



SHARED SERVICES CANADA

Amendment No. 006 to the Invitation to Qualify (ITQ) for the Network Solution Supply Chain (NSSC) Procurement Process

ITQ Invitation No.	10044001/A	Date	June 30, 2016
File No.	14-25620	GETS Reference No.	PW-16-00726541

This Amendment revises the originally NSSC ITQ released by SSC on March 16, 2016. The NSSC ITQ remains unchanged, except as explicitly amended by this document.

This NSSC ITQ Amendment No. 006 is raised to:

- 1 – Publish Canada's responses to Industry questions received during the question period;
- 2 – Issue a reminder that enquiries related to this ITQ must be submitted by e-mail to SSC.telecomconsultation-consultationtelecom.SPC@canada.ca; and
- 3 - **E-mail/Question Confidentiality.** To ensure that your questions are answered in an expeditious manner, please remove the confidential nature of your question so that we can publicly post your question and the answer on Buy and Sell. Please also remember to remove any indication (such as footnotes) within your e-mail which are noting that your e-mail is confidential in nature. Please refer to Section 1.1 of SSC's Standard Instructions.

NOTE: Clarification questions are numerically sequenced upon arrival at SSC. Questions and answers for this solicitation may be issued out of sequence.

1 – Publish Canada's responses to Industry questions received during the question period:

Question 55	<p>Due to the fact that Alcatel-Lucent is a significant existing Government of Canada (GoC) Original Equipment Manufacturer(OEM), we formally request to be added to the list on page 6 of 39 of the ITQ in Section H) as shown below.</p> <p>h) It is Canada's intention to require Contractors to provide mandatory Service Solution Tier 2: Maintenance Services for all of the following existing / legacy GC Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) products:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">i. A10;ii. Avaya (including legacy Nortel equipment);iii. Bluecoat;iv. Brocade;
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	<p>v. Cisco; vi. F5; vii. Fortinet; viii. HP; ix. IBM; x. Juniper; xi. McAfee; xii. Riverbed; and xiii. Symantec</p> <p>Will the Government of Canada please add Alcatel-Lucent to this list?</p>
Answer 55	Please refer to Modification 013 .
Question 56	<p>In Tab Annex B1 it states the following, however it does not make it clear if you can use the same reference name, if applicable, to more than one of the 8 solutions. i.e. LAN and Datacentre. Can the Government of Canada please confirm that we can use the same reference name for more than one of the 8 solutions?</p> <p>“With respect to the above, a different Customer Organization can be used for each solution, but multiple Customer Organizations cannot be used to meet the requirement described for a single solution.</p>
Answer 56	Please refer to Amendment 002, Modification 005 .
Question 57	Please confirm an intent to enter into a definite teaming agreement between 2 corporations constitutes a partnership as referenced in section 4.2.a) of the ITQ
Answer 57	Please refer to 4.2 a) Respondent can be a corporation, a partnership or a joint venture. It must be clear for Canada who is the Respondent, please refer to 2.1 c).
Question 58	In Section 9, Annex B1 item vii regarding traffic management: Can you elaborate on what you mean by traffic management solution? Would it include network traffic control to manage, control or reduce the network traffic, particularly Internet bandwidth, e.g. by a network scheduler? Is the intent of traffic management to reduce congestion, latency and packet loss? Would it entail the measurement of the network traffic to determine the causes of network congestion and attack those problems specifically?
Answer 58	The various functionality presented in the question are all examples, although not an exhaustive list, of the functionality of a traffic management solution.
Question 59	In Section 9, Annex B2 the reference solution must have 10 sites that are 400km distant from other sites and has a minimum 500 sites. Is this requirement meant to deal with remote sites such as northern Canadian communities and would demonstration of service to remote sites that may not be 400km away be acceptable?
Answer 59	The requirement for 10 of the 500 physical sites to be at least 400 km distant from all other sites is intended to demonstrate that the Respondent is capable of providing service in various geographic locations. The requirement remains unchanged.
Question 60	Would Shared Services Canada consider extending the deadline for response to the ITQ by at least 2 weeks?
Answer 60	Please refer to Amendment 003, Modification 010 .
Question 61	Do the 10,000 users imply customers, employees or a combination of both?
Answer 61	There is no requirement as to the type of the users served by the Networking Solutions.
Question 62	When asking for 3 solutions per sub category does this imply 1 project or are 3 separate projects each with 10,000 users acceptable? (ie: The respondent must provide at least 3 LAN solutions, each located at least 100 km apart, that collectively serve at least 10,000 users)

