



## Supply Chain Resilience Workshop

### Speakers

**Olga Bezhentseva,**  
Commercial Advisory Director,  
Forvis Mazars

**Jo Merlini,**  
Deputy Director, Complex Outsourcing  
and Professional Services Markets,  
Sourcing and Suppliers,  
Cabinet Office

**Amelle Mestari,**  
Procurement and CSR Director,  
Equans

**Darya Oglezneva,**  
Forensic and Investigation Services  
Director,  
Forvis Mazars

**Davinia Watson,**  
Procurement Business Partner, Transport  
and Community Services  
Serco

**Claire Wigley-Smith,**  
Supplier Management Operations Manager,  
Serco

**Simon Withington,**  
Technology Director,  
Forvis Mazars

**Anton Yunussov,**  
Technology Director,  
Forvis Mazars

### Facilitator

**Robbie White,**  
Director of Innovation and Digital Skills,  
Forvis Mazars

*The BSA, in collaboration with BSA member Forvis Mazars, held an event to explore the latest trends and best practices in supply chain resilience and management.*

*The event focused on the importance of good supply chain resilience; strategic approaches to supply chain management; methods of building supply chain resilience and mitigating disruptions; the importance of preventing value leakage; and implications of the Procurement Act for supply chain management.*

Peter Campbell, Deputy Chief Executive of the BSA, welcomed attendees to the workshop and set out the importance of supply chain management and resilience to BSA members and, more broadly, those operating under contract. Robbie White, Director of Innovation and Digital Skills at Forvis Mazars, led the session and invited Jo Merlini, Cabinet Office, to deliver his speech.

Jo Merlini began by providing an overview of continuities and forthcoming changes in the Government Commercial Function, including priorities for supply chain management. Jo provided an overview of his role in the Cabinet Office Markets, Sourcing and Suppliers team and the commercial role that the Cabinet Office plays across the public sector.

Jo described how a new National Procurement Policy Statement (NPPS) will be published early next year, setting out the government's mission-led priorities for public procurement. The go-live of the Procurement Act is therefore being delayed until February 2025, to align with this new strategy.

He discussed the importance of supply chain integrity, including prompt payment and risk management; supply chain security, including cyber security and physical logistics security; and driving value from supply chains. Net zero and social value expectations in public sector contracts were also discussed.

Finally, Jo highlighted the importance of strategic partnering to secure successful outcomes for all involved. Participants had the opportunity to ask questions and share any thoughts arising.

Olga and Darya delivered a presentation exploring the importance of supply chain management and business continuity planning. This included discussion on taking a holistic view of procurement and supply chain management, and the opportunities of supply chain management to optimise value. The supply chain audit process could be strengthened by

establishing clear procedures and fostering constructive and collaborative discussions to improve trust between supply chain partners. Automation could also be leveraged to streamline the process.

Anton and Simon discussed methods of mitigating supply chain disruptions, including strengthening cyber security. Topics of discussion included the utilisation of best practice frameworks to instil confidence amongst the supply

chain, and the importance of collaboration in cyber risk management. IT outages are occurring more frequently, and the growing usage of modern technologies means that outages can greatly impact the supply chain. Business recovery planning is therefore important in the event of technology failing.

Davinia and Claire provided a case study perspective of Serco's approach to supply chain resilience. They discussed the importance of ensuring that contracts remain fit for purpose, including functional data protection and cyber security clauses. Managing a healthy relationship between supply chain partners is integral to partnership. Larger organisations can support supply chain partners through several means, including holding joint events and business planning workshops. Payment terms can also be strengthened, and terms and conditions can be shortened to address the administrative burden for smaller organisations.

Amelle provided an insightful overview of Equans' approach to building supply chain resilience. The case study highlighted the proactive measures taken during the Covid-19 pandemic to enhance resilience. Key strategies included strengthening engagement, providing education, monitoring performance, and rewarding best practices. Additionally, SMEs in the supply chain were supported with training and resources that they might not have otherwise accessed. Regular meetings with key supply chain partners and continuous feedback were also emphasized as crucial for strengthening relationships and ensuring mutual success.

Following the presentations, Robbie White facilitated a panel discussion involving all participants.

Attendees discussed the importance of sharing best practice and increasing visibility. There was a discussion on the role of continuous, reciprocal feedback and transparent communication in building supply chain relationships.

Following this, attendees were invited to discuss the additional scope to support strategic primes to manage their supply chain. Suggestions of greater support included addressing risk allocation by the public sector in contracts; assisting with expectations in areas such as net zero; and improved standardisation of reporting requirements across Tier 1 suppliers. It was also raised that Tier 1 suppliers could benefit from having time to foster meaningful relationships with SMEs in the supply chain, and the implications this may have for SMEs' business development prospects.

Finally, attendees were encouraged to reflect on the practical considerations arising from the workshop. Some attendees recognised the importance of supporting supply chain partners through knowledge sharing and collaborative workstreams.

The event concluded with gratitude expressed to all speakers and participants.