

Interview to **GENNARO RANIERI**PURCHASING AND CONTRACTING MANAGER
CONI SERVIZI

CONI, ONLINE PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACTING FOR TOTAL TRANSPARENCY



The Purchasing Office of Coni Servizi (part of the operating company of the Italian National Olympic Committee's activities) has been using a digital platform to manage the supplier registry, tenders and contracts for projects including major construction works. This step increases efficiency and traceability, security and transparency in compliance with public administration contracting rules, which are necessary in consideration of Rome's bid to host the 2024 Olympics



Even an organisation of the size and importance of CONI has moved its procurement processes online. A robust technology platform implemented by specialist provider **BravoSolution** has, for the last two years, revolutionised the way the organisation selects its suppliers and purchases what it needs, ensuring transparency and compliance with regulations, two key factors for Coni, not least in view of Rome's bid to host the 2024 Olympics. We talked about specifics with Coni Servizi Purchasing and Contracting Manager Gennaro Ranieri.

How important is procurement for Coni's strategic and business objectives?

The Coni Purchasing Office handles all activities to procure work, goods and services for Coni, Coni Servizi and the Rome 2024 Olympic Bid Committee, guaranteeing cost optimisation, transparency and compliance with contracting rules. At the present time, with Coni in the spotlight as a result of Rome's

bid to host the Olympic Games, fair play and compliance with regulatory standards is more crucial than ever, because any contract management issues could have negative repercussions on the city's candidacy.

It should also be remembered that Coni Servizi is not only a public company in which the Italian Ministry of the Economy holds a stake, and therefore subject to public administration contracting rules, but also one that represents stakeholders including Sports Federations and the A.S. Roma and S.S. Lazio football clubs, which need access to purchasing facilities to provide their own services (such as Olympic Stadium maintenance services, for example). The Purchasing Office must therefore act impeccably in the performance of its duties, both in terms of compliance with regulations and the speed, quality and efficiency of its response to internal customers.

How does technology help you improve the effi-

ciency of purchasing and contracting processes?

For the last two years or so we have been using a purchasing portal to perform activities ranging from supplier selection, negotiation and procurement in all product categories, through to contract management. When we talk about a purchasing portal, we aren't just referring to the tender operation itself, but also to the related upstream and downstream phases. Upstream we use it to manage the supplier registry online, while downstream we use the portal during the contract definition phase. There are multiple benefits including more competition and transparency, as well as faster interaction with suppliers, who need only one interface to obtain all the necessary information about registering and about Coni Servizi tendering activities.

What, in your view, are the basic characteristics required by a purchasing process management platform?

The most important is cyber security, which is a priority requirement to protect the integrity and confidentiality of the data processed. There is no doubt that a certified solution offers better guarantees from this point of view. It is also important for the solution to be modular, so that an integrated approach can be adopted in both pre- and post-negotiation stages. It has to be flexible too, for easy alignment with the frequent regulatory changes affecting public contracting authorities. Ease of use is also essential, with an intuitive interface to facilitate the transition to online management. The solution we are using has all these features.

In its role as a public contracting authority, Coni Servizi is involved in major works associated with sporting events. How can the risks of corruption or criminal infiltration be limited?

The two key factors in preventing the risk of corruption or criminal infiltration, in my opinion, are people and technology. If Rome wins its bid to host the Olympic Games, this is the direction we need to work in: irreproachable staff trained to deal with security issues plus robust, reliable supporting technology. When purchases are managed using a secure platform, a trail is kept of everything and there are no weak links through which infiltrators can penetrate. A technology-based platform also opens up contracting opportunities with public authorities to any interested party with the necessary requirements to offer goods and services,

improving competition and offering more business opportunities to all suppliers.

To sum up, based on your two years' experience in Coni, could you tell us about your most important achievement and about something you haven't done yet but would like to?

What I'm most proud of is having rapidly transitioned the supplier registry-tender-contract cycle to an online process. When I arrived, Coni used a traditional paper-based approach, but now, after our introduction of the eProcurement system and appropriate buyer training, no one can imagine working without it. I am proud to have played a role in such an important change at Coni.

Looking ahead, the project I'm working on now is the implementation of the supplier vendor rating system. This doesn't just assess contract performance, which is vital for cost control, but also performance at "ethical", moral and reputational levels. In my opinion, compliance with the requirements of the former article 38 in the Italian Public Contracting Rules (article 80 in the new Rules) is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for parties that perform work in the public sector.

I believe there is room for more specific and detailed assessment models that can identify - with even greater clarity - the suppliers that are truly able to bring quality, an ethical approach and reliability to public sector spending processes.

