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

Communication #2

Date of Issue: 26 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.	**RFP pg. 80, clause 12.13.4 states** that "If a Bidder includes evidence of experience of individuals that are not currently employed by the said bidder, then the Bidder is required include a letter or agreement from the respective individual whose evidence of experience is included in the proposal in their submission, that the individual is aware and is in agreement that their evidence of experience may be included for tendering purposes, and that the said individual confirms to commit and will make him/herself available for the contract period should the contract be awarded" • Is it necessary to include such a letter if the individual is employed by the same Group as the responding company?	Yes.
2.	The SLA terms referenced in the "Business Requirement Specification" does not specifically refer to the SLA's required on the actual products in use e.g. Dell servers in **Tower S.** For h/w SLA's be that from the OEM, a 3rd party or other services entity please confirm:	Our servers have a ProSupport plus warranty support with Dell – 4 hours restore time. For out of warranty repair, please check **Site Classification**

No	Question	Answer
	The expected response time for attending to a h/w failure? • 8 x 5 x Next Business Day or • 24 x 7 x 365 The expected time to repair/replace faulty h/w post confirmation of support request logged: • 4 hours • 8 hours • 12 hours • Custom Do the same response/repair times apply to equipment in and out of maintenance? If not please list required times for each. From a "value for money" perspective it is advised that h/w maintenance contracts be reviewed on an annual basis, rather than upfront for the contract term. • With some h/w nearing end-of-life please confirm if the contracts and associated cost related to h/w maintenance, be reviewed annually or should it cover the full term from the outset? • 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? • Should the maintenance contract on equipment irrespective of status be co-termed on maintenance renewal?	(2-2 SARS RFP 03-2024 2-2 Tower S Site Classifications) document for SLA. 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 hardware maintenance will be procured (for in-warranty equipment). 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. Servers which have reached end of life will be placed on Time and Material until replaced.
3.	In the 'Mandatory Response Templates', for all Towers, in the sections that deal with services delivery history, there is no 'Table B' for substantiating information. May we insert a Table B and include substantiating documents for these sections? (such	Yes, Bidders may insert a "Table B", but it is not mandatory/compulsory.

No	Question	Answer
	as client reference letters).	
4.	**Tower N:** **TOWER N5 Pricing:** - How will EOL (End of Life) / discontinued equipment be handled. - The Proxim requested products reach end of life and not available from Proxim. Will these be replaced with similar equipment? Must the alternative / replacement units be quoted?	Rate cards for Proxim equipment can be ignored, will be removed from the pricing templates.
5.	**Tower N:** Please clarify if the successful bidder will be responsible for monitoring? Please share details of what is expected and perhaps include a RACI for roles and responsibilities around monitoring between SARS and the successful incumbent?	The network is monitored via the SARS Network Operations Centre (NOC) and incidents are assigned to service provider Remedy Hotseat.
6.	The Networks Tower caters for pricing of specialised network support engineers. There seems to be a gap regarding cabling and infrastructure engineers. Please advise how are we to price for these roles and cater for the following rates? • Labour related pricing • Normal hours • After hours • Sunday Public holidays • Pricing per kilometer where applicable to SARS sites • Accommodation pricing where technicians have to sleep out with subsistence allowances	Cabling Engineers will be added to Pricing Template N12 for Tower N. The pricing template will be updated and uploaded to tender websites. Refer to Tower N Pricing Template – N12.
7.	Please provide Meraki Organisation ID?	Meraki Organisation ID will not be supplied, only during Transition Period.