Answer 62	Please refer to Amendment 002, Modification 005 . Respondents must provide Customer Organization references for which they have provided three instances of the eight Networking Solutions where the three instances of solution provided collectively serve at least 10,000 users.
Question 63	Please define Tier 2 maintenance services
Answer 63	Please refer to Section 1.2 Table 1 of the NSSC ITQ. Further detail of the scope of the required maintenance services will be defined in subsequent phases of the procurement process.
Question 64	Could we please get an unlocked version of the annex forms?
Answer 64	Canada will not provide the unlocked version of the NSSC ITQ annex forms.
Question 65	Section # 2.3 Page 11 Item: Question re: Close of Enquiries and Comments Period Section 2.3 Enquiries and Comments During the ITQ Response Period states that; a) All enquiries regarding this ITQ must be submitted by email to SSC.telecomconsultation-consultationtelecom.SPC@canada.ca no later than 15 Federal Government Working Days (FGWDs) before the ITQ closing date. Enquiries received after that time may not be answered. In the event that SSC is unable to provide responses to questions submitted prior to the end of the Enquiries and Comments Period, will Canada extend the Enquiries and Comments Period to allow for follow-up questions? If so, will Canada also extend the ITQ closing date?
Answer 65	Please refer to Amendment 002 Answer #48. The enquiry end date remains unchanged and all questions received in time will be answered. Enquiries answered post enquiry close date will not warrant an ITQ Extension nor an enquiry extension period.
Question 66	We would like to request an extension for this opportunity to have the close date of June 3rd, 2016.
Answer 66	Please refer to Amendment 003, Modification 010 .
Question 67	We have reviewed the Tier 4 requirement, described in Annex D, which includes the “vii” requirement for Service Desk experience for a period of at least 24 continuous months during the 15 years prior to the ITQ closing date as follows: “vii Service Desk with an IVR (Integrated Voice Response) system that enables choice of language.” We reviewed your requirements with our partner and they explained that some OEM's, like XXXX, do not answer Service Desk calls directly, and they use electronic telephone systems that result in documented average response times for P1 and P2 calls of around 1 hour. With our North America based Service Desk solution our customers asked us to design a telephone system where they always get live multilingual people, from a large group of 326 Network Engineers, on the phone to address and/or direct calls as required to the language of choice for the caller. As a result our Technical Assistance Centre (TAC) Service Desk has an average response time of 5 minutes for P1 and P2 calls, versus 1 hour with XXXXX. We created this system to address matters more personally and it more effectively and more quickly enable the choice of language. Our clients provided feedback that they did not like slow automated system from company XXXXX, and that our system is preferred for making contact with a Service Desk.

	<p>As a result we have the following Question #1: Could the Government of Canada please amend this requirement to state: “vii Service Desk with an effective system that enables choice of language.” ?</p>
Answer 67	The requirement remains unchanged.
Question 68	<p>Our team has reviewed the Tier 1 requirement described in Annex A, and we noticed that the large OEMs have items (i), (ii), (vi), and (viii) covered extremely well, and this is covered in the “Magic Quadrant for the Wired and Wireless LAN Access Infrastructure” dated 1 September 2015. See the following link: https://www.gartner.com/doc/reprints?id=1-2MA78JC&ct=150901 As a result, in order to promote the maximum competition for these networking solutions we respectfully ask will the Government of Canada split Tier 1 into more sections, and that the first section be called Tier 1A, and that it consist of items (i), (ii), (vi), and (viii)? Will the GoC please grant this request?</p>
Answer 68	The requirements remain unchanged.
Question 69	<p>In order to promote the maximum competition for these “Best of Breed” networking solutions we respectfully ask will the Government of Canada split Tier 1 into 4 more sections, that it consist of items (iii), (iv), (v), and (vii), highlighted below, and that these be called Tier 1B, 1C, 1D, and 1E? Will the GoC please grant this request?</p> <p>i. The Respondent must have provided at least 3 LAN solutions, each located at least 100 km apart, that collectively serve at least 10,000 users;</p> <p>ii. The Respondent must have provided at least 3 routing network solutions, each located at least 100 km apart, that collectively serve at least 10,000 users;</p> <p>iii. The Respondent must have provided at least 3 layer 4 – 7 network solutions, each located at least 100 km apart, that collectively serve at least 10,000 users;</p> <p>iv. The Respondent must have provided at least 3 IT security solutions, each located at least 100 km apart, that collectively serve at least 10,000 users;</p> <p>v. The Respondent must have provided at least 3 optical network solutions, each located at least 100 km apart, that collectively serve at least 10,000 users;</p> <p>vi. The Respondent must have provided at least 3 data centre network solutions, each located at least 100 km apart, that collectively serve at least 10,000 users;</p> <p>vii. The Respondent must have provided at least 3 traffic management solutions, each located at least 100 km apart, that collectively serve at least 10,000 users; and</p> <p>viii. The Respondent must have provided at least 3 wireless LAN solutions, each located at least 100 km apart, that collectively serve at least 10,000 users.</p>
Answer 69	The requirements remain unchanged.
Question 70	<p>We understand that the Network Solution Supply Chain (NSSC) is designed to replace the existing Network Equipment and Support Services (NESS) National Master Standing Offer (NMSO) procurement vehicle, and that the NESS NMSO allows for the NESS holders to designate fulfilling resellers to fulfil product orders. The limitation of the NESS is that it does not allow for the fulfilment of services, however, the NSSC does allow for service fulfilment. Although resellers are not specifically mentioned in the NSSC ITQ document, they are an important resource for the delivery of the products and services defined in this NSSC. As a result will SSC please confirm that bidders that are successful in being awarded NSSC Supply Arrangements will be allowed to have products and services awarded by their</p>

