



## **Answers questions posed via e-mail and during briefing session held on 11 April 2025 via Microsoft Teams**

**1. Is it compulsory for the Cloud Hosting Provider to be SITA Certified?**

Registration with SITA is not required. However, compliance with South African data protection laws and relevant industry standards is necessary.

**2. Please clarify your understanding of a "seamless" migration.**

A "seamless" migration means transferring services, applications, and data to a new cloud platform with minimal downtime and no data loss.

**3. What would the customer allow to connect the current SITA site and the bidder Cloud in Teraco (e.g., IPSEC Tunnel or cross-connect)?**

IPSEC VPN tunnels and dedicated cross-connects are acceptable, provided they meet the required security and compliance standards, including encryption.

**4. Will the required VPN services be for a site-to-site connection or user access?**

Both types are site-to-site for data center connectivity and user access for remote connections.

**5. If the VPN is for user access, how many users will be accessing the VPN?**

Six users.

**6. Is MFA (Multifactor Authentication) required if the VPN is for user access?**

MFA is required for VPNs due to strong industry standards and the need for compliance with data protection regulations.

**7. SQL Licensing: Is this Enterprise or Standard?**

The Regulator will provide the required SQL version and license.

**8. Setup and config: Does security refer to SOC or standard checking of logs, etc.?**

Standard log checking would suffice, provided the regulator can fully monitor the environment.

9. **For the 24/7 technical support, does this refer to OS support, SQL Support, or only platform level?**

The document outlines 24/7 technical support, including routine updates, patch management, and maintenance for the operating system and SQL Server. It emphasises the need for system availability and responsiveness to critical incidents, highlighting the importance of full-stack support.

10. **What do you mean by "Configuration of application subdomains"? Can you provide subdomain information?**

This refers to managing DNS records and routing for application access; the subdomain information will be shared with the successful bidder.

11. **Please confirm that the high availability is for infrastructure, not the application.**

High Availability (HA) in this document focuses on infrastructure. Bidders must configure failover, load balancing, and database replication to ensure continuous service availability. While application-level HA is not required, infrastructure must support it.

12. **For performance testing upon completion of migration, who will conduct the testing, and what are the test criteria?**

This will involve collaboration between the successful bidders and the Regulator.

13. **Does the customer require an external vendor to perform the vulnerability assessment, or can the bidder perform this?**

The bidder should perform these assessments either directly or through a partner. The regulator should be granted access to run its evaluation of the infrastructure.

14. **What kind of SSL certificate should be provided, multi-domain, wildcard, and for how many sub-domains?**

A wildcard certificate should be provided, covering four sub-domains. The Regulator currently has a certificate that expires at the End of September. The appointed service provider will provide this certificate from October onwards.

15. **How is the infrastructure joined to the current active directory environment if that is the setup?**

The infrastructure is not domain-joined, and there will be no requirement.

**16. What is the current hosting Platform at SITA?**

SITA hosts the current infrastructure for the Information Regulator using the Cloud Foundation Infrastructure (CFI), a core component of the Government Private Cloud Ecosystem (GPCE). The GPCE is developed through a hybrid cloud infrastructure in partnership with Huawei, IBM, and Gijima.

**17. Performance Security**

The performance security shall be denominated in the currency of the contract, or in a freely convertible currency acceptable to the purchaser and shall be in one of the following forms:

(a) a bank guarantee or an irrevocable letter of credit issued by a reputable bank located in the purchaser's country or abroad, acceptable to the purchaser, in the form provided in the bidding documents or another form acceptable to the purchaser.

**18. Please can you clarify if there is an Annexure or Template that should accompany SBD 3.3 Pricing Schedule?**

There are no Annexures A and B that accompany SBD 3.3 it was a typing error.

**19. The migration is assumed to be lift-and-shift with the same Operating system and SQL server version—please confirm.**

No, the migration should be to an environment specified in the tender document. The Information Regulator will provide the SQL Server 2022 standard licensing.

**20. What other software is installed on these servers?**

In addition to the Operating System and SQL Server, the servers run registered applications, including the myRegulator portal, E-services, and APIs, as specified in the Reference.