No	Question	Answer
8.	**Tower N** Please provide the term for the EA?	The term for EA will be for a period 5 years, this will be finalized during transition period.
9.	Please share the Annual Billing or Pre-Paid Billing for the EA?	Pre-paid billing will not be provided during the tender process, however will be provided to the awarded bidder.
10.	Please confirm the start date for the Smartnet contract? Smartnet contract will be priced for 1 year upfront and then renewed annually for 5 years?	Bidders are advised to refer to question "12", Communication # 1 for further details that provide more clarity.
11.	Does SARS own any spare devices or parts, beyond the installed base? If yes, please share a list?	Bidders are advised to refer to question "12", Communication # 1 for further details that provide more clarity.
12.	Table 7.2 in the Main RFP Document Inquiry number 2.7 makes reference to the BRS 7.6. This 7.6 paragraph is not in the BRS. Kindly include the missing information?	SARS acknowledge the enquiry, the correct reference is Section 10.6 of the BRS.
13.	Table 7.2 in the Main RFP Document Inquiry number 2.8 makes reference to the BRS 7.8. This 7.8 paragraph is not in the BRS. Kindly include the missing information?	SARS acknowledge the enquiry, the correct reference is Section 10.7 in BRS.
14.	Table 7.2 in the Main RFP Document Inquiry number 2.9 makes reference to the BRS 7.9. This 7.9 paragraph is not in the BRS. Kindly include the missing information?	SARS acknowledge the enquiry, the correct reference is Section 10.8 in BRS.
15.	**Tower N** Equipment Inventory includes a list of sites with SLAs, while the individual tabs include the equipment along with the site they are located at. The number of sites assigned to the equipment exceeds the sites shared in the site list. This presents a challenge as we will not be able to assign SLAs to the correct equipment. Please share aligned and update site and equipment list?	The sites list is changing on a monthly basis, but the latest site and equipment list will be supplied during transition period. SARS will publish an updated Site classification.

No	Question	Answer
16.	**Tower S:** Please supply us with a list of Service Tags to enable us to see which are in or out of warranty? They would also help to determine the current support levels per site.	We will not supply service tags. The support levels per site is listed in the site classification (2-2 SARS RFP03-2024 2-2 Tower S Site Classification list) document.
17.	Will the successful incumbent be required to do the call logging, uploading of logs if required and then the coordination of Server Repair?	Yes. Please refer to section 3.2 of the Tower S Technical Response Template.
18.	Will the successful bidder for Tower S need to have a Call Centre for SARS and does this need to integrate with any SARS Call Desk?	Yes. The bidder is required to integrate with SARS call desk.
19.	Will BIDDER have remote access to all the serial in case BIDDER needs to upload logs? Will BIDDER have remote access to all the serial in case BIDDER needs to upload logs?	The bidder will have remote access to collect and upload logs.
20.	In laymen terms what exactly is expected from BIDDER for the in-warranty servers, what should be costed for and what should be excluded?	The Bidder must cost the management of in-warranty services per device (e.g. replacement of warranty parts) and excluded to this is firmware updates.
21.	The Site Classification list for Tower S (2.2 SARS RFP 03-2024 2-2 Tower S Site Classifications) does not correspond with the list of Servers per site as listed in (2.3 SARS RFP 03-2024 2.-3 Tower S Server devices). The Site Classification list helps a bidder to understand the SLAs per site, however; if all servers listed in the latter list has sites which do not appear in the former list, bidders will not know which SLAs apply to all sites. *After cleaning up the list a bit, there are 30 sites with servers which we do not know the SLAs for. It is also important to note the naming conventions for the sites do not correspond as well. Please share an updated list/s?*	The site classification list and Tower S Server devices list were consolidated and updated to provide clarity. This information is specified in the Site Classification document and Table S - 3 coverage Periods and Table S – 4 Service Levels - see Business Requirements Specification section 6.5. a) 2.3.1 SARS RFP 03-2024 Tower S Site Class & Devices

