

**RETURN BIDS TO:**  
**RETOURNER LES SOUMISSIONS À:**

Jacynthe Tremblay  
Place du Portage, Phase III, 7B3  
11, rue Laurier/11 Laurier St.  
Gatineau  
Québec  
K1A 0S5  
Bid Fax: (809) 956-4944

**LETTER OF INTEREST**  
**LETTRE D'INTÉRÊT**

Comments - Commentaires

Vendor/Firm Name and Address  
Raison sociale et adresse du  
fournisseur/de l'entrepreneur

Issuing Office - Bureau de distribution  
Travel Procurement Services Division/Division des  
services d'approvisionnement en voyage  
Place du Portage, Phase III, 7B3  
Portage III 7B3  
11, rue Laurier/11 Laurier St.  
Gatineau  
Québec  
K1A 0S5

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Title - Sujet</b><br>AUDIT SERVICES - LOW FARE GUARANTEE   |  |
| <b>Solicitation No. - N° de l'invitation</b><br>EN578-150198/A  | <b>Date</b><br>2014-05-29  |
| <b>Client Reference No. - N° de référence du client</b><br>20150198   | <b>GETS Ref. No. - N° de réf. de SEAG</b><br>PW-\$\$LP-003-65176 |
| <b>File No. - N° de dossier</b><br>lp003.EN578-150198   | <b>CCC No./N° CCC - FMS No./N° VME</b>                           |
| <b>Solicitation Closes - L'invitation prend fin</b><br><b>at - à 02:00 PM</b><br><b>on - le 2014-06-20</b>  |  |
| <b>Time Zone</b><br><b>Fuseau horaire</b><br>Eastern Daylight Saving<br>Time EDT  |  |
| <b>F.O.B. - F.A.B.</b><br><b>Plant-Usine:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Destination:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Other-Autre:</b> <input type="checkbox"/>              |  |
| <b>Address Enquiries to: - Adresser toutes questions à:</b><br>Tremblay, Jacynthe   | <b>Buyer Id - Id de l'acheteur</b><br>lp003                      |
| <b>Telephone No. - N° de téléphone</b><br>(819) 934-0768 ( )  | <b>FAX No. - N° de FAX</b><br>(819) 956-4944                     |
| <b>Destination - of Goods, Services, and Construction:</b><br><b>Destination - des biens, services et construction:</b><br><br>Specified Herein<br>Précisé dans les présentes |  |

Instructions: See Herein

Instructions: Voir aux présentes

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Delivery Required - Livraison exigée</b><br>See Herein   | <b>Delivery Offered - Livraison proposée</b> |
| <b>Vendor/Firm Name and Address</b><br><b>Raison sociale et adresse du fournisseur/de l'entrepreneur</b><br><br><br><br><b>Telephone No. - N° de téléphone</b><br><b>Facsimile No. - N° de télécopieur</b>  |  |
| <b>Name and title of person authorized to sign on behalf of Vendor/Firm</b><br><b>(type or print)</b><br><b>Nom et titre de la personne autorisée à signer au nom du fournisseur/</b><br><b>de l'entrepreneur (taper ou écrire en caractères d'imprimerie)</b><br><br><br><b>Signature</b><br><br><br><b>Date</b> |  |

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Ip003EN578-150198

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Ip003

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**Performance Audit of the Government of  
Canada's Travel Agency:**

**Hogg Robinson Group plc**

**REQUEST FOR INFORMATION (RFI)**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Public Works and Government Services Canada (PWGSC) is releasing this Request For Information (RFI) as a first step to inform all interested parties of the possible procurement of a Performance Audit of the Government of Canada's Travel Agency – Hogg Robinson Group plc (HRG) addressing the need for a performance audit on a monthly basis for the duration of the contract and to solicit information that will help PWGSC to refine its procurement strategy.

