

**Question for written answer E-008588/2013
to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)
Rule 117
Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE) and Markus Pieper (PPE)**

Subject: VP/HR - Security contracts concluded by EU agencies in Afghanistan and on the West Bank/Gaza Strip

The firm Page Protection Services (PPS) for several years provided security services for EU delegations in Afghanistan and in the West Bank/Gaza Strip. On 16 April 2013 the contract for Afghanistan was terminated on the grounds of serious shortcomings in the provision of the services involved. The contract for the West Bank/Gaza Strip has been renewed, even though similar serious shortcomings have come to light there.

1. Why was PPS awarded the contract for the provision of security services in crisis areas even though the company did not meet the criteria laid down in the original invitation to tender?
2. Why were the criteria modified after the event to favour PPS (original criteria: turnover of at least EUR 20 million, 400 staff – at the time PPS had eight employees and a turnover of EUR 14 million)?
3. Who ordered the modifications? Was an investigation carried out into possible conflicts of interest?
4. When did OLAF begin its investigation of the contracts? Which locations for the provision of services did that investigation cover? When was the investigation completed?
5. Why was PPS awarded a new contract even though OLAF has been investigating the previous contracts concluded with that firm?
6. In what way is this consistent with the rules in force?
7. How many contracts have been concluded with PPS, and what was the value of those contracts? For what countries were those contracts concluded?
8. How many contracts does PPS currently have, and what is the value of those contracts? For which countries have these contracts been concluded?
9. Has the Commission tried to recover sums paid to or impose penalties on PPS?
10. What shortcomings did the Commission and the EEAS identify in Afghanistan? What shortcomings did they identify in the West Bank/Gaza Strip?
11. What disciplinary measures has the Commission/the EEAS taken against EU staff responsible for awarding the contracts in question?