RFP 14/2016 Network Carrier and Infrastructure Services

RFP Communication #1

Date of Issue: 13 July 2016

1. Answers to questions posed by Bidders.

This communication is issued in terms of paragraph 9.3 of the _SARS RFP 14-2016 1-1 Network, Server and End-user Device Services Summary Guidelines Instructions and Conditions_

The information contained in the tables below is issued subject to the provisions of paragraph 12.3 and 12.4 of the _SARS RFP 14-2016 1-1 Network, Server and End-user Device Services Summary Guidelines Instructions and Conditions._

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.

Note that the communications issued by SARS for this RFP are cumulative, i.e. Communication #N will contain all questions, errata, references to re-issued or additional documents that have been issued in previous communications - (previous communications being any Communication #M, where M is less than N).

Notices and announcements

No	Date	Notice
1.	11 July 2016	Kindly note that closing dates for RFP 14/2016 and the times that Proposals will be accepted have been amended as follows: <table><tr><td>**OLD CLOSING DATES AND TIMES**</td><td>**NEW CLOSING DATES AND TIMES**</td></tr><tr><td>01 August 2016 from 09:00 to 15:00</td><td>01 August 2016 from 09:00 to 15:00</td></tr><tr><td>02 August 2016 from 09:00 to 15:00</td><td>02 August 2016 from 09:00 to 15:00</td></tr><tr><td>**03 August 2016 from 09:00 to 15:00**</td><td>**04 August 2016 from 09:00 to 15:00**</td></tr></table> Please note that Proposals will not be accepted on 03 August 2016 due to the 2016 Municipal Elections and the declaration of 03 August 2016 as a public holiday. All references to 03 August 2016 15:00 as the Closing Date in all of the documentation in the RFP pack must be amended to 04 August 2016 15:00.

Question and Answer Table

No	Question	Answer
1.	It was found that the majority GPS coordinates for sites in the RFP is inaccurate. Will this be created and a new list sent out?	Response pending. SARS will respond in due course after checking the list.
2.	Would SARS accept the queue monitoring for the email gateway service being viewable by the vendor product management interface or is the service provider to ensure that this is viewable via monitoring and reporting portal?	SARS would prefer the monitoring and management to be performed from the Vendor product management interface. A link from the portal to the vendor product management interface would be sufficient
3.	Is IP flow reporting on the firewall a mandatory requirement?	This is not a mandatory requirement; however, SARS would prefer syslog information to be forwarded for event correlation purposes as detailed in par 8.4.5 of the *Business Requirements Specification*.
4.	There is no detail concerning the IPS in the business specification document.	This is correct; SARS do not have an IPS requirement within the scope of this tender. SARS currently owns the IPS infrastructure and the service provider must provide sufficient rack space to host such infrastructure. Please refer to par 8.2.2 of the *Business Requirements Specification* for detail concerning the hosting requirements.
5.	VSAT diagram indicates Amos SiC band. Can we assume Ku band is to be used if a different satellite can be used?	Yes, Ku Band can be assumed.
6.	Please confirm definitions upstream: • Traffic from VSAT CPE to hub • TC, Downstream • Traffic from hub to VSAT CPE = RX? • VSAT site hist, VSAT DHA sites • Downstream of 6 Mbps and upstream of 2 Mbps = 8 Mbps total pool size	Downstream means Traffic from Hub to CPE. Upstream means from CPE (Site to Hub)
7.	On Tower V can a list of PABX's be provided?	All PABX's will be decommissioned by the time this RFP will be awarded, the remaining PRI's, BRI's and Analogue lines will be directed connected to SARS-owned CPE routers.
8.	Tower V- Transcoding requirements for inbound as well as outbound calls. Does SP need to provide gateways to transcode and what type of transcoding is required (from codec to codec)?	No transcoding is required. SARS will provide / pass calls in correct codec.
9.	Tower V: 30 sites are mentioned but not all 30 are provided. Should the	The 30 sites are mentioned in the context of the current model of service provision.

