

**Date:** 7 February 2025

**Revision:** 1.0

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**Responses to the queries received with respect to the Request for Tender N2303 (Reducing the regulatory and training burden for rail workers using technology).**

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**NOTE 1:** Aiming to prioritise the health and safety of teams that may be affected by cyclone Alfred, the NTC has postponed the deadline for submissions for this project to the **19<sup>th</sup> of March 2025, 5pm AEDT.**

**NOTE 2:** *With regards to the handling of data for the purposes of this project:* Provisions to safeguard the appropriate receipt, use, storage, handling and disposal of the relevant information will be included in the agreement between the NTC and the successful consultant.

No.	Question	Answer
1	What is the current technology stack the NTC uses? Are there any existing data platforms that can be leveraged?	[Question asked during the information session on 26/02/2025 and taken on notice]: The NTC uses the Microsoft environment, including Microsoft 365 Cloud, Azure, and a limited use of CoPilot. For the purposes of this project, the NTC requires the use of existing models/tools, not the production of new models/tools. The NTC does not require the production of a tool that will then be provided to the NTC.
2	What formats are the inputs in?	[Question answered during the information session on 26/02/2025. Response updated to provide clarity regarding the use of data for the purposes of this project]: Inputs are in various file formats, and may comprise multiple document files with text, images, tables etc. This includes Excel, PowerPoint, PDF, as well as SCORM files for e-learning resources. Some of the inputs are publicly available (for example: <a href="https://www.artc.com.au/customers/operations/rules-procedures/">https://www.artc.com.au/customers/operations/rules-procedures/</a> ). For documents that are not publicly available, the NTC will work with the successful consultant and the relevant stakeholders to provide these inputs for the purposes of this project. Upon completion of the project all relevant data and third-party intellectual property must be deleted.
3	Is this project seeking recommendations based on the gaps and similarities, or just a gap analysis?	[Question answered during the information session on 26/02/2025]: This project is seeking analysis and recommendations based on this analysis.

No.	Question	Answer
4	Will this project include comparisons of different signalling technologies, or an overall view?	[Question answered during the information session on 26/02/2025]: This project includes a comparison of draft ETCS network rules currently being developed and used by NSW and QLD. The purpose of this is to provide recommendations on how to enhance harmonisation and interoperability across the networks.
5	Is the deliverable the gap analysis as output from the LLM, not the production of the LLM itself?	[Question answered during the information session on 26/02/2025]: The deliverable is the analysis and recommendations, not the production of an LLM model/tool. For the purposes of this project, the NTC requires the use of existing models/tools, not the production of new models/tools.
6	Where is the NTC considering using AI in the future in the work program?	[Question answered during the information session on 26/02/2025]: The NTC welcomes thought leadership in the use of technology to support policy reform. However, the purpose of this project is targeted to the specific objectives outlined in the RFT document.
7	What are the outputs of this project, and where will this information be used?	[Question answered during the information session on 26/02/2025]: The objectives and deliverables of this project are described in the RFT document. The outcomes of the analysis and recommendations will be used by the NTC to progress the policy reform program under the National Rail Action plan. This will include sharing this information with all program stakeholders, including but not limited to RIMs, RSOs, RTOs, jurisdictions, ISA, ARA, technical committees.
8	What is the timeframe on the outcomes from this project being stood up and implemented?	[Question answered during the information session on 26/02/2025]: The program of work facilitating reform under the 4-year National Rail Action plan is progressing. The outcomes of this project will inform the NTC's recommendations to transport and infrastructure Ministers by the end of 2025.
9	There are 2 elements to this project – one is the analysis and providing the recommendations, and the other is trialling the use of AI. What is the main goal between these two within the 10-week timeframe. This will inform how the tenders are developed.	[Question answered during the information session on 26/02/2025]: The objectives of this project are described in the RFT document. Both elements are necessary to demonstrate the proof of concept for utilising technology to reduce burden. The NTC acknowledges that this is a short project and encourages organisations to submit proposals that demonstrate how they best balance all requirements to deliver the desired outcome on time. Partnerships between organisations are encouraged. [Post-information session note]: Small adjustments to this timing could be discussed with the successful consultant during the contract negotiation phase.

No.	Question	Answer
10	Will previous studies and findings be provided as part of the materials for the project?	[Question answered during the information session on 26/02/2025]: Yes, relevant studies and past work will be shared with the successful consultant.
11	Is there a budgetary estimate for this project?	[Question answered during the information session on 26/02/2025]: According to the NTC procurement procedure, the budget allocation for projects under procurement is not disclosed. All complete offers that respond to the RFT requirements will be considered.
12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can you please provide more information about these documents; Safeworking rulebooks, railway signage across networks, units of competencies, and respective RIM glossaries.</li> <li>• Specifically, what format are these files?</li> <li>• Are they a mix of words and images and charts, or words only?</li> <li>• How big are these files?</li> <li>• Do they include complex tables / data?</li> <li>• If we could please see examples of documents that would be fantastic</li> </ul>	Refer to response to Question 2.
13	Is there a specific LLM platform you prefer / require use of?	No. Any existing platform that is compliant with the applicable Australian Government guidelines in force at the time of the project and Australia's AI Ethics Principles ( <a href="https://www.industry.gov.au/publications/australias-artificial-intelligence-ethics-principles/australias-ai-ethics-principles">https://www.industry.gov.au/publications/australias-artificial-intelligence-ethics-principles/australias-ai-ethics-principles</a> ) would be acceptable. The NTC does not require the production of a new platform. All bidders are required to specify the platform proposed to be used, how it meets the above requirements, and the location where data will be stored in Australia.
14	Are there any preferred cloud hosting platforms that are preferred? (e.g. MS Azure)	No. As the NTC will not own it, bidders can propose any suitable hosting platform, considering the principles noted in the response to Question 13.
15	What format should the final analysis take?	The final report should be submitted in PDF format. Draft deliverables for review and comment should be submitted in Word or similar format. Material used for stakeholder engagement should be prepared in PowerPoint format.