	reseller channels, and that the NSSC will allow for this?
Answer 70	Please refer to NSSC ITQ, Section 1.2 e). Canada is encouraging potential Solution Providers to engage smaller suppliers such as Value Added Resellers (VARs). The determination of what component(s) to use to satisfy a solution requirement will be left up to the Solution Provider as long as their proposal meets Canada needs. Canada does not want to limit the number of sub-contractors that the SA holder may wish to utilize.
Question 71	On Page 13 of 39 there is a section "3 PROCUREMENT PROCESS" and under "(c) Request for Supply Arrangements (RFSA) Phase", there is a sentence that states: "Any Supply Arrangements will only be awarded after completion of the RFSA Phase and any necessary internal approvals have been received." In order to confirm that resellers will be a part of the process to deliver products and services, will SSC please amend this sentence to state: "Any Supply Arrangements will only be awarded after completion of the RFSA Phase and any necessary internal approvals have been received, <u>and it will be at this time that Supply Arrangement (SA) Holders will be allowed to provide a list of authorized resellers under their SA.</u> " ? The highlighted and underlined section of the sentence shows the recommended wording.
Answer 71	The requirements remain unchanged.
Question 72	On Page 13 of 39 there is a section "3 PROCUREMENT PROCESS" and under "(c) Request for Supply Arrangements (RFSA) Phase", there is a sentence that states: "Canada is currently considering awarding three to five Supply Arrangements for 7 years, plus 3 one-year optional periods based on four integrated Service Solution Tiers, but this will be confirmed in the RFSA when it is released." One of the best features of the NESS NMSO is that it allows companies to qualify on an ongoing basis, which facilitates the addition of new technologies and "Best of Breed" product and services in a timely manner, and it also does not limit the number of NESS NMSO agreements that are awarded. Even other procurement vehicles like the SBIPS Supply Arrangement (SA) allows for new companies to qualify on a quarterly basis, which is of great benefit to the Government of Canada. The current SSC plan to limit the number of Supply Arrangements to only three to five awards, and to lock them in for a 7 year term, plus 3 one-year optional periods will result in greatly limiting the competition which will definitely not benefit the Government of Canada. It will be hard enough to win Supply Arrangements anyway without these kinds of unnecessary limitations. As a result will SSC please amend this section of the NSSC ITQ to promote competition and companies with the latest technologies by removing the limitation on the number of Supply Arrangement awards, and also to allow new companies to qualify on an ongoing basis like the NESS NMSO?
Answer 72	The requirements remain unchanged. Also please refer to Amendment 002 Answer 44.
Question 73	On page 18 of 39 in Section "5.2 Financial Capability" it does not specifically mention that companies that have proof of Financial Capability already on file with SSC, that this does not have to be submitted again to SSC. Will SSC please confirm that for the Request for Supply Arrangements (RFSA) Phase that if companies have proof of Financial Capability already on file with SSC, that this does not have to be submitted again to SSC?
Answer 73	Please refer to 5.2 a). It is anticipated that SACC Manual clause A9033T subsection 4 will apply.
Question 74	On page 6 of 39 in Section "1.2 Introduction" it states the following in (g): "(g) Respondents must submit responses for Service Solution Tiers 1, 2 and 4. The mandatory evaluation criteria (set out in Annex B1, B2, and B4) focus on the Respondent's experience delivering the requirements for these three Solution Tiers." We were approached by one of the largest multivendor "Best of Breed" service providers in the world, who specializes on maintaining the same networking products that the Government of Canada already has installed. They do not understand why the same company needs to fulfill networking products in Tier 1, as well as also provide Tier 2 and 4 services, and we agree that this does not make sense to limit competition for Tier 2 services

	in this way. As a result, in order to ensure that highest level of competition possible for Tier 2 services, will SSC please amend this section to allow for Supply Arrangement awards per Tier, and not require all 3 Tiers, such as Tiers 1, 2 and 4, to be proposed in order to be compliant?
Answer 74	The requirements remain unchanged. Also please refer to Amendment 002 Answer #44.
Question 75	Our organisation responded to the vendor questionnaire on July, 2015 stating that we offered leading edge for managed remote monitoring, Troubleshooting and Tier 3 services within our Canadian facility. The ITQ does not allow us to be compliant in the first phase to enable us to compete for Tier 3. Would Canada consider competing Tier 3 on its own basis, providing an unrestricted competitive environment?
Answer 75	The requirements remain unchanged. Also please refer to Amendment 002 Answer 44.
Question 76	We have not been able to subcontract to very large Telco/system integrators who can substantiate client references of 10,000 users for all 8 references stated in Tier 1; would Canada reduce the reference requirements to meet a minimum 4 of 8 references in Tier 1, to qualified suppliers of the 14 OEM (1.2h) that can and are supplying professional services, remote monitoring and support, to a large customer base but not necessary 10,000 users?
Answer 76	The requirements remain unchanged.
Question 77	The Optical Network Solutions Requested Reference in Tier 1 is very a restrictive requirement aligned with very few suppliers, mostly Telco and excluding most IT focused Solution Providers, would Canada consider removing this requirement or contract this restrictive solution separately to the very few possible vendors?
Answer 77	The requirements remain unchanged. Also please refer to Amendment 002 Answer 44.
Question 78	The requirement for a client of 500 sites for the Tier 2 reference is very restrictive. Would Canada consider organisations that could meet this requirement with multiple clients for a minimum 500 sites?
Answer 78	The requirement remains unchanged.
Question 79	The importance for Canada to get quick access to support and meet standard SLA requirement, can Canada remove the requirement for IVR as prompt service is ideal with live point of contact?
Answer 79	The requirement remains unchanged.
Question 80	With Socio Economic committee meetings and discussions ongoing, how can SSC promote a vehicle that clearly eliminates SME participation?
Answer 80	Please refer to NSSC ITQ, Section 1.2 e). Canada is encouraging potential Solution Providers to engage smaller suppliers such as Value Added Resellers (VARs). The determination of what component(s) to use to satisfy a solution requirement will be left up to the Solution Provider as long as their proposal meets Canada's needs. Canada does not want to limit the number of sub-contractors that the SA holder may wish to utilize. Also please note in the NSSC ITQ, Section 4.2 a) a Respondent can be a corporation, a partnership or a joint venture.
Question 81	The inclusion of a possible point rating system to encourage the inclusion of those suppliers that do not meet the depth and breadth of experience does not position the SME in a favorable position. Subcontracting to a large Telco or Systems integrator is not a sustainable practice for the SME. How will SME inclusion be facilitated?
Answer 81	Point rated criteria may be included in the RFSA against which bidders will be assessed during the evaluation. Bidders may be asked to include a plan for the engagement of VARs throughout the life of the contract. This plan may also be point rated. During RRR, this topic may be discussed and appropriate criteria may be included following input from the

