



**Provision of Programme Oversight and Assurance Services in
relation to the MetroLink Programme**

Tender Circular 03

**National Transport Authority,
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12th August 2026

SECTION A: TENDER QUERIES

Detailed hereafter are queries that has been received with respect to the National Transport Authority (NTA) competition – Provision of Programme Oversight and Assurance Services in relation to the MetroLink Programme, together with the NTA's response. Grey shaded items represent queries and responses issued in a prior circular:

Tender Query 1:

In the PQQ Questionnaire, the Criterion 4.A.2 refers to the Candidate experience in technical assurance activities for..... delivery of integrated oversight, monitoring and assurance plans covering governance, risk, cost, design, schedule, change and benefits. We note that with the exception of "design" the scope of the answer to this section would be predominantly financial/commercial assurance type service, while design assurance would typically be performed by engineering consultants / technical advisors for the Client. Can the Authority clarify the scope of the design assurance it expects the Candidate team to complete as part of the scope of work?

Response:

The design assurance scope under this contract does not require the OAT to undertake detailed engineering checks or to assume the role of designer or technical reviewer. The OAT will be required to establish and implement an independent assurance framework to provide assurance to the Approving Authority that the Sponsoring Agency's design management processes are being followed and applied effectively; that designs are being developed to the required quality standards; that design principles and functional responses are aligned with the Approving Authority's Requirements; and that cross-contract system integration risks are appropriately managed and assured. The OAT's role will also include providing assurance that design development remains aligned with the Programme objectives, intended benefits and overall delivery requirements.

Tender Query 2:

In the Information Memorandum, Section 1.4 (and later in Section 2.1) notes that "The services may also include other Metro and Sustainable Transport services related work.". Can the Authority confirm that such extension of potential scope will be subject to conflict of interest discussions with the successful Candidate, such that for the purposes of bidding approval, we can confirm that the Candidate would not be precluded from advising / pursuing any other project (other than a MetroLink based role) at this juncture?

Response:

The Authority confirms that the reference to potential support for other metro and sustainable transport investment programmes relates to prospective future call-off tasks or scope extensions.

Any such scope extensions will be subject to conflict of interest evaluations carried out in accordance with public procurement regulations on a case-by-case basis at the relevant time.

At this juncture, Candidates are not automatically precluded from pursuing or advising on separate, non-MetroLink infrastructure projects across the wider state sector, provided that no actual, potential, or perceived conflict of interest arises under the current competition. All final determinations regarding the acceptability of conflicts remain at the discretion of the NTA.

Tender Query 3:

In the Information Memorandum, Section 1.4 notes that the maximum contract value of €55M ex VAT. We note that the e-tenders value is less than this amount at €43,558,000. Please confirm the maximum contract value anticipated at this point in time.

Response:

The maximum contract value will be €43,558,000 (excluding VAT).

Tender Query 4:

In the Information Memorandum, Section 2.2 notes that "The OAT will deliver functions/ capabilities which include, but are not limited to, monitoring and assurance activities and other services under the following general headings: Environmental monitoring. We note that this is not elaborated on later in the same section. Can the Authority elaborate on the expectation of "environmental monitoring" it envisages in its role as Approving Authority? Does the Authority envisage the need for environmental scientists or engineering based consultancy to undertake this item.

Response:

The Authority does not envisage a requirement for field environmental scientists within the OAT resourcing contract. The OAT's scope under this heading is an independent verification and assurance function.

The successful team will be required to review, interrogate, and provide independent assurance on the environmental performance reports, sustainability indices and carbon monitoring baselines submitted by the Sponsoring Agency. The Authority is seeking expert capability in translating complex sustainability, carbon, and environmental data into clear, assurance insights and subsequent reporting if necessary.

Tender Query 5:

We appreciate that the tender response itself is limited in its requirements, however teaming arrangements and ensuring we have the right solution, as well as internal governance and sign offs, are particularly challenging this time of year. To ensure we have all of our necessary governance and approvals, as well as potential subcontracting arrangements in place, can the Authority consider a one week extension to the deadline?

Response:

The Authority acknowledges the commercial and operational complexities involved in finalising robust tender response and sub-consultancy agreements for a major infrastructure oversight contract. To support the market in compiling high-quality submissions and to maximise competitive

participation, the Authority grants a one-week extension to the closing date for the submission of the pre-qualification responses to **Noon on Wednesday 12th August 2026**.