No	Question	Answer
	assumption be made on the provided details of sites or should there be more sites with information on them?	SARS will be carrying the voice traffic from these 30 sites to break-out/break-in at Doornkloof and Alberton sites only. The current solution and configuration is not relevant to the design of the new model as requested in this RFP.
10.	Is there a requirement for the preferred provider to port numbers?	The Preferred Outgoing Voice Carrier Provider, as it is only carry outgoing calls will not be required to port numbers. The Primary Voice Carrier Provider is required to provide a seamless transition for SARS and thus SARS's current phone numbers for incoming calls (for example of its branch offices) must remain the same. Note that SARS's incoming toll-free and shared toll numbers are not within the scope of numbers that must be ported and are currently procured separately.
11.	With respect to changes on the customer provisioning portal, is the term config changes referring to device config changes or purchase changes?	The Customer Provisioning Portal (CPP) must be designed to keep track of purchase configuration changes. Device configuration changes are not to be tracked on the CPP.
12.	In Tower V, it has been mentioned that toll free numbers might be requested in the near future, is there toll free numbers currently? If yes, how many numbers or PRI's are carrying that toll free number?	SARS's strategy with regard to toll-free/shared toll numbers to its contact centres, call centres is under review and therefore the current services are not being replaced as a result of this RFP.
13.	In Tower I, for penetration testing how many internal and external IP that would potentially be tested?	The scope of the external assessments will focus on all external facing services and comprises some 250 IP addresses.
14.	In Tower D, in existing third (3rd) party contracts it was mentioned that a successful bidder will take full responsibility to account on the SARS existing contracts with other providers, and be responsible to manage the contract termination. Is SARS going to share or disclose the details of these contracts?	The provisions of the contract and the detailed responsibilities of the service provider with regard to managing the contract to termination will be finalised as part of the transition project.
15.	In Tower I, management and support of DNS. Please clarify if the bidder should transfer the DNS to our platform (date centre) or does SARS want the bidders to only manage the DNS which are probably seating elsewhere (3rd party)?	SARS would prefer that the primary DNS services are transferred to the successful Tower I Service Provider.
16.	In Tower V, are all remote sites breaking out locally or is the voice calls	In principle, SARS will be routing all voice calls to/from Alberton and Doornkloof. If this

No	Question	Answer
	also routed to a central location?	is not feasible, local breakout must be provided by the Primary Voice Carrier Service Provider.
17.	In Tower V, can the bidders propose a hosted PABX for all sites or can the bidder propose an alternate break out technology than BRI/PRI?	Hosted PABX services are not required. The Bidder may propose alternate break-out technology for PRI's, BRI's and Analogue services.
18.	Can the provider respond to both the preferred voice and primary carrier option?	Yes the Bidder may respond to both. The Bidder must then complete all sections of the response templates and clearly indicate in the appropriate checkboxes that it is responding to both. The evaluation of the Bidder's proposal will be conducted as follows: if the Bidder is not successful in the Primary Voice Carrier Provider evaluation and award it will remain eligible to compete for the Preferred Outgoing Carrier Provider services. Evaluation of the Primary Voice Carrier Provider Proposals will therefore be conducted first, before considering the Proposals to the Preferred Outgoing Carrier Provider.
19.	When proposing on the preferred voice carrier option, is there a requirement for monitoring and reporting or the customer provisioning portal?	Yes the Bidder must include the Monitoring and Reporting Portal and the Customer Provisioning Portal in its Proposal.
20.	Understanding that the premises of the RFP is one of transition and not transformation, how much flexibility do the bidders have to change the TC architecture design to something else in order to meet the access site bandwidth requirement?	In principle, the Bidder has the flexibility to propose an alternate solution, provided: • the WAN bandwidth requirement it met for a site. • the redundancy requirement is met. • the performance of mail and file server services provided to the access sites from the town concentrator sites will not deteriorate from the performance delivered by the current direct connection. • the transition from the current solution to any solution proposed will not have additional / impact. (any affect a new solution has must be documented) • the solution has benefits for SARS (these benefits must be described in order for SARS to evaluate the changes of the new proposed solution).
21.	Should the site be running ISP/MPLS over the last mile and hence can logically separate networks via VRF's would this be an acceptable form of separation from a voice perspective?	Logically separate networks for data and voice via VRF's is an acceptable solution. See also the answer to question 36.

No	Question	Answer
22.	There do not appear to be any details concerning the SLA's that are required for the hosting environment, hosting network infrastructure or any security responses.	The Bidder must assume that the hosting environment must be 99.99% available in respects of all utilities for the environment (Power, heating, cooling).
23.	To what extent do data sovereignty policies apply i.e. data pertaining to monitoring for an environment restricted to SA borders? Does email gateway service have to be a dedicated hardware/software platform? Can a cloud based platform be provided as an alternative provided it addresses all of the requirements?	SARS currently makes use of a cloud solution; however the management thereof remains with the boundaries of South Africa. SARS requires a logical separation of services from other clients.
24.	What if one has enough cash reserves? Do they still need a Bid Bond, or will SARS need another compliance documents?	The Bid Bond is a mandatory requirement in all of the Towers. Alternative forms of guarantee or of status will not be accepted as a substitute.
25.	What happens if SARS does not get any bidder bidding for all four (4) towers? Will SARS award to four (4) bidders, one (1) in each tower?	SARS has not made it a condition that the same Bidder must be appointed in all four Towers. On the contrary, a Bidder may bid on one or more Towers and SARS will evaluate each Tower separately.
26.	Will the recordings of the briefing session be available on the SARS website?	The Briefing Session slides will be posted to the SARS website.
27.	Will the attendance register be distributed or available on the SARS website?	The attendance register will not be published to the website. The attendees and companies represented were read out at the briefing session.
28.	Bid quotation price by April 2017, must it be valid for more than 120 days?	The Bidder's Proposal must be valid for 180 days. (Clause 9.5.of the RFP Main Document). The Bidder should note that, if successful, the Bidder's quoted price will only be eligible for adjustment on the first anniversary of the Effective Date (the date of the signing of the contract).
29.	Must each tower have all mandatory documents e.g. Tax clearance certificate, BEE certificate, Company registration etc. or just one (1) original be attached?	Note that the tax clearance certificate is not required and that the Bidder's CSD registration should be attached.

