**SARS RFP 04-2025**

**Tower C**

**Unified Communications Platform as a Service (CPaaS)**

**Mandatory Response Template — Category D**

**FOR Future Social Media, LIVECHAT & AI/LLM CARRIER SOLUTION**

***Instructions***

1. *Bidder is instructed to follow the format (section numbering, headings etc.) of this mandatory response template exactly. Bidder must not deviate from the numbering scheme nor deviate from the order in which the sections and subsections are presented in this template.*
2. *Each section of this Mandatory Response Template corresponds to a mandatory criterion. Within each section is an explanation (in italics) of what is required to be submitted by the Bidder in its response. Omitting a section, a required response, answer, or required documentation will result in SARS disqualifying the Bidder.*
3. *The response to each section of the Mandatory Response Template must be separated by a file divider in the Bidder’s hardcopy response.*
4. *The Bidder must attach documentary evidence of claims where specifically requested and, where directed, may attach additional documentation. All documentation must be placed in a subsection of Section 7 (Additional Documentation) located at the end of this template and a reference to the documentation must be made by the Bidder in the “Table B: References to Additional Documentation” of the referring section. SARS is not under any obligation to evaluate material that is not referenced within “Table B: References to Additional Documentation” and in the manner set out above.*
5. *The Bidder must use this MS-Word document as a template for its response. The Bidder may delete these italicised instructions and the tables headed by “Instructions for completing a Response to Table A” and “Instructions for completing Response Table B” from the completed template in its Proposal.*

***Important note regarding the contents of the Bidder’s response***

1. *The accuracy of the content of the Bidder’s response is paramount. SARS may, at its discretion, conduct a due diligence to verify the claims made in the Bidder’s Proposal during or after SARS’s evaluation of the mandatory criteria. The Bidder is advised to note the provisions of the RFP regarding misrepresentation and disqualification in the RFP Main Document.*
2. *Unless otherwise specified, where responses are required to indicate Bidder’s capability, the Bidder’s current capabilities must be given.*
3. *The Bidder must make clear every aspect of its response to the information sought. SARS does not take any responsibility to clarify any aspect of the Bidder’s response. SARS may at its own discretion seek clarification from the Bidder. Any interpretation that is made by SARS evaluators of an ambiguous response will be final and need not be clarified by SARS.*
4. *SARS will evaluate the Bidder’s Proposal based on the information contained in the Proposal (and any clarifications, verifications, or due diligence conducted by SARS). SARS has no responsibility to take extraneous information into account in its evaluation.*

**Mandatory Response**

**[Bidder Name]**

1. Bidder’S organisation

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| ***Mandatory requirement*** | | |
| Reference: RFP Main Document paragraph 8.3.  SARS is interested only in organisations that take full accountability for service delivery. Thus, any Bidder, be it a juristic person, partnership, sole proprietor, or any special purpose vehicle, must take full accountability for service delivery.  A Bidder must be registered in South Africa in terms of South African laws, and the Bidder must operate in South Africa.  **NB: The Bidder must have attached its CIPC registration. In terms of consortiums or JVs, incorporated JVs must submit their CIPC registration and unincorporated JVs must submit individual CIPC registration documents.** | | |
| ***Instructions for completing Response Table A below.***   * *The Bidder must complete all fields in Response Table A in full.* | | |
|  | **Field name** | ***Instructions*** |
| Comply/Do Not Comply | *The Bidder must supply a response of “Comply” or “Do Not Comply”. Any other response made in this column will be interpreted as “Do Not Comply”.* |
|  | |