	QRs.
Question 82	With all of the networking technology in the control of Telcos or large systems integrators, how will innovation and leading edge solutions be evaluated by the government?
Answer 82	Questions that are not related to NSSC will not be answered.
Question 83	We estimate that 90% of the networking transactions that occurred during the last few months with the Federal Government, were won and delivered by SME companies. The proposed purchasing methodology of the NSSC Procurement Process does not include those SMEs. How will SME participation be included?
Answer 83	Please see NSSC ITQ, Section 1.2 e) on how SMEs can participate. Also please note in the NSSC ITQ, Section 4.2 a) a Respondent can be a corporation, a partnership or a joint venture.
Question 84	The OEMs that make up the NSSC categories have established channel programs, some global in application. The Canadian Government which is a fraction of the global revenues for these companies cannot dictate how these companies must represent their products to the Federal market. How will the government be adaptable to established business practices?
Answer 84	Please refer to Amendment 002 Answer 44.
Question 85	The requirement for respondents to qualify for both tier 1 and tier2 in addition to the fully managed services tier 4 is extremely restrictive. Would SSC consider separating the requirement so that tier 4 is separated from tiers 1 and 2?
Answer 85	The requirements remain unchanged. Also please refer to Amendment 002 Answer 44.
Question 86	In order to maximize the savings on support and maintenance, it is recommended that 5 years of support be included with any hardware purchase. This forces the respective OEMs to aggressively price both hardware and associated support. Will the government please consider including 5 years of support with any hardware purchase?
Answer 86	Refinement of the NSSC initiative will take place in subsequent phases of the procurement process.
Question 87	In place of the requirement to have the respondent meet all 8 categories of networking solutions, would SSC consider adjusting the requirement to allow for more competition by allowing respondent to qualify if they can satisfy a subset of the 8 solutions, for example 3 of 8? The number of organizations that are able to qualify with all 8 networking solutions is very limited.
Answer 87	The requirements remain unchanged.
Question 88	To encourage a higher level of competition, would SSC consider adding an OEM SA to the requirement? OEMs could compete for positions under each networking solution requirement and then assign a limited number of authorized partners (including Tier 1 and SME Solution Providers). This method of procurement would increase competition and allow SSC and OEMs to leverage the value added services and ongoing innovation offered by authorized Solution Providers. SSC could leverage the PISA contract format where OEMs reveal their competitive price list with predetermined discounts to the government and appoint the contracts to be fulfilled by either Tier 1 or SME solution providers dependent upon the nature of the requirement.
Answer 88	The requirements remain unchanged. Also please refer to Amendment 002 Answer 44. Questions that are not related to NSSC will not be answered.
Question 89	To support SSC in delivering the most cost effective and innovative solutions for regional and isolated requirements, would SSC add an additional tier to allow authorized SME solution providers to compete? This would allow for SSC to leverage Solution Providers to deliver outcome-based responses and increase competition.

