LIST OF QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES

Compulsory Briefing Session Held 20 July 2026 at 11:00 to 13:00

Compulsory Briefing Session: 20 July 2026

1. Question: We refer to the tender requirement under the compliance criteria which states that bidders must demonstrate compliance with:

- ICASA Licensed Network Provider (e.g., Individual ECS and ECNS Licences);
- Internet Service Providers' Association (ISPA) Membership; and
- Certified SD-WAN Partner status (e.g., Huawei, Cisco, Fortinet, etc.).

We respectfully request that the requirement for mandatory ISPA membership be reviewed and removed or alternatively amended to be a non-mandatory evaluation criterion.
Our reasons are as follows:
1. ISPA Membership is not a statutory or regulatory requirement
Unlike ICASA ECS and ECNS licences, which are legally required for the provision of electronic communications services and networks in South Africa, membership of the Internet Service Providers' Association (ISPA) is voluntary and not prescribed by legislation or regulation. ISPA itself describes the organisation as a voluntary industry body representing the interests of its members. Accordingly, while ICASA licensing is directly linked to legal compliance, ISPA membership is not.
2. The requirement may unnecessarily restrict competition
The inclusion of mandatory membership of a private industry association excludes otherwise qualified and fully compliant operators that:

- Hold valid ICASA licences.
- Meet all applicable regulatory obligations.
- Possess the required technical expertise and resources; and
- Can successfully deliver the services contemplated under the tender.

This may have the unintended consequence of reducing competition and limiting participation by capable service providers.
3. Regulatory compliance is already demonstrated through ICASA licensing
The requirement for valid ICASA ECS and ECNS licences adequately demonstrates legal authority to provide telecommunications and connectivity services within South Africa. This is the primary regulatory standard against which compliance should be measured.
4. Technical competency can be demonstrated through OEM certifications
We acknowledge the relevance of SD-WAN partner certifications from recognised vendors such as Cisco, Fortinet, Huawei or similar. Such certifications directly demonstrate technical competence and implementation capability. However, ISPA membership does not provide evidence of technical capability or legal compliance.

Requested Amendment

We respectfully request that the requirement be amended. This amendment would preserve the procurement objective while promoting fairness, competitiveness, and broader industry participation.

Response: We have reviewed and amended the TOR

2. Question: We respectfully request a formal extension of the submission deadline for **RFB 14-2026/2027** Service provider to supply implement, support, and maintain SDWAN and Internet Services over a five-year prior currently due on **31 July 2026**. We kindly request that the closing date be extended to **14 August 2026**.

This request is motivated by several outstanding matters that materially impact bidders' ability to prepare a comprehensive and accurate response, namely:

- Clarification questions submitted by bidders have not yet been fully addressed, and there is currently no confirmed timeline for when responses will be provided by SEDFA.
- The site information remains incomplete, and the full list of sites has yet to be shared with respondents.
- Additional time is required to assess the outstanding information and develop a solution that fully aligns with the requirements of the RFP.

Granting this extension will enable respondents to prepare more complete and competitive submissions, ultimately supporting SEDFA in obtaining the best possible outcome from the procurement process.

We appreciate your consideration of this request and remain committed to delivering a robust, reliable, and comprehensive solution, including the SD-WAN deployment and the seamless transition of MPLS, Internet, and APN services.
We kindly request confirmation of the extension at your earliest convenience or advice on any additional information required to support this request.

Response: We have reviewed closing date of the tender and extended it to the 11 August 2026

3. Question: Please assist the ITIL and COBIT certification do you need for individuals or if the company comply with both certifications regarding the above RFB?

Response:

Thank you for your clarification request regarding the ISACA (COBIT) compliance requirement contained in RFB 14-2026/2027.

SEDFA acknowledges that organizations may adopt different internationally recognized IT governance, risk management, service management, and information security frameworks to achieve effective governance and control objectives.

In this regard, bidders are not required to hold a formal COBIT certification. However, bidders must be able to demonstrate that their governance framework, policies, processes, controls, and operational practices are aligned with, or substantially equivalent to, the governance and control objectives envisaged by COBIT.

Accordingly, bidders may submit evidence of compliance through equivalent and recognized frameworks, standards, and best practices, including but not limited to:

- ITIL (Information Technology Infrastructure Library)
- ISO/IEC 27001 (Information Security Management)
- ISO/IEC 20000 (IT Service Management)

- ISO 31000 (Risk Management)
- NIST Cybersecurity Framework
- Other recognized IT governance, risk, and compliance frameworks

Supporting evidence should include relevant policies, governance structures, operational procedures, certifications (where applicable), audit reports, risk management practices, and any other documentation demonstrating the effective implementation of IT governance controls.

The evaluation committee will assess the submitted evidence to determine whether the proposed framework(s) provide governance, risk management, control, and assurance mechanisms that are substantially equivalent to the objectives intended by the COBIT requirement.

We trust the above clarifies the requirement."

