

**OFFICE OF
THE CITY AUDITOR**

REPORT

**PROCUREMENT SYSTEM (ARIBA) -
USER EXPERIENCE AUDIT**

JUNE 9, 2025

Report Summary

BACKGROUND

The City of Edmonton uses SAP Ariba software for its procurement to payment phases including:

- Sourcing goods and services
- Managing contracts
- Buying goods and services
- Invoicing processes

The use of Ariba allows the City and suppliers to do business on a single platform.

Internal Ariba users and external suppliers who conduct business with the City must use Ariba. The City's Corporate Procurement and Supply Services Branch (CPSS) is the centralized supply chain management and tendering authority for the City. CPSS plays a critical role in the internal Ariba users and external suppliers' use of Ariba, including providing training and support when assistance is required.

Currently, there are over 2,000 internal Ariba user accounts and 3,100 suppliers with user accounts in Ariba.

AUDIT OBJECTIVE & SCOPE¹

The objective of the audit was to determine whether CPSS provides support to contribute to a positive user experience of Ariba.

The scope of this audit included users of Ariba, both internal users within City departments and external suppliers. We reviewed information from 2020 to 2024.

This audit did not include an evaluation of the City's decision to use SAP Ariba or the procurement processes used.

¹ We conducted this engagement in conformance with the Institute of Internal Auditors' *Global Internal Audit Standards*.

WHAT WE FOUND²

Overall, CPSS has met the audit objective of providing support to contribute to a positive user experience of Ariba. However, we found areas to improve their effectiveness.

CPSS has contributed to a positive user experience by doing the following:

- Having clear roles and responsibilities between business areas, external suppliers and CPSS.
- Developing and maintaining operating procedures and training manuals for Ariba users.
- Providing support and assistance when required by Ariba users.

However, we found the following opportunities for CPSS to improve their effectiveness:

- Instances of gaps relating to clarity and completion of training requirements.
- Review Ariba tickets in aggregate to identify and address common issues.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1

We recommend that CPSS clarify the training requirements and improve the process to verify that the training requirements are completed.

Recommendation 2

We recommend that CPSS monitor and address frequent Ariba user issues to improve the user experience where possible.

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

When Ariba users do not have up-to-date training, they may not be using Ariba in the most effective and efficient way, which

² The Institute of Internal Auditors' *Global Internal Audit Standards* require us to report the significance and prioritization of our findings. This report contains all our significant findings and those that we deemed not significant, but that still support our recommendations. We prioritized each significant finding based on how important it is that management address the finding. This report contains only those significant findings that we prioritized as management must address, or should address.

can result in frustration in using the system. The user experience can improve when internal Ariba users are trained and have the required certification(s).

Monitoring tickets to identify and address frequent issues can reduce the number of issues encountered by users, and thereby reduce the number of tickets CPSS needs to respond to. The user experience can improve when user issues are not constantly repeated.

Ariba System Background

SAP - ARIBA

The City of Edmonton started using SAP Ariba software in 2019 for its various sourcing, contract management, buying, and invoicing processes. The use of Ariba allows the City and the supplier to do business on a single platform. This platform is intended to provide benefits such as:

- Central communication that allows collaboration between the supplier and the City throughout the contracting process.
- Reduced need for paper-based transactions.
- Allows internal Ariba users and suppliers to see all contract-related documents in one place. This can improve the monitoring of contractual requirements, as well as for the City to comply with obtaining the appropriate approvals.

Procurement to payment is the sequential process of a contract lifecycle and includes four distinct phases:

1. Sourcing - includes the business areas' identification of the requirement for a particular material or service. Sourcing also includes determining the appropriate procurement method, obtaining and evaluating bids, and awarding the contract.
2. Contract Management - includes managing the contract from award to completion. The process includes ensuring compliance with contractual obligations, supplier performance, contract amendments, and contract closeout.
3. Buying - includes creating, reviewing, and approving the purchase requisitions and receiving the goods or services.
4. Invoicing - includes processing supplier invoices, obtaining approvals, and completing the required reconciliations in order to process payments.