Answer 89	The requirements remain unchanged.
Question 90	The ITQ as published will not result in cost savings, it will force consolidation by deploying trailing edge low value technology and will stifle innovation and best of breed solutions in the environment. The respondents will be limited to large systems integrators who have a poor track record of delivering against large project requirements. Would SSC reduce the reference requirements to allow for SME to compete?
Answer 90	The requirements remain unchanged. Please refer to Amendment 002 Answer 44.
Question 91	While we are certain that SSC intends for SMEs to subcontract to the large Telcos, Systems Integrators and Service Providers, this is simply not a sustainable practice for SMEs. Not only do legal issues become a heavy burden, but so does the extreme level of control / influence that the large entities will undoubtedly leverage to their advantage over any SME(s) who may be interested in attempting to work through the large vehicle holder(s). Would SSC, at a minimum, consider some type of point-based rating system setup to encourage inclusion of suppliers who do not meet the levels of depth and experience as currently required in the ITQ?
Answer 91	Please refer to answer 81
Question 92	Many, many of the networking transactions that have taken place over the past few quarters have been won and delivered by SME companies. If those SMEs are suddenly eliminated from the procurement process, which will be the case if the NSSC vehicle proceeds in its current form, has SSC considered what impact this will have on both advancing Federal Government IT projects in a timely manner, as well as the financial impact this will have on the businesses that contribute to both the local and Canadian economy. Will SSC please consider separating the Tiers identified in the ITQ to allow for compliance within each category discreetly? Additionally will SSC separate the categories identified within Tier 1 to allow for OEMs or their partners to provide direct compliant responses to the sub-categories of technology, similar to the structure currently in place on DCSSI-PISA to allow for the inclusion of more SMEs?
Answer 92	The requirements remain unchanged. Also, please refer to Amendment 002 answer # 44. Questions that are not related to NSSC will not be answered.
Question 93	The number of respondents who would be able to qualify in all 8 networking solutions is very limited. Would SSC adjust the requirement so that a respondent could still qualify if they can deliver in a subset of the 8 categories (ie. 3 of the 8)?
Answer 93	The requirements remain unchanged.
Question 94	Would SSC adjust the current requirement to align more closely with the current DCSSI - PISA contract format? (ie. Add an OEM Supply Arrangement) whereby the OEMs could compete for inclusion under each of the network solutions requirements and then be allowed to assign authorized Partners (both Tier 1 and SMEs) to fulfill business transactions? This structure would promote competition while supporting the channel organizations who the OEMs rely on to bring added value and drive innovation their respective customer base. We submit that SSC needs to consider that many of these OEMs are Global companies who are entirely channel driven and have long established relationships with SMEs and Tier 1 providers alike. Asking these OEMs to effectively abandon the SMEs, whom they often rely on to drive a large volume of transactional business, is potentially very damaging to their reputation and financial goals.
Answer 94	The requirements remain unchanged. Also please refer to Amendment 002 Answer 44. Questions that are not related to NSSC will not be answered.
Question 95	We believe that the current NSSC vehicle structure supports requirements for National rollouts and deployments, however, would SSC consider adding an additional tier, which

	would allow SMEs to compete and support existing infrastructure and diverse requirements, to fulfill more regional and / or specialized requirements for networking solutions, including legacy replacements and upgrades for clients?
Answer 95	The requirements remain unchanged.
Question 96	Would SSC reduce the requirements to allow SMEs to compete in this process?
Answer 96	The requirements remain unchanged. Please refer to Answer #81 and amendment 002, answer 44.
Question 97	Please separate the Tiers identified in the ITQ to allow for compliance within each individual tier.
Answer 97	The requirements remain unchanged. Also please refer to Amendment 002 Answer 44.
Question 98	Will SSC separate Tier 1 into the 8 categories identified this will allow for OEMs or their partners to provide direct compliant responses to the sub-categories of technology, similar to the structure currently in place on DCSSI-PISA?
Answer 98	The requirements remain unchanged. Also please refer to Amendment 002 Answer 44. Questions that are not related to NSSC will not be answered.
Question 99	Will SSC please consider separating the Tiers identified in the ITQ to allow for compliance within each category discreetly and separate the categories identified within Tier 1? We believe that the best sustainable model would be based on the DCSSI RFSA.
Answer 99	The requirements remain unchanged. Also please refer to Amendment 002 Answer 44. Questions that are not related to NSSC will not be answered.
Question 100	Will SSC please consider separating the Tiers identified in the ITQ to allow for compliance within each category discreetly? Additionally will SSC additional separate the categories identified within Tier 1 to allow for OEMs or their partners to provide direct compliant responses to the sub-categories of technology, similar to the structure currently in place on DCSSI-PISA?
Answer 100	The requirements remain unchanged. Also please refer to Amendment 002 Answer 44. Questions that are not related to NSSC will not be answered.
Question 101	Will SSC please consider separating the Tiers identified in the ITQ to allow for compliance within each category discreetly? Additionally will SSC separate the categories identified within Tier 1 to allow for OEMs or their partners to provide direct compliant responses to the sub-categories of technology, similar to the structure currently in place on DCSSI-PISA to allow for the inclusion of more SMEs?
Answer 101	The requirement remains unchanged. Also please refer to Amendment 002 Answer 44. Questions that are not related to NSSC will not be answered.
Question 102	In addition to the procurement methodology described in the ITQ, which would be utilized for national rollout and deployment projects, would SSC add another tier to allow clients to obtain networking products and services to satisfy legacy replacement and upgrades as well as to support smaller more regional or isolated requirements? This second level would allow SME solution providers to compete to support existing infrastructure with diverse requirements.
Answer 102	The requirements remain unchanged.
Question 103	Will SSC please consider separating the Tiers identified in the ITQ to allow for compliance within each category discreetly? Additionally, will SSC separate the categories identified within Tier 1 to allow for OEMs or their partners to provide direct compliant responses to the

