

RFI-003/25

Request for Information for a data backup solution of the Cray XC30-AC Lustre
file system

Closing Date and Time: 06 March 2026 at 11:00

NON-COMPULSORY BRIEFING SESSION

Date:	23 February 2026
Time:	10:00
Venue:	Meeting ID: 316 999 410 905 64 Passcode: zr6xm6xr
Compulsory:	NO

THIS REQUEST FOR INFORMATION WILL CLOSE ELECTRONICALLY ON THE eTENDER PLATFORM WHICH MAKES PROVISION FOR THE ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION OF BIDS, RFQs AND RFIs (<https://www.etenders.gov.za/>)

Responses to this RFI must ensure that they complete and submit all the documents issued with this RFI together with the response from the responder before the closing date and time of the RFI. Responses received after the closing time will NOT be considered.

ENQUIRIES:

Any clarification required regarding the meaning or interpretation of the document or any aspect concerning the submission is to be requested **in writing** from:

SCM: Acquisition Department
South African Weather Service
Email: rfg@weathersa.co.za

1 PURPOSE

This Request for Information (RFI) issued by the South African Weather Service (SAWS), is solely to conduct a market analysis to determine a solution for Cray XC30-AC HPC Lustre file system and data backup.

2 INTRODUCTION

The South African Weather Service (SAWS) is a public entity of Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE) and derives its mandate from the South African Weather Service Act (No 8 of 2001 as amended). The public entity is listed as a Schedule 3A Public Entity in terms of the Public Finance Management Act (PFMA).

SAWS is tasked with providing timely and accurate scientific data in the field of meteorology to the broader South African society: a combination of both public good and commercial services. The organisation plays a vital role in South African public life, not just as a provider of key services, but also in empowering citizens to adapt the effects of the ever-changing weather.

3 BACKGROUND

The requirement requires a service provider to provide a solution to securely backup 1.5PB of model data residing on the Cray XC30-AC HPC Lustre File system.

The South African Weather Service (SAWS) requires a capable solution to protect the model data on the Sonexcion C3000 storage attached to the Cray XC30-AC to ensure operational continuity. This proposal leverages SAWS's existing infrastructure related to the current Cray hardware environment.

4 OBJECTIVE OF THE REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

This Request for Information (RFI) issued by the South African Weather Service (SAWS), is for storage service providers to provide responses for provisioning of a solution to backup the required of Lustre file system and model data for a duration of 3 years.

SAWS invites qualified service providers to submit information and indicative proposals for the Lustre file system and model data backup solution that will include the latest technologies based on 2 options. Bidders are to submit proposals on both or one solution (cloud or on prem). All of the required tools and software are to be noted in the proposals.

- Option1: Direct attached on-prem solution that will integrate through Infini-band 100GbE (HDR100) connection for fast copy of data. This solution must include all required hardware ex. Server, Storage, networking cards and cabling.
- Option2: Of-prem solution based on best practice cloud options with most cost effective measures. This solution must include all related platform licenses with no hidden charges based on per year. The solution must also include any hardware or network related requirement for on-prem cloud gateway.

The bidders are to note that this is to back up the data. Consideration to the method of copy, medium, connectivity, staging must be noted on the estimated size is of 1.5PB.

Bidders must also note that the expected compression ratio of the Model data is about x1.6.

SAWS seeks information from vendors to ensure comprehensive solutions are delivered. This initiative will assist SAWS with the following amongst others:

- Safe and secure platform to store model data,
- Continuity of services,
- Migration of data,

SAWS will evaluate the Information with reference to the business requirements. SAWS may consider the Information for the preparation of a Tender or Request for Quotation, based on the Information Proposal received.

SAWS may request additional information, clarification or verification in respect of any information contained in or omitted from a respondent's information. SAWS will communicate in writing via email with the respondent.

This RFI is not a tender but a market engagement exercise. Responses will be evaluated based on:

- Technical capability and alignment with SAWS requirements.
- Experience and track record.
- Indicative cost-effectiveness.
- Innovation and scalability.
- Compliance with regulatory and governance standards.

The scope of work is below, amongst others:

- Providing the hardware (server & storage) and software required for this solution
- Expertise to assist in installation and integration of solution into SAWS HPC environment
- Integration via Infini-band (..) for fast backend transfer option
- Integration via network (10GbE is available) slow transfer option
- Migration of data & file structure from Lustre to propose platform

The expected deliverables are below, amongst others:

- **Successful migration of all data and files:** All selective data sets and scripts indicated by SAWS ICT.
- **Collaboration with current HPC support:** Collaboration with our current HPC support contractors.
- **Good knowledge and understanding of HPC environment:** Knowledge of HPC environments will be key for successful implantation.

5 COST IMPLICATIONS

The costs incurred by a service provider in respect of the preparation of any response to this RFI or the cost of attendance of the briefing session will be borne by the individual / organisation responding to this RFI. SAWS shall in no way be liable to reimburse any individual / organisation for such costs incurred.

This RFI does not constitute an offer to do business with SAWS but merely serves to facilitate a requirements-based decision process. Nothing in this RFI or any other communication made between SAWS (including its officers, directors, employees, advisers and representatives) is a representation that SAWS will offer, award or enter into an agreement with the Respondent.

6 SUBMISSION OF RESPONSES

This Request for Information will close electronically on the etender platform which makes provision for the electronic submission of Bids, RFQs and RFIs (<https://www.etenders.gov.za/>)

Responses to this RFI must ensure that they complete and submit all the documents issued with this RFI together with the response from the responder before the closing date and time of the RFI. Responses received after the closing time will NOT be considered.

7 ENQUIRIES

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The Acquisition Administrator
South African Weather Service
Email: rfg@weathersa.co.za