RFP 03/2024: NETWORK, SERVER, AND END-USER SUPPORT SERVICES

Communication #1

Date of Issue: 21 June 2024

1. Answers to questions posed by Bidders.

These questions and answers as well as issued / reissued documents referred to in this document can be found on SARS's website at www.sars.gov.za

Question and Answer

No	Question	Answer
1.	Please confirm that the correct approach to USBs is per main RFP **page 88** clause 13.4.2 and per RFP pg. 82 clause 13.2.4 – i.e several USBs are needed (one USB per physical file provided). We need confirmation of this as other RFP sections seem to refer to **a single USB stick.**	The bidders must submit a single hardcopy of its proposal contained in several hardcopy files, and a single electronic copy written to several Universal Serial Bus (USB) by 26 July 2024 at 11:00
2.	Where in the bid should we place the 'Contract Response Template' per Tower? Can we simply decide where to place it in each NP-x file? (We are aware that the main marked-up Contract Agreement (aka Master Services Agreement) must be placed in the Common File).	Yes, Contract Response Template to form part of the Common file.
3.	Should bidders include the following three documents in the bid together with the marked-up Support Services Agreement? (i) 4-2 Network, Server and End-user Device Support Services Data	Yes, all four (4) documents need to be returned with or without mark-ups and form part of the Common file.

No	Question	Answer
	Protection Agreement (ii) Appendix E-4 Incident Management Priority Process Appendix E-4 Manage ICT incidents?	
4.	Section 5 in the Tower N Mandatory Response Template refers to a 'Proposal for all required services for Tower N'. (i) Does this refer to the 'Technical Response Template', or is an additional separate proposal required? (ii) May we provide an additional proposal per Tower as an attachment at the end of the TRT, outlining solution methodology?	The mandatory evaluation criteria 5 (for Towers N and S) and criteria 4 (for Tower E) on the Mandatory Response Template 'Declaration that the bidder has submitted a Proposal for all required services for Tower N/S/E" (as applicable) refers to the bidder's submission in totality per Tower, and not an additional separate proposal for this criterion. This forms part of your Mandatory Response Template per applicable Tower N/S/E, and bidders are only required to *complete all fields in Response Table A in full* by indicating "Comply/Do Not Comply" to the services listed. *The Bidder may add more lines to Response Table A if necessary.* Further solution methodologies are incorporated as part of the Technical evaluation where bid responses are requested in line with the Technical Response Template (TRT) per applicable Tower N/S/E.
5.	For TRTs - at the end of the TRT, is it strictly necessary for supporting documents to be pasted into the SARS template? i.e. can we not simply attach these as long as they are clearly marked and numbered?	Yes. The Bidders are not required to necessarily paste supporting documents into the TRT. Supporting documents may be attached per the directory structure as long as they are clearly referenced in the Response Table B per criterion of the TRT, and Section 5 (for Tower N) Section 6 (for Tower E and S) [Attached Documentation] located at the end of the TRT, and a reference to the documents must be made by the Bidders in the 'Response Table B: References to Attached Documentation' of the referring section.

No	Question	Answer
6.	Where in the bid submission can we include our shareholding structure? Would you prefer this to go into the Common file, or Tower File(s)?	Yes. It may form part of the Common File.
7.	Regarding the Contract, and the Data Protection Agreement, should the soft copy include a Word version or the signed scanned PDF version	It should be in a Word version. This will allow for acceptance/rejection of changes or any amendments applicable.
8.	Where SARS requires a word version of a completed Template in the soft copy, should we sign these using Word or leave the soft copy unsigned?	SARS provided templates in Word format for bidders to respond, please sign these documents.
9.	Has SARS identified any key resources from the current incumbent delivery, across all 3 Towers, that SARS has envisaged being retained but moved to the incoming service provider? i.e. Does SARS wish the incoming service provider to manage a **Section 197** transfer during this process?	Yes, this will be provided during transition period and the incoming service provider must manage the Section 197 transfer process.
10.	Please confirm the hardware maintenance required for all of the equipment listed for Tower S by: o Duration e.g. 1,3,5 years – Should h/w maintenance for the duration of the contract be procured upfront or on an annual basis? o Response/repair time □ 8 x 5 x Next Business day or □ 24 x 7 x 4 o Does the same response/repair times apply to equipment in and out of maintenance? If not please list required times for each o Should equipment that is out of maintenance carry the same maintenance extension as equipment in maintenance or do we default to 1-year a time?	The equipment is purchased with hardware maintenance (5-year warranty). The bidder must have a back-to-back agreement with the OEM(Dell) for equipment which is out of warranty to provide hardware maintenance. No h/w maintenance will be procured. The same response/repair times apply except for equipment listed as time and material which will be best effort. Please see Business Requirements Specification **Table S - 3 coverage Periods and Table S – 4 Service Levels.**

