

Response to Queries (RFP Reference Number: IT-09/2023-24)

Pre-Bid responses to queries raised for RFP for Managed Network Services for Network Operation Centre (IT-09/2023-24)

Date: 23/02/2024

Sr. No	RFP Page No	RFP Heading and Section	RFP Clause	Requested Change / Clarification	Response to Technical Query
1	6	Current State of NOC & WAN	The bidder will also be responsible for the monitoring and configuration management of all network infrastructure comprising of Routers, switches, modems, Video Conferencing equipment's, WLAN controllers, Wireless APs, WLAN monitoring systems, LAN and WAN links, NMS systems, Life Size and WebEx Video conferencing solutions, private and public Cloud based solutions etc.	Kindly share complete inventory which is part of this RFP scope along with the list of existing tools. We assume that all the required tools like NMS/EMS, SIEM, NMS, management/monitoring, syslog etc. are already in place in StockHolding's environment.	Asset details are shared as per RFP details. All the required tools like NMS, SIEM, Syslog are in place in StockHolding's environment. NMS Tool: Manage Engine's OpManager.

2	8	Eligibility Criteria	<p>The bidder should have experience in minimum 03 (three) corporate customers in India for at least last 05 (five) years from RFP date for providing onsite (from customer premises) NOC services for managing and monitoring the network consisting of -</p> <p>(i) At least 900 remote network devices (such as routers, switches, etc.) per project.</p> <p>(ii) Providing remote Network Management Service such as installation, configuration & management of WAN links, L3 & L2 network devices of at least 200 branches.</p> <p>(iii) Experience of managing minimum 500 links (Branch Links, Extranet links,) WiMAX/CDMA/ISDN Backup Link) from multiple service providers</p>	<p>Kindly change this clause to - The bidder should have experience in minimum 03 (three) corporate/Government/PSU customers in India for at least last 05 (five) years from RFP date for providing onsite (from customer premises) NOC services for managing and monitoring the network consisting of -</p> <p>(i) At least 900 remote network devices (such as routers, switches, etc.) per project.</p> <p>(ii) Providing remote Network Management Service such as installation, configuration & management of WAN links, L3 & L2 network devices of at least 200 branches/junctions (smart/safe city projects)</p> <p>(iii) Experience of managing minimum 500 links (Branch Links, Extranet links,) WiMAX/CDMA/ISDN Backup Link) from multiple service providers</p>	<p>"Corporate" refers to any type of Organization in India i.e. Private, Government, PSU etc.</p> <p>"Branches" refers to branch offices/ office locations.</p>
3	13	Technical Bid Evaluation	<p>a) 3 project – 12 Marks b) 4-7 projects – 16 Marks c) More than 7 projects – 20 Marks</p>	<p>Kindly clarify that Minimum qualification marks are 16, so does it mean that minimum 12 marks does not qualify the vendor for technical evaluation.</p>	<p>Yes. Minimum qualification marks are 16.</p>
4	13	Technical Bid Evaluation	<p>Bidder should have an exposure of managing at least 500 links (Branch Links, Extranet links,) WiMAX/CDMA/ISDN Backup Link) from multiple service providers for minimum 03 (three) corporate customers in India during last 05 years from the RFP date.</p>	<p>Kindly change this clause to - Bidder should have an exposure of managing at least 500 links (Branch Links, Extranet links,) WiMAX/CDMA/ISDN Backup Link) from multiple service providers for minimum 03 (three) corporate/Government/PSU customers in India during last 05 years from the RFP date.</p>	<p>"Corporate" refers to any type of Organization in India i.e. Private, Government, PSU etc.</p>

5	19	Scope of Work (SoW)	The bidder will ensure 24X7 network service availability through onsite network infrastructure monitoring and management. (7:00AM to 23:00PM Onsite and 23:00PM to 7:00AM on need basis) It will be the responsibility of the bidder to take immediate actions to ensure 24x7 network services availability.	Please change this point to "The System Integrator should have ServiceDesk which operates 24x7 and should have skilled resources for technical support. On need basis SI should provide on-site support and services at StockHolding's Mahape and Bangalore on a 24 x 7 x 365 basis".	No change.
6	21	Logging of critical devices	The bidder is required to maintain the syslog of critical network devices installed at DC, NDR, DR and critical locations for a period of three months.	We assume that the require syslog tool and required storage is already operational by StockHolding team and bidder need NOT to provision any syslog server in their scope.	Understanding is correct.
7	17	Scope of Work(SOW) - Network Event and Monitoring	Bidder shall monitor the network infrastructure to detect conditions which impact network connectivity to proactively detect deviations from normal operating levels. The monitoring must be capable of detecting both hard down failure conditions and proactively detect degraded response times to applications and services. The monitoring shall be implemented and maintained in DC and DR and not depended upon a single location & device.	Assuming that the required network monitoring and management tools would be provided by StockHolding team. It includes supply and set-up of these tools.	Understanding is correct.
8	17	Scope of Work (SoW)	The bidder shall manage telecommunication data circuit additions, moves, changes and disconnections which may be the result of a change in requirements or transfer between telecommunication vendors due to contract changes.	Request to change the "manage" clause to "coordinate" with network service provider.	Link Management is in scope of bidder.
9	19	Scope of Work (SoW)	StockHolding reserves the right to make changes to the list of locations as and when required without assigning any reasons thereto.	Kindly provide the details in advance to make the readiness of resources.	StockHolding will provide those details in advance from time to time.