ARIBA USERS

Internal Ariba users and external suppliers use Ariba to conduct their respective roles in the process, from initiating procurement to issuing payments.

Corporate Procurement and Supply Services (CPSS)

CPSS is the centralized supply chain management and tendering authority for the City. CPSS plays a critical role to ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of the procurement to payment system.

CPSS oversees the City's use of the Ariba platform, with responsibilities including:

- Access Management - ensure internal Ariba users and external suppliers have access to Ariba to perform their procurement, contracting, and invoicing activities.
- Training & Resources - develop and provide training, user guides and reference materials to Ariba users.
- User Support - provide ongoing assistance to Ariba users, address system-related inquiries, and resolve issues.
- Procurement Support - assist business areas with sourcing suppliers, managing contracts, and ensuring procurement practices align with City policies, procedures, and trade agreements.
- System Maintenance & Enhancements - coordinate the validation, implementation, and testing of defect fixes, new features, and enhancements to Ariba and its integration with the City's enterprise systems.

Currently, there are over 2,000 internal Ariba user accounts.

Internal Ariba Users

Internal Ariba users who require Ariba access include users who manage contracts, evaluate purchase options, approve expenditures, make and verify purchases, receive goods, and approve supplier invoices.

Suppliers and Bidders

Suppliers (including bidders) use Ariba to participate in procurement opportunities with the City.

Bidders register in Ariba to:

- View and track procurement opportunities.
- Submit bids and proposals.
- Participate in the contracting process.

Suppliers use Ariba to manage the delivery of goods and services by:

- Receiving purchase orders electronically.
- Submitting shipment notifications.
- Creating and submitting invoices to the City.
- Tracking invoice status.