### 1.1 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

#### 1.1.1 General Context

PWGSC under its Shared Travel Services Directorate (STS) is responsible for the travel operations of the Government of Canada. On April 7, 2014, HRG began to deliver a new Shared Travel Services (STS) solution. The STS solution delivers the next generation of travel services for the Government of Canada. This new solution is an end-to-end travel product that:

- Simplifies and improves delivery of travel services
- Streamlines travel management workflow
- Reduces travel management expenses
- Provides greater transparency and accountability of travel spend government-wide

#### 1.1.2 Specific Context (Components of the STS solution)

##### i-STIS Internet Portal

The Portal is loaded with the latest weather, travel news and alerts. Travellers will quickly find links to book travel, review travel policy, manage expenses, see the latest FAQs, locate MasterCard ATMs, instantly see credit card balances, outstanding expenses and travel summaries. Travellers can also view reports, departmental contacts and much more. Help is available throughout the Portal to provide first level support for all components of the new solution.

##### ii-Government of Canada travel cards

The new solution comes with new Individual Designated Travel Cards (IDTCs), Departmental Travel Expense cards (DTECs), and Departmental Travel Expense Accounts (DTEAs), all provided by BMO MasterCard. The new credit cards and account are pre-associated with a specific department, division and/or branch. Insurance coverage for these credit cards exceeds government minimum standards, and MasterCard's acceptance is unsurpassed by any other credit card provider worldwide.

##### iii-Online Booking Tool

Booking travel is available with the latest Web-based application that lets travellers and travel arrangers plan and book flights, trains, hotels and vehicles online. The STS Online Booking Tool (OBT) is recommended for: domestic, transborder and straightforward international travel reservations; bookings for hotel and/or car rental only; and for travel that is at least 24 hours after approval. Preferred supplier rates are loaded directly into the system and are easily identifiable to ensure bookings meet National Joint Council travel directive.

A traveller can use the OBT to plan and book his/her own travel. Authorized travel arrangers can book travel for others – including groups – according to their role permissions. Travel Authorization requests are automatically sent to the appropriate recommenders and approvers. A feature of the system delivers automated bookings dependent on tolerance levels that are agreed to by your approver, significantly reducing potential back-and-forth authorization requests with ever-changing fares and availability. This technology saves organizations in employee time and travel spend.

**iv-Call Centre**

The Call Centre provided by HRG supplies full-service, bilingual travel agency support by phone, fax and email to all GC employees and authorized contractors worldwide. Open around the clock, 365 days a year, travellers can call toll-free from within North America or collect from international locations. The Call Centre complements the OBT with travel that occurs within 24 hours of submitting Travel Requests. Call Centre staff is also able to assist with following requirements:

- § Group bookings for 10 or more
- § Travel to remote Canadian locations
- § Travel using airline credits or passes
- § Web fares not captured in the OBT
- § Special needs
- § International and/or multi-leg routes
- § VIP and/or Dedicated services
- § Conference management services
- § Technical support

**v-Expense Management Tool**

For organizations that have signed up for the full solution, the STS Expense Management Tool (EMT) automates submitting, approving, and processing travel expense reports. This tool supports a consistent application of travel and expense policies, allows electronic receipt attachment and, with the acceptance of IDTCs worldwide, results in data gathering and reporting, facilitating better travel decisions and reduced overall travel spends.

**1.2 OBJECTIVE:**

The objective of the audit is to verify that:

- (1) all HRG reservation agents are offering and documenting the lowest available airfares (including government negotiated and private fares) to all Government travelers, in accordance with the low fare search windows indicated in the travel service contract; and that
- (2) the online booking tool delivered by HRG is offering the lowest available airfares (including government negotiated and private fares) to all government travellers, in accordance with the low fare search windows indicated in the travel service contract.

**1.3 Annex**

Annex 1: Statement of Requirement Document for Performance Audit of the Government of Canada's Travel Agency

**2. REQUEST FOR INFORMATION**

"Respondents" to this RFI are defined as companies with the capabilities to deliver a Performance Audit of the Government of Canada's Travel Agency compliant with the technical requirements described in Annex 1: Statement of Requirement - Performance Audit of the Government of Canada's Travel Agency.

These respondents are invited to submit a reply to the RFI that addresses any or all of the topics listed below. To facilitate the review of the responses to this RFI, respondents are asked to please address and

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present the requested information in the order in which the topics are presented. Such topics are described in the following subsections.

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## 2.1 RESPONDENT INFORMATION

Please provide background information on your company, company management team and company experience with similar requirements in the area of performance audit of a travel agency. Please provide the name, telephone number, and email address of a representative who may be contacted for clarification or other matters related to the response.