	<p>sub-categories of technology, similar to the structure currently in place on DCSSI-PISA?</p> <p>Would SSC consider making these modifications?</p>
Answer 103	<p>The requirement remains unchanged. Also please refer to Amendment 002, Answer 44.</p> <p>Questions that are not related to NSSC will not be answered.</p>
Question 104	<p>Will SSC please consider separating the Tiers identified in the ITQ to allow for compliance within each category discreetly and separate the categories identified within Tier 1?</p>
Answer 104	<p>The requirements remain unchanged. Also please refer to Amendment 002 Answer 44.</p> <p>Questions that are not related to NSSC will not be answered.</p>
Question 105	<p>Will SSC please consider separating the Tiers identified in the ITQ to allow for compliance within each category discreetly? Additionally will SSC additional separate the categories identified within Tier 1 to allow for OEMs or their partners to provide direct compliant responses to the subcategories of technology, similar to the structure currently in place on DCSSI-PISA?</p>
Answer 105	<p>The requirements remain unchanged. Also please refer to Amendment 002 Answer 44.</p> <p>Questions that are not related to NSSC will not be answered.</p>
Question 106	<p>Question 4 - Will SSC please consider separating the Tiers identified in the ITQ to allow for compliance within each category discreetly? Additionally, will SSC separate the categories identified within Tier 1 to allow for OEMs or their partners to provide direct compliant responses to the sub-categories of technology, similar to the structure currently in place on DCSSI-PISA?</p>
Answer 106	<p>The requirements remain unchanged. Also please refer to Amendment 002 Answer 44.</p> <p>Questions that are not related to NSSC will not be answered.</p>
Question 107	<p>Would SSC consider adjusting (adding an OEM SA) the requirement to follow more closely with the DCSSI – PISA contract format?</p>
Answer 107	<p>The requirements remain unchanged. Also please refer to Amendment 002 Answer 44.</p> <p>Questions that are not related to NSSC will not be answered.</p>
Question 108	<p>Will SSC please consider separating the Tiers identified in the ITQ to allow for compliance within each category discreetly? Additionally will SSC separate the categories identified within Tier 1 to allow for OEMs to provide direct compliant responses to the sub-categories of technology, capitalizing on the reseller community? This is similar to the structure currently in place on DCSSI-PISA which allows for the inclusion of more SMEs.</p>
Answer 108	<p>The requirement remains unchanged. Also please refer to Amendment 002 Answer 44.</p> <p>Questions that are not related to NSSC will not be answered.</p>
Question 109	<p>We interpret the current ITQ as essentially an outsource of the creation and administration of IT marketplace(s) to Telecommunication providers, unable to coverage all Solution Provision requirements unilaterally. What contractual provisions does the Crown envision to ensure open marketplace supporting innovation and access beyond the core partnerships of Telecom company?</p>
Answer 109	<p>Please see Amendment 002 Answer 44.</p> <p>Contract provisions discussions will take place in subsequent phases of the procurement process. Please refer to NSSC ITQ, Section 1.2 e), where SSC is encouraging potential</p>

	Solution Providers to engage smaller suppliers such as Value Added Resellers (VARs).
Question 110	There are many outstanding questions which could result in material changes and may affect the references Bidders are anticipating to leverage for the ITQ response. To ensure Bidders have a minimum 3 weeks to respond, we would like to request that an extension be granted to the ITQ in the event the Amendment containing the Q&A are not released this week.
Answer 110	Please refer to Amendment 003, Modification 010 .
Question 111	Item: Request regarding references for Annex B1, Annex B2 and Annex B3 It is our understanding that as per Section 6.3 (c) of the ITQ document that, "...Canada will conduct any project reference validation check in writing by e-mail by sending the reference (primary or backup) a copy of the completed and signed ITQ Project Reference Form." Many clients have corporate policies that do not allow for emails as references. In the event that a reference has this stated policy, would SSC be willing to contact by phone as an exception?
Answer 111	The requirements remain unchanged. Please refer to section 6.3 (d).
Question 112	Please confirm whether Respondents are permitted to fulfill portions of the requirements under the ITQ by leveraging contractual relationships with third parties (for whom Respondent takes responsibility).
Answer 112	Please refer to section 4.2 Submission of Only One response. Yes, Canada confirms that it is up to the Respondent with whom they use as third parties to satisfy the requirements under the ITQ.
Question 113	This ITQ seems written for Respondents capable of providing and supporting all solutions (as per Annex B1) from among only the specified legacy OEM vendors (as per Annex B2). Is this correct? Capable of addressing all four integrated Service Solution Tiers, we provide and support several solutions in the "Networking Solutions" category. Is there a SSC procurement vehicle for us to submit products and solutions in order to possibly become an approved OEM vendor?
Answer 113	Please refer to NSSC ITQ Section 4 - Response Preparation Instructions. Questions that are not related to NSSC will not be answered.
Question 114	On page 6, Section 1.2 h) of the General Information section, please Alcatel-Lucent as one of the 'existing / legacy GC Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) products' Various GC departments own Alcatel-Lucent networking gear including, but not limited to, DND and CSE. Alcatel-Lucent has sold through the NESS agreement (Standing Offer EN578-030742/025) and DND contract W8474-167187/001/QD.
Answer 114	Please refer to Answer #55.
Question 115	As Zebra is an Existing GC Original Equipment Manufacturer, we formally request to be added to the list in Section H
Answer 115	Please refer to Modification 013 .
Question 116	As Ciena (Legacy Nortel Optical/ Ethernet) is an Existing GC Original Equipment Manufacturer, we formally request to be added to the list in Section H below... h) It is Canada's intention to require Contractors to provide mandatory Service Solution Tier 2: Maintenance Services for all of the following existing / legacy GC Original Equipment