Tender Query 6

Based on our experience of similar contracts, we understand that SMART travel may fall within the scope of this contract. Please can you confirm if associated services for SMART travel will be included within scope such as optimising public transit routing, automating intelligent traffic management, and delivering 24/7 passenger support?

Response:

SMART travel operational deliverables—including public transit routing optimisation, the automation of live intelligent traffic management systems, and the provision of 24/7 passenger customer support interfaces—are outside the scope of this contract.

As detailed in Section 1.4 and Section 2.1 and 2.2 of the Information Memorandum, the scope of this procurement is confined to the provision of specialist technical, oversight, and program assurance resources to reinforce the NTA's internal Metro Investment team.

Tender Query 7

Subcontractor Declaration: Is a Candidate required to name all potential subcontractors at PQQ stage, or only those whose capacities are being relied upon to meet the selection criteria (per Section 2.D of the ESPD)? Where a subcontractor's capacity is not being relied upon, is disclosure of that subcontractor's identity mandatory, optional, or not required at this stage?

Response:

The Information Memorandum does not require Candidates to submit ESPDs for all potential subcontractors where those subcontractors' capacities are not being relied upon to meet the selection criteria. However, Candidates should have regard to the provisions relating to multiple participation and conflicts of interest set out in Sections 7.2 and 7.6 of the Information Memorandum.

Tender Query 8

Financial Capacity Requirement: We note criterion 4.1: Minimum Turnover stipulates that candidates are required to demonstrate compliance with the minimum financial turnover of €10 million. As our audited financial statements for FY2025 have not yet been finalised, would the NTA accept a letter from our external accountant/auditor confirming that our organisation meets or exceeds the minimum annual turnover requirement of €10 million, with the disclosure of our actual FY2025 turnover figure to follow as soon as the audited accounts are complete?

Response:

The NTA confirms that it will accept, for the purposes of the PQQ, a letter from the Candidate's external accountant or auditor certifying that the Candidate meets or exceeds the minimum annual turnover requirement of €10,000,000 in the most recent financial year where the audited financial statements for that year have not yet been finalised. Candidates should provide audited accounts for the preceding financial years available at the time of submission.

Candidates should note that, in accordance with Section 4.1 of the Information Memorandum, where the previous financial year's financial statements have yet to be audited, "a letter from the entity's accountant certifying the turnover figure for that year should be provided". The Candidate will be required to provide the audited financial statements for that year to the NTA once they become available.

Tender Query 9

Clarification Deadline: The tender documentation states that clarification questions must be submitted no later than ten (10) days prior to the tender submission deadline. We note that the tender submission deadline has been extended from 5th August 2026 to 12th August 2026. Could the NTA please confirm whether the clarification deadline has also been revised accordingly and, if so, whether the new deadline for submission of clarification questions is 1st August 2026?

Response:

Candidates should note that the deadline for the submission of completed PQQ documents has been extended to **Noon (Irish time) on Friday 28th August 2026**, and the deadline for submission of clarification questions is revised to **17:00 (Irish time) on Friday, 14th August 2026**.

Candidates are encouraged to submit any queries as early as possible to allow sufficient time for the NTA to consider and respond to them.

Tender Query 10

Criteria 4.A.1 to 4.A.3: Criteria 4.A.1 to 4.A.3 of the PQQ each request the Candidate to demonstrate its experience and expertise in relation to carrying out assurance. Each Criterion includes a bulleted list of areas, which the Candidate's response should detail. Please can you confirm that in each case the Candidate is being asked to demonstrate its experience and expertise relevant to providing oversight and assurance around the activities listed rather than delivering the activities listed. In particular we request this clarification around criteria 4.A.2 and 4.A.3.

Response:

The NTA confirms that the purpose of Criteria 4.A.1 to 4.A.3 is to assess the Candidate's experience and expertise in providing oversight, monitoring and assurance services in relation to the activities and disciplines identified within each criterion, rather than necessarily having delivered those activities directly.

In responding to Criteria 4.A.1 to 4.A.3, Candidates should demonstrate experience that is relevant to an oversight and assurance role, including how they have undertaken assurance, challenge,

review, monitoring, reporting, governance and/or independent assessment activities in relation to the matters identified within the criteria.

For the avoidance of doubt, experience of directly delivering the underlying activities may be included where relevant and may help provide context to a Candidate's expertise. However, the primary focus of the assessment is the Candidate's experience and expertise in an oversight and assurance capacity, reflecting the nature of the services being procured under this competition.