## 2.2 PERFORMANCE OF THE WORK

Please explain how you will be able to fulfill requirement described in Annex 1: Statement of Requirement. This description should provide a first elaboration, detailed as far as practical, of the technical evidence that the proposed solution would meet or exceed STS's minimal performance requirements.

## 2.3 ACQUISITION COST ESTIMATES AND BASIS OF PAYMENT

Please provide cost estimates and an appropriate basis of payment to fulfill requirement in Annex 1. A suggested basis of payment is provided at Annex 2.

## 2.4 RECOMMENDATIONS, SUGGESTIONS OR COMMENTS

Canada would like to hear from you to what will be the optimal level of effort for audits to be performed: what would you consider to be a reasonable number of days during one specific month? Should we conduct these audits monthly or less? What days of the month should these audits be performed? Should they be consecutive or random days? Based on the results of audits, on what criteria should we base the decisions to increase or decrease the audits through the time? If conclusion of the audits is positive, should we decrease the level of effort to a less frequent occurrence? On the other hand, if conclusion of the audits is negative, should we increase the level of effort to a more frequent occurrence?

Moreover, please provide general feedback and/or any recommendations, inputs or comments (including technical information) that could assist the Government of Canada in developing the future RFP documents for Performance Audit of the Government of Canada's Travel Agency.

## 3. OTHER INFORMATION TO INTERESTED RESPONDENTS

### 3.1 IMPORTANT NOTE TO INTERESTED RESPONDENTS

Respondents should note that this RFI is not a pre-selection process. There will be no short listing of firms for purposes of undertaking any future works, as a result of this RFI. Similarly, participation in this process is not a condition or prerequisite for participation in an eventual RFP.

This RFI is neither a Call for Tenders, nor a RFP, and no agreement or contract will be entered into with any contractor, based on responses to this RFI. The issuance of this RFI is not to be considered in any way as a commitment by Canada, or as authority for the respondent to undertake any work which could be charged to Canada, nor is this RFI to be considered a commitment to issue eventual RFPs or award eventual contracts in relation to this project.

Canada must not be bound by anything stated in this RFI. Canada reserves the right to change all or any parts of this RFI as deemed necessary.

### 3.2 COSTS FOR RESPONSES

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No payment will be made to the respondents by Canada for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of responses to this RFI.



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### **3.3 REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION AND LETTER OF INTEREST**

Requests for Information and Letter of Interest should be sent by **E-MAIL ONLY** to:

**Jacynthe Tremblay**

Supply Specialist

Public Works and Government Services Canada

Traffic Management Directorate

Travel Procurement Services Division - LP

11 Laurier Street, 6B3-37

Gatineau QC K1A 0S5

Telephone: 819-934-0768

Facsimile: 819-956-4944

E-mail address: [jacynthe.tremblay@pwgcs-tpsgc.gc.ca](mailto:jacynthe.tremblay@pwgcs-tpsgc.gc.ca)

The closing date to submit a response is: **Friday, June 20, 2014, 2:00 pm EDT.**

Responses are to be submitted in one of the two Official Languages of Canada (English or French).

## Annex 1 - STATEMENT OF REQUIREMENT

### Performance Audit of the Government of Canada's Travel Agency

#### REQUIREMENT:

Canada has a contract with Hogg Robinson Group plc and their subcontractor, BMO Financial Group, for the provision of travel services for government travellers. Shared Travel Services Directorate (STS), Services and Specialized Acquisitions Management Sector (SSAMS) within Public Works and Government Services Canada (PWGSC) is the Technical Authority of the government travel service contract for Canada. Services and Technology Acquisition Management Sector (STAMS) is the Contract Authority.

The Contractor will utilize recognized, valid statistical sampling methodology to determine the number of domestic, transborder and international files to be audited that will provide Canada with a statistically valid audit, ensuring a high degree of accuracy. The Contractor will be provided access to all HRG travel files created during the audit period.

The Contractor will ensure that all data obtained in the course of this work will remain fully secured in accordance with current Government of Canada security policies and privacy legislation. Specifically, all contractor personnel are to be security cleared for access to subject data, all facilities where GC data is stored are to be appropriately assessed and validated by PWGSC Industrial Security Services (ISS), and any IT systems or electronic processing mechanisms used for this data are to be Certified and Accredited (C&A) and/or assessed and validated by PWGSC ISS.

