

Eastern, Western and Central Regions

Clarification Questions for RFP (Batch 1)

RFP Issue Date: 12 September 2025

RFP Closing Date: 24 October 2025

1. SECTION 5: Business Proposal Form and list of required documents, subsection B Returnable documents used for scoring references are made to Annexure F1: Volume Source Confirmation Annexure F1 is omitted from the electronic Zip Folder, can this please be provided?

Answer:

Request for Annexure F1 to be removed. Volume Commitment is not required.

2. Should complete Bids be uploaded as part A Section SBD1 Form or should they be delivered as per the Bid Advertisement Form?

Answer:

Completed Bids must be uploaded as per part A Section SBD1 Form.

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3. We are preparing to respond to the various siding Request for Proposals (RFPs) that were issued by the Transnet Infrastructure Manager in September 2025. We are looking to visit the sidings during an upcoming stakeholder trip on Thursday, 9th October 2025. Would it be possible for TRIM to facilitate that we visit the following sidings on this day?
- i. Blackhill: Siding number 743348
 - ii. Blinkpan: Siding number 702404
 - iii. Rietkuil: Siding number 765198

Answer:

All site visits are scheduled to ensure that all bidders are taken jointly by TRIM to the facility. This ensures that Transnet can coordinate its resources and prevent erratic visits to operational sites. Furthermore, we also wish to minimize disruption to current lessee's operations with multiple visits. All site visits conducted outside the TRIM approved timeslot are done at the bidders' own accord and TRIM is not responsible for any consequences this visit may result in on the RFP or if objections are raised by other bidders. Any actions arising out of bidders own site visits to the facility that is found to conflict with the RFP governance process, will be dealt with in terms of the RFP process.

4. What is a Common User Facility?

Answer:

Multi-User Facility/ Common-User Facility

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A Multi-User Facility means that the rail siding must be managed in a manner that enables multiple companies having access to have their cargo destined by rail to have access for stockpiling and loading on a shared site. The facility is leased to a single entity who is responsible for coordinating train movements and stockpiling activities. However, the Train Operating Companies (TOC's) retains sole authority to determine which parties may load or offload cargo at the siding and to allocate operational slots accordingly. In certain cases, a Multi-User Facility may accommodate multiple customers and have more than one TOC operating within the same siding.

5. Seeking clarity on the objective criteria. Furthermore, the prospective bidder made a claim to say there have been instances in Transnet where a term "Objective Criteria" had been used to push a bidder that was in 3rd place to 1st place. So, if the list is not set out for bidders, it allows for the adjudication committee 'to do as they please behind closed doors' leading to no transparency. Is there a list entailing what the Objective Criteria is?

Answer:

To provide clarity, Transnet has in fact outlined the Objective Criteria, it applies at Step 5: Objective Criteria of the evaluation process. This step is not arbitrary instead, it is a formal Procurement Process that allows for justified deviation from awarding solely based on highest score, if legitimate risk factors are identified.

The purpose of this step is to mitigate operational and financial risks before final award. The application of this stage is sequential, meaning it is only applied after the technical and pricing evaluations are complete — and is applied only if applicable.

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The objective criteria used in this step include:

Probity Check: A form of due diligence to assess the integrity, financial health, and general risk associated with awarding to a particular bidder.

Aspects of the Probity Check (illustrative but not exhaustive):

- **The company's financial position (Submission of audited financial statements (minimum 24 months) or a Letter of Credit for newer companies)**
- **A Credit Risk Assessment (which determines the level of deposit and guarantees required, and may influence award recommendations)**
- **Any flags by National Treasury (e.g., Previous bad payment history with Transnet, which may negatively impact a bidder)**

To prevent assumptions that "objective criteria" have been used in the past to arbitrarily promote a third-ranked bidder to first place the transparency of the process is documented and disclosed in the RFP.

6. Prospective Bidder enquired about the Scoring for ownership/ management, if TRIM will score the current ownership or what would be created as part of the structure that would submit the bid? If a JV/ Consortium submits a bid & TRIM intends to score the current ownership. How is TRIM intending to score individual/ different companies, in order to arrive at a score of 4? If a JV is formed by a combination of a 100% Black-owned company & another company that has little to no black. Is TRIM only going to score 100% Black-owned company or is TRIM going to dilute the score to 50% of the overall score?