Candidates should ensure that their responses clearly explain the role performed in each Reference Example and how that experience demonstrates the capabilities sought under the relevant criterion.

Tender Query 11

If an entity is being relied upon only for the requirements of Section 4 - Candidate's Previous Experience of the Pre-Qualification Questionnaire (i.e. the entity is not being relied upon for the requirements of Section 3 - Pre-Qualification – Minimum Criteria), is the candidate required to submit Section 2 and Section 3 of the Pre-Qualification Questionnaire, and an ESPD for that entity?

On page 3 of the Pre-Qualification Questionnaire, it is stated that "Any entity / entities being relied on by a Candidate (or any Candidate Member in the case of a Consortium) must also complete Section 2 and Section 3, if being relied on for the purposes of Section 3. Any entity / entities being relied upon must also complete and submit an ESPD."

However, this does not make reference to entities being relied upon for Section 4 of the Pre-Qualification Questionnaire only.

Response:

Where an entity is being relied upon solely in relation to the qualitative experience requirements set out in Section 4 of the PQQ (Candidate's Previous Experience) and is not being relied upon to satisfy any of the minimum criteria set out in Section 3 of the PQQ, that entity is not required to complete Section 3 of the PQQ.

The requirement in the PQQ instructions that an entity being relied upon must complete Section 2 and Section 3 "if being relied on for the purposes of Section 3" applies only where reliance is being placed on that entity to satisfy the minimum selection criteria (for example, turnover or insurance requirements).

However, Candidates should note that where reliance is placed on another entity's capacities, the Information Memorandum states that any entity being relied upon in accordance with Section 7.14 must complete an ESPD and such completed ESPD must be included in the Pre-Qualification Submission.

Accordingly:

- Entity relied upon for Section 3 (Minimum Criteria): Section 2 (ESPD), Section 3 and a separate ESPD are required.
- Entity relied upon only for Section 4 (Previous Experience): Section 3 is not required. The Candidate should clearly identify the entity and demonstrate that the relevant experience/capacity will be available for contract performance, as required by the PQQ and Section 7.14 of the Information Memorandum. A separate ESPD for the relied-upon entity should also be provided.

Tender Query 12

Please clarify whether securing the OAT contract would restrict the Successful Tenderer from bidding for and delivering projects or frameworks with Irish Rail that are not directly related to the MetroLink Programme.

Response:

The restrictions set out in the procurement documents relate to conflicts of interest associated with the MetroLink Programme. Appointment as the OAT would not, in itself, prevent the Successful Tenderer from bidding for or delivering projects or frameworks for Irish Rail that are unrelated to the MetroLink Programme. Any actual or potential conflicts of interest would, however, need to be disclosed and may be assessed by the NTA on a case-by-case basis in accordance with the provisions of the procurement documents

Tender Query 13

The Information Memorandum refers to experience with NEC4 for large infrastructure projects, while the PQQ does not list NEC4 explicitly as a requirement. Could NTA please confirm whether strong and relevant NEC3 experience will be accepted for the qualitative criteria, provided the Candidate can demonstrate robust oversight and assurance capability on NEC-based projects?

Response:

Relevant NEC3 experience will be accepted for the qualitative assessment criteria. Candidates should clearly demonstrate how their NEC3 experience evidences the oversight, monitoring, assurance and programme controls capabilities sought by the relevant criterion. Experience with NEC3 and NEC4 will be considered on the basis of the relevance, scale, complexity and quality of the experience demonstrated in the submission, in accordance with the published evaluation criteria.

Tender Query 14

The Information Memorandum indicates that the OAT team size will typically vary between 4 and 15 personnel, with an additional 5 personnel during the first 8–12 months to establish processes. Could NTA please confirm whether these numbers are indicative planning assumptions or whether they represent minimum and/or maximum contractual staffing levels over the life of the contract?

Response:

As per the information memorandum these are indicative only and may vary.

Tender Query 15

We fully recognise the importance of NTA's probity and conflict-of-interest requirements. Several organisations already provide client-side advisory or assurance services to NTA or TII on MetroLink and related programmes. Could NTA clarify, in general terms, how such existing client-side roles will be treated in the OAT procurement (for example, compatible with bidding, requiring mitigation measures, or representing grounds for exclusion)?