10	19	Scope of Work (SoW)	<p>Qualified Shadow resource/s, having equivalent or more skillsets, qualifications, experience and immediately deployed onsite without any delay. On the unavailability of the resident onsite resource/s. Deviation of such arrangement from bidder's side will apply a penalty of Rs. 5000/- per instance per day basis as per the penalty criteria for resource management.</p>	<p>Request to make relaxation on the penalty clause and would recommend to add service credits instead of Penalty.</p>	<p>StockHolding may chose to impose penalty either in the form of amount or in the form of Service credits from selected bidder subject to the critically of the services or business impact due to service / resource unavailability.</p>
11	22	Network Link Management	<p>StockHolding has two service providers for MPLS Connectivity. Apart from that there are other service providers like Bharti, Sify, Airtel, TCL, TTML, TTSL etc. for extranet, Internet links and in total 255 links for monitoring and maintenance purposed.</p>	<p>Since the SLA ownership lies with existing service provider for link management ,Bidder responsibility would be only coordination with service provider</p>	<p>For link management bidder's responsibilities are included in RFP.</p>
12	22	Network Link Management: Follow-ups with Service Providers and Escalations	<p>As BSNL has migrating their links from copper to fiber and for such migration BSNL requires an additional MLLN modem, Media converter etc. to be purchased. Bidder will ensure that all such accessories will be procure locally by bidder with the make and model suggested and / or recommended by BSNL and same can be connected to respective branch with additional commercial to StockHolding. This process needs to be completed after taking prior approval from Stockholding and within the stipulated time period provided by respective service providers.</p>	<p>Any device require to enable the ISP circuits or connection would be provided by StockHolding or Service provider.</p>	<p>The point mentioned by us is related to termination of link in Stockholding branches and not at ISP end. As per the use case example Media convertor to be procure by bidder and invoice required to be raised with Stockholding Branch.</p>

13	24	Network Link Management: testing and Integration	As StockHolding's near DR and DR Site has been hosted with different service provider, bidder has to ensure a visit at these IDC locations from bidder's field engineers on monthly basis, during DR Drill activities and in case of any support requirement from StockHolding site. Bidder has to keep a track of such visits and send a monthly reports to StockHolding for verification purposed. Bidder has to ensure that local engineer's will be available from their team in case of any urgent requirements arises to visit IDC.	Kindly clarify the field engineer here, will these resources will be in addition to the resources deployed on StockHolding sites ? Will travel expanses be born by bidder or StockHolding?	These are field support engineers providing support to Stockholding branches incase of link down. Visit to branch as well as to coordinate with local lineman and make the link functional is responsibility of field support engineers. There expenses will be born by bidder only.
14	30	Deliverables	Provide 24X7X365 comprehensive maintenance support (all parts inclusive) at DC and DR to resolve any technical problem/issues.	24X7X365 comprehensive maintenance support would be provided by existing AMC service provider, Bidder would be responsible for coordination with AMC service provider to resolve the problem/issues. Bidder will provide remote management. Kindly clarify.	24x7x365 Comprehensive management and monitoring for all the in scope devices deployed in Stockholding locations for configurations and related troubleshooting.
15	33	Bidder's Roles & Responsibility	Deploy tools Monitoring tools as a service.	Kindly elaborate the expectation here, kindly help with the details on the tool requirement so that proposal can be shared accordingly. It will be considered as separate project.	Kindly ignore this as we have OpManager tool for device monitoring and backup. Same needs to be managed by bidder.
16	39	NMS Engineer	Campus Survey monthly report (ducts, pathways with in the StockHolding premises and leading to the StockHolding premises) should be submitted	kindly elaborate the scope here, what all details to be captured in the survey report, kindly help with the CAD drawings of all the facilities where bidder needs to submit the monthly survey report.	Its Internal HUB rooms management where in which floor wise access switches are connected.