Ariba Roles and Responsibilities, and Standard Operating Procedures

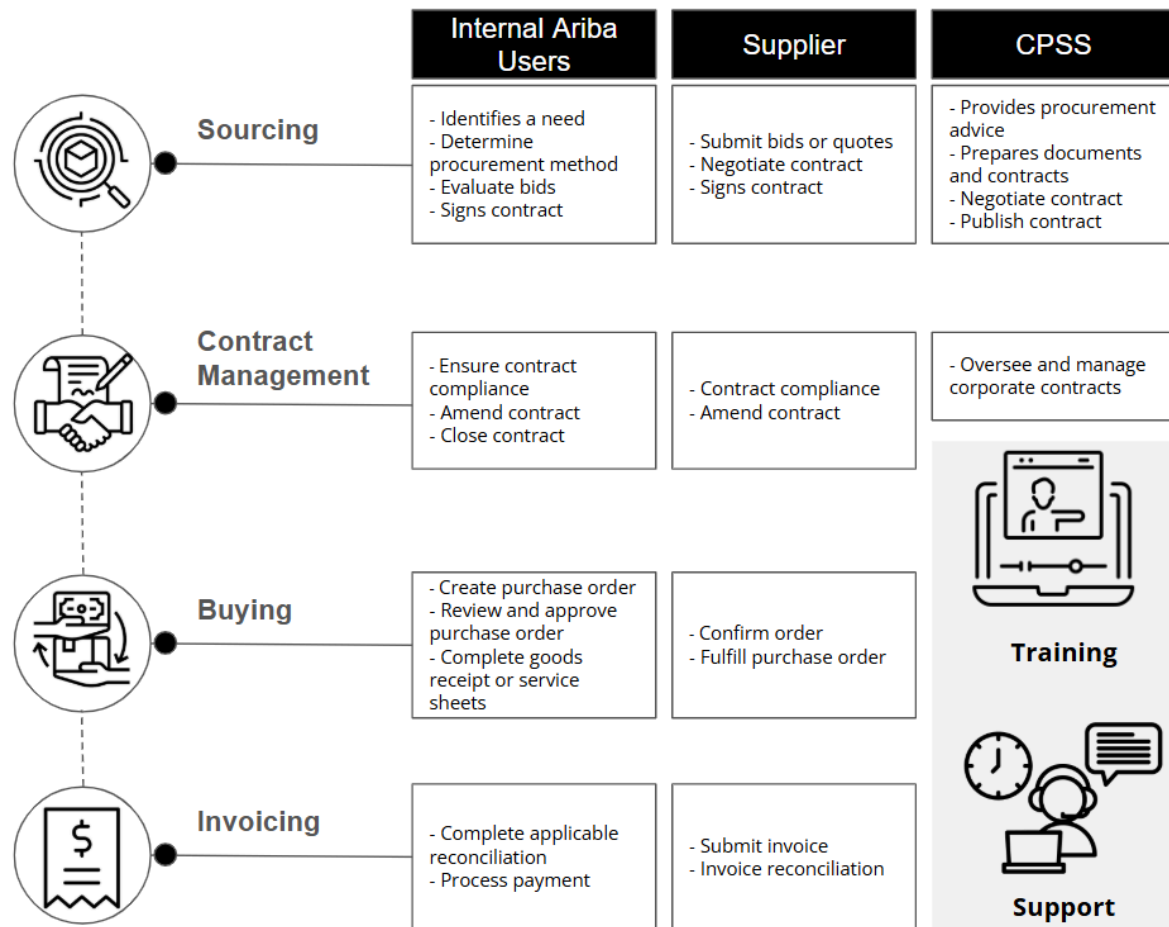
KEY FINDING

Overall, the roles and responsibilities of the internal Ariba users, external suppliers, and CPSS are well defined. CPSS has developed and maintains an inventory of standard operating procedures and training materials for Ariba users. Survey responses show that internal Ariba users are aware of and use the training material.

We have no recommendations related to this area.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Ariba is used in all four phases of the procurement to payment system, from the initial identification of the need for a good or service to the closure of a contract. See Figure 1 for a high-level overview of these roles and responsibilities.

Figure 1 - Roles and Responsibilities

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES AND TRAINING GUIDES

CPSS has developed an inventory of standard operating procedures and training materials for both internal Ariba users and external suppliers.

CPSS also maintains the training materials. When updates are required, internal Ariba users can submit suggested revisions or updates through a Google form. CPSS has also started work in creating a master tracking sheet to manage changes made to these documents. We reviewed selected procedures and training guides and found that CPSS has updated these standard operating procedures.

CPSS also provides internal Ariba users with access to the

“Procurement & Contract Management Training and Reference Materials” site, while suppliers have access to the “Selling to the City” site. Each of the websites contains resources, such as training guides, videos, and flowcharts that are relevant for various topics in the procurement to payment phases.

We conducted a survey of internal Ariba users in March 2025, to obtain their opinion of the user experience. The survey was sent to 2,192 individuals who had an Ariba user account. The response rate was 21 percent (464/2,192).

We asked internal Ariba users whether they were aware of the “Procurement & Contract Management Training and Reference Materials” site and whether they use the site. See Figure 2 and Figure 3.

Figure 2 - Awareness of CPSS Training Site

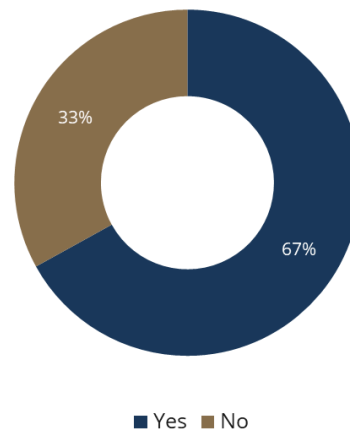
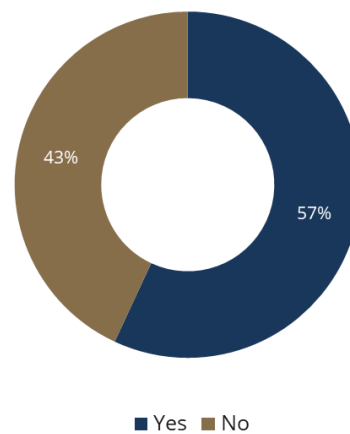


Figure 3 - Usage of CPSS Training Site

The majority of respondents were aware that standard operating procedures and training materials are available. Additionally, for those who were aware of the site, the majority also use it.