**21. Could you briefly describe the functionality of the application (myRegulator portal & E-services, API application) running on these servers? Who is responsible for configuring the application on the new cloud platform?**

The myRegulator portal and E-services facilitate online interactions between the Information Regulator and the public, providing services such as registration, complaints handling, and public data access through web and API interfaces. The successful bidder will provide the cloud infrastructure and migrate the application and data from the previous environment. The IRSA's IT Team will test and connect the applications.

**22. Are these servers exposed to external users over the internet?**

Yes, the servers host applications that are exposed to external users via the internet. Therefore, security and access controls will be necessary.

**23. Who is responsible for testing the application once migrated? Do we have test cases?**

The Information Regulator's IT team and the appointed service provider will be responsible for testing the applications post-migration. IRSA will provide test cases to facilitate proper application validation.

**24. What are the security and compliance requirements?**

Security and compliance requirements include data sovereignty within South Africa, compliance with POPIA, thorough endpoint protection, monthly vulnerability assessments, and high-level encryption for data at rest and in transit. Providers must demonstrate compliance through appropriate certifications or compliance documentation.

**25. Is there only one environment (Production), or are there non-production environments as well? If non-production exists, can you share the inventory?**

Currently, the primary focus of this RFB is the production environment. Our non-production environment is on-prem and not part of the deliverables on this tender.

**26. Do you have any HA/DR configured for this application? If yes, provide details.**

The current setup includes High Availability (HA) and Disaster Recovery (DR) provisions with storage and VM-level replication across geographically separated data centers. Backup policies and VM snapshots are performed regularly per the specifications outlined in the service detail.

**27. Do you already have any AWS landing zones to host this application?**

No AWS landing zone is currently established. The successful bidder, including any connectivity and networking components, will set this up, provided the winning proposal is AWS-based.

**28. Can connectivity be established from the current on-premises site to the AWS cloud?**

No existing direct connectivity to AWS is established; this must be provisioned as part of the implementation phase. (If the winning Bid is AWS-based)

**29. Will you pay the AWS subscription fee or expect that through the supplier's book?**

The supplier must manage the AWS subscription as part of the contract arrangement, which should be included in the bidder's pricing structure. (If the winning Bid is AWS-based)

**30. What is your envisaged growth rate on AWS cloud? Please share the roadmap.**

Subject to business needs, an estimated annual growth rate of approximately 15-20% is anticipated. After the award, the successful bidder will discuss detailed capacity planning and a more refined roadmap.

- 31. We understand you want us to provision just two vanilla VMs—one for the application server and another for the database server. The rest of the activities, such as deploying applications, configuration, testing, etc., are outside the scope—please confirm.**

Provisioning includes infrastructure setup (VMs), OS installation, and infrastructure readiness. The winning bidder and IRSA will handle application deployment, configuration, and testing.

- 32. OS license will be bundled with AWS subscription fees. Do you want to use a managed database (RDS) for SQL Server?**

Managed database services (such as RDS) for SQL Server are not currently in scope unless explicitly agreed in further discussions post-award. The initial requirement specifies dedicated VM-based SQL Server hosting.

- 33. Is there any other licensed software besides the Operating System and SQL server database?**

No additional licensed software beyond the OS and SQL Server is included in this RFB.

- 34. There is just one application server; what is the use of a load balancer? Can you also detail the requirements for security hardening, networking, firewalls, and load balancers?**

The load balancer can be excluded, provided there is an HA setup for the two Virtual Servers.

Requirements include advanced security hardening aligned with CIS benchmarks, strict firewall rules, WAF deployment, and automated monitoring with detailed logging capabilities.

- 35. You are looking for 24/7 technical support. We assume this is on-call support and only Level-3 technical support. Please confirm.**

Correct, the required support is 24/7 on-call Level-3 technical support focused on infrastructure and critical issues resolution.

- 36. You asked to ensure high availability (with a minimum uptime of 99.5%). How do you want us to support HA with just one set of servers?**

The bidder must propose a suitable HA solution, which usually involves additional redundancy at the infrastructure or hypervisor level, possibly across multiple Availability Zones or physical sites, to ensure 99.5% availability.