The Contractor must be available to perform low fare audit on a monthly basis for the following specified periods:

1. October 1, 2014 to March 31, 2015
2. April 1, 2015 to March 31, 2016
3. April 1, 2016 to March 31, 2017
4. April 1, 2017 to March 31, 2018 (optional)
5. April 1, 2018 to March 31, 2019 (optional)
6. April 1, 2019 to March 31, 2020 (optional)
7. April 1, 2020 to March 31, 2021 (optional)
8. April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2022 (optional)
9. April 1, 2022 to March 31, 2023(optional)
10. April 1, 2023 to March 31, 2024 (optional)

Canada will notify the Contractor in writing at least sixty (60) days prior to the start of the month to be audited for any change with respect to the periods or schedule of audits.

#### OBJECTIVE:

The objective of the audit is to verify that:

- (1) all HRG reservation agents are offering and documenting the lowest available airfares (including government negotiated and private fares) to all Government travelers, in accordance with the low fare search windows indicated in the travel service contract; and that

(2) the online booking tool delivered by HRG is offering the lowest available airfares (including government negotiated and private fares) to all government travellers, in accordance with the low fare search windows indicated in the travel service contract.

## METHODOLOGY:

HRG is required to set up various queues (domestic, transborder, international for the traditional Call Centre and on-sites) where ***all*** Passenger Name Records (PNR's) will be automatically placed.

Domestic, transborder and international files will be placed in the queue immediately after the file locator has been obtained and the file has passed through the agency's quality assurance process (within 2 hours of file creation for domestic and transborder files and within 24 hours for international files). During the audit period the Contractor will be responsible for obtaining all of the PNR's from the Computer Reservation System (CRS),. On each PNR there is a Travel Authorization Number (TAN) comprised of three (3) alpha characters and six (6) digits. This information resides in the first line of the PNR where the name field is located.

The TAN is to be captured along with the passenger's name and provided on all reports by the Contractor. In addition, the Contractor will capture the HRG office where the reservation was made (this information resides in the 'received field', on the second last line of the PNR) and provide reports for each HRG branch office and government department.

In fiscal year 2013-14, 187,708 PNR's were created through the Travel Call Centre. A further 149,897 PNR's were created through the Online Booking Tool. PNR's are to be separated into domestic, transborder and international queues for sampling. Taking into account the reporting periods of data, the approximate breakdown and logical structure of the data is as follows:

1. Monthly period (all days or selected number of days: to be agreed to between Canada and Contractor)

### 1.1 Travel Agency Bookings

#### 1.1.1 Domestic (73%)

1.1.1.1 Prices listed on Computerized Reservation Systems (CRS)

1.1.1.2 Prices listed by Regional Carriers not on CRS

1.1.1.3 Prices listed at Carrier Websites for Carriers also listed on CRS

#### 1.1.2 Transborder (9%)

1.1.2.1 Prices listed on Computerized Reservation Systems (CRS)

1.1.2.2 Prices listed by Regional Carriers not on CRS

1.1.2.3 Prices listed at Carrier Websites for Carriers also listed on CRS

#### 1.1.3 International (18%)

1.1.3.1 Prices listed on Computerized Reservation Systems (CRS)

1.1.3.2 Prices listed by Regional Carriers not on CRS

1.1.3.3 Prices listed at Carrier Websites for Carriers also listed on CRS

1.1.3.4 Prices listed at Consolidator sites

## 1.2 Online Bookings

### 1.2.1 Domestic (91%)

1.2.1.1 Prices listed on Computerized Reservation Systems (CRS)

1.2.1.2 Prices listed by Regional Carriers not on CRS

1.2.1.3 Prices listed at Carrier Websites for Carriers also listed on CRS

### 1.2.2 Transborder (8%)

1.2.2.1 Prices listed on Computerized Reservation Systems (CRS)

1.2.2.2 Prices listed by Regional Carriers not on CRS

1.2.2.3 Prices listed at Carrier Websites for Carriers also listed on CRS

### 1.2.3 International (1%)

1.2.3.1 Prices listed on Computerized Reservation Systems (CRS)

1.2.3.2 Prices listed by Regional Carriers not on CRS

1.2.3.3 Prices listed at Carrier Websites for Carriers also listed on CRS

1.2.3.4 Prices listed at Consolidator sites

Domestic and transborder files must be randomly audited only once, within 2 hours after being placed in the queue. International files must be audited within 24 hours after being placed in the queue. If the Contractor finds a lower fare option, the Contractor must annotate the option and queue the file back to the agent so that the traveller may be advised.