Response:

The NTA recognises that organisations participating in this competition may currently perform, or may previously have performed, services for the NTA, TII or other public bodies in relation to MetroLink or other infrastructure programmes. The existence of such an appointment does not, in itself, result in automatic exclusion from this competition.

As set out in Sections 7.6 and 3.1 of the Information Memorandum, Candidates are required to disclose any actual or potential conflicts of interest. The NTA will assess any such circumstances on a case-by-case basis, having regard to the nature of the relevant services, the extent of the Candidate's involvement, the potential impact on competition, equal treatment and probity, and the adequacy of any proposed mitigation measures.

Depending on the circumstances, the NTA may determine that:

- no conflict arises;
- a conflict can be appropriately managed through suitable mitigation measures and safeguards; or
- the conflict cannot be satisfactorily mitigated, in which case exclusion from the competition or other measures may be required.

Candidates are also reminded that, if appointed as the OAT, certain restrictions may apply in relation to future MetroLink-related opportunities, as described in the procurement documents, and any future conflict of interest assessments will be undertaken at the relevant time and in accordance with applicable law.

Accordingly, the NTA is not able to provide a general determination regarding any particular existing client-side role. Each situation will be considered on its own facts and circumstances should they arise.

Tender Query 16

In previous MetroLink procurements we understand that a range of probity and conflict-management tools (such as ring-fencing and separate teams) have been used to manage neighbouring roles. For the OAT competition, could NTA kindly indicate whether it is open to considering appropriate Conflict Management Plans from candidates with some existing MetroLink-related work, where this would be compatible with NTA's probity requirements?

Response:

The NTA will assess any actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest on a case-by-case basis, having regard to the specific circumstances of the competition and the requirements to maintain the integrity, fairness and probity of the procurement process. Where appropriate, the NTA may consider proposed conflict management measures; however, the acceptability of any such measures will be assessed in the context of the particular circumstances and the NTA cannot provide any assurance in advance of the tender evaluation process.

As set out in the Information Memorandum Section 2.2 OAT Overview, *'due to the role of the OAT, it is a requirement of the Contract that the Successful Tenderer will not tender for any engineering consultancy, commercial services consultancy, construction contracts or any other advisory contract relating to the MetroLink project, except with the prior written consent of the Authority where it has been provided with satisfactory assurances that any potential conflict of interest has been appropriately addressed and managed.'*

Tender Query 17

Section 6 of the PQQ notes that, if appointed to deliver programme oversight and assurance services, the Successful Tenderer may not be permitted to tender for assurance or advisory contracts in relation to MetroLink. Could NTA please clarify whether this restriction applies only to assurance/advisory roles or whether it may also extend to other technical and commercial services on MetroLink, and whether this will be defined on a case-by-case basis in future procurements?

Response:

No definitive list of future restricted roles can be provided at this stage. While Section 6 of the PQQ refers to assurance and advisory contracts, Candidates should also have regard to the broader conflict of interest provisions in the Information Memorandum. The NTA will assess the Successful Tenderer's eligibility to participate in future MetroLink-related procurements, including technical, commercial, assurance, advisory or other services, on a case-by-case basis having regard to the

nature of the opportunity, the Successful Tenderer's prior involvement and any actual or potential conflicts of interest.

Tender Query 18

The OAT description refers to a support and training element to build NTA's internal capability. Could NTA provide any guidance on the expected scale and nature of these training and capability-building activities (for example, approximate number of NTA staff, main topics, and whether this will be a defined workstream with specific deliverables), so that Candidates can size this aspect of the services appropriately?

Response:

Capability building under this contract will be delivered as an active, embedded workstream integrated within the permanently co-located office environment, rather than through standalone classroom-based training. The focus is on continuous, day-to-day knowledge transfer through collaborative working, facilitated learning sessions, on-the-job training, and job shadowing. These activities will be targeted at a core internal NTA cohort of approximately 5 to 10 personnel, ensuring practical capability development and progressive transfer of expertise

Tender Query 19

Where a Candidate proposes to rely on the experience of an affiliate or other entity that is not a Candidate Member for Criteria 4.A.1 to 4.A.3, please confirm whether that entity must:

- be identified as a Reliance Entity;
- submit a separate ESPD;
- provide a commitment letter with the PQQ; and
- perform the corresponding services if the Candidate is successful.