17	39	NMS Engineer	Ensure minimum uptime of 99% for MPLS & Backbone & P2P links, 98% for all other links as per the defined SLA by StockHolding on monthly basis.	Link uptime is governed by StockHolding's back to back SLA (as requested in this clause) with service providers in StockHolding's - service provider agreement, penalty or SLA deviation on bidder is applicable only on the delay at bidder's end to log the call with service provider.	Here, we are not only expecting to log a call with bidder, where as we are expecting that bidder's field support engineer at respective StockHolding branch location to visit branch and /or Exchange for fault resolution as per the defined timelines and reported to us. Failure to that penalty will be applicable as per RFP terms and conditions.
18	46	Uptime Commitment for Links: Table G	General Queries	Link uptime is governed by StockHolding's back to back SLA (as requested in this clause) with service providers in StockHolding - service provider agreement, penalty or SLA deviation on bidder is applicable only on the delay at bidder's end to log the call with service provider.	Here, we are not only expecting to log a call with bidder, where as we are expecting that bidder's field support engineer at respective StockHolding branch location to visit branch and /or Exchange for fault resolution as per the defined timelines and reported to us. Failure to that penalty will be applicable as per RFP terms and conditions.
19	52	Problem Management: Table N	Total number of RCAs submitted within 48 Hrs / Total number of RCAs	request to make changes in RCA metric. The RCA calculation/submission should be 1 week.	No change.
20	57	Subcontracting	As per scope of this RFP, sub-contracting is not permitted. The bidder shall not assign or subcontract the assignment or any part thereof to any other person/firm.	Request you to allow the subcontracting, it will allow bidder to leverage on our strong partner ecosystem to extend best possible services to StockHolding, bidder is fully responsible to own the required SLA as per the RFP.	Sub-Contracting or Consortium is not allowed for this RFP.
21	44 to 54	SLA & Penalty	Deviation of every 1% from the benchmark will attract a penalty of 2% of the monthly PO value. Penalty will be calculated on a monthly basis post verification of monthly report.	The rate of penalty is too high and there is no cap and there is repetitive mentioning of that penalty level at various pages under various sub-heads and at some places it has even gone upto 10% as well e.g. for preventive maintenance states 10% each instance of monthly invoice value (page no. 50)	No change.

22	44 to 54	SLA & Penalty	Preventive maintenance: 10% per instance	There must be cap and the rate of penalties should be based upon certain rational and without the same being repetitive in nature under different head.	Maximum penalty will be 10% of monthly invoice value.
23	56	Termination	StockHolding reserves right to terminate the contract by giving 30 days prior written notice	Kindly change to 90 days	No Change.
24	16	Scope of Work (SoW)	General Queries	We assume that redesign/modify herein means the finetuning of configuration only; otherwise modifications sometimes may be read as addition of network hardware/software which doesn't seem to be the intention in current scope	No, As stated in Pre-bid meeting we may go ahead for upcoming projects in near future like Cloud deployments, SDWAN deployment, which may required topology or network architecture related modifications based on solution requirement.
25	17	Scope of Work (SoW): Network Infrastructure Management	General Queries	Is contractor same as bidder? If both terms are same then enhancing network management tool may need purchase of licenses, which we assume will be done by SHCIL if convinced on enhancement suggested by bidder	Yes, understanding is correct. Based on bidder's recommendation we will evaluate the necessary tools and/or purchase additional licenses if any.
26	44 to 54	SLA & Penalty	General Queries	We assume the penalty is applicable on non-availability of shadow resource in case of main resource going on leave or on absence	As clearly stated in Pre-bid meeting we need shift to cover with required resources as per PO terms and conditions. Any deviation may apply penalty.
27	20	Scope of Work (SoW)	General Queries	We assume the training of bidder's resources on new NMS/EMS will be arranged by SCHIL in case of migration from existing to new tool	If StockHolding is procuring New tool, then required Knowledge transfer (KT) session will be provided to onsite resources deployed by bidder.
28	21	Network Infrastructure device management	General Queries	While SCHIL expects support from bidder on old and network devices, it is assumed that the device count would not increase substantially as the current manpower are planned in line with current scope & inventory	EOS and EOL devices will be replace with latest technology devices.

