



## The Commonwealth

**Tender Name: Unified IP Telephony**

**Tender Reference No: 560-2021**

### Clarification Questions/Answers

Q1: *“The Secretariat is seeking to engage a supplier in providing a seamless communication telephony system using MS teams to make outgoing and incoming calls worldwide in addition to at least 54 Member states as provided for in Appendix A*

- Is Comsec expecting to have any of the 350 users located in these 54 member states, and if so would they require a local telephone number and local PSTN access? Or are all 350 users located in the UK, with a UK DDI number?

A1: Existing users are in UK which is also a member state. Your solution will be scalable to accommodate acquisition of DDI's for our staff in Geneva and New York in the immediate future. We have 500 UK DDIs

Q2: *“The Direct routing destination must be provided in the response, including the presence in member states, with a pre-determined rate card that is fixed over the period of the contract”*

- Please provide further explanation as to what is meant by the “direct routing destination”. What is meant by “presence in member states”?

A2: Your solution should not have restrictions for calling any of our member states; we would appreciate the scope of destinations serviced by your network.

Q3: *“High profile numbers segregation allowing for additional layers of security and features to all those numbers deemed by the Secretariat as crucially sensitive”*

What is meant by “numbers segregation”?

A3: That we can classify/designate numbers by VVIP, high profile, call Pool numbers and so on.

Q4: 6.3.7 Fit for Purpose

*“Conference Phone”*

- How many of these devices is Comsec looking to procure through this ITT?

*“VoIP Headset”*

- How many of these devices is Comsec looking to procure through this ITT?

You have also provided a very detailed and specific specification for each of these devices. Do you have a specific make/model in mind? Does the responder need to propose a device that fits these specifications exactly, or is this purely for guidance?

A4: 20 Conference Phones  
350 Voip Headsets



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There are no specific models in mind. The specifications are minimum guidelines. The more robust your device/Model is the better.

Q5: *“With so many people working from home, the deployment of communications and collaboration tools becomes a critical aspect of operations. It can also come with a few challenges, particularly when it comes to connectivity. For this reason, you shall take the following into account:*

*☒ The quality of the home network connection matters: Ideally, it shall be a high-speed, low latency connection with little to no packet loss*

*What involvement does Comsec expect the responder to have in this aspect?*

*☒ There may be a need to Perform a soft deployment, and test calls to verify how everything sounds”*

- Please provide more detail around what is meant by this and how the responder should price this into their proposal

*☒ Make sure that the ICT support team can remotely connect back to the phone system.*

- Which phone system is being referred to?

A5

*a) The quality of the home network connection matters; What involvement does Comsec expect the responder to have in this aspect? ...*

*That the solution offered can work with common base market home provisioned entry level bandwidth.*

*b) There may be a need to Perform a soft deployment, and test calls to verify how everything sounds; Please provide more detail around what is meant by this and how the responder should price this...*

*A Proof of concept that will include testing from remote (home) calls to both domestic and international destination*

*c) Make sure that the ICT support team can remotely connect back to the phone system; Which phone system is being referred to?*

*The one you are going to propose*

Q6: Has Comsec considered concurrent usage of the Direct Routing solution – i.e. how many concurrent SIP channels are required?



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A6: No, we have not considered this. All these considerations are part of the solution design offered by yourselves and is up to the vendor to advise and propose a best fit solution.

Q7: Can Comsec provide a breakdown of international call minutes by country (per month or per year)

A7: Attached Raw Data

Q8: "Part 3 – pricing.

*section e) Teams Direct Routing Pricing Model"*

Three different pricing models are shown – these appear to be very specific. Is this just for guidance or does Comsec expect pricing to be provided for each one.

A8: Yes, this is a guidance in line with our financial requirements. We do require a rate card as per the ITT Part 3 (d). You can also tailor your pricing model in Part 3(e) or do both.

Q9: There is reference to a 'Legal Comments Table', where is this to be found?

A9: Please see Page 18 of the updated ITT document

Q10: Are the existing international locations being considered as part of this Teams, Direct Routing solution?

A10: Yes, our international offices are up for consideration later with the scalability capabilities that come with the solution. For now, only the UK office DDIs are being ported.