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Answer:

Refer to Section 2 of point 4 in the RFP:

Joint Ventures or Consortiums

Respondents who would wish to respond to this Commercial Proposal as a Joint Venture [JV] or consortium with B-BBEE entities, must state their intention to do so in their Commercial Proposal submission. Such Respondents must also submit a signed JV or consortium agreement between the parties clearly stating the percentage [%] split of business and the associated responsibilities of each party. If at the time of the bid submission such a JV or consortium agreement has not been concluded, the partners must submit confirmation in writing of their intention to enter into a JV or consortium agreement should they be awarded business by Transnet through this Commercial Proposal process. This written confirmation must clearly indicate the percentage [%] split of business and the responsibilities of each party. In such cases, concluding of agreements will only take place once a signed copy of a JV or consortium agreement is submitted to Transnet.

7. The minimum rental of R100 000 for the Voorslag Siding, is it for both A & B or is it for each?

Answer:

The rental amount of R100 600 per month is for both A & B.

8. What certainty do we have that the sidings won't be withdrawn again since they were advertised & later withdrawn in 2024. This is due to a concern of having to invest in the submission of the bid only to have the process halted midway & not reaching the end, with little to no communication from Transnet.

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Answer:

On 1 October 2024, in line with the Rail Reform process, Transnet Freight Rail (TFR) underwent a vertical separation into TFR, being a Rail Operator and Transnet Rail Infrastructure Manager (TRIM) responsible for the rail network.

The sidings portfolio, being a key enabler to connect to the core network from road to rail, formed part of the TRIM responsibility to ensure compliance with the Rail Reform transcripts.

The go-to-market strategy for the RFP in question was informed by the integrated TFR strategy at the time of advertising. Unfortunately, this process was not fully compliant with the revised strategy and governing principles that came into effect by the establishment of TRIM.

TRIM has an established governance structure, so that these sidings are awarded in line with the TRIM's strategy that is governed by the Rail Reform prescripts. This obligation gave rise to TRIM having to withdraw the sidings issued to the market under the TFR strategy and issue these RFP's for the lease of these facilities under Rail Reform Transcripts.

9. Are the Eastern Region Commodities only limited to Coal. If yes, then what are the possibilities? If not, what are the possibilities to move with the times & towards better greener energies/ fuel from coal? Or to various other commodities that customers can run through the sidings?

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Answer:

The siding is created as a capability to connect road to rail. It augments the issue around slot allocation. It is an enabler to slot allocations. Even when it comes to commodities, a lessee would load on behalf of the slot allocation for that particular siding. Hence, when it comes to the type & diversification of commodities, it would depend on the slot allocation of the subject siding. The type of commodity to be moved on the siding is a factor of what the slot allocation has been awarded to that specific piece of Real Estate.

10. With regards to the sidings as it was responded to say that its operation is linked to the slot allocation given by TRIM, would the winning bidder be able to source their own cargo & customers or are they obliged to work with TRIM's allocated TFR cargo?

Answer:

The winning bidder can source their own cargo and customers. As per the RFP, it is the lessee's responsibility to secure the volumes required, and the successful bidder manages contracts directly with TOCs or cargo owners, while ensuring the facility operates within the contracted footprint and transport system capabilities. It is important to note that sidings that are currently in operation have TOCs with contracted slot allocation from the specific loading point. These contracted slots need to be taken into account by new lessees when operating the facility.

11. Rietkuil: please send me pictures of the site and sliding rail network connection and property.

➤ So, is the sidings rail network connection working?

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- Is the facility and rail network connection siding vandalized?

Answer:

The lease plan which forms part of the published documents provides an aerial representation of the siding, illustrating the layout and key infrastructure components. In addition, site visits are arranged to afford prospective bidders the opportunity to physically inspect the sidings and obtain a comprehensive understanding of the facilities and their operational context.

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