Improve Process to Review Training Gaps

KEY FINDINGS

CPSS defines the training requirements for each internal Ariba user role on the *SAP Ariba Access Request* form. Internal Ariba users request Ariba access by completing the form, acknowledging the date training is completed, and obtaining appropriate approval(s). CPSS reviews this form prior to granting Ariba access.

However, we found the following areas where there are training-related gaps that CPSS can improve:

- Training requirements have changed since the initial roll-out of Ariba in 2019. Various roles which currently require verifiable training courses and certificates have changed.
- We found that 55 percent of internal Ariba users have not completed a training course that is currently required for their user role.
- We conducted a survey of internal Ariba users in the City and the majority of respondents indicated that training requirements for their role(s) were not clear.

CHANGES TO TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

Training requirements have changed since the roll-out of Ariba in 2019.

Internal Ariba users complete the *SAP Ariba Access Request* form to gain Ariba access. This form includes training requirements and confirmation from the internal Ariba user that they have completed the required training.

Training requirements can include completion of courses offered through the City's Learning Management System (LMS). LMS provides a certificate once the training course is

completed. Other training requirements include reviewing various guides or watching videos.

LMS courses are formal, verifiable training that internal Ariba users complete through the City's website. The City maintains a historical record of the training that is taken by every City staff member. Therefore, we were able to use this information to determine whether required LMS training has been completed.

We reviewed six roles in Ariba that have a requirement to complete LMS course(s) and found that the requirements have changed over time.

- For two of the roles (Contract Manager and CPSS - Procurement), the current requirement is similar to the requirement in 2020, with a slight name change.
- For four of the roles (Enterprise Central Component Purchase Order User, Purchaser, Goods Receiver, and Service Entry Sheet Approver), the current requirement is different from the requirement in 2020.

For the roles where the requirements have changed, internal Ariba users who already have Ariba access are not required to comply with the updated requirements.

CPSS communicates small updates regularly through bulletins. However, it may be beneficial for internal Ariba users to be compliant with the verifiable training that is currently required for their role. For example, the Enterprise Central Component Purchase Order user role now requires completion of one LMS course while the previous requirement was to review a training guide in order to gain Ariba access. In instances where the previous requirement was to review a training guide, this requirement is not verifiable, whereas obtaining an LMS certificate can be validated.

LMS TRAINING NOT COMPLETED

Currently, there are 1,845 unique internal Ariba users who have at least 1 of the 6 roles that require LMS training in the City. We compared the LMS training database for each of the 1,845

internal Ariba users to the LMS training that is required for their role. See results in Table 1.

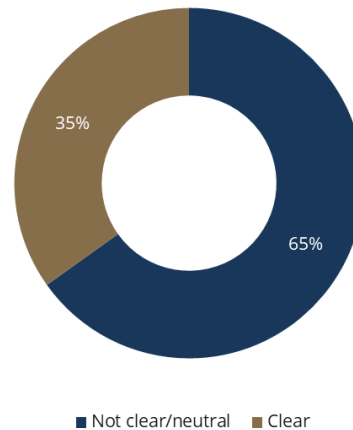
Table 1 - Compliance with Current LMS Requirements

Internal Ariba Users - LMS Training Requirements	Total	%
Users who have taken at least one required LMS course	824	45%
Users who have not taken at least one required LMS course	1,021	55%
Total	1,845	100%

We found that 55 percent of internal Ariba users have not completed any of the LMS training requirements for their current Ariba role(s). This may be due to them being granted access without taking training or they may have been granted access prior to the LMS training requirements being implemented.

