



SOUTH AFRICAN AIRWAYS

A STAR ALLIANCE MEMBER 

**Service Provider Requirements for the Supply of Tea,
Coffee and Hot Beverage Accompaniments**

1. Purpose

This document outlines the consolidated requirements for the appointment of a suitable service provider to supply tea, coffee and hot beverage accompaniments, including sugar, sweeteners, milk portions and related products, for South African Airways inflight requirements.

2. Scope of Services Required

The appointed service provider must be able to source, supply, package, label and deliver hot beverage products and accompaniments that are suitable for airline operations and premium guest experience standards.

South African Airways aims to champion the consumption of **premium African-produced coffees and teas**, in alignment with its brand promise:

“Taking Africa to the World and bringing the World to Africa.”

3. Product Categories to be Supplied

Category	Required Products	Minimum Requirement
Coffee	Freeze-dried coffee, instant coffee sticks, decaffeinated coffee and specialty beverages where required	Suitable for onboard brewing equipment, consistent quality, smooth flavour profile and airline service application
Tea	Ceylon tea, rooibos tea, English breakfast, Earl Grey, chamomile, green tea, ginger tea and other specialized teas as required	Individually wrapped or boxed as specified, hygienic, premium quality and suitable for inflight or lounge service
Sugar	White sugar and brown sugar sachets	Individually sealed sachets, 3–5 g per sachet, free-flowing and suitable for hot beverages
Sweeteners	Non-nutritive sweetener sachets	Clearly labelled sachets with a clean taste, quick dissolution and compliance with applicable food regulations
Accompaniments	cappuccino or related products where required	dissolution performance and clear labelling

3.1 Coffee Quality Requirements

Coffee supplied must meet the following quality requirements:

- **Flavour and Freshness:**

Coffee must be fresh, smooth and balanced, with no excessive bitterness, burnt notes, astringency, flatness or stale flavour.

- **Shelf Life and Suitability:**

Coffee must be suitable for onboard brewing equipment and altitude consumption, with a minimum shelf life of nine months.

3.2 Coffee and Tea Specifications for Onboard SAA Flights

3.2.1 Coffee Specifications

Type of Coffee	Unit of Measurement	Packaging
Freeze-dried Coffee (Coffee must be of African origin i.e., single origin and unblended coffee beans, medium to dark roasted, <i>Coffee arabica</i>)	Sachet: 18–20 g to brew 1 litre per pot	Foil sachet
Single-portion Coffee Sticks (Recognised brand) • Instant coffee • Decaffeinated coffee	1.5–1.8 g per sachet	Foil sachet
Specialty Single-portion Beverages • Hot Chocolate • Cappuccino	14–20 g per sachet (supplier standard)	Foil sachet

3.2.2 Standard Teas

Standard teas must be manufactured and packaged in South Africa.

Tea Type	Unit of Measurement	Packaging
Ceylon Tea	±2 g per tea bag (Tagged)	Box of 100 teabags

3.2.3 Specialised Teas

Tea Type	Unit of Measurement	Packaging
Earl Grey	±2 g per tea bag	Individually wrapped, tagged
English Breakfast	±2 g per tea bag	Individually wrapped, tagged
Chamomile	±2 g per tea bag	Individually wrapped, tagged
Green Tea	±2 g per tea bag	Individually wrapped, tagged
Ginger tea	±2 g per tea bag	Individually wrapped, tagged
Rooibos Tea	±2 g per tea bag	Individually wrapped, tagged

4. Dry Goods Specification

4.1 Non-Nutritive Sweeteners

Category	Technical Requirement
Product Type	Single-serve non-nutritive sweetener sachets
Accepted Sweetener Types	Aspartame, Acesulfame-K, Sucralose, Stevia (Reb A), Saccharin
Unit Weight	0.5–1 g per sachet

4.2 Brown or White Sugar

Category	Technical Requirement
Product Type	Granulated free flowing sachets
Brand Preference	Recognised South African dairy brands
Unit Weight	3–5 g per sachet

5. Onboard Equipment

Coffee supplied must be compatible with standard onboard SAA aircraft brewing equipment. Suppliers must confirm suitability during bid submission.

Aircraft	Equipment used	Method
SAA operates with widebody and narrow-body aircraft: A330-300 (2), A340-300(2), A320 (15) Most Domestic routes make use of the black and grey flasks, and all outstations make use of the silver flasks.	Coffee Flasks:  	An 18–20 g coffee sachet is added to a 1.2-litre flask, followed by boiling water.