|  |
| --- |
| ***Instructions for completing Response Table B below.***   * *The Bidder must attach its Companies and Intellectual Property Commission (CIPC registration or consortium agreement or Joint Venture (JV) agreement documentation to support the Bidder’s declaration above in accordance with the instructions to add and reference attached documentation.* * *Notwithstanding the above requirement, SARS, at its sole discretion, may perform its own verification of the Bidder’s registration or consortium agreement or Joint Venture (JV) agreement as a Bidder registered in South Africa under South African laws.* * *If the Bidder wishes to attach additional documentation the Bidder must attach it as a subsection of the Additional Documentation Section (Section 7) at the end of this template. The Bidder must create a new subsection in the Additional Documentation (Section 7) for each additional document and place the document within the subsection.* * *The Bidder must then enter the following information in Response Table B (References to Additional Documentation) for each document the Bidder has attached.*    + *The Reference where the document can be found must be entered in the “Reference” field. (e.g., Section 7.1)*   + *The Document Title must be entered in the “Document Title” field (e.g., CIPC Registration Certificate* *or consortium agreement or Joint Venture (JV) agreement”)*   + *The Bidder must indicate what aspect of its response to the information requested by SARS in this section is supported by the additional documentation in the “Submitted in Support of” field. (e.g., “Company Registration or consortium agreement or Joint Venture (JV) agreement”)* * *The Bidder may add more rows to “Table B: Reference to Additional Documentation” table if necessary.* * *It remains the Bidder’s responsibility to provide sufficient information to support its claim to satisfy the mandatory requirement.* |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Bidder Organisation** | |
| **Response Table A** | |
| **Declaration** | **Comply/Do Not Comply** |
| In compliance with the mandatory requirement, the Bidder declares its compliance with the requirement that the Bidder is registered in South Africa in terms of South African laws and the Bidder must be operating in South Africa |  |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Response Table B: References to Additional Documentation** | | |
| **Reference** | **Document Title** | **Submitted in Support of** |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

1. Licences, if applicable

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| ***Mandatory requirement*** | | |
| *Reference: RFP Main Document paragraph 8.3.*  The Bidder must possess Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (ICASA) Individual ECS (I-ECS) regulatory licence or similar licensing authority or regulation, to provide the services for which it is bidding in Tower C, if applicable.  **NB: The Bidder must provide an official ICASA letter as proof of its licence(s). The Bidder may rely on regulatory licences held by a parent company or subsidiary, provided that the Bidder submits a satisfactory explanation of how such reliance will comply with regulatory requirements and provides a warranty of compliance. The Bidder may not rely on a third party’s licence(s). The evidence of licence-holding must correspond with the licence(s) the Bidder claims to hold**. | | |
| ***Instructions for completing Response Table A below.***   * *The Bidder must complete all fields in Response Table A in full.* * *The Bidder may add more lines to Response Table A if necessary.* | | |
|  | **Field name** | ***Instructions*** |
| Licence holding compliance | The Bidder must respond either “Comply” or “Do not comply”. By responding “Comply” the Bidder warrants that it currently (as at the Closing Date) holds the licences necessary to deliver the full scope of services of Tower C. Any response other than “Comply” will be treated by SARS as a statement that the Bidder does not comply with this criterion. |
| Licence Requirement | The Bidder must set out the licences it is required to hold to deliver the solution it has proposed in its Proposal. |
| Licence Holding | The Bidder must set out its licence holding that satisfies the corresponding licence requirement. |
|  | |