**37. Could you please elaborate on the “intermediate level cloud certification training” requirement? What certification do your four (4) ICT personnel want to pursue, and what is expected from the supplier?**

The successful bidder must provide intermediate-level certification training specific to the proposed cloud platform (e.g., AWS, Microsoft Azure, or Google Cloud). The bidder is expected to facilitate a training that leads to an industry-recognised intermediate-level certification for four (4) Information Regulator ICT personnel.

This training must empower IRSA personnel with the skills required for day-to-day cloud infrastructure management, administration, and troubleshooting within the proposed hosting solution.

**38. What other software is installed on these servers?**

- IIS (Internet Information Services)
- .NET Framework 4.7.2
- SQL Server Management Studio (SSMS) Version 20.2
- SQL Server Reporting Services (Report Server Configuration Manager)
- ASP.NET Web Forms Application
- ASP.NET MVC Web API
- Microsoft Hyper-V Server 2019 (Virtualization)
- Windows Server Roles & Features: Web Server (IIS), ASP.NET 4.7, HTTP Activation, Windows Process Activation Service (WAS)
- Antivirus (e.g., Windows Defender or third-party AV)
- Any other required dependencies for your ASP.NET, MVC, and .Net Core applications

**39. Could you briefly describe the application's functionality (myRegulator portal & Eservices, API application) running on these servers? Who is responsible for configuring the application on the new cloud platform?**

- myRegulator Portal:
  - An internal-facing web application that runs on a VPN. It is designed to handle day-to-day regulatory tasks by authorized internal users only.
  - It connects seamlessly with the external-facing eServices to facilitate inter-application communication when needed.
- eServices Portal:
  - An external-facing site providing public access to regulatory services. This portal is available to users outside the organization.
- API Application:
  - A Web API that supports both the internal myRegulator portal and the external eServices by managing authentication, data exchange, and various service integrations.

- Additional:

Wildcard Certificate: We use a wildcard certificate to secure all subdomains.

**40. Are these servers exposed to external users over the internet?**

- **myRegulator Portal:**

No—it is strictly internal and requires VPN access for authorized personnel.

- **eServices Portal and API:**

Yes—these are publicly accessible over the internet via designated domain names and are secured with standard firewall and security measures

**41. Who is responsible for testing the application once migrated? Do we have test cases?**

The Internal Testing Team, in collaboration with the Development Team, will execute testing once the migration is complete.

Yes, we have comprehensive functional test cases

**42. Is there only one environment (Production), or are there non-production environments? If non-production exists, can you share the inventory?**

- The Production environment is the only environment currently hosted externally.
- There are non-production environments, such as Development and Test, available internally, but these are not hosted on external servers.

**43. What are the upstream and downstream interfaces of this application?**

- Upstream Interfaces:
  - Internal Users: Access the myRegulator portal via a VPN.
  - External Clients: Access eServices through web browsers and mobile devices.
- Downstream Interfaces:
  - SQL Server Database: Central data storage for both applications.
  - SQL Reporting Services (SSRS): Used for generating and distributing reports.
  - File Systems: For document uploads/downloads where necessary.

Additionally, secure intercommunication between the internal myRegulator portal and the external eServices portal is maintained.

**44. Is there any other licensed software apart from the Operating System and SQL server database?**

- No, there is no additional third-party licensed software besides:
  - Windows Server 2019 Standard

- SQL Server Standard Edition (with reporting services features)
- The .NET Framework, IIS, and other tools used are included with the operating system or are free to use as part of the development environment.

**45. What quantity of internet bandwidth (Mbps) and how many public IPs are required?** A connection with a 100 Mbps capacity (with burst capability) should be sufficient.

**46. Please confirm the ACTUAL volume of data that needs to be migrated from the current hosting environment for each of the two servers?**

- Web/API Server:
  - Application files and configuration: Approximately 5–10 GB
  - Logs and miscellaneous data: Approximately 2–3 GB
- Database Server:
  - Primary SQL Databases: Approximately 50–60 GB

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