	Tea Flasks:	10–16 tea bags are to be used per 1.2-litre tea flask, Ensuring that each flask yields a minimum of 10 cups of hot beverages.
		

Kindly note: Onboard an aircraft, water boils at approximately 90–93 °C due to reduced cabin pressure. This lower brewing temperature may affect coffee and tea extraction, resulting in a weaker or less aromatic cup compared with ground conditions.

6. General Service Provider Requirements

- Demonstrate proven experience supplying food and beverage products to airlines, catering, hospitality or similar high-volume environments.
- Maintain reliable sourcing, stockholding, distribution and continuity of supply to meet SAA operational requirements.

7. Product Quality Requirements

- Products must be of good commercial quality, consistent and suitable for premium airline service.

- Sugar, sweeteners and milk products must be clean in taste, free from contamination and suitable for hot beverage applications.

8. Packaging and Labelling Requirements

- Products must be packed in food-grade packaging suitable for airline and catering operations.
- Single-serve products must be individually sealed to protect hygiene, freshness, and portion control.
- Packaging must be strong enough to withstand handling, storage, uplift, trolley loading and in-

flight service conditions.

- Outer cartons must be clearly marked and suitable for warehouse handling and stock rotation.

All product labels must clearly display the product name, ingredients, allergen declarations where applicable, net weight or volume, batch or lot number, best-before date, manufacturer or distributor details, storage instructions and any mandatory warning statements required by legislation.

9. Food Safety and Regulatory Compliance

- The service provider must comply with all applicable South African food safety, labelling and hygiene legislation.
- The service provider must maintain appropriate food safety controls across sourcing, production, packing, storage, and delivery.
- Products must be free from foreign matter, contamination, leakage, infestation, off-odours, clumping, damaged packaging, or any other quality defect.
- The service provider must provide food safety certification, product specifications, and supporting compliance documents on request.
- SAA reserves the right to conduct audits, request corrective actions, and reject products that do not meet quality or food safety requirements.

10. Shelf Life and Storage Requirements

- Products must be delivered with sufficient remaining shelf life to allow for storage, distribution and operational use.
- Coffee and dry accompaniments should preferably have a minimum remaining shelf life of not less than 70% at the time of delivery.
- Tea products should have a long shelf life and maintain aroma, freshness, and quality throughout the supply period.
- Milk products must be shelf-stable where specified and must not show signs of leakage, bloating, curdling or spoilage.
- All products must be stored and transported under conditions that preserve food safety and product quality.

11. Delivery and Operational Requirements

- The service provider must deliver products according to agreed schedules, quantities, and delivery locations.
- Deliveries must be accurate, complete, and supported by delivery notes or relevant documentation.
- The service provider must maintain continuity of supply and notify SAA in advance of any potential stock shortages or product changes.
- Products must be packed in manageable carton sizes suitable for warehouse, catering, and operational handling.
- The service provider must be able to respond to urgent operational requirements where reasonably required.

12. Documentation to be Submitted by Bidders

- Company profile and relevant service experience.
- Detailed product list and technical specifications for each item offered.
- Food safety certification and quality assurance documentation.
- Product labels or mock-up labels for review.
- Shelf-life information and storage requirements.
- Proof of authorised distribution where branded products are supplied.
- Delivery capability, lead times, and contingency arrangements.
- Pricing schedule per product category and unit of measure.

13. Evaluation Considerations

- Product quality, taste, consistency and suitability for airline and catering service.
- Compliance with food safety, labelling, and packaging requirements.

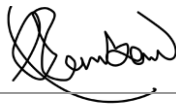
- Ability to provide consistent supply and meet operational delivery requirements.
- Value for money, including unit pricing, packaging format, and operational efficiency.
- Supplier experience, responsiveness, and ability to support SAA service standards.
- Preference may be given to reputable South African or African-origin products aligned to SAA brand positioning.

14. Additional Conditions

- SAA reserves the right to award the contract as a whole or in part.
- SAA will request documentation, clarification, samples or site verification before appointment.
- Samples submitted for evaluation may not be returned.
- Any approved product changes during the contract period must be communicated to and approved by SAA before implementation.

15. Approval

15.1 Specification Approval

Business Unit	Name	Title	Signature	Date
Commercial	Phophi Rambau	Specialist: Food & Beverage		07.07.2026
Commercial	Nothando Mathe	Acting Senior Manager: Guest Experience		10/07/26
Operations	Abighail Mogapi	Manager: Inflight Logistics		07/07/2026
Operations	Lindi Jordaan	Inflight Services		07/07/2026