29	21	Network Infrastructure device management	General Queries	We assume syslog exists in set-up, bidder just need to maintain. If the syslog resources are increased or suggested by bidder for increase due to log requirements from devices, then SCHIL would arrange the additional resources for proper working of syslog	StockHolding has deployed a centralised Syslog for log management to be taken care by respective bidder. Management of Hardware resources on Syslog server will be taken care by StockHolding.
30	54	Payment Terms	General Queries	The sections mention the periodicity as monthly but no time limit for payment. Please confirm that the payment shall be made within 30 days of submission of invoice	Payment will be released at the earliest after receiving all required documents along with invoices.
31	55	Dispute Resolution	General Queries	We suggest the dispute to be resolved through arbitration act of 1996 wherein both parties can select a neutral arbitrator to give the decision and that decision shall be binding on both the parties. In case of parties not agreeing to selection of arbitrator, the same can be taken from arbitration panel as suggested by Mumbai High courts/arbitration center. This will provide the speedy resolution	No change.
32	56	Indemnify	General Queries	Since there are no supply of products in current contract, we request to remove the “infringement due to patent or statutory infringements in the equipment offered by bidder”	No change.

33	57	Limitation of liability	General Queries	The Limitation of liability clause seems to be right in the spirit but onerous in drafting. For example, the direct liability is capped through 2 conditions (SLA and all other claims) but it seems unlimited from the word “without limiting below”. The clause should start with “Each party’s total aggregate liability.....” The Exclusion and exceptions are captured rightly, so just correction in 1 st sentence will make it fully right	No change.
34	8	Eligibility Criteria (For On-site Manpower Assignment: Technician (Cabling) (1 number)	Minimum Graduate / Technical Diploma Holder in related field with minimum 05 years of experience in Data Centre Non-IT Infrastructure	We request to allow first-level contractor for cabling related work, SI will be directly accountable & responsible for first level contractor project governance and deliverable	No change.
35	8	Eligibility Criteria (For On-site Manpower Assignment)	General Queries	It is mandatory to have on-site resources on direct payroll of bidder ?	Yes. 3rd party payroll are not allowed
36	16	Scope of Work (SoW)	General Queries	It is mentioned in SOW that re-design, re-installation and reconfiguration is needed wherever applicable. Could you please highlight the current design challenges and pain points in the existing network.	Currently we do not have any challenges in current setup, but as stated in kick-off meeting we may go ahead for upcoming projects in near future like Cloud deployments, SDWAN deployment, which may required topology or network architecture related modifications based on solution requirement.
37	17	Scope of Work (SoW): Network Event and Monitoring:	Monitor the network infrastructure to detect circuit, equipment and security issues that would impact functionality or degrades performance;	If devices are EOL/EOS then what would be possible options for the bidder?	EOL and EOS is for branch network devices which is going to be change in near future. Where as DC, DR devices are recently migrated with newer ones.

38	19	Scope of Work (SoW): Network Infrastructure Management	The bidder has to perform warranty, inventory, AMC & Vendor Management to enable coordination with internal & external agencies including Internet SPs, WAN SPs for replacement or relocation of any hardware/software/service components.	We would current inventory details to highlight the EOL/EOS devices.	Its provided as a part of RFP document.
39	19	Scope of Work (SoW)	StockHolding reserves the right to make changes to the list of locations as and when required without assigning any reasons thereto.	How frequent relocations happen ?	5 -6 branches shifting in a year.
40	19	Scope of Work (SoW)	However, StockHolding is and will be in the process of the changing and migrating the end of support (EOS) and End of Life (EOL) network devices, servers, equipment's and appliances with equivalent one and /or higher specification / configuration model decided by the StockHolding by coordinating with respective / New OEMs from time to time. So number of devices may modify (Add / Delete) as per the requirement of organization. Considering this StockHolding expects that bidder will support to all such old and new network devices during migrations, new implementations, new technology upgrades like SDWAN, NAC implementations across all StockHolding branch locations as and when decided by the organization during entire support period of 3 years with no additional cost of maintenance during such upgrades and migrations adopted by StockHolding.	How many devices are EOS/EOL or going to be in next 1 year ?	Count is already provided in RFP document.

41	19	Scope of Work (SoW)	General Queries	In 1 st para at page 44, RFP mentions the penalty of 10% of monthly fees for each violation. First, it is way too high as the monthly penalty cap should be 10% (not each violation) and at the same time, pt S at page 19 mentions penalty of INR 5000 for such violation. Please clarify	As stated in Kick-off meeting total cap of 10% on monthly invoice value is applicable. Kindly refer page number 49, point E. Resource Management, Table - K, for penalty related to resource management. Kindly ignore the penalty define on page number 19.
42	8	Eligibility Criteria	Bidder should have presence at all Tier 1 cities in India	Clarification from StockHolding	"Tier 1 cities" refers to Bangalore, Delhi, Hyderabad, Chennai, Ahmedabad, Kolkata, Mumbai and Pune.
Note: All other clauses/Terms & conditions except above shall remain same as per RFP (RFP Reference Number: IT-09/2023-24)					