4. Question: I am writing to respectfully request an extension of the closing date for **RFB 14/2026/2027 – Supply, Implementation, Support, and Maintenance of Managed SDWAN and Internet Services** for the Small Enterprise Development and Finance Agency (SEDFA) following our attendance to the briefing session. The current submission deadline is **31 July 2026 at 12h00**.

Due to unforeseen circumstances and the extensive documentation, technical design, nationwide deployment planning, and compliance requirements associated with this bid, additional time would greatly assist us in finalising a comprehensive, competitive, and fully compliant proposal. The tender requires a detailed SDWAN and Internet solution covering multiple sites nationwide, together with mandatory technical, operational, and compliance documentation.
We remain highly interested in participating in this opportunity and are committed to submitting a quality response that fully addresses SEDFA's requirements. We would therefore appreciate your consideration of an extension to the submission deadline.
We would be grateful if you could advise whether an extension is possible and, if so, kindly provide the revised closing date.
Thank you for your time and consideration. We look forward to your favourable response.

Response: We have reviewed closing date of the tender and extended it to the 11 August 2026

5. Question: As part of our review of the tender for the supply, implementation, support, and maintenance of SD-WAN and Internet Services, we would appreciate clarification on the following points to ensure that our submission accurately aligns with the requirements.

1. Site Count Discrepancy
The site list shared with bidders reflects a total of **65 sites**, whereas the tender documentation refers to **71 sites**. There appears to be a discrepancy of **6 sites** between the stated total and the detailed site list provided.
Could you please confirm:
- The correct total number of sites included within the scope of this tender.

- Whether there are additional sites that were omitted from the shared site list.
- If additional sites are to be included, kindly provide the details of these sites and any associated requirements.

2. Service Level Agreement (SLA) Requirement
Please confirm the required SLA for the sites.
The tender documentation references an availability SLA of **99.72%**. However, during the bidder briefing session, we understood that the required SLA may be **99.9%** or **99.99%**.
Could you please clarify the minimum SLA requirement that bidders should price and propose against for this tender?
Response To:

1. Site Count Discrepancy
The Total sites are 65, Northwest was counted twice ,The excel sheet was updated including service provider at the site.
2. Service Level Agreement (SLA) Requirement
Head Office: availability SLA of 99.99%.

Provincial Offices/Branch Office: availability SLA of 99.72%.

6. Question: Also – Do you possibly have a list of all the addresses of the 71 sites so that we can be accurate with the costing on the dual links we need to provide.

Response: The list has been attached as Annexure 1 and the Total sites are 65 reflected on the annexure 1.

7. Question: Thank you for the briefing hosted today.

Sorry to bother you but we just want to ask about Annexure 1 which we cannot find (on page 28 of 69) as copied below.

> **7 Provisioning**
> Installation, configuration, and commissioning of WAN links and Internet for SEDFA locations **(listed in Annexure 1)**

Response: The annexure has been amended and attached as Annexure 1

8. Question: We would like to formally request for an extension of the submission date, due to;

1. 3rd party dependencies with the LSM providers, more time is requested.

Response: We have reviewed closing date of the tender and extended it to the 11 August 2026

We refer to RFB 14-2026/2027 and the mandatory requirements section which references compliance with **ISACA standards (COBIT)**.
MTN would like to seek clarification on this requirement.

While MTN adheres to internationally recognised governance, service management, risk management, and information security frameworks, including ITIL and ISO-based operational controls, we do not hold a specific COBIT certification.

Kindly advise whether bidders may demonstrate compliance through equivalent IT governance frameworks, policies, controls, and operational practices that achieve the same governance and control objectives as COBIT, together with supporting evidence of their implementation.

Your guidance on the acceptability of equivalent governance standards and supporting documentation for this requirement would be appreciated.

9.Question

Response: Thank you for your clarification request regarding the ISACA (COBIT) compliance requirement contained in RFB 14-2026/2027.

SEDFA acknowledges that organizations may adopt different internationally recognized IT governance, risk management, service management, and information security frameworks to achieve effective governance and control objectives.

In this regard, bidders are not required to hold a formal COBIT certification. However, bidders must be able to demonstrate that their governance framework, policies, processes, controls, and operational practices are aligned with, or substantially equivalent to, the governance and control objectives envisaged by COBIT.

Accordingly, bidders may submit evidence of compliance through equivalent and recognized frameworks, standards, and best practices, including but not limited to:

- ITIL (Information Technology Infrastructure Library)
- ISO/IEC 27001 (Information Security Management)
- ISO/IEC 20000 (IT Service Management)
- ISO 31000 (Risk Management)
- NIST Cybersecurity Framework
- Other recognized IT governance, risk, and compliance frameworks

Supporting evidence should include relevant policies, governance structures, operational procedures, certifications (where applicable), audit reports, risk management practices, and any other documentation demonstrating the effective implementation of IT governance controls.

The evaluation committee will assess the submitted evidence to determine whether the proposed framework(s) provide governance, risk management, control, and assurance mechanisms that are substantially equivalent to the objectives intended by the COBIT requirement.