SURVEY RESULTS - TRAINING

With regards to training, we asked internal Ariba users whether the training requirements for their Ariba role(s) were clear, including the required LMS training. See Figure 4.

Figure 4 - Clarity of Training Requirements

Overall, 35 percent of respondents indicated that the training requirements were clear. The majority (65 percent) of respondents were not clear or indicated neutral. There is an opportunity for CPSS to improve on the clarity of training requirements so that internal Ariba users are clear on the training required.

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

Internal Ariba users may not have the required training to properly use Ariba which can result in frustration and require additional support from CPSS staff.

RECOMMENDATION 1

Clarify the training requirements and improve the process to verify that the training requirements are completed.

**Responsible Party**

Branch Manager, CPSS



Accepted by Management

Management Response

CPSS agrees with the recommendation and is enhancing training governance, updating materials, redesigning access protocols, and implementing a tracking system to ensure all Ariba users complete required training before system access is granted.

**Implementation Date**

March 31, 2026

Monitor and Address Frequent Ariba Tickets

KEY FINDINGS

Generally, CPSS is providing timely and adequate Ariba support when assistance is required by users. Internal Ariba users we surveyed provided positive feedback on the support they receive from CPSS.

However, we found CPSS is not effectively monitoring and addressing frequent Ariba user issues. As a result, we found that a small number of internal Ariba users are repeatedly submitting tickets for similar issues, often related to two phases of the procurement to payment system.

POSITIVE FEEDBACK FROM SURVEY - INTERNAL ARIBA USERS

We conducted a survey of internal Ariba users to obtain their opinion of the timeliness and adequacy of support that they received from CPSS. The majority of respondents contact CPSS for support when they require assistance. These services are requested through the creation of a ticket or by calling a CPSS contact when help is required.

Furthermore, we analyzed the comments provided by those surveyed relating to the support they receive from CPSS. The word cloud shows the most frequently used words from the comments that were provided. See Figure 5.

Figure 5 - Frequently Used Words Relating to CPSS Support

Overall, the comments were generally positive based on the common words used by respondents to describe the adequacy and timeliness of the support received from CPSS.

RESOLVING ARIBA TICKETS EFFECTIVELY

Internal Ariba users create tickets when they have issues and require the assistance of CPSS staff to resolve them. External suppliers contact the supplier management team, via email or phone call, who will then create tickets on their behalf to track the issues. The issues are resolved by one of two areas within CPSS:

- The Technology & Integration team addresses the functional and technical issues related to end-user Ariba system usage. These can include access management, data updates, resolving issues related to system functionality, and Enterprise Resource Planning integration.
- The Supplier Management team addresses supplier enablement requests, process-related questions and training needs, supplier integration concerns, and catalogue requests.

From 2021³ to 2024, there were 14,427 tickets created. From 2022 to 2024, CPSS resolved 14,189 tickets (98 percent).

³ In 2021, there were 67 tickets created. All of these tickets were resolved in 2022 or later.

Approximately 52 percent of tickets are resolved within one day. These involved simpler issues that are resolved internally with quick fixes. However, we also found that overall it takes an average of seven days to resolve a ticket. Certain tickets require external support in order to address, thus the timelines to resolve these tickets are extended.

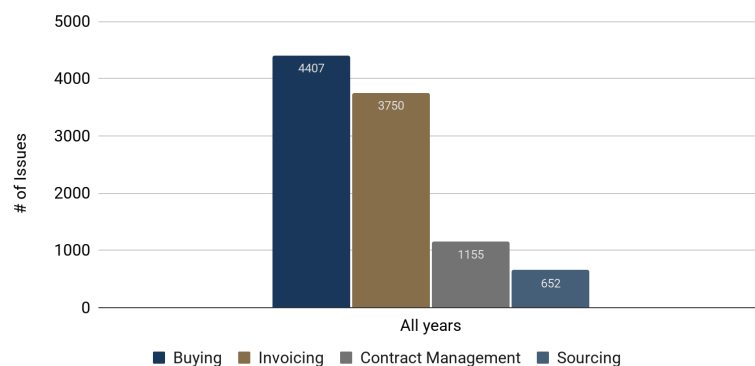
FREQUENT ISSUES AND TICKET CREATORS

We categorized the resolved tickets by issue where possible and found the majority of tickets relate to the phases of the procurement to payment system. We also analyzed who was creating the tickets and found that 10 internal Ariba users created 23 percent of the tickets.

