

Tender Questions and Answers

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Effective Date	July 2024		
Review Date	July 2027		

To whom it may concern	Date	13 October 2026
	Enquiries	Sandi Bokveldt-Lize
	E-mail address	LizeSN@ntcsa.co.za

Dear Sir/Madam

Request for Enquiry Number	E1808NTCSAWGR
Description / Project Title	The supply and delivery of X 5 Kit: type: switch analyser SA10; application: circuit breaker tester; comprising electrical cables, the test cables, the transducers, the brackets for the transducers, the software; specification: kit 1 advanced d + 3xs120; Elcon; vendors are responsible for ensuring that they are performing against the correct drawing revision
Tender Questions Closing Date	15 October 2026

Item	Supplier's Questions	NTCSA's Answers
1.	Your tender specifies the ELCON SA10 Kit 1 Advanced D + 3 × S120. However, they intend to submit an alternative solution from OMICRON that provides equivalent functionality and application They are requesting clarification on whether any additional documents, schedules, or information are required when submitting an alternative product, apart from the technical information and supporting documentation already requested in the tender. Their objective is to ensure that their alternative offer is submitted correctly and includes all necessary supporting evidence for evaluation.	We are not looking for alternatives. We specifically want the Elcon SA10.

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2.	The tender is restricted to the ELCON SA10 and why technically equivalent equipment from other manufacturers is not being considered The supplier seeks justification for the brand-specific requirement and clarification on whether technically equivalent alternatives may be submitted and evaluated in accordance with the tender's alternative tender provisions.	The enquiry is being conducted through an open and competitive procurement process, with technical specifications developed and approved by the end-user based on operational requirements. The restriction to the ELCON SA10, inclusion of Schedules A and B, prohibition of alternative equipment, and technical evaluation criteria are end-user requirements, and the ITT clearly states that alternatives are not permitted. All bidders are encouraged to submit offers that fully comply with the RFQ requirements. Submissions received by the closing date will be evaluated fairly, transparently, and in accordance with the prescribed technical, commercial, procurement, and governance requirements. All suppliers are afforded equal opportunity to participate. Regarding the request for an extension, this is not feasible as the tender closes in two days and the procurement process is already at an advanced stage. Sufficient time has been provided for suppliers to prepare and submit quotations. Furthermore, the ITT stipulated that queries were required to be submitted at least five working days before the tender closing date. Suppliers are therefore encouraged to submit their responses before the specified closing date and time.
3.	We would appreciate your clarification and, given the timing, reconsideration of the requested extension.	Extension of the tender closing date is granted until 15 October 2026, which will be communicated via the same platforms where tender was issued.
4.	The supplier formally escalated concerns regarding tender E1808NTCSAWGR and requested an urgent review by Procurement and Supply Chain Management. Restrictive Specification - The tender was limited to the specifically named ELCON SA10 circuit breaker analyser, excluding alternative equipment. - The supplier argues that NTCSA has previously confirmed that more than one circuit breaker analyser is approved, and therefore	Following an independent review and delays in responding to clarification requests, NTCSA has approved an extension of the tender closing date. The revised closing date will be communicated through the same platforms used to issue the tender. The extension is intended to ensure fairness and give all suppliers sufficient time to consider the clarifications and prepare compliant submissions. Suppliers may propose alternative equipment; however, any alternative must be fully compatible with BTS 11 software, which

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	questions the basis for restricting the competition to a single brand/model. The supplier also advised that given the seriousness of the concerns, the matter will also be escalated to National Treasury for further review.	NTCSA uses for test analysis, condition monitoring, and reporting. Suppliers must provide adequate evidence demonstrating compatibility and seamless integration with the existing BTS 11 environment. Formal communication regarding the new closing date will be issued in due course.
	The supplier is requesting clarification on NTCSA's requirement that any alternative circuit breaker analyser must be fully compatible with BTS11 software. Key concerns raised include: - The supplier believes the BTS11 compatibility requirement may effectively restrict competition in the same way that specifying the ELCON SA10 would, because BTS11 is an ELCON software platform. - They request clarification on how the approved Megger TM1800 analyser complies with the BTS11 compatibility requirement. - The supplier asks NTCSA to clearly define what "fully compatible with BTS11" means, specifically whether: - The analyser must be directly controlled through BTS11; or - It is sufficient that test data and historical records can be transferred and integrated into NTCSA's existing environment. - The supplier argues that if only ELCON equipment can meet the requirement, it creates a proprietary barrier to entry and undermines the intent of allowing alternative equipment. - They question why the procurement is being conducted as an open competitive tender if the operational requirements can only be met by ELCON equipment. - They contend that alternative solutions should be assessed based on their ability to meet functional requirements rather than being required to operate within a specific manufacturer's proprietary ecosystem. - The supplier further argues that excluding alternative technologies	NTCSA's requirement that tendered products must be compatible with its existing infrastructure is a legitimate procurement requirement and does not constitute gatekeeping. Replacing existing infrastructure solely to accommodate alternative products would be uneconomical due to lifecycle considerations and the Total Cost of Ownership. Such replacement would only be considered when the entire infrastructure reaches end-of-life and a full turnkey replacement is procured. The current tender remains open to any supplier, provided their product can be demonstrated to be compatible with NTCSA's existing systems. Allowing suppliers to replace existing infrastructure as part of their offering would likely result in higher costs when compared to suppliers whose products already integrate with the current environment. Therefore, NTCSA's compatibility requirement is justified, reasonable, and aligned with sound procurement practices.

