

Procurement Survey: Summary Report

What buyers told us about documentation, verification and confidence

About this survey

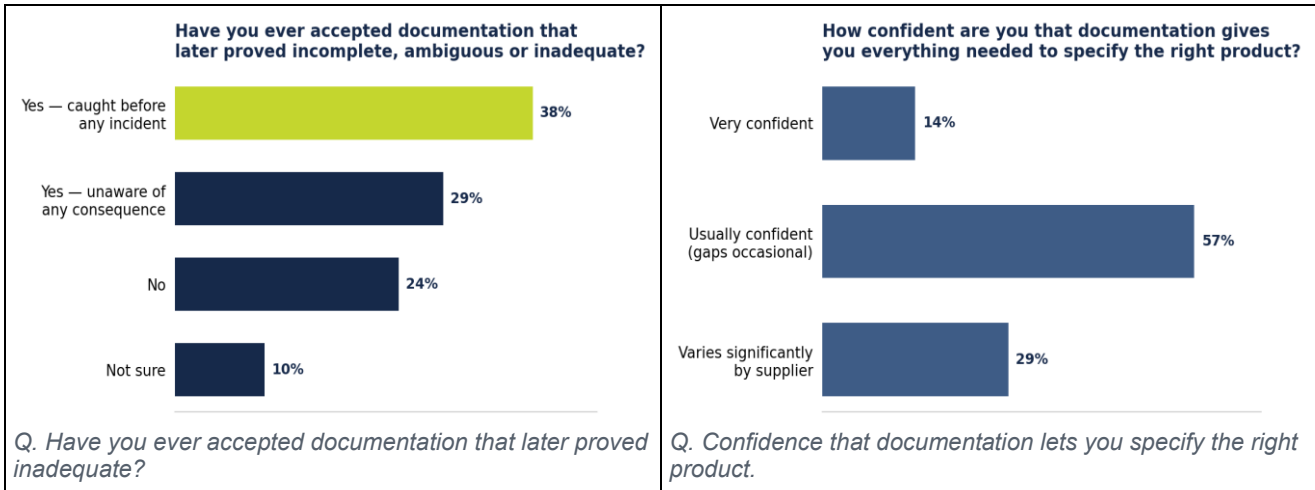
An initial survey of procurement and buying professionals across seven countries (the United Kingdom, United States, Singapore, Taiwan, New Zealand, UAE and Chile), spanning construction, manufacturing, energy, ports and events. The majority of respondents were not LEEA members, which provided a useful read on the wider buyer market. Findings are indicative of buyer sentiment and closely mirror the themes raised in the member roundtables.