Response:

Where a Candidate proposes to rely on the experience or capacities of an affiliate or other entity that is not a Candidate Member in order to satisfy Criteria 4.A.1 to 4.A.3, that entity should be identified as a Reliance Entity in the Candidate's submission. The Candidate should clearly identify the entity being relied upon and the criterion or criteria for which reliance is required.

In such circumstances:

- The entity should be identified as a Reliance Entity in Section 1 of the PQQ.
- A separate ESPD must be submitted for that entity. Section 7.14 of the Information Memorandum states that any entity being relied upon must complete an ESPD and include it in the Pre-Qualification Submission. The ESPD itself also requires a separate ESPD for each entity on whose capacities the economic operator relies

- A commitment letter (or equivalent evidence) must be provided with the PQQ. Section 7.14 requires the Candidate to demonstrate the commitment of the entity to provide the capacities being relied upon, for example by means of a letter confirming that it will provide the capacities or resources relied upon and will execute a contractual commitment if required by the NTA.
- The entity must make available the capacities on which reliance is placed and, where the experience relates to services that will be performed under the Contract, is expected to perform those services. Candidates are referred to the confirmation in Section 1 of the PQQ requiring confirmation that entities being relied upon in respect of the criteria in Sections 3 and 4 of the PQQ will perform the services for which those capacities are required. In addition, the PQQ states that where a Candidate relies on the experience of an entity, it must demonstrate to the satisfaction of the NTA that the capacities relied upon will be made available if the Candidate is successful.
- Accordingly, where reliance is placed on the experience of an affiliate or other entity for Criteria 4.A.1 to 4.A.3, the Candidate should identify that entity as a Reliance Entity, provide a separate ESPD and a commitment letter (or equivalent evidence of commitment), and ensure that the entity will make available, and where relevant perform, the services corresponding to the capacities on which reliance is based

Tender Query 20

Document 2 permits a Candidate to rely on the experience of another entity for its Reference Examples, provided the relevant capacities will be made available. Section 7.14 of Document 1 also requires a Reliance Entity to provide a commitment and complete an ESPD.

Please confirm that a Candidate may rely on the experience of an entity that is not a Candidate Member for Criteria 4.A.1 to 4.A.3 and, if so, please confirm:

Whether that entity must be identified as a Reliance Entity in Section 1;

Whether it must provide a separate ESPD; Whether a formal commitment letter must be submitted with the PQQ; and

Whether the entity must perform the corresponding services under the Contract if the Candidate is successful.

Response:

A Candidate may rely on the experience of an affiliate or other entity that is not a Candidate Member for Criteria 4.A.1 to 4.A.3. In such circumstances, the entity should be identified as a Reliance Entity, a separate ESPD must be provided, and evidence of the entity's commitment must be included with the PQQ. The Candidate must demonstrate that the relevant capacities will be

made available for contract performance and, where the relied-upon capacities relate to services to be delivered under the Contract, the relied-upon entity should perform those services

Tender Query 21

Where the Lead Member of a Consortium does not independently meet the €5,000,000 annual turnover requirement, please confirm whether it may rely on the financial capacity of another entity under Section 7.14 of Document 1 to satisfy that Lead Member-specific requirement.

Response:

The €5,000,000 annual turnover requirement is a specific requirement that must be met by the Lead Member itself. While reliance on the capacities of another entity is permitted in relation to the Consortium's overall turnover requirement, the Lead Member specific turnover requirement must be demonstrated by the Lead Member

Tender Query 22

Relative importance within each criterion: For criteria 4.A.1, 4.A.2 and 4.A.3, several sub-topics are listed (e.g. interface management, quality assurance processes, deep-dives, benefits and data interrogation). Could the Authority kindly indicate whether all listed sub-topics are of equal importance in scoring, or whether some are considered particularly critical and should be given greater emphasis in our responses?

Response:

No separate weightings apply to the individual sub-topics listed under Criteria 4.A.1, 4.A.2 and 4.A.3. The sub-topics are intended to guide Candidates as to the matters that should be addressed. Each criterion will be assessed and scored as a whole, and the NTA has not assigned greater weighting to any particular sub-topic. Candidates should provide a balanced response demonstrating the overall quality and relevance of their experience and expertise against the criterion concerned.

Tender Query 23

Treatment of in-progress reference examples: The PQQ permits reference examples that commenced at least two years before the Submission Deadline and have a capital value of at least €500m, even if not yet completed. Could the Authority confirm that such in-progress projects are acceptable and that performance to date (e.g. interim milestones, governance arrangements, assurance activity) will be considered in the qualitative assessment?

