories (smartphones, laptops, televisions, lawn mowers, front-loaded washing-machines). Starting 4 November 2022, four new product categories were added (top-loaded washing-machines, dishwashers, vacuum cleaners, high-pressure cleaners).

Disclaimer:

This case has been described to provide inspiration. If, after careful reflection, this example offers added value to your procurement practises, adapt it to fit your organisation and make sure it is compliant with the applicable rules and regulations for procurement.