Q11: 6.3.4 Scalability – There is a requirement to have flexibility to add on DDI numbers in series. If the number range is not already owned it will be very difficult to guarantee new numbers in the existing series?

A11: Sorry I do not understand the question here. This is more of a statement. We have 500 DDIs in the range 6100-6600 that we own

Q12: 6.3.6 Quality Assurance / Call Quality – Does the requirement for 'supporting dedicated bandwidth' mean you would like us to provide dedicated connectivity outside of the scope of the connectivity ITT? If so, do you have a view on bandwidth requirements or would you like recommendations?

A12: No. We mean the solution you provide needs to have a capability to configure bandwidth allocation. For instance, if we have a 1GB pipe, we can allocate 600Mbps to the solution.

Q13: There is a very specific list of requirements for hardware, is this required for each of the 350 users?

A13: The requirement is a minimum guidance. You can design your proposed solution to the best possible standards as you are the Subject matter experts.

Q14: Can we provide additional documentation alongside the formal response to aid our full response?



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<p>A14: Yes, please provide as relevant.</p>
<p>Q15: Why hasn't The Commonwealth Secretariat embarked on an Enterprise Telephony solution over and above the E5 solution?</p>
<p>A15: Smart Optimisation of the current environment is our priority. This will allow for maturity in line with our enterprise roadmap in the future.</p>
<p>Q16: Do you require full compliance of ISO27001 or features of the accreditation?</p>
<p>A16: We require a vendor to demonstrate adherence/compliance to ISO27001 information security standards to benefit from the best practice it presents</p>
<p>Q17: How much call quality is The Commonwealth Secretariat looking for? Where would QoS be applied e.g QoS on Platform, Data Centre to Premise, End to end?</p>
<p>A17: End-to-end</p>
<p>Q18: Does the Commonwealth Secretariat procure through a Framework? If so can you provide details?</p>
<p>A18: This requirement is not being procured under any Framework; it is being procured as a stand-alone ITT.</p>
<p>Q19: 6.5 – Active Directory management integration, does this involve SSO?</p>
<p>A19: Yes.</p>
<p>Q20: Teams licensing – please can you advise who will assume responsibility for configuration and support of the Teams phone system that is combined with O365 E5? – if the Supplier, will they be granted access as a CSP in order to gain access?</p>
<p>A20: Access to the Tenant will be availed in the implementation phase upon signing an NDA</p>
<p>Q21: Please can you advise if users will have a physical Endpoint device or softphone only?</p>
<p>A21: Soft Phone across various endpoint devices ( Mobile, PC, Tablet) and VoIP headsets.</p>
<p>Q22: Please can you specify the Headset/User Endpoint quantities?</p>
<p>A22: See Q4</p>
<p>Q23: In order to deliver full QoS, please can you advise if you are open to a private voice circuit?</p>
<p>A23: We are open to a best fit proposal. If a Private circuit is the route then that shall be evaluated in line with the technical criteria.</p>
<p>Q24: Can we deploy our cloud solution into Commonwealth Azure platform or as an alternative, would there be a virtual host environment on site available in which to build the solution?</p>