|  |
| --- |
| ***Instructions for completing Response Table B below.***   * *The Bidder must attach relevant documentation to support the Bidder’s declaration above in accordance with the instructions to add and reference attached documentation, including copies of licences.* * *If the Bidder wishes to attach additional documentation the Bidder must attach it as a subsection of the Additional Documentation Section (Section 7) at the end of this template. The Bidder must create a new subsection in the Additional Documentation (Section 7) for each additional document and place the document within the subsection.* * *The Bidder must then enter the following information in Response Table B (References to Additional Documentation) for each document the Bidder has attached.*    + *The Reference where the document can be found must be entered in the “Reference” field. (e.g., Section 7.1)*   + *The Document Title must be entered in the “Document Title” field (e.g., “ICASA Licence”)*   + *The Bidder must indicate what aspect of its response to the information requested by SARS in this section is supported by the additional documentation in the “Submitted in Support of” field. (e.g., “Proof of licences held”)* * *The Bidder may add more rows to “Table B: Reference to Additional Documentation” table if necessary.* * *It remains the Bidder’s responsibility to provide sufficient information to support its claim to satisfy the mandatory requirement.* |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Licences** | | |
| **Response Table A** | | |
| **Licence holding compliance** | | **Comply/Do not Comply** |
| The Bidder warrants that it currently (as at the Closing Date) holds the licences necessary to deliver the full scope of services of Tower C. | |  |
| **Licence Requirement** | **Licence holding** | |
|  |  | |
|  |  | |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Response Table B: References to Additional Documentation** | | |
| **Reference** | **Document Title** | **Submitted in Support of** |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

1. SECURITY

|  |
| --- |
| ***Mandatory requirement*** |
| *Reference: RFP Main Document paragraph 8.3.*  SARS want to establish the alignment between SARS Security requirements and the Bidder’s organisational approach to security management as defined within the ISO 27001 framework and with specific reference to implemented client(s).  The Bidder must give as much information as possible to show its security approach and how it will benefit SARS in the delivery of secure Services in this Tower.   * SARS also want to establish if the bidder’s Service has the following mandatory components:  1. IPSec: IPSec (Internet Protocol Security) is a set of protocols designed to secure internet communications by encrypting and authenticating data packets. It provides confidentiality, data integrity, and authentication for data transmitted across public networks through encrypted tunnels. IPSec supports various encryption methods and operates in two modes: tunnel mode (encrypts the entire packet) and transport mode (encrypts only the payload). It is widely used to create secure VPN connections. 2. VPN: A Virtual Private Network (VPN) is a technology that creates a secure and encrypted connection over a less secure network, such as the internet. VPNs enable users to send and receive data as if their devices were directly connected to a private network, thereby providing privacy and security. An IPSec VPN uses the IPSec protocol to establish the encrypted tunnel that protects data traffic. 3. Firewalls: Firewalls are security devices or software that monitor, and control incoming and outgoing network traffic based on predetermined security rules. They act as a barrier between trusted internal networks and untrusted external networks, protecting against unauthorized access and cyber threats. Firewalls filter traffic to block malicious or unwanted data while allowing legitimate communication. 4. Encryption: Encryption is the process of converting plain text or data into a coded form (ciphertext) using an algorithm and an encryption key, making it unreadable to unauthorized parties. It ensures confidentiality and protects sensitive information during storage or transmission. Decryption is the reverse process, requiring a key to convert the ciphertext back to its original form. 5. RSA-based data centres: The bidder’s data centres where SARS data may be stored must be in South Africa.   **The evidence must be provided by the Bidder in the form a declaration on the Bidder’s letterhead signed by a duly appointed Director, and the declaration must indicate all requirements as stipulated in the ISO 27001 framework, as well as the comprehensive details for the mandatory requirements.** |

|  |
| --- |
| ***Instructions for completing Response Table B below.***   * *If the Bidder wishes to attach additional documentation the Bidder must attach it as a subsection of the Additional Documentation Section (Section 7) at the end of this template. The Bidder must create a new subsection in the Additional Documentation (Section 7) for each additional document and place the document within the subsection.* * *The Bidder must then enter the following information in Response Table B (References to Additional Documentation) for each document the Bidder has attached.*   + *The Reference where the document can be found must be entered in the “Reference” field. (e.g., Section 7.1)*   + *The Document Title must be entered in the “Document Title” field (e.g., “Reference”)*   + *The Bidder must indicate what aspect of its response to the information requested by SARS in this section is supported by the additional documentation in the “Submitted in Support of” field. (e.g., “Reference from customer substantiating the number of sites”)* * *The Bidder may add more rows to “Table B: Reference to Additional Documentation” table if necessary.* * *It remains the Bidder’s responsibility to provide sufficient information to support its claim to satisfy the mandatory requirement.* |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Response Table B: References to Additional Documentation** | | |
| **Reference** | **Document Title** | **Submitted in Support of** |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

