



25 June 2025

Dear Applicant

Our Ref: FOI 801

Your request for information received on 06 June 2025 has been handled under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

Request

Request for information regarding procurement fraud

Our response

PROCUREMENT & INTERNAL FRAUD - INFORMATION AND INTELLIGENCE -
NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE MODEL (NIM) OR OTHER REGULATORY
INTELLIGENCE FRAMEWORK

1. Does the NIHE have a counter fraud team or audit team member trained through and registered with the

- a. Association of Certified Fraud Examiners (ACFE)? - No
- b. Fraud Professional Accreditation Board (CFPAB)? - Yes
- c. Government Counter Fraud Profession (GCFP)? - No
- d. Chartered Institute for Public Finance and Accounting (CIPFA) – Yes

2. How many counter fraud personal operate within the NIHE?

12

3. Have the NIHE an internal policy to consult with external counter-fraud professionals to investigate procurement fraud or internal fraud within NIHE?

Yes

4. Has the NIHE developed counter-fraud investigation models dealing with specific procurement fraud risk or internal fraud risk schemes?

NIHE has developed mechanisms to address fraud risks, including internal audit strategies, National Fraud Initiative (NFI) data matching, Audit and Risk Assurance Committee oversight & Counter Fraud Working Group oversight.

5. Have the NIHE developed counter-fraud investigation methods through a risk management model and if so can a copy be provided?

NIHE has developed counter-fraud investigation methods that incorporate risk management principles, particularly through risk-based audits, NFI data matching, staff training, tenancy/corporate fraud initiatives and quarterly Audit and Risk Assurance Committee & Counter Fraud Working Group briefings.

6. Do the NIHE have a drafted model identifying vulnerabilities of potential procurement fraud and internal fraud risk within its procure-to-pay cycles to NIM standards or other statutory framework and if so can a copy be provided?

NIHE operates internal processes and controls to address procurement fraud and internal fraud risks within its procure-to-pay cycles, aligned with NIAO guidance and public procurement policies.

7. Do the NIHE share detected fraud threats and intelligence through and register or operating strategy with other authorities?

Yes

8. Do the NIHE have in place a tactical response and enforcement plan in place which involves the economic crime unit of the Police Service Northern Ireland?

Yes

9. What assurance measures (if any) does the NIHE have in place that ensure the effective application of information and intelligence relating to procurement fraud or internal fraud risk by its counter fraud or audit staff is being implemented successfully?

The Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) has implemented several assurance measures. These include:

- Internal risk-based audit strategy.
- Internal control systems and audits.
- External audits.
- Dedicated unit for the investigation and management of whistleblowing and fraud allegations.
- Participation in the National Fraud Initiative (NFI).
- Fraud awareness training and reporting mechanisms.

- Audit and Risk Assurance Committee Oversight.
- Procurement Fraud Risk Management.
- Continuous Improvement and Learning (Lessons learned).
- Oversight by external authorities (Department for Communities, Northern Ireland Audit Office).
- Counter Fraud Working Group oversight for the management of Fraud and Money Laundering risks.
- Fraud and Whistleblowing policies and procedures in place.

10. Do the NIHE operate independently under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 and if so under what authority or legislation?

The NIHE does not operate independently under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984. Its authority to address fraud and irregularity stems from housing and public procurement legislation, primarily the Housing Executive Act (Northern Ireland) 1971 and related regulations.

11. Do the NIHE operate independently in accordance with the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 and if so under what authority or legislation?

The Northern Ireland Housing Executive does not operate independently under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000.

PROCUREMENT & INTERNAL FRAUD - CORRUPTION AND COLLUSION.

12. Have procurement fraud or internal fraud investigations been successful in uncovering procurer and bidder collusion through the discovery of inappropriate gifts or monetary kickbacks or has discovery been made through whistleblower disclosure?

No

13. Have procurement fraud or internal fraud investigations been successful in uncovering procurer and bidder collusion through contract specification manipulation and lack of performance auditing by Contract Managers?

.

Yes

14. Have procurement fraud or internal fraud investigations been successful in uncovering procurer and bidder collusion by a contractor been awarded frequent multiple contracts unlawfully?

No

15. Have procurement fraud or internal fraud investigations been successful in uncovering procurer and bidder collusion through the discovery of new supplier unaudited agreements?

No

16. Has procurement fraud or internal fraud investigations been successful in uncovering bid and tender manipulation between contractors for tendered works?

No

17. Have procurement fraud or internal fraud investigations been successful in uncovering duplicated tender submissions involving duplicated rates, duplicated schedules, or duplicated worksheets records?

Yes

18. Have procurement fraud or internal fraud investigations found concealment active by managers leading to abuse of position resulting if fraud?

Yes

19. Has a procurement fraud or internal fraud investigation been successful through any whistleblower disclosure?

Yes

20. Has the NIHE been sued or settled any out of court action for failing to protect whistleblowers under employment rights legalisation or other NI Order?

We can advise that NIHE have one ongoing Tribunal claim alleging a detriment at work as a result of having made alleged protected disclosures; one Tribunal claim involving a number of allegations including alleged detriment relating to alleged protected disclosure has been settled without admission of liability.

PROCUREMENT FRAUD – PRESS AND MEDIA PUBLICATION POLICY

21. Does the NIHE have a drafted policy on publishing fraud investigation prosecutions through the media and can you provide a copy?

No

22. Which media outlets are used to publish fraud prosecutions by the NIHE?

Fraud prosecutions are typically handled in collaboration with the Department for Communities (DfC), Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) and the Public Prosecution Service (PPS). The PPS decides whether to prosecute, and any public disclosure of prosecution outcomes would likely involve coordination with these bodies.

This concludes our response.