Response:

Ongoing projects are acceptable as Reference Examples where they commenced at least two (2) years before the Submission Deadline and satisfy the other requirements of the PQQ. Candidates may rely on experience and achievements demonstrated to date on such projects, including governance, oversight, assurance, programme controls, reporting and other relevant activities. The

NTA will evaluate the experience and expertise evidenced in the submission in accordance with the published qualitative assessment criteria and scoring methodology.

Tender Query 24

Further to the extension of the Pre-Qualification Submission Deadline to noon on 12 August 2026, please confirm whether there is a revised deadline for submission of clarification queries.

Response:

Please see response to Query 9.

Tender Query 25

The Information Memorandum indicates that the OAT will undertake finance and cost monitoring and assurance activities for the programme, in close liaison with NTA, TII and the NTA Capital Programme Office, including for the DBFOM package. Could the Authority kindly clarify the expected scope and boundaries of these finance and cost activities for the OAT, in particular:

- a) Whether the OAT's role is limited to independent monitoring, challenge and assurance of programme-level cost, budget, risk, and financial reporting prepared by others;
- b) Whether the OAT is not expected to provide financial advisory services such as revenue, ridership or demand forecasting, financial modelling, or return-on-investment calculations.

Response:

This query is not applicable to the PQQ submission.

Tender Query 26

Clarification: We note that some sections of the PQQ indicate that candidates should provide two (2) Reference Examples per question. However, Section 4 – Candidate's Previous Experience (page 10) states that candidates must draw on "at least two (2) Reference Examples per criterion."

Can you please confirm whether candidates may reference more than two Reference Examples in their responses to Questions 4.A.1, 4.A.2 and 4.A.3, provided applicable word limits are observed?

Response:

The requirement for Questions 4.A.1, 4.A.2 and 4.A.3 is for candidates to provide two (2) Reference Examples in support of each response. References in the PQQ to at least two (2) Reference Examples per criterion should be read as requiring two examples.

Tender Query 27

Criterion 4.A.3 states that the response should demonstrate experience and expertise in “...developing and operating programme controls frameworks (risk, cost, schedule, change, performance metrics)”

Is the NTA looking for instances of programme oversight and assurance in the development and operation of programme controls (which is aligned to the scope of services of this framework), or is the NTA indeed looking for experience in the establishment and operations of programme controls people, processes and procedures in the context of a programme controls delivery role.

Response:

The NTA confirms that under Criterion 4.A.3, the primary purpose is to assess the Candidate's experience and expertise in providing oversight, monitoring, review, and assurance in relation to the development and operation of programme controls frameworks, rather than requiring candidates to have performed a direct programme controls delivery role.

For the avoidance of doubt, experience of establishing or operating programme controls in a direct delivery capacity may be included where relevant to provide context to a Candidate's technical background. However, the primary focus of the assessment is the Candidate's experience in an oversight and assurance capacity, demonstrating how they have undertaken independent review, assurance, challenge, and reporting against programme controls frameworks and associated programme controls deliverables. Candidates should ensure their responses clearly explain the specific role performed in each Reference Example.

Tender Query 28

We refer to Sections 7.2 and 7.6 of the Information Memorandum and Section 6 of the PQQ concerning multiple participation and conflicts of interest.

Please confirm whether a conflict of interest would arise where:

an external legal adviser advises a Candidate in the Programme Oversight and Assurance Services competition; and

the same legal adviser, using a separate team and appropriate information barriers, advises an entity bidding for a separate MetroLink construction or PPP contract.

The legal adviser would not be a Candidate Member, Reliance Entity, subcontractor or service-delivery participant in the Oversight and Assurance Services.

Please confirm whether this arrangement is permitted and whether any disclosure would be required.

Response:

The NTA cannot provide an advance determination on the specific arrangement described. The fact that the same legal adviser acts for a Candidate in this competition and for an entity participating in a separate MetroLink-related procurement would not, of itself, necessarily result in a conflict of interest or exclusion. However, any actual or potential conflict of interest should be disclosed to the NTA and will be assessed on a case-by-case basis having regard to the facts, including the relationship between the procurements, confidentiality considerations and the adequacy of any proposed information barriers or other mitigation measures.