	<p>Manufacturer (OEM) products:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. A10; ii. Avaya (including legacy Nortel equipment); iii. Bluecoat; iv. Brocade; v. Cisco; vi. F5; vii. Fortinet; viii. HP; ix. IBM; x. Junper; xi. McAfee; xii. Riverbed; and xiii. Symantec
Answer 116	Please refer to Modification 013 .
Question 117	<p>As an OEM we have received calls from several companies with regards to partnering with them and we are required to follow the Competition Act, so we cannot favour any one partner. It is our policy to follow the Competition Act and allow all partners to submit responses to tenders and ITQ's. We want to be fair and open and provide an "equitable opportunity" for our products and services to be offered by all companies that are submitting a response to this Invitation to Qualify (ITQ). In Section 4.2 under "Submission of Only One Response" on Page 14 Sub-Section (e) our advisors have confirmed that this is in conflict with the Competition Act when it states: "(e) Any individual, sole proprietorship, corporation or partnership that is a Respondent as part of a joint venture cannot submit another response on its own or as part of another joint venture." Due to the fact that this requirement is in conflict with the Competition Act, since it forces OEM's not to allow all of our partners an "equitable opportunity" to partner with us in order to submit a response to this Invitation to Qualify, will SSC please remove this requirement from ITQ No.10044001/A? This will ensure that this ITQ is in keeping with Competition Act.</p>
Answer 117	The requirement remains unchanged. Canada will leave it to the discretion of the OEMs to decide with whom they will do business with and how they chose be involved in this ITQ.
Question 118	<p>The requirement for NSSC ITQ Project Reference Form for Service Solution Tier 2 states; "The Respondent must also have experience providing, during the 15 years prior to the ITQ closing date, professional services for the installation, configuration and optimization of the OEM products that the Respondent used to provide services similar to Service Solution Tier 1 services to a Customer Organization that has a minimum of 500 physical sites and where at least 10 of the sites were at least 400 km distant from all other sites'</p> <p>When you ask for "a minimum of 500 physical sites and where at least 10 of the sites were at least 400 km distant from all other sites"our assumption is that the 10 sites must be at least 400km apart from each of the other 10 sites not that the 10 sites must be at least 400km apart from each of the 500 sites.</p> <p>Please confirm</p>
Answer 118	<p>The assumption presented in the question that ". . . the 10 sites must be at least 400km apart from each of the other 10 sites . . ." would be an acceptable fulfillment of the requirement.</p> <p>Please also see Answer 59.</p>
Question 119	<p>The reference forms do not include an area for signature. It is our assumption given Canada has the ability to validate references via email during the evaluation phase that references do not need to be signed by the client.</p> <p>Please confirm.</p>
Answer 119	Correct, reference forms do not require a signature.

Question 120	The evaluation process in section 6.3 describes a process in which SSC may contact customer references to conduct validation checks. The relationships with our customers is of utmost importance and we would prefer to be able to coordinate and facilitate any SSC contact with them. Would SSC consider providing respondents with advance notice that would include the name and the mode of contact (email or phone) of any planned customer validation checks, so that we can alert the customer to ensure compliances are being met in a timely and predictable fashion for SSC?
Answer 120	This requirement remains unchanged. Please refer to Answer 33, Amendment 002
Question 121	<p>There have been several acquisitions in the networking market, resulting in some companies increasing their installed base in the Canadian Federal Government. Due to the fact that Extreme Networks is an existing Government of Canada (GoC) Original Equipment Manufacturer(OEM), we formally request to be added to the list on page 6 of 39 of the ITQ in Section H) as shown below.</p> <p>h) It is Canada's intention to require Contractors to provide mandatory Service Solution Tier 2: Maintenance Services for all of the following existing / legacy GC Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) products:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. A10; ii. Avaya (including legacy Nortel equipment); iii. Bluecoat; iv. Brocade; v. Cisco; vi. F5; vii. Fortinet; viii. HP; ix. IBM; x. Juniper; xi. McAfee; xii. Riverbed; and xiii. Symantec <p>Will the Government of Canada please add Extreme Networks to this list?</p>
Answer 121	Please refer to Modification 013 .
Question 122	<p>Due to the fact that Allied Telesis is an existing Government of Canada (GoC) Original Equipment Manufacturer(OEM), we formally request to be added to the list on page 6 of 39 of the ITQ in Section H) as shown below.</p> <p>h) It is Canada's intention to require Contractors to provide mandatory Service Solution Tier 2: Maintenance Services for all of the following existing / legacy GC Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) products:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. A10; ii. Avaya (including legacy Nortel equipment); iii. Bluecoat; iv. Brocade; v. Cisco; vi. F5; vii. Fortinet; viii. HP; ix. IBM; x. Juniper; xi. McAfee; xii. Riverbed; and xiii. Symantec <p>Will the Government of Canada please add Allied Telesis to this list?</p>
Answer 122	Please refer to Modification 013 .

