RFI 05/2025: TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION FOR NETWORK CARRIER AND INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES

Communication #1

Date of Issue: 02 October 2025

1. Questions and Answers

These questions and answers as well as issued / reissued documents referred to in this document will be posted to all potential bidders.

Questions and Answers

No	Question	Answer
1.	Please may we get an extension on the closing date?	The closing date for the Request for Information (RFI) has been extended to **13 October 2025 at 11:00 AM.**
2.	If we decide to go with JV, does ICASA need to be on Primary bidder's name, or it can be on any partner name.	At this point in the Request for Information (RFI) process, this question does not apply. **Please note that this is not a tender process.**
3.	Please confirm whether SARS intends to appoint one service provider per tower or whether multiple providers can be appointed within a single tower (especially Tower V	At this point in the Request for Information (RFI) process, this question does not apply. **Please note that this is not a tender process.**

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	and Tower C where split awards are mentioned).	
4.	For Service Management and Reporting Portals, can SARS confirm if integration into SARS's existing ITSM tools is required, or will standalone portals suffice?	At this point in the Request for Information (RFI) process, this question does not apply. **Please note that this is not a tender process.**
5.	SARS requires Cisco Gold Integrator/Global Gold status. Will equivalent OEM accreditations (Huawei, H3C, Juniper, etc.) be accepted where proposed WAN/SD-WAN solutions are based on those vendors?	At this point in the Request for Information (RFI) process, this question does not apply. **Please note that this is not a tender process.**
6.	Do we only have to propose Cisco SD-WAN, or can it be another OEM as well?	At this point in the Request for Information (RFI) process, this question does not apply. **Please note that this is not a tender process.** **For the purposes of this RFI, please note that the SARS Network Infrastructure utilises CISCO technology. Accordingly, bidders are required to submit proposals aligned with CISCO-related solutions.**
7.	Are there any integration requirements with SARS's PBX/UC systems (CUCM, Teams, etc.), or is the voice carrier scope limited to SIP connectivity and call termination?	At this point in the Request for Information (RFI) process, this question does not apply. **Please note that this is not a tender process.** **For the purposes of this RFI, please note that the SARS Network Infrastructure utilises CISCO technology. Accordingly, bidders are required to submit proposals aligned with CISCO-related solutions.**
8.	In the context of this being an RFI and "not an evaluation" (I think I heard that earlier), please confirm the purpose of scoring and attaining the minimum required scores e.g. 70/100 and 66.6/100 etc.	SARS issued the DRAFT tender pack (including RFP document, mandatory evaluation criteria, technical evaluation criteria, Business Requirements Specification and pricing templates). The intention for sharing the DRAFT tender pack is to proactively consult the industry to provide inputs to what will become the official RFP. The scoring criteria will ONLY apply to the forthcoming Request for Proposal (RFP), which will be released following the Request for Information (RFI). Bidders

No	Question	Answer
		are requested to thoroughly review all provided documents and submit proposals for possible consideration in the RFP process.
9.	Are all bidders with an intention to respond to the RFP/tender that will be issued obligated to respond to the RFI?	No, participation is not compulsory.
10.	Is any pricing required for the RFI or should we only ask questions	Pricing submission is not required. However, Bidders are required to submit ONLY the Recommendation Response Template(s) corresponding to the specific Tower for which they intend to propose inputs. Please refer to section 6.5 of the _**SARS RFI 05-2025 1-1 Summary Guidelines Instructions and Conditions**_ for further details. **NB: Bidders must submit only the Recommendation Response Templates to the SARS Tender Office email by the deadline.**
11.	What is the timeline for the publication of the RFP?	At this stage, SARS is unable to confirm the exact timeline for issuing the Request for Proposals (RFP) to the market. However, we anticipate that the RFP will be released as soon as inputs from the Request for Information (RFI) and all internal governance processes have been finalized.
12.	Can only Companies that provide the entire service tender or can we partner with other companies? Can we only respond to certain areas of the RFI/RFB?	At this point in the Request for Information (RFI) process, this question does not apply. **Please note that this is not a tender process.**

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13.	Do we need to submit mandatories for the RFI?	Bidders are required to submit ONLY the Recommendation Response Template(s) corresponding to the specific Tower for which they intend to propose inputs. Please refer to section 6.5 of the **_SARS RFI 05-2025 1-1 Summary Guidelines Instructions and Conditions_** for further details. **NB: Bidders must submit only the Recommendation Response Templates to the SARS Tender Office email by the deadline.**
14.	Please confirm that we do not have to submit any supporting / mandatory documents, but only comment on those?	Bidders are required to submit ONLY the Recommendation Response Template(s) corresponding to the specific Tower for which they intend to propose inputs. Please refer to section 6.5 of the **_SARS RFI 05-2025 1-1 Summary Guidelines Instructions and Conditions_** for further details. **NB: Bidders must submit only the Recommendation Response Templates to the SARS Tender Office email by the deadline.**

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