Therefore you should submit a Conflict of Interest Management Plan (COIMP) for consideration by the NTA

Tender Query 29

We would be grateful if the NTA could provide clarification on the following point regarding the scope of the Programme Oversight and Assurance Services:

Finance and Cost Monitoring and Assurance

The OAT will undertake finance and cost monitoring and assurance activities for the programme, in close liaison with NTA, TII MetroLink and the NTA CPO. In this context, the finance and cost scope is understood to cover the programme's cost-related and commercial implications (including CAPEX/OPEX, cost drivers, risk allocation and contractual impacts). Could you pls confirm?

And please describe NTA's approach to providing programme-wide finance and cost monitoring and assurance that:

1. Focuses on CAPEX, OPEX, cost drivers, risk allocation and contractual implications, with particular attention to the programme's commercial framework and obligations; and
2. Supports the scenario analysis, while explicitly excluding any legal services and any financial advisory activities such as revenue, ridership or demand forecasts, financial modelling, return on investment calculations, PPP structuring or business case / economic appraisal.

Response:

The NTA confirms that the Finance and Commercial services are intended primarily to provide programme-level financial, cost and commercial monitoring, challenge and assurance in support of the NTA's role as Approving Authority for the MetroLink Programme.

The scope is expected to include monitoring and assurance of programme costs, CAPEX and relevant OPEX, affordability, cost drivers, contingency, commercial arrangements, contractual commitments, risk allocation, claims, compensation events, incentive mechanisms, pain/gain arrangements, budget performance, cost forecasting and financial reporting. The OAT will also be expected to

independently review, challenge and provide assurance on financial and commercial information provided by the Sponsoring Agency and other programme participants.

The NTA confirms that the OAT may be required to undertake scenario analysis, sensitivity analysis and other programme-level financial assurance activities where required to support monitoring, assurance, affordability assessments, risk reviews or decision-making.

The NTA does not envisage that the Services will include the provision of legal services, transport demand modelling, patronage or revenue forecasting, PPP structuring advice, business case development, economic appraisal, cost-benefit analysis or corporate finance advisory services.

Tender Query 30

Sections 7.1 and 7.2 of the Information Memorandum permit consortium arrangements and outline the requirement for approval where an entity is involved with more than one Candidate. Could the NTA clarify whether, following completion of the PQQ stage, a pre-qualified Candidate (or a member of a pre-qualified consortium) may subsequently join another shortlisted Candidate's consortium or tendering team for the ITN stage.

Response:

A Candidate's composition, including any consortium structure and the entities participating in its submission, will form part of the basis upon which the Candidate is assessed and shortlisted at the Selection Stage. As set out in Section 7.3 of the Information Memorandum, information submitted as part of a Pre-Qualification Submission, including the ownership, structure and composition of a Candidate, may only be changed following submission with the consent of the NTA, and any proposed change will be assessed by the NTA having regard to the requirements of the procurement process. Section 7.3 further provides that the NTA reserves the right, in its absolute discretion, to withhold approval for such changes and/or disqualify a Candidate from further participation in the procurement process.

Accordingly, a pre-qualified Candidate (or a member of a pre-qualified consortium) may not assume that it will be permitted, following completion of the PQQ stage, to join another shortlisted Candidate's consortium or tendering team for the ITN stage. Any such proposed change would require the prior written consent of the NTA and would be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Tender Query 31:

We are writing to respectfully request an eight-week extension to the current deadline for the submission of the PQQ documentation.

Our team is fully committed to preparing a high-quality submission that addresses the specific requirements of this opportunity and provides the most relevant and comprehensive references in support of our application.

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In addition, with the summer holiday period approaching, the availability of several key members of our technical team will be more limited than usual. This temporary reduction in resources may impact our ability to dedicate the level of effort, coordination, and attention necessary to develop the PQQ documentation to the standard we strive to achieve.

Granting the requested extension would not only enable us to accommodate these scheduling constraints but also allow us to further strengthen and refine our submission. As a result, we would be able to provide a proposal that delivers greater value, clearly demonstrates our capabilities, and reflects our full commitment to the successful delivery of this project.

Response:

The NTA has previously granted two extensions to the deadline for submission of PQQs (see Tender Query 9).

The NTA will further extend the submission deadline for completed PQQs to **17:00 on Monday 31st August 2026**.

No further extensions will be offered.

SECTION B: TENDER AMENDMENTS

The information provided in this Section C, Additional Information, constitutes part of the Instructions related to this tender competition

SECTION C: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The information provided in this Section C, Additional Information, constitutes part of the Instructions related to this tender competition