Question 123	Due to the fact that the answers are still outstanding, and we asked these questions well over a month ago, and the closing date of June 7th, 2016 is fast approaching, will the Government of Canada please extend the due date by six weeks so that we can get the answers to our questions, and ask additional questions related to our unanswered questions, in order to allow us enough information to submit an effective response to this Invitation to Qualify?
Answer 123	Please refer to Amendment 004, Modification 011 .
Question 124	<p>As a result will SSC please extend the due date of this ITQ until at least 4 weeks after our enquiries are answered, to facilitate at least one additional round of clarification questions? At this point we feel that the extension should be until July 7, 2016, if the questions are answered by June 7, 2016.</p> <p>This Amendment 004 extension until June 28th, 2016 does not answer this question or my concerns about all of the outstanding question. I need my questions answered so that I can select and work with the most appropriate partners. After you answer my questions, my selected partners and I will then need to ask our questions. A closing date of June 28th, 2016, prior to answering our questions, has frustrated this entire process.</p> <p>We need an extension until at least 4 weeks after our enquiries are answered, to facilitate at least one additional round of clarification questions. Can you please confirm that you will be extending this ITQ again to address our very valid concerns? Thank you.</p>
Answer 124	Canada will provide vendors sufficient time to respond to the ITQ. Further close date extensions will be up to the discretion of Canada
Question 125	Some of our references have agreed to be references as long as SSC does not reach out to them directly without at least contacting us, so our Account Managers that are handing these accounts can facilitate a time and date for contact, such as a conference call. As you can imagine some of these large companies, that are our references, do not like to be contacted without an introduction to who will be contacting them, so will SSC please confirm that they will contact our company, who is responding to the ITQ, in advance so that contact with the references can be properly arranged and facilitated?
Answer 125	Please refer to Amendment 002, Answer 33.

Modification 013 - At NSSC ITQ 1.2 Introduction h) (page 6):

- INSERT:**
- xvi. Alcatel-Lucent
 - xvii. Zebra
 - xviii. Ciena
 - xix. Extreme Networks
 - xx. Allied Telesis

Modification 014

DELET: **10** **Annex B2: ITQ Project Reference Form for Service Solution Tier 2**

INSERT:

10 **Annex B2: ITQ Project Reference Form for Service Solution Tier 2**

Service Solution Tier 2: Maintenance and Professional Services

Mandatory Experience Requirement 2

Respondent Name

Respondent Address

Requirements:

The Respondent must have experience providing, for a period of at least 24 continuous months during the 15 years prior to the ITQ closing date, maintenance services for the OEM products that the Respondent used to provide services similar to Service Solution Tier 1 services to a Customer Organization that has a minimum of 500 physical sites and where at least 10 of the sites were at least 400 km distant from all other sites.

The Respondent must also have experience providing, during the 15 years prior to the ITQ closing date, professional services for the installation, configuration and optimization of the OEM products that the Respondent used to provide services similar to Service Solution Tier 1 services to a Customer Organization that has a minimum of 500 physical sites and where at least 10 of the sites were at least 400 km distant from all other sites.

The Respondent must also have experience providing, for a period of at least 24 continuous months during the 15 years prior to the ITQ closing date, maintenance services for at least 3 of the OEM's products listed in Section **1.2 Introduction h) of the NSSC ITQ.**

Annex B2 Response Requirements:

The Respondent must provide a detailed description of how it meets the above requirement and must provide Customer Organization References, so that SSC may validate the information provided by the Respondent with its customer.

To have provided maintenance services for a period of at least 24 continuous months, the Respondent is not required to have provided service every day during those 24 months, but must have been under contract to provide maintenance as and when requested by the customer throughout a 24-month period.

Entity under contract to Customer Organization to perform the project reference

Prime Contractor information for experience acquired as a Subcontractor (Complete if Applicable)

Company Name

Contact Name

Telephone

	Email Address	
Project Name		
Project Duration (including start date, completion of implementation and end date, if applicable)		
Project Description (e.g. work performed, experienced gained)		
Name of Customer Organization		
Primary Contact for Customer Organization	Name	
	Telephone	
	Email Address	
Backup Contact for Customer Organization	Name	
	Telephone	
	Email Address	

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The following is a summary of Attachments/Amendments issued to date to this solicitation:

Document Tracking	Distribution	Date	Description
Amendment No. 001	Buy and Sell	April 7, 2016	Canada's Response to Questions 1 to 4; Modifications 001 to 003 to the NSSC ITQ.
Amendment No. 002	Buy and Sell	May 3rd, 2016	Canada's Response to Question 5 to 54; Modification 004 to 009 to the NSSC ITQ.
Amendment No. 003	Buy and Sell	May 5 th , 2016	Canada publishes an extension to the NSSC ITQ close date; Modification 010.
Amendment No. 004	Buy and Sell	June 3rd, 2016	Canada publishes an extension to the NSSC ITQ close date; Modification 011.
Amendment No. 005	Buy and Sell	June 24, 2016	Canada publishes an extension to the NSSC ITQ close date; Modification 012.
Amendment No. 006	Buy and Sell	June 30th, 2016	Canada's Response to Question 55 to 125; Modification 013 to 014 the NSSC ITQ.