No	Question	Answer
	o Should the maintenance contract on equipment irrespective of status be co-termed on maintenance renewal?	
11.	What brand and model / OEM currently in environment for: - Barcode Printers - Desktops - Laptops - Dot Matrix Printers - Inkjet Printers - Label Printers - LCD Monitor - LED Monitor - Line Matrix Printer - MFP RT3 Printer - Personal MFD's - Plasma Monitor - Plotter - Receipt Printer - Scanner - Tablets	The information can be found on the below document: Tower E: End-User Device Specifications which is part of the Tender Pack.
12.	**Tower N Cisco Equipment** **Pg 29 of 89; Table 7.2; 2.1** 1) Should equipment qualify for smartnet support what would the Start and end date be? If date is not available can annual support rate be quoted? 2) Would current (out of warranty and support) spares be available for	1). The current support "Start Date" of Smartnet is 01 Sept to 30 Aug, renewed annually. SARS intends to extend this to 5-year agreement with the awarded or appointed Bidder for Tower N. The Bidders are not required to supply a quote to this regard, only discounts are required as per Tower N, Tab N13.

No	Question	Answer
	takeover. Will this spares list and location be made available? 3) If no spares available for out of warranty and support devices can replacement devices be quoted for procurement and Smartnet linked to these replacement devices?	2). Yes, "out-of-warranty" spares will be supplied by SARS during the Transition period. The equipment will be moved to the new service provider store / backup locations. This is mostly Cisco Catalyst 3650 and 3750 UTP 24 port switches and Cisco Catalyst SFP 12 port switches. SARS also has adequate spare holding for Cisco Catalyst 6500 which is / will be decommissioned @ high priority. 3). Yes, but only for break-fix purposes when equipment is deemed to be UTR, general bulk procurement is not included / allowed in this tender. Repairs completed via 3rd party (hardware.com) only includes power supplies for above mentioned switches.
13.	**Tower N Video Conferencing** Could we please get a view of the makes, models and serial numbers of the VC Kit installed	Cisco Spark Room Kits Plus (20 * CS-KIT-S-UNIT+), the serial numbers will be supplied during transition period, but the equipment is still covered under Cisco Smartnet. The Tandberg equipment is no longer required as this platform has been decommissioned.
14.	Could we please get a view of the warranty on the VC devices	The Cisco Spark Room Kits Plus (CS-KIT-S-UNIT+) equipment is still covered under Cisco Smartnet. The Yealink equipment will not be under warranty at the time of tender award.
15.	Are the sparing devices the same specifications as the currently installed equipment	Yes.
16.	Tower N Voice Equipment Please clarify what UCS refers to in the pricing template, tab N7	Cisco UCS (Unified Communication Server), the rate cards for this can be ignored as this platform has been virtualized.
17.	Tower N - Unified Communication Manager Support Will the vendor support for call manager be renewed via the partner that is awarded this tender	Yes, this is spart of yearly OEM renewals. The current version CUCM Version is "12.5.1.10000-22".

No	Question	Answer
18.	Tower N - Cisco Voice Do we have to factor in a Voice estate upgrade to the latest supported cisco software version, and include new licensing and server Hardware to support the voice upgrade?	No, this is part of yearly OEM renewal. The current version for CUCM is "12.5.1.10000-22" and ASR is "ASR1000 Software (X86_64_LINUX_IOSD-UNIVERSALK9-M), Version 17.6.5".
19.	Tower N Pricing Template – N6	The rate cards for Tandberg equipment within N6 can be omitted, all Tandberg equipment was decommissioned during past financial year.