

comparable and cost per report begins at N 100. Other private credit agencies are neither better nor cheaper. Other sources of reference include publications such as (1) Major Companies of Nigeria (2) the Times Industrial and Trade Directory (3) the Directory of Incorporated (and Registered) Companies in Nigeria.

Government Purchasing

The public sector (federal and state ministries and public corporations) frequently offers the best opportunities for overseas suppliers.

Many significant purchases are publicly tendered either through tender boards or by the institution itself. The foreign supplier must take the initiative to identify likely needs, as in many cases there is insufficient lead time to prepare a proper bid. An alert representative can usually be aware of up-coming projects well before their formal announcement. British specifications are commonly used, although a strong advance marketing effort can make officials receptive to others.

Most major government purchases are on a supply and install basis, since design is normally undertaken by independent consultants or the government organization itself. The "turnkey" approach has been used but is more frequently viewed with caution.

Maintenance and training for one or more years is commonly required. A spares package of five to 10 per cent is often purchased with the original order. Non-price factors such as delivery standardization, special training packages and reliability can also be important.

The British Crown Agents are still extensively used by state governments and by some public corporations. Of late there has been a trend by Nigerian corporations to specify preferred manufacturers. Canadian suppliers seriously pursuing business through British Crown Agents should ensure that they are registered as suppliers and that they have made themselves known to the client.

The Nigerian National Supply Company (NNSC) was created in 1972 by the Nigerian government to act as a national bulk purchasing organization. While its role has been diminished by increased competition from private commodity traders, it continues to be a major