Frequent Issues

Of the 14,189 resolved tickets 7,310 (52 percent) mentioned at least one issue relating to the phases of the procurement to payment system. There were 9,964 mentions of procurement to payment issues in the 7,310 tickets we reviewed. The most common issues related to buying and invoicing. See Figure 6.

Figure 6 - Procurement to Payment Issues - Ariba Tickets (2022-2024)



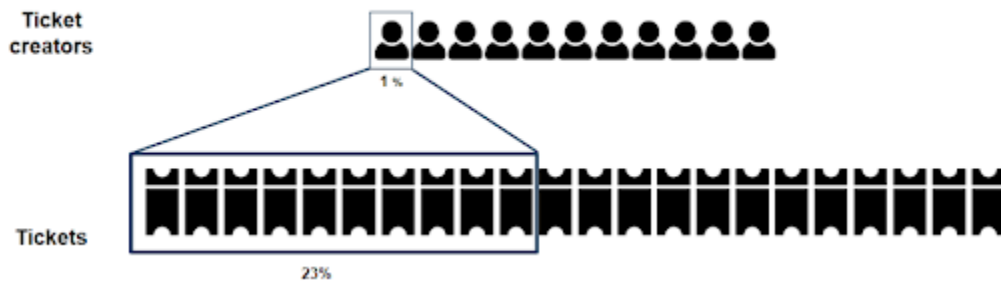
We did not analyze the remaining 6,879 tickets (48 percent) as they dealt with other issues or the ticket description was not sufficient for us to categorize. These included:

- Drag and drop is not working
- Ariba profile error for expenditure officer

- Unable to start next task
- Warning status

Frequent Ticket Creators There were 1,423 unique internal Ariba users who created at least 1 ticket out of the 14,189 resolved tickets that we analyzed. However, a small number of ticket creators submitted a high number of tickets. See Figure 7.

Figure 7 - Top 10 Ticket Creators



We analyzed the top 10 ticket creators which is equivalent to 1 percent (10/1,423) of the population. These individuals submitted 3,274 of the 14,189 tickets which is equivalent to 23 percent of all tickets submitted.

We interviewed three frequent ticket creators to understand the root cause of these issues. The general reason is related to technical issues between their operational systems and the Ariba system. These glitches were resolved through workarounds by the CPSS team. CPSS is aware of some frequent ticket creators and some of the common issues. However, detailed analysis and resolving the root cause for these issues can be improved.

There are opportunities for CPSS to review the issues created by the small group of users to effectively identify and resolve the root cause of these duplicate issues in order to reduce the number of tickets created.

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

Addressing frequent and repeated issues will reduce the amount of assistance required and reduce the number of tickets CPSS needs to respond to. Additionally, user experience may be more positive when the same issues are not constantly repeated.

RECOMMENDATION 2

Monitor and address frequent Ariba user issues to improve the user experience where possible.

**Responsible Party**

Branch Manager, CPSS



Accepted by Management

Management Response

CPSS agrees with the recommendation and will monitor Ariba support tickets to identify recurring issues, update training and communication materials, and implement targeted system improvements to enhance user experience and workflow efficiency.

**Implementation Date**

June 30, 2026

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We would like to thank the staff and management of the CPSS team for their cooperation during the audit. Additionally, we want to thank the internal Ariba users and suppliers who took time to provide feedback through our survey of their experience in using Ariba.