No.	Question	Answer
16	What level of detail is expected in the "gap analysis"?	It is up to each bidder to submit a proposal that would provide analysis and evidence sufficient to support sound recommendations. For the purposes of bid evaluation, bidders may submit proposals in a 'menu' format, as long as core scope and optional/additional items are clearly identified and costed.
17	Do you expect a working prototype that stakeholders can interact with, or just analysis results?	Refer to response to Question 5.
18	Who will coordinate access to the various stakeholders mentioned (RISSB, ONRSR, RTOs, etc.)?	The NTC will coordinate access to the stakeholders.
19	What level of stakeholder consultation is expected? (Interviews, workshops, surveys?)	It is anticipated that direct consultation with the stakeholders will be required. This could include interviews, workshops, surveys or similar.
20	Will stakeholders need to directly interact with any developed prototype?	No.
21	Is there a budget range you are working within for this project?	Refer to response to Question 11.
22	What specific metrics will be used to evaluate the success of the PoC?	Success of the proof of concept would be demonstrated by the quality of the results. As a minimum, this includes: 1. Clear visibility of similarities and differences between the inputs analysed, 2. Efficiency and accuracy of running the analysis, 3. Quality assurance, checking and validation of analysis and results, and 4. Ease of use.
23	How will "feasibility" be measured?	Feasibility would be demonstrated by willingness of industry stakeholders to accept the output of this work as proof of concept.
24	What level of detail is expected in the "cost implications" for potential wider implementation?	Refer to response to Question 16.
25	Are there any specific cyber security standards that must be adhered to?	The successful consultant will need to demonstrate how they will protect information that is not publicly available and its destruction when no longer required. Level of maturity against the ACSC's Essential Eight is preferred eg. Level 1 or higher.

No.	Question	Answer
26	Are there specific Australian Government AI ethics standards that must be followed?	Refer to Australia's AI Ethics Principles ( <a href="https://www.industry.gov.au/publications/australias-artificial-intelligence-ethics-principles/australias-ai-ethics-principles">https://www.industry.gov.au/publications/australias-artificial-intelligence-ethics-principles/australias-ai-ethics-principles</a> )
27	Can you please confirm and/or share your current state technical architecture, i.e., data platform, usage of cloud-based technologies that could be leveraged for the AI/LLM project?	Refer to response to Question 1.
28	Can you confirm the file formats that would be provided for the ingestion into the LLM program?	Refer to response to Question 2.
29	Are you looking for the preferred supplier to utilise an open-source and/or enterprise grade LLM program, (i.e., Google Gemini)?	Refer to response to Question 13.
30	Do you have a Responsible AI/Data Governance framework that will need to be adhered to as part of the engagement?	Refer to response to Questions 25 and 26.
31	Our observation was that there were several industry experts on the call this morning. Are you expecting the preferred supplier to have a depth of knowledge in the rail and/or infrastructure domain? More specifically, <i>"The consultant is to make a proposal regarding the number of glossaries and railway signage for the purposes of this project."</i> [this statement infers industry knowledge will be a prerequisite].	A working knowledge of the rail industry would be advantageous. The successful tenderer will need to prepare recommendations relevant to the rail industry; awareness of this industry will make this analysis easier and more relevant to its intended use and audience. The NTC encourages organisations to partner up, if preferred, to better demonstrate this.
32	Does the NTC have an indicative budget for the engagement, given the timeline of 8-10 weeks?	Refer to response to Question 11.
33	Can NTC please clarify if all input data - units of competency, Safeworking rules, network glossaries, and network signage -	Refer to response to Question 2.

No.	Question	Answer
	will be provided to the successful tenderer at project inception?	
34	What are the objectives of the stakeholder consultation discussed on Page 9? Is it intended that the input documents for the project will be sought from the stakeholders during this consultation, or will stakeholders be consulted for their input on the project and / or feedback on its outputs more generally?	The purpose of the stakeholder consultation is to bring stakeholders together to validate the results of the analysis and validate with industry subject matter experts whether the outputs are acceptable to industry.
35	Does the input data have any handling/classification considerations, i.e. is it all public domain, importantly does anything need to remain sovereign Aus at rest (i.e. in Aus server)?	Refer to response to Question 13.
36	What is the precise quantity and format of input data?	Refer to response to Question 2.
37	For both the ETCS Draft Analysis and SARC Analysis, could you provide details on: 1. The key document types and their purpose. 2. The average length of each document type. 3. The standard file formats used.	Refer to response to Question 2.
38	Does the agency expect that the outcome of this tender is the demonstration of the capability of the solution's ability to meet the requirement or does NTC want to also have the ability to access this solution after the end of this engagement and continue to experiment / test the model that has been built?	Refer to response to Questions 5, 22 and 23.