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	before evaluation prevents NTCSA from considering potentially superior solutions that may offer: ○ Improved functionality; ○ Better technical support; ○ Additional features; ○ Lower lifecycle costs; and ○ Greater operational benefits. • They state that such restrictions may be inconsistent with fair, transparent, competitive, and cost-effective procurement principles. • The supplier therefore requests: ○ Clarification of the actual functional purpose behind the BTS11 compatibility requirement; ○ Confirmation that alternative methods of achieving data compatibility and operational requirements will be accepted; and ○ A technical and procurement justification if native BTS11 compatibility remains mandatory.	
	The supplier is formally challenging the compatibility-based specification and requesting objective technical evaluation and justification before alternative analyser technologies are excluded	Please note that technical revised and uploaded is 100% all or nothing. Technical evaluation criteria has been uploaded on NTCSA Tender bulletin and NT website.
	The supplier is preparing an alternative technical solution and has requested clarification on the tender requirements. Their queries relate to: 1. Technical Threshold – Clarification is requested on whether the applicable minimum technical evaluation threshold is 70% (as stated in the Technical Evaluation Criteria) or 100% (as stated in the ITT). 2. Alternative Equipment Evaluation – Confirmation is requested that where an alternative solution is proposed, the required accessories will be assessed based on equivalent functionality and compatibility with the alternative equipment, rather than strict compatibility with the ELCON SA10.	Please note that technical revised and uploaded is 100% all or nothing.

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	3. Technical Data Sheets – Confirmation is requested that technical data sheets for equivalent components included in the alternative solution may be submitted instead of those specific to the ELCON SA10 accessories. 4. BOQ Requirements – Guidance is requested on whether tenderers should retain the existing BOQ descriptions and indicate equivalent alternatives alongside them, or whether a revised BOQ will be issued to accommodate alternative solutions. Overall: The supplier seeks clarity on the evaluation criteria and submission requirements to ensure their alternative proposal complies with the tender requirements.	
	The supplier acknowledges NTCSA's confirmation that the technical evaluation is now based on a 100% mandatory (all-or-nothing) threshold, but argues that this does not resolve their concern regarding potential bias toward the ELCON SA10 system. Key points raised: - The tender continues to reference ELCON-specific hardware, accessories, components, and BTS11 software requirements. - The supplier questions how an alternative manufacturer can achieve 100% compliance if these ELCON-specific requirements remain mandatory. - They argue that allowing alternative equipment is meaningless if alternatives must effectively replicate the ELCON ecosystem to qualify. - The supplier cites Eskom Procurement and Supply Chain Management Procedure 32-1034, stating that technical evaluations should not promote specific brands, products, or supplier preferences. - They request a detailed justification identifying which technical requirements are genuinely mandatory and why. - They seek clarification on whether alternatives will be assessed	NTCSA has acknowledged that several concerns raised about the procurement process are valid and require internal review. While certain deviations from the original tender requirements were made to allow supplier participation, NTCSA now recognizes that cancelling the tender, or using a different procurement approach, may have been more appropriate. Consequently, to ensure fairness, transparency, and to avoid further costs for tenderers, the tender has been cancelled. NTCSA will review the requirement and determine the most suitable procurement strategy going forward. The organisation also thanked the supplier for their constructive feedback, which has helped reassess the procurement approach.

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against:

- Functional and performance requirements only, or
- ELCON-specific hardware, accessories, part numbers, and BTS11 compatibility requirements.
- They contend that if only equipment compatible with the ELCON ecosystem can qualify, the procurement should instead be conducted as a **sole-source or closed tender**, rather than an open competitive tender.
- The supplier maintains that an open tender should provide a genuine opportunity for alternative technologies to compete on a fair and technology-neutral basis.
- They suggest that NTCSA evaluate equipment based on what it must achieve functionally rather than compatibility with a specific manufacturer's ecosystem.
- They propose that, if NTCSA is confident in the ELCON solution, alternative equipment should be allowed to compete through a fair evaluation process, potentially including practical demonstrations.
- The supplier concludes by requesting confirmation of how a non-ELCON solution can achieve 100% compliance and why the requirements should not be viewed as a gatekeeping mechanism favoring a specific brand.

Signature: 

Date: 13/10/2026

Name: Sandi Bokveldt-Lize

Designation: Procurement Practitioner

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