In order to verify that the airfare quoted by HRG was the lowest available airfare, the Contractor must make use of all available sources (regardless of the source suggested by HRG), including:

- the CRS
- consolidators
- regionally specific carriers (include carriers that do not participate in automated reservation systems or Billing and Settlement Plan)
- web sites (if applicable)

Domestic files are those where travel is wholly within Canada. As soon as the file has been created and passed through the quality assurance process, HRG is required to automatically place these files into the domestic queue and the Contractor must audit the file within two (2) working hours. PNRs must only be audited once.

Transborder files are those where travel originates within Canada and the destination is the United States, or vice versa. As soon as the file has been created and passed through the quality assurance process, HRG is required to automatically place these files into the transborder queue and the Contractor must audit the file within two (2) working hours.

PNR's must only be audited once.

International files are those where: travel originates within Canada and the destination is outside of Canada and the United States or, files with travel originating outside of Canada and the United States.

At the time of booking, based on the origin and destination of the traveller's itinerary, HRG is required to determine the availability of the lowest fare based on the published fares within the CRS and offer this fare to the traveller. Within 24 hours, HRG is required to check the file for lower fares using published, private government fares, charter or consolidated fares, and annotate the file with

the lowest available fare and queue the file to the Contractor. These files must be audited by the Contractor within twenty-four (24) hours after being placed in the queue.

For negotiated, private air fares with the carriers (carrier discount agreements to be provided at contract award), the Contractor must audit the PNR within the stipulations dictated by the type of file, i.e. domestic, transborder, or international, and in accordance with their appropriate discount schedules as outlined in the airline agreements. Prior to auditing the file, the Contractor must refer to the field(s) where the fares are stored to determine whether HRG has annotated the PNR with a lower fare.

Based on the origin and destination of the traveller's itinerary, the Contractor must, within 24 hours, contact one other source within the local market to obtain the selling price (including all taxes).

Where applicable (routings conducive to consolidator fares), the Contractor must consult with a consolidator whether or not HRG determines the lowest available fare to be a consolidator fare.

Prior to auditing the file the Contractor will refer to the field(s) where the fares are stored to determine if HRG has annotated the PNR as the lowest fare. For each file where a consolidator fare is applicable, the Contractor must provide the name of the consolidator company contacted for auditing purposes along with proof of seat availability.

Based on the origin and destination of the traveller's itinerary and the airline, the Contractor must check the fare on the airline's web Site.

### **DELIVERABLES (REPORTS):**

The monthly reports listed below are to be provided to Canada two (2) weeks after month end that the audit occurred.

A monthly report (for the period during which the audit is requested), broken down by HRG Branch office, government department and, domestic, transborder and international travel.

Monthly reports must detail:

- (1) the total number of PNR's received.
- (2) the total number of PNR's audited.
- (3) the average ticket cost of PNR's audited.
- (4) the potential savings for PNR's audited.
- (5) the fare types of PNR's audited.
- (6) the total number and locator number of PNR's not placed in the queue within specified time requirements.
- (7) errors found on HRG files and action taken (accepted, refused, no response, cancelled, changes or ticketed) for each PNR.
- (8) supporting documentation of all errors.

**Exempt PNRs:**

- (1) Diplomatic courier - No further explanation required.
- (2) Deportee/Escort- No further explanation required.
- (3) Incomplete PNR's. Files that contain a portion of an itinerary i.e. outbound only, and are fully documented to that effect prior to the audit.
- (4) Prepaid: The Contractor must not audit prepaid fares. HRG is not responsible for fares calculated by the applicable carrier.
- (5) PNRs that are booked using a Flight pass where the cost on the file is a zero amount.
- (6) Fare quotes must be excluded from the audit.
- (7) Exchanges must be excluded from the audit.