All documents that are required in the Common File do not have to be duplicated in across the Towers.

For documents that must be included a File specific to a Tower, for example the Bidder's BEE certificate in the Pricing and BEE for one Tower, the Bidder may include |

No	Question	Answer
		an original in one Tower and copies in other Tower provided the copy makes reference to the Tower in which the original can be found.
30.	In Tower D, satellite bandwidth pools are not clear i.e. from the mobile truck list only up/down speed is mentioned?	Response pending.
31.	In Tower D, there is a mention of network optimisation, what does this refer to?	The references to optimisation refer to an obligation on the service provider to ensure that SARS's requirements are optimally fulfilled from a carrier capacity, cost and technology viewpoint. This does not impose a responsibility on the service provider in Tower D to perform, for example, traffic optimisation, prioritisation or compression, although it would remain for the service provider to identify and recommend any opportunities for SARS to optimise its data carrier network performance and cost.
32.	In Tower D, talks about taking over of existing satellite infrastructure. Please elaborate?	The current VSAT equipment (dish and modem) can be re-used but will remain the property of SARS.
33.	In Tower D on the pricing sheet there's 3 SLA categories it is mentioned that there is basic standard, extended and premium. What does this refer? Secondly, it is mentioned that 3rd party CCIS to be included on the transition please elaborate further on this?	The SLA categories (Gold Silver or Bronze) refer to the time to repair See the Business Requirements Specification(par 6.4.2 -6.4.5) The Service Coverage Period (Basic, Standard, Extended or Premium) is the period during which the SLA will be measured. See the Business Requirements Specification (paragraph 5.1.7).
34.	In Tower D section 6.4.11 can SARS clarify if they need to separate (physically) networks or if the bidders can cater for Tower I on Tower D, meaning if they can include voice/VOIP COS on Tower D? This relates to section 6.4.11 and 7.4.11 as well on Tower I	Response pending. See also the answer to question 36.
35.	Please can you kindly supply us with the MSA for all four towers that we can comment on.	The 'MSA' is contained in the pack. It is the document named _SARS RFP 14-2016 4-1 Network Carrier and Infrastructure Services Agreement._ The commentary / mark-ups must be made in the prescribed format and must be contained in the template relevant to the Tower(s) the Bidder is responding to: _SARS RFP 14-2016 5-3-D Tower D Contract Response Template;_ _SARS RFP 14-2016 5-3-V Tower V Contract Response Template_;

No	Question	Answer
		SARS RFP 14-2016 5-3-I Tower I Contract Response Template; or
		SARS RFP 14-2016 5-3-S Tower S Contract Response Template
36.	Consolidation of answers to questions regarding the provision of bandwidth to carry SARS voice traffic over the SARS WAN.	All voice traffic carried over the SARS network will be carried over circuits/bandwidth provisioned out of Tower D. The requirement for circuits / bandwidth to be provisioned for the carriage of voice traffic from Tower V is limited to: **Primary Voice Carrier Service Provider** • PRI/BRI/Analogue circuits that have been requested for sites for which SARS will not be carrying the voice traffic to its Alberton and Doornkloof sites. • The provision of SIP trunking from Alberton and Doornkloof to the Service Providers switched network to carry outgoing and incoming calls. **Preferred Outgoing Voice Carrier Service Provider** • The provision of SIP trunking from Alberton and Doornkloof to the Service Providers switched network fir the carriage of outgoing calls. Note that the cost of the Preferred Outgoing Voice Carrier Service Provider's SIP trunking must be recovered from the outgoing call costs and cannot be separately charged. The data sheet issued in the RFP pack *SARS RFP 14-2016 3-2 SARS Site Classifications* must read with the understanding above. The heading in column N, instead of reading "Tower V"/"Bandwidth" should read "Bandwidth Required for Voice Traffic in Tower D". The requirement for voice traffic bandwidth is over and above the bandwidth requirement specified for data in column J and Bidders for Tower D <u>must</u> include the total requirement in their proposals for Tower D. The requirements for the separation of voice and data circuits is thus a design issue for <u>Tower D</u> and does not affect proposals for Tower V.

Errata

No	Document	Ref	Original Text / *Description*	Corrected Text / *Description*
1.	*SARS RFP 14-2016 3-2 SARS Site Classifications*	Column N heading	"Tower V"/"Bandwidth"	"Bandwidth Required for Voice Traffic in Tower D"

Documents Re-issued

No	Original Document	Updated / New Version
1	*No documents have been re-issued to date*	

Additional Documents Issued

No	Additional Documents Issued
1	RFP 14-2016 - Briefing Session 7 July 2016 Slides