

Montserrat Submarine Cable Project RFP

Clarifications: 1 - 13

Last updated: 04/03/2019

The following questions related to the Montserrat Submarine Fibre Project RFP were received by the Government of Montserrat via the online Tenders Portal or via email. If you have questions, please send them via the portal or to the Head of Procurement at jutleh@gov.ms.

Question 1:

We have reviewed the information and are wondering whether there is any additional information; +DTS +Geophysical Surveys +Likely routes for the cable?

Answer 1:

The Government is not providing any specific guidelines on the exact Route of the cable. We will consider what the Suppliers propose as the optimal route(s) with regard to efficiency, cost and available redundancy.

Desk Top Surveys, Geophysical Surveys and Bathymetries, are the responsibility of the Supplier.

The Government of Montserrat, through the Physical Planning Unit may have some limited bathymetric data for the Western coastline of Montserrat, which was acquired in August 2017. Contact the GIS Manager, Mrs Lavern Rogers-Ryan at rogersl@gov.ms.

Question 2:

Would the Government be interested in an installation only proposal, with the opportunity to establish its own maintenance agreement with a maintenance organisation such as NASCA?

Answer 2:

At this time Government of Montserrat is entertaining proposals for the Installation, Operation, and Maintenance of a subsea cable system.

However, you are free to make any proposals that you think the government would find advantageous to fulfill its requirements for subsea fibre connectivity.

Question 3:

Is the station in Montserrat under the scope of the supplier?
If yes, is there available a selected land and/or an available building?

Answer 3:

Yes, the landing station in Montserrat falls under the scope of the Supplier.

The Supplier should indicate in their proposal, whether they would use a Beach Manhole only and connect to an existing telco facility; or if a purpose built landing station will form part of the proposal. We are not insisting that the cable is to be landed at a predetermined location; therefore the availability of land for locating a landing station should form part of the Supplier's private surveys.

Question 4:

Do you consider as an acceptable offer to connect the Montserrat branch to a Branching Unit to be included in one of the neighbouring existing cable? As ECFS for example?

Answer 4:

It is up to the Suppliers to propose viable and practical solutions to implement the project.

Keep in mind that price is not the only factor in determining the preferred solution. It would be expected that all of the merits of implementing a Branching Unit into an existing cable would be highlighted.

To use your example. We are aware that the ECFS wet plant is already 24 years old. You would therefore need to present information that assures us that this would not be a disadvantage for Montserrat, with regard to the long-term durability of the link and/or future upgrades.

Question 5:

Could update us on the details of the domestic market?

- Number of fixed lines
- Number of internet connections
- Number of mobiles?

Answer 5:

GoM is not in possession of current and reliable detailed statistics relating to the domestic telecommunications market.

Please refer to the Montserrat Telecommunications Authority (MICA) <http://www.mica.ms> for information in this regard or contact the local telecommunications companies, FLOW: <https://discoverflow.co/montserrat/support/support> and DIGICEL: <https://www.digicelgroup.com/ms/en/contact-us.html> directly.

Question 6:

What are the average price for each of the above services?

Answer 6:

Please contact the local telecommunications companies, FLOW and DIGICEL directly for first-hand information regarding the pricing of their services.

FLOW: <https://discoverflow.co/montserrat/support/support>

DIGICEL: <https://www.digicelgroup.com/ms/en/contact-us.html>

Question 7:

What are the price regulatory constraints, if any, for selling capacity on the submarine link?

Answer 7:

Telecommunications companies wishing to operate in Montserrat would have to apply for and receive a concession and license to operate from the *Montserrat Telecommunications Authority (MICA)* <http://www.mica.ms> Please contact MICA for further information in this regard.

Question 8:

As external company, we have little knowledge of domestic environment or land/building available in Montserrat.

Could you let us know the following; the preferred landing point? Land and/or building available? Contact details for companies in charge of construction in Montserrat?

Answer 8:

- **The preferred landing point?**
 - *There is not currently a 'preferred landing point' predetermined by GoM. Bunkum Bay, has been referenced as a possible landing site in previous documentation, but the respondent's proposals are expected to either include their proposed landing site or indicate the survey work that will be done to determine the most suitable landing point.*
 - **Land and/or building available?**
 - *There is currently no land and/or building specifically earmarked for use in this project. The Suppliers proposal should include their preferred options for land and building if necessary, or indicate their plans for survey and acquisition. In other words, it is up to the Supplier to examine their options for co-location or new building construction.*
 - **Contact details for companies in charge of construction in Montserrat?**
 - *There are a number of companies in Montserrat which should have the requisite civil engineering and construction expertise to be sub-contracted by the Supplier. It would not be appropriate for GoM to point out any specific ones. Suppliers are encouraged to conduct their own research in this regard.*
-

Question 9:

Could you be more specific regarding the PPP model (Public-Private Partnership) considered by GoM?

Answer 9:

Government of Montserrat is seeking to address a market failure in which it has so far been deemed uneconomical for the private sector to install and operate a submarine fibre optic cable to Montserrat. To ensure that Montserrat gets the benefits of having a submarine link for international telecommunications available to the local consumers and businesses, GoM is prepared to inject some CAPEX into the installation of that cable asset. The Supplier's proposals should give the GoM an optimal solution which reduces or eliminates the need for recurrent financing by GoM. The cable will remain the property of GoM, and the Supplier is expected to monetise the cable to allow for adequate operation and maintenance. GoM expects to have an IRU on the installed cable up to the landing station on the island(s) the cable is connected to.

Question 10:

Are you open to alternatives arrangements?

Answer 10:

Yes, Government of Montserrat will evaluate ALL proposals that meet the administrative requirements for submission. However, Respondents are advised to take note of the project specifications found in Appendix 1 of the Request for Proposals.

Question 11:

Do you need confirmation that a given supplier intends to submit an offer before the due date on 4th April 2019?

Answer 11:

Potential suppliers are encouraged to register their interest at their earliest convenience on MyTenders, however this is not a requirement. All potential Suppliers have up until the deadline date of (Wednesday, 3rd April 2019) to submit their proposals. If you are planning to submit your proposal through MyTenders, it is important to allow sufficient time for uploading documents before the deadline.

Question 12:

The pricing is required to be submitted in XCD, what about the invoicing and payment currency? USD or XCD?

If the invoicing and payment currency is USD, which exchange rate between USD and XCD shall we apply?

Answer 12:

Invoicing and Payment should be listed in XCD

The exchange rate is set at USD 1 = XCD 2.7169

Question 13:

If the operation company who submit this tender is not a local operator, is a telecom license required to install and operate this cable?

Answer 13:

Yes, the company would be required to have a concession to operate the cable and a license to sell services on Montserrat.

Please contact the Montserrat Telecommunications Authority (MICA) <http://www.mica.ms> for further information in this regard.

Additional Questions and Answers will be added to this document as they become available.