



Date: 26 January 2018

To: All Participants

Dear Sirs,

Re: Clarification on the Procurement Exercise for “Internet connectivity for Agalega through mobile based services between Mainland Mauritius and the Island of Agalega within the Republic of Mauritius, Ref No. NCS/SBD11/12-17/USF-AGALEGA/10”

Further to the pre-bid meeting held at the ICT Authority on 22 January 2018 for the provision of internet connectivity for Agalega through mobile based services between mainland Mauritius and the Island of Agalega within the Republic of Mauritius and the queries raised by bidders, the ICT Authority under Section ITB 10.1, is issuing the enclosed clarifications and amendments which can also be viewed on our website at www.icta.mu, which have to be taken into consideration upon submission of bid as per date specified in the bidding document.

These clarifications and amendments shall form an integral part of the bidding document, as amended.

Clarifications: -

Query No. 1: What is the expected number of mobile users over the platform which will provide the service?

Reply No. 1: The population is around 300 and with the forthcoming projects (airstrip, jetty, ...), it is expected that number of users would increase.

Query No. 2: With regards to the LTE network, should handsets/modems be provided?

Reply No. 2: No. The project needs to cater for setting of internet services along with the necessary equipment (such as dongles, routers, etc...) at the given premises listed in the bidding document. The Authority will be funding only the satellite backhaul part as well as the provision of internet services at the given locations in the bidding document. The rest of services will be based on individual subscriptions, which will not be funded by the Authority.

Query No. 3: Will the network be opened to the public?

Reply No. 3: Yes, it will be opened to the public.

Query No. 4: The bidding document mentioned coverage. Is it the island coverage or the population coverage? Can the Authority be more specific?

Reply No. 4: Primarily, the intention is for mainland coverage, i.e. the population coverage.

Query No. 5: Will voice service need to be offered at some point in time?

Reply No. 5: The focus is for internet services to be provided at the given locations as per the scope of service. However, VOIP is an inbuilt feature of 4G services over LTE or LTE Advanced networks.

Query No. 6: What is the provision for site acquisition in Agalega?

Reply No. 6: Operators need to make their own arrangement and liaise with the Outer Islands Development Corporation (OIDC) for locations where towers will be erected. The Authority will act as facilitator for the potential bidders towards the OIDC, but funding from the USF will only be for the services requested as per the tender document.

Query No. 7: Any restrictions with regards to tower heights near to the airport?

Reply No. 7: Yes, with the airstrip in Agalega, all the international regulations are applicable there as well.

Query No. 8: Is a separate numbering plan required?

Reply No. 8: Not necessarily. The link itself is between Mauritius and Agalega, so it could be an extended set of numbers.

Query No. 9: The main concern is for transport logistics to be arranged to travel to and from Agalega and also provision of electric supply. Can the Authority provide additional information on same?

Reply No. 9: It is expected that when submitting their best quotes, bidders will have to either cater for their own power supply or liaise with the OIDC to be able to render the services at the given locations. In terms of logistics, bidders will be able to liaise with OIDC for the transport facilities which are available to travel from and to Agalega to ensure that the project is operational. Over and above the planned four (4) trips in a year to Agalega on the Mauritius Trochetia Vessel, there are other fishing vessels which travel to Agalega or other appropriate vessels through the Seychelles Islands.

Query No. 10: Are lodging facilities available in Agalega?

Reply No. 10: Yes, it comes at a cost and the arrangement for food can also be made. All the necessary quotes are available with the OIDC.

Query No.11: Do the computers also need to be provided at the Public Internet Access Corner?

Reply No. 11: Yes, a minimum of five (5) computers along with the relevant accessories need to be provided at the given location in the tender document.

Query No. 12: With regards to the radio frequency band to be utilised, can the 800 MHz be utilised to provide service on the LTE or LTE Advanced platform?

Reply No. 12: The 800 MHz radio frequency band is not yet opened.

Query No. 13: Under additional services, request is made for additional bandwidth of 20 Mbps and 45 Mbps. Can the ratio of uplink and downlink be provided?

Reply No. 13: The ratio utilised can be 1:3.

Query No. 14: What is the need for going to the LTE or LTE Advanced technology when the satellite backhaul capacity is only 10 Mbps?

Reply No 14: The internet parameters for LTE and LTE Advanced are well defined compared to 2G and 3G platform and the latency will considerably reduce on a better technical platform.

Query No. 15: The tender is for 36 months, what will happen after the 36 months?

Reply No. 15: With regards to the infrastructure which will be put in place, that will be allowed and opened to other operators for use. Ideally, after the 36 months the operators may provide all the services without USF support. However, if the operators are unable to operate without USF support, a tender exercise may again be launched subject to any policy decision by the Government, but at that time the physical infrastructure created in this procurement exercise will already be in place and be provided to the next winning bidder.

Query No. 16: Can the date for service provision to be operational be extended to September 2018 instead of June 2018?

Reply No. 16: This query needs to be debated with the various stakeholders, and if the time-frame is being changed, bidders will be informed accordingly.

Query No. 17: Can the bid submission date be rescheduled by two (2) weeks?

Reply No. 17: The Authority would not wish to change the bid submission date.

Amendments: -

Bidders are hereby informed that the following amendments are being brought to the bid document: -

1. The services in Agalega shall be operational as from **September 2018** instead of June 2018.

2. In line with Para (1) above: -

(a) column 2 of the table under Para (c) of Page 33 of the bid document is amended and should now be read as **September 2018 – August 2021**.

(b) column 1 of the table under Para (d) of Page 34 of the bid document is amended and should now be read as **September 2018 – August 2021**.

(c) column 2 of Annex 1 'Cost Proposal Breakdown' of Page 44 of the bid document is amended and should now be read as **September 2018 – August 2021**.

(d) sub-section 1.2 of Section V 'Activity Schedule' of Page 49 of the bid document is amended and should now read as follows: -

*"Any contract awarded pursuant to this bidding exercise shall be for a base contract period of **36 months**, ending in **August 2021**."*

