

## Supplier Questions and Answers

Question 1:

“1.2.1 PHAC is seeking to issue a contract for a Contractor to provide access to cell-tower/operator location data”

Tracking cellular subscriber movements via "pings" off of cell towers requires the co-operation of a subscriber's carrier (eg. Rogers, Telus, etc). Due to privacy concerns (both for subscriber and carrier) this information is not publicly available. In the past the RCMP had to obtain a court order in order for us to have access to this sensitive data. Does PHAC have a relationship with these carriers to provide this information in a timely manner? And if so, what is the nature and composition of this data? It is not possible to propose a solution without first knowing the availability and composition of this "ping" data.

Answer 1:

The type of mobility data that PHAC is seeking through this RFP is commercially available to industry, academia, not-for profit and other organizations at the discretion of mobility operators who are custodians of this data. Mobile users remain in control of their data since PHAC will only consider vendors who give users the ability to opt out of their respective mobility data sharing program. PHAC will only consider bids from vendors who meet the Government of Canada's strict security, legal, privacy and transparency requirements.

Question 2:

“MT1 The Bidder must demonstrate, by providing a detailed work plan, their ability to provide access to de-identified cell-tower based location data from across Canada via an analytical environment from January 1, 2019 to the end of contract.”

What is the nature of this "cell-tower based location data." Does it originate with carriers, as stated in Q-1, or is a mapping of cell tower locations across Canada?

Answer 2:

Please see response to Q-1.

Question 3:

Is the date January 1, 2019 a misprint?

Answer 3:

No

Question 4:

“MT1 geographic coverage area by cell tower, and algorithms to estimate points of interest”

Is this requirement met by a map that shows where a cell tower provides service, based on topography (hills & valleys) and related factors that influence signal propagation?

Answer 4:

No

Question 5:

“MT1 analytical environment that allows regular queries of data”

What kind of questions must these queries answer? Do these queries involve temporal analysis (eg. compare last month with this month?) Can you provide examples of such queries?

Answer 5:

PHAC will use mobility data to describe and analyze how population-level movement trends have changed over time, including identifying new patterns that may help inform public health messaging, planning and policy development. Canadians are able to review changes to population mobility in their health region and compare them to changes in other health regions, as well as to changes at the national level, on COVID Trends.

Question 6:

“MT1 Timely: timely data is as close to real-time as possible but no more than one week lag”

By "no more than one week" do you mean from when the location data was provided by the carriers?

Answer 6:

Yes

Question 7:

“MT1 Protects privacy: description of how de-identified data are provided to ensure the anonymized nature of the data, removal of all personal identifiers”

By "removal of personal identifiers" does the cell-tower based location data contain information that associates the data with a cellular subscriber?

Answer 7:

No. The data we receive from the vendor must not contain any personal identifiers or correspond to specific cellular subscribers. PHAC's Privacy Management Division was consulted in the development of this RFP and no personal information is being acquired through this contract.

Question 8:

"MT1 Representative: data accessible represents greater than a minimum of 20% market share of the Canadian population."

Is there any requirement for the data to provide a certain level of coverage for each province? For example, Canada has 34 million cellular subscribers, of which 20% equals 6.8 million. Now, if the data captures 6.8 million subscribers in Ontario, that meets the minimum 20% market share, yet this data would not capture subscribers in Canada's other 12 provinces and territories.

Answer 8:

Yes, we are looking for coverage across the Canadian population.