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### Briefing of bidders for Met. Office move

14 June 2000

Release number 415

Plans to move The Met. Office took another step forward this week. Representatives from 80 companies interested in undertaking the relocation attended an open day at the weather forecasters' current headquarters in Bracknell, Berkshire.

The plan will relocate the main HQ from ten sites in the Bracknell area to new accommodation on a single site. It is hoped to identify the new site by early next year and complete the move in 2003.

As an executive agency of the Ministry of Defence, operating as a Trading Fund, The Met. Office manages itself as a business. In a recent review of its operations the organisation concluded that new accommodation will be a key factor in its long-term success.

Funding for the move is not dependent on central government or the Private Finance Initiative, so at this stage all options remain open. However, a selection process involving the private sector begins in early July, when up to ten companies will be invited to submit their outline proposals for the relocation.

Steve Noyes, The Met. Office's Director of Relocation, said: "The success of the recent Open Day lays an excellent foundation for the procurement process. Gaining the confidence of the private sector at this stage will ensure we have high-quality proposals from which to short-list, and finally to select the successful contractor over the coming months."

**For further information:**

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