

RFP 30/2023

**APPOINTMENT OF A SERVICE PROVIDER
FOR THE PROVISION OF DIGITAL
FORENSICS REVIEW PLATFORM
SOFTWARE SOLUTION**

1. INTRODUCTION

SARS established an in-house Digital Forensics Investigation's capacity in 2004. Digital forensics is a process that entails the acquisition, preservation, processing, analysing, and reporting on evidence collected from digital media in a forensically sound manner. Digital Forensics Specialist will process the forensic images into a usable format. Processing and analysis of these acquired forensic images will be executed on this Review Platform and shared with the responsible Auditor/Investigator.

DFI investigates 100 to 150 digital media cases a year with a combined data size of at least 100 terabytes. Digital media ranges from company servers to desktops, laptops, smartphones, USB drives, tablets, gaming devices, CCTV footage, cloud storage etc. This function is aligned with the Fourth Industrial Revolution which brings with it the collection, ingestion, and analysis of huge volumes of data enabling businesses to make swift informed decisions in determining tax/customs liability.

2. THE SARS STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES ARE

Digital Forensics Investigation (DFI) is a business unit responsible for supporting all SARS's investigative units with the acquisition, storage, analysis and reporting on evidence acquired from digital media during a tax and customs investigation. DFI therefore execute its work in support of the 3rd Strategic Objective which is to "Detect taxpayers and traders who do not comply and make non-compliance hard and costly".

3. SCOPE OF WORK

Digital Forensics Investigation is currently using Forensic Tool Kit (FTK) and Magnet AXIOM Review tools for imaging, processing, and analysis of digital media within the computer forensic environment. The Forensic Review Platform must be able to support the current tools in use within the DFI environment. The solution should ensure a seamless integration of current work environment, process, and tools.

Training of DFI specialist and transitional understanding to this Digital Review Platform will be a natural progression and knowledge building and capability on the tools currently used. The software must be highly compatible with FTK and Magnet Review image ingestion.

The solution should enable intelligent use of data in understanding the links between various connected role-players from multiple data sources. The following performance attributes should be an integral part of the solution:

a) Centralised processing

Centralised processing should allow multiple processing/indexing to run concurrently on multiple devices at high speed, which will release workstations for DFI specialist to perform analysis and investigations and not be held-back by the processing stage.

b) Real time-interactive investigation

The solution should allow for at least fifteen (15) concurrent users on a web-based interaction between the DFI Specialist and the investigators/auditors, which will enhance efficiency regarding investigation turnaround times. Evidence files can be shared securely. The remote login process must be permissible, thus enabling work to be carried out from various working sites.

c) Leverage SARS Investigations related to Big Data

Past, present, and future data will be mined to build a more intelligent picture of understanding taxpayer and taxpayer behaviour. Currently, DFI has high volumes of historical data relating to some of the current tax investigation focus areas, it can be used to enhance current and future investigations. This solution will enable in-depth mining and analysis of DFI's database, cross-case information search and analysis. Estimated quantity of data will 100 to 300 Terabytes within a financial year and an additional 700 terabytes of historical data.

d) Case and information management

The system must allow for effective management of the cases and the usage of evidence collected. The system must allow for delegation of control and separation of information access by classification. Information managed in a secure environment and be subject to a limited time-based access, therefore eliminating sensitive information left on investigators computers, thereby limiting the risk of possible data leaks.

e) Artificial intelligence

Information overload is the biggest hurdle to overcome when searching for evidence. Predictive coding functionality is required to efficiently identify the most relevant data. Artificial intelligence in digital forensics includes the elimination of manual review processes that include neural network-based machine learning algorithms that automatically detect previously unknown images and video clips related to key categories. The solution needs to be able to search and identify persons of interest with advanced facial recognition capabilities, including advanced case data filtering with unique facets.

f) Data presentation and visualisation

The system must enable interactive and integrated geographic mapping, chart, and link analysis tools to make sense of large data from diverse sources, structured and unstructured data sets.

4. PRODUCT DELIVARABLE

The Digital Forensic Review software platform must be compatible with leading digital forensic suites AND current licensed software packages.

- The software should have the ability to allow for at least fifteen (15) users to collaborate in real time with multiple devices (i.e laptop, desktop and mobile devices).
- The software must support the forensic portable package extraction AND analysis.
- The software must have case management capabilities AND user management capabilities.
- The software must have the ability to ingest evidence sources which had previously been processed without extra manual work AND evidence should be readily available to review.

If required, the service provider should be able to do provide a demo on the capabilities of the required software. The service provider must be accredited by the OEM to provide the Digital Forensics Review Software/s with sufficient experience, and implementation track record, offering technical support.

5. ADMINISTRATIVE ORDERING AND REPORTING:

5.1 Ordering

The successful bidders must:

- i) Have ordering procedures that are efficient and user friendly.

5.2 Product Availability:

- ii) The required must be made available to SARS and copy thereof stored on the SARS Digital Media Library.

6. PRICING




Bidder must ensure that all costs related to the supply of the goods are presented, no additional costs can be entertained after the tender is awarded.

6.1 Pricing Structure -

- a) Bidders must price all line items.

7. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

- a) The successful bidder shall upon receipt of written notification of an award, sign the Services Agreement proposed by SARS. The service levels agreement shall form an integral part of the Services Agreement.

BSC APPROVAL AND SIGNATORIES			
NAME	DESIGNATION	DATE	SIGNATURE
Deon Naude	Ops Specialist: Digital Forensic	2023-11-29	
Gerhardus Oberholzer	Specialist: Digital Forensic	2023-11-29	
Sibongile Sigasa	Ops Specialist: Digital Forensic	2023-11-29	<i>ST Sigasa</i>
BUSINESS AREA LEAD APPROVAL AND SIGNATURE			
Patricia Langa	Business Area Lead: Digital Forensic	2023-11-30	 type text here