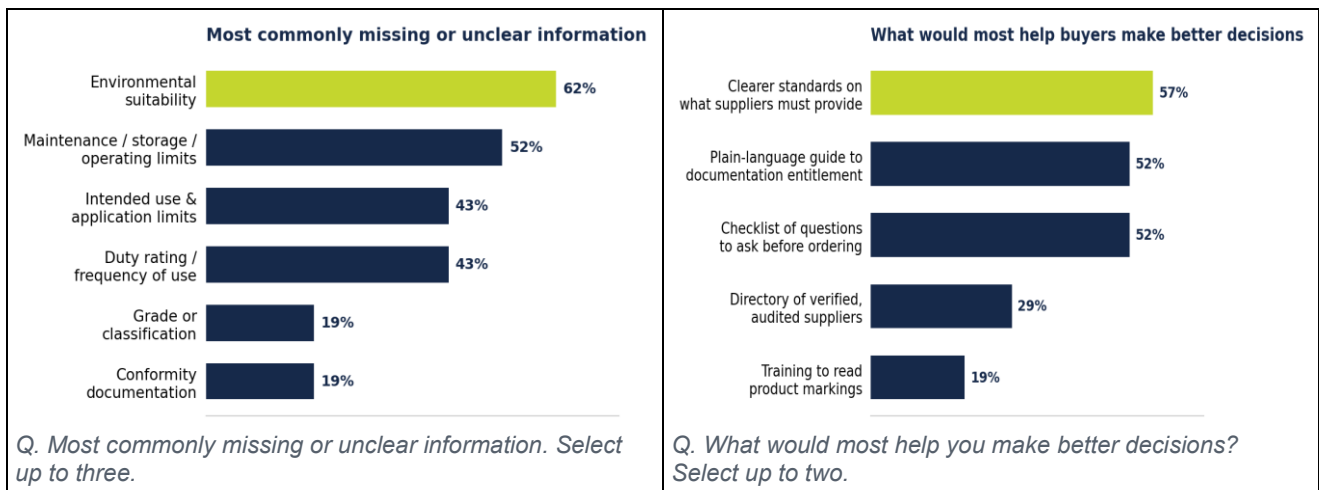
Headline findings

Most buyers have been let down by documentation. 67% said they had accepted product documentation that later proved incomplete, ambiguous or inadequate. Some caught it before any incident, others were unaware of any consequence.

Confidence is shallow. Just 14% are “very confident” that documentation gives them everything they need to specify the right product. The rest see occasional or significant gaps.

Buyers know what would help, and it is exactly what GLAD is about: clearer standards, a plain-language guide to what they are entitled to receive, and a checklist of questions to ask before ordering.





What buyers say is missing and how they cope

The information gaps are about fitness for purpose, not just paperwork. The most commonly missing details were environmental suitability (62%), maintenance, storage and operating limits (52%), and a clear statement of intended use and application limits (43%) exactly the information that tells a buyer whether a product is right for *their* job.

Verification is inconsistent. While most buyers rely on an approved, audited supplier list (57%) or check certificates against the standard (52%), 38% still accept the supplier’s own declaration and 24% have no formal verification process at all. Only 10% cited trade-body membership (such as LEEA) as a check, a clear opportunity to make membership a more recognised quality signal.

Cost pressure is real but not dominant. Most buyers said cost does not influence their documentation standards, but a substantial minority acknowledged it had at least occasionally been a factor in accepting equipment or paperwork they were not fully satisfied with, which echoed the roundtables’ “price beats quality” theme.

The supplier view: Australia & New Zealand

Alongside the buyer survey, a separate survey of manufacturers, distributors and technical authors in Australia & New Zealand. The survey examined the same issue from the supplier side, such as how products are marked and documented. Read together, the two show both ends of the same gap. (Given the smaller supplier sample, these findings are summarised qualitatively.)

Suppliers think the marking is fine, yet report buyers misreading it. Every supplier rated their own product marking as broadly adequate, but the same respondents consistently described buyers misunderstanding it. As one put it, documentation is generally suitable to comply, “but the quality is a differing story.” The gap is comprehension, not compliance.

The confusion is about technical language. The terms most often misunderstood were WLL versus SWL versus MBL versus lashing capacity (LC), duty and FEM classifications, and configuration-specific capacities (choked, basket and multi-leg). When buyers order, they most often fail to specify the intended lifting method or configuration, the environmental conditions, and whether the lift is routine or engineered. They also fail to ask for duty-cycle suitability, service life, maintenance and lifecycle cost, and full traceability.

Suppliers' message to procurement is the buyers' message back. Asked what procurement most needs to understand, suppliers landed on exactly the buyers' conclusion: the difference between "compliant" and "fit for purpose."

And they want to help. Nearly all said they would use a LEEA marking and documentation checklist, and most would share it with their own customers as a benchmark, making suppliers active partners in the campaign, not just its subject. It is the other half of the GLAD message: when a buyer asks another question, be ready to answer.

What this tells us

Buyers are not careless, they are under-equipped. They accept inadequate documentation not because they don't care, but because the right information often isn't there and there's no simple way to demand it. The single most requested fixes are clearer standards, a plain-language guide to documentation entitlement, and a checklist of questions to ask. That is precisely the behaviour GLAD 2026 is built to encourage: ask another question, and a membership body that helps buyers know which questions to ask, and which suppliers can answer them.