**Audit Instruction**

In cases where there are several itinerary options on a PNR, the Contractor will audit only one of the itineraries as per the audit instructions.

**Departure Window:**

Domestic/Transborder- An eight-hour (4 hours either side) window should include departure and arrival times. Specifically, departure/arrival times more than 4 hours outside the requested departure/arrival time must not be suggested by HRG.

International- 9 hours either side of departure.

**International Split Ticketing:**

Split tickets at a destination point (issuing two one way tickets) will be an acceptable practice and should be offered where beneficial.

Split tickets at a connection point should be offered when the connection time is equal to the minimum connection time plus one hour. HRG agents are required to document each PNR with the actual cost of the split routing prior to documenting a client refusal. Files not annotated correctly will be considered an error.

**Waitlisting Flights:**

For the purpose of this audit- HRG will not be found in error for not offering waitlist. However, the Contractor will send a message to HRG recommending a waitlist where applicable.

**HRG Response Time to the Contractor:**

HRG is required to respond to the Contractor within 48 hours of receiving a message.

**Acceptable Fare Difference on Lower Fares:**

Domestic/Transborder- no minimum.

International -minimum \$100.00.

PNR Annotation Requirements:

If the lowest published fare is unavailable (sold out), HRG is required to "freeze-frame" the data from the CRS and transfer the data to the PNR or if the lowest unpublished fare is unavailable (sold out), annotate the file as evidence of having researched and found a lower fare.

HRG is required to make pertinent annotations in the appropriate fields where fares are stored in their system. Prior to the audit of the PNR, the Contractor must review these fields to verify that the file has been adequately annotated. The following HRG annotations are acceptable and should not be considered errors by the Contractor:

1. Client Refusal of Fare:  
"low fare declined" provided that the option, including the fare, is visible in the field with the fare record prior to the audit. The reason the fare is declined is not mandatory for the audit requirements but must be annotated by HRG in the historical remarks.
2. Negotiated/Private Fare Declined:  
"above options declined" in the field(s) with a record of the fare. Provided that the option, including the fare, is visible in the PNR prior to the audit.

**Annex 2 – BASIS OF PAYMENT****1 – First Period of the Contract: October 1, 2014 to March 31, 2016 (GST or HST excluded)**

| <b>Low fare audit for October 1, 2014 to March 31, 2016</b> |  |  |  |
|---|--|--|--|
| <b>Audit Size</b> (To be proposed as optimal size)          |  |  |  |
| <b>Cost per PNR \$</b>                                      |  |  |  |
| <b>Total \$</b>   |  |  |  |
| Domestic PNR's per month                                    |  |  |  |
| International PNR's per month                               |  |  |  |
| Transborder PNR's per month                                 |  |  |  |
| Reports   |  |  |  |
| GDS Fee   |  |  |  |
| Implementation Fee  |  |  |  |
| <b>Monthly Total cost</b>                                   |  |  |  |

Additional GDS/Web Search are to be approved by STS authority

| Flight Category | Additional GDS/WEB Search |
|-----------------|---------------------------|
| Domestic        |                           |
| International   |                           |
| Transborder     |                           |



**2 – Second Period of the Contract: April 1, 2016 to March 31, 2017 (GST or HST excluded)**

| Low fare audit for April 1, 2016 to March 31, 2017 |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|
| <b>Audit Size</b> (To be proposed as optimal size) |  |  |  |
| <b>Cost per PNR \$</b>                             |  |  |  |
| <b>Total \$</b>                                    |  |  |  |
| Domestic PNR's per month                           |  |  |  |
| International PNR's per month                      |  |  |  |
| Transborder PNR's per month                        |  |  |  |
| Reports  |  |  |  |
| GDS Fee  |  |  |  |
| Implementation Fee                                 |  |  |  |
| <b>Monthly Total cost</b>                          |  |  |  |

Additional GDS/Web Search are to be approved by STS authority

| Flight Category | Additional GDS/WEB Search |
|-----------------|---------------------------|
| Domestic        |                           |
| International   |                           |
| Transborder     |                           |

**3 – Possible Optional Periods of the Contract: After April 1, 2017 (GST or HST excluded)**

To be determined by Customer Price Index on January 01, year of optional period starts.