1. OPERATING CAPACITY FOR Social Media, LIVECHAT & AI/LLM carrier SOLUTION

|  |
| --- |
| ***Mandatory requirement*** |
| *Reference: RFP Main Document paragraph 8.3.*  The Bidder must be able to carry at least 10 000 000 (ten million) live chat messages over a period of 12 months.    **NB: A Bidder must submit a declaration on the Bidder company letterhead, signed by a director authorised to represent the company that affirms that the Bidder:**   1. **Can carry at least 10 000 000 (ten million) live chat messages to/from any device locally and;** 2. **To/from any device internationally.** 3. **The bidder has been in business for a consecutive period of 12-months.**   **NB: If the signed declaration letter is missing any of the three (3) specified requirements, the bidder will be disqualified at this stage of the evaluation.** |

|  |
| --- |
| ***Instructions for completing Response Table B below.***   * *If the Bidder wishes to attach additional documentation (such as invoices or reference letters from clients that provides objective proof of the bidder’s ability)* the *Bidder must attach it as a subsection of the Additional Documentation Section (Section 7) at the end of this template. The Bidder must create a new subsection in the Additional Documentation (Section 7) for each additional document and place the document within the subsection.* * *The Bidder must then enter the following information in Response Table B (References to Additional Documentation) for each document the Bidder has attached.* * *The Reference where the document can be found must be entered in the “Reference” field. (e.g., Section 7.1)* * *The Document Title must be entered in the “Document Title” field (e.g., “Reference”)* * *The Bidder must indicate what aspect of its response to the information requested by SARS in this section is supported by the additional documentation in the “Submitted in Support of” field. (e.g., “Reference from customer substantiating the number of sites”)* * *The Bidder may add more rows to “Table B: Reference to Additional Documentation” table if necessary.* * *It remains the Bidder’s responsibility to provide sufficient information to support its claim to satisfy the mandatory requirement.* |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Response Table B: References to Additional Documentation** | | |
| **Reference** | **Document Title** | **Submitted in Support of** |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

1. COMPULSORY BRIEFING SESSIONS

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| ***Mandatory requirement*** | | |
| Reference: RFP Main Document paragraph 8.3  The Bidder(s) must have attended the compulsory briefing session.  **NB: An attendance register will be taken at the compulsory briefing session, and a certificate of attendance will be issued (which will be submitted as part of the mandatory requirement, per the Mandatory Response template). If the Bidder does not attend the briefing session, the Bidder will be disqualified.** | | |
| **Instructions for completing Response Table A below.**   * *The Bidder must complete all fields in Response Table A in full. The Bidder must submit details.* * *The Bidder may add more lines to its Response in Table A if necessary.* | | |
|  | **Field name** | ***Instructions*** |
| The Bidder(s) must have attended the compulsory briefing session | *The Bidder either respond Comply/Do not comply* |
| Comment | *Any comment* |
|  | |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | | | |
| **Response Table A** | | | |
|  | **Comply/Do not comply** | **Comment** | |
| The Bidder(s) must have attended the compulsory briefing session |  |  | |
| **Response Table B: References to Attached Documentation** | | | |
| **Reference** | **Document Title** | | **Submitted in Support of** |
|  |  | |  |
|  |  | |  |

1. Authorised Signature of Bidder

*I declare that the responses and the information provided above are accurate, complete, and correct and that I am authorised to sign this declaration on behalf of the Bidder.*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Signature of Bidder’s Authorised Signatory** |  |
| **Name** |  |
| **Capacity** |  |
| **Date** |  |

1. Additional Documentation
   1. [Note to Bidder: the Document Title must be entered here]

[The Actual document must be ADDED in here - Refer to instructions 3 & 4 on first page]