No	Question	Answer
22.	**Tower E:** Does SARS own any spare devices or parts, beyond the installed base? If yes, please share a list?	No.
23.	**Tower E** Please give us an idea of % of warranty vs out of warranty equipment e.g. 70/30 or other?	10% Out of Warranty and 90% IN-Warranty.
24.	We note the response times required for services in areas is this purely Response and not MTTR ? What is the MTTR linked to these areas? Please share Schedule C?	Schedule C is part of the Master Service Agreement document from page 222. 4.1 SARS RFP 03-2024 4-1 Network, Server, and End-User Device Support Services Agreement.
25.	We note the response times required for support. Will the successful incumbent be allowed to support remotely with First Call Resolution (FCR) and then despatch a tech if required? Would this be acceptable? This will allow us to respond quicker and negate the need for despatch and travelling where not required	**Tower E:** No need, there is 1st line support and other SARS technical teams that remotely evaluate incidents.
26.	Please provide OEM Make and model for all End User Device equipment types?	SARS acknowledge that this information was omitted. The information has since been provided and is available on the End User Device Specifications Document which is issued with the erratum. . Refer to document 3-E-1 Tower E End-user Device Specification.
27.	Please advise if an incident is detected during standard housekeeping, if SARS approval is required before a repair is carried out and the approx. time to receive approval if required? If SARS approval is required, kindly confirm if the approval process is manual or automated?	No approval required to do housekeeping task.

No	Question	Answer
28.	**Tower E:** Please provide approx. number of requests per month for "Service Only" items?	SARS has provided -Tower E Incident Stats document to provide further clarity to the question.
29.	Will SARS accept the provision of Bidders existing warehouse space, or is the requirement to subcontract this service mandatory? Our experience requires us to advise SARS that having multiple parties being responsible for warehousing increases the associated risks.	Subcontracting this service is not Mandatory, Bidders can use their existing warehouses.
30.	If a faulty device is swapped out with a whole unit spare (WUS) and SARS have not replaced the device within 45 days the service provider may remove the WUS. As this will disrupt the user's ability to work, please advise who is responsible for ensuring that a replacement is provided?	The use of a WUS is the responsibility of the service provider during the repair SARS is only responsible for a replacement device when faulty device is deemed UTR (Uneconomical to Repair). Please review the process flow diagrams and the Master Services Agreement for further information.
31.	Please advise the average monthly number of break-fix tickets for Tower E and the approx. percentage currently resolved remotely?	700 Tickets on a monthly basis and Tower E does not include remote support and hence no percentage available.
32.	Does SARS own any spare devices or parts, beyond the installed base? If yes, please share a list?	Tower E: No
33.	Please confirm the ITSM toolset currently in use at SARS? Also include the version?	BMC Remedy version 20.02
34.	We understand that the successful incumbent will need to integrate their ITSM tool with the SARS ITSM tool. Does SARS' integration tools have existing APIs to use or will the successful incumbent need to supply?	SARS already has a BMC Remedy web service in place which will form the basis of the integration. However, the integration of web services from MQ to SARS Remedy will require specific development and customization by SARS's integration team.

No	Question	Answer
		As the Service Provider, you will be responsible for publishing your web service according to a SARS defined schema format, which will be consumed by DataPower. ESB exposes a webservice currently, so we need the successful incumbent to advise the type of operations they would want to use, then we check on our side on the existing service what to add or amend, else we reuse. The successful incumbent must integrate with the existing service through the defined existing integration protocol (i.e. SOAP/HTTPS via DATAPOWER) through the defined SARS standards to be compliant to security needs as well. There will be a collaborative effort between the service provider and SARS to ensure the technical specifications and data formats are fully compatible and meet the integration requirements.
35.	Please confirm the middleware that would be used for the integration? Please share all applicable detail around the integration, including licencing and development costs?	The middleware that will be used is DataPower. The successful incumbent must provide details of the requirements if they will not reuse the existing interface, then SARS internally will do impact analysis and be able to suggest if there is licensing and development costs.
36.	Will SARS carry the cost for the integration development on the SARS end?	No, costs to be carried by the service provider.
37.	Will the successful incumbent be required to make use of the SARS integration service provider or is it expected off the successful incumbent to provide and manage and support the integration end-to-end?	The successful incumbent will be responsible for managing and supporting the integration end-to-end. However, it's important to note that while the service provider handles the overall integration process, specific components

No	Question	Answer
		such as the SARS Remedy side and the SARS MQ/DataPower components will be supported by SARS.
38.	Additional Attachments	Tower E – WUS Device Specifications Tower E – Device Warranty Information Tower E- MFD Usage Stats Tower N – 5.3 SARS RFP 03-2024 5-3-N Tower N Pricing Response Template