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<p>A24: We prefer that your proposed solution be cloud-based.</p>
<p>Q25: Please can you provide a further breakdown of international call spend or is a metered option acceptable with?</p>
<p>A25: Attached Raw data for 12 months for your analysis. You may present a metered option as part of your pricing models as indicated in the ITT part 3(e). We will still require a rate card as per part 3 (d)</p>
<p>Q26: <b>SIP Trunks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Please confirm the current Quantity of SIP Trunks?</li><li>○ Are they over/under utilised currently?</li><li>○ Would it be acceptable to change the endpoint the SIP trunks are currently terminating on?</li></ul>
<p>A26: You would need to determine and provide these as per your Solution design. Please note a Cloud solution is preferred.</p>
<p>Q27: With reference to Part 1 – Tenderer Details, section 1.7 Policies/Accreditations [pass/fail], question - <i>Please confirm business adherence to ISO27001 standards, supporting evidence must be provided.</i></p> <p><b><i>Please can you advise, considering the statement below, whether we would pass this requirement or be disqualified?</i></b></p> <p>We can advise that we are currently accredited to Cyber Essentials, are being assessed for accreditation to Cyber Essentials Plus by the end of 2021 with the aim of achieving ISO 27001 accreditation in 2022. We can confirm that the partners we would work with, to provide a solution to you, already hold accreditation to ISO 27001.</p> <p>Cyber Essentials is for all organisations, of all sizes, and in all sectors. The Government widely encourages its adoption and made it mandatory for Central Civil Government contracts advertised after 1 October 2014 which feature characteristics involving handling of personal information and provision of certain ICT products and services. The Cyber Essentials Assurance Framework, leading to the awarding of Cyber Essentials and Cyber Essentials Plus certificates was designed in consultation with SMEs, including the Federation for Small Business, to be 'light-touch' and achievable at low cost. This scheme offers the right balance between providing additional assurance of an organisation's commitment to implementing cyber security to third parties, while retaining a simple and low-cost mechanism for doing so.</p>
<p>A27: Your submission will be evaluated in line with the Evaluation criteria for the Technical Questionnaire</p>
<p>Q28: Is the preferred solution to utilise MS Teams with Direct Routing as the entire UC/Telephony solution or an Enterprise UC/Telephony solution, that can overlay and integrate seamlessly with Teams?</p>
<p>A28: Yes. The preferred solution to utilise MS Teams with Direct Routing as the entire UC/Telephony solution</p>
<p>Q29: Within the tender it states:</p>



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“The Direct routing destination must be provided in the response, including the presence in member states, with a pre-determined rate card that is fixed over the period of the contract”

Does the commonwealth have presence in the countries or are you just requiring the ability to dial there? i.e. does the solution also need to have presence in the commonwealth member states or just the ability to dial there. Therefore, the solution is only for the UK HQ Office?

A29: The ability to dial out to any destination from the UK is key. As we have asked for a scalable solution we will be deciding on presence in our staffed countries within the course of the contract.

Q30: IT admin training or end user training, if so would it be train the trainer or classroom training?

A30: It will be a mix of both as IT Admin would require administrative training and End users can have classroom “ease of use” training.

Q31: Regarding number porting, is it all part of the same range or have you got multiple ranges?

A31: Same range. We have 500 DDIs in the range 6100-6600 that we own

Q32: Clarification on quantity of conference phones & VOIP headsets

A32: Refer to Q4

Q33: *Exploration of the possibility to migrate voicemail from the current to the new system (what will be inherited).*

- With regards to the above, is the customer looking to export existing voicemail messages into teams? More clarification needed on the requirement here please.

A33: We have an existing Enterprise IP Telephony System. We would like to import the voicemails from this system into Teams. Whether this is a possibility or not remains with the vendor hence “exploration”. We would categorise this as a value add on our end.

Q34: Does the solution need to be cloud hosted or would an on-premise solution be accepted?

A34: Cloud is preferred for flexibility and management.

Q35: Would a letter of intent for accreditation be accepted for the ISO270001, if a bidder is in the process of obtaining this accreditation?

A35: Your submission will be evaluated in line with the Evaluation criteria for the Technical Questionnaire.

Q36: Where are the users are located. Are they UK users just needing to dial internationally or is there a requirement to service global users?



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A36: See Q30
Q37: What is the term of the contract?
A37: The appointed supplier shall be awarded a contract to supply and maintain the solution for a period of Four years with a possible extension of One year (4 + 1 years).
Q38: Is the currency of pricing GBP or USD or Euro?
A38: Currency of pricing is GBP
Q39: Who manages tenant today?
A39: Management is done internally by the ICT team at the Commonwealth alongside an MSP who manages our EA.
Q40: Are we required to manage tenant or just to provide trunks?
A40: The requirement is specified in the ITT. We are asking the bidders to propose a solution around these requirements as the Subject matter experts. If the solution requires SIP trunks then that should be included in the design and provision. You will not be required to manage the tenant but your team if successful will be granted access in the implementation stage.
Q41: We can provide pricing for the GSIP countries only or provide pricing for gateways as well for non-GSIP countries.
A41: Sorry. It is not clear what your question is. Your preferred pricing proposal is welcome. Please see Part 3(d) and (e)
Q42: Request for extension on the bid deadline due to additional internal governance required before release of the tender documents.
A42: The Submission deadline is hereby extended to 12noon BST on Friday 29th October 2021