GUIDELINES FOR ECONOMIC OPERATORS TO MINIMISE TENDER BIDS' SIZES

These guidelines are intended to assist economic operators on how to minimise document file sizes which they intend to upload as part of their tender submission. It is important to highlight the fact that the total upload limit for the entire bid is 100MB. This upload limit is explicitly marked on the latest version of the tender preparation tool. These brief tips aim to help economic operators to downsize their bid by at least 60% of the original file size.
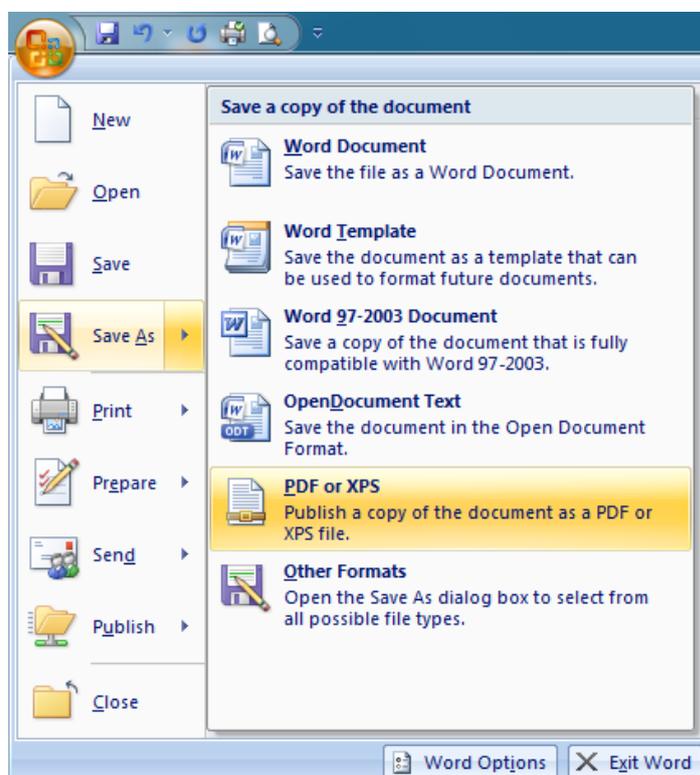
Further information can be obtained from the IT Unit help desk of the Department of Contracts on 21220212.

1. **Working with Microsoft Word files**

   The 'Microsoft Word' is a commonly used software to create particular documentation. In some cases these documents will become so large that they exceed the attachment limit. However, there are specific ways of how to work with Microsoft Word documents to minimise their file size.

   a. Converting a Microsoft Word document to PDF

   A Microsoft Word document can be converted to a PDF file with no changes in the final layout (see picture 1). A major benefit of this conversion is that PDF support high levels of data encryption and security, and provides an easy and secure approach for data transmission and sharing, through commonly used tools such as email. PDF allows file compression too as the PDF can achieve effective reductions between 2:1 and 8:1. This conversion will therefore result in smaller documents (with regards to file size) with no loss in quality.

Picture 1

b. Inserting pictures

When it comes to insert a picture within a Microsoft Word Document, it is important to reduce the file size of the same picture, to the barest possible. In many cases, this could be done without losing any of the important details of the picture.

Using PNGs - A 32bit PNGs can include more than 4billion different colours, while in practice only a few dozens of colours are used. Hence, to minimise the file size, a picture may be saved to 8bit image that can have up to 256 colours. In many cases, this change from 32bit to 8bit will be performed without losing any valuable information.

The above applies to all types of files and not only to PNG files. For instance, instead of uploading a MS Word file, a user can upload its PDF equivalent, or even better a ZIP file containing the PDF of the original MS Word file. Files with reduced file sizes utilise less resources of end-user workstations, consume less bandwidth of internet connections, are quicker to upload, occupy less storage space in servers, etc, and in conclusion are more "user-friendly" for the end-users.
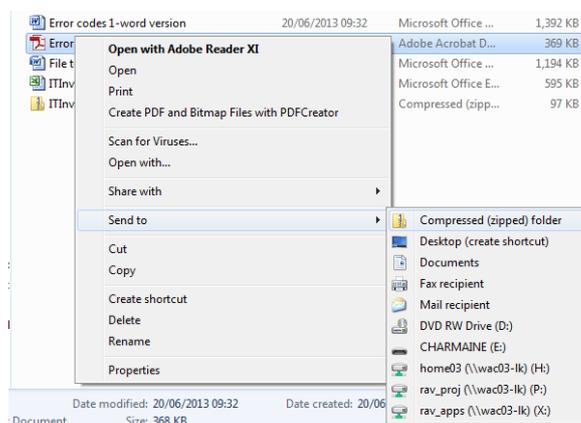
2. **Compressing files**

Economic operators are expected to compress files to make them smaller, as the process may downsize files by 50 to 90 percent. Compressing files will also help economic operators to upload several files as one attachment (when it is necessary).

Compressed files can take half to one-tenth the time that it takes to send files that haven't been compressed.

As shown below, a 595KB file was reduced to 97KB, this means 83.7% reduction from the original file size (Pictures 2). Picture 3 indicates how economic operators can compress a file to a zip file.

Picture 2

Picture 3