

Clarification to Queries
with respect to
Request for Empanelment
for
Empanelment of Advanced Metering
Infrastructure (AMI) Service Provider
For Implementation of Smart Prepaid Metering under RDSS Scheme

Queries as per RFE

Sl. No	Clause No.	Existing Provision as per RFE	Applicants' Queries	PFCCCL's Response										
1.	Disclaimer	This RFE, along with its Annexures, is not transferable.	Are there any Annexures in the RFE?	This is a typographical error. There are no Annexures to this RFE.										
2.	Timelines	General	Please extend the current bid submission deadline of 3 rd February 2025 by two weeks.	The Application submission date is hereby extended to 7.2.2025 upto 15:00 hrs. The Technical Proposal would be opened on the same day at 15:30 hrs										
3.	Chapter- 1. Clause No. 1.1.1	Applicant shall mean any agency submitting its application foras per the terms and conditions set out in this RFE;	We understand that it is not necessary to be empanelled with REC to participate in this RFE Process.	In order to participate in this empanelment process, it is mandatory to be empanelled with REC in line with the Qualification Requirements as per the SBD.										
4.			This empanelment shall stand parallel to REC empanelment and PFCCCL shall be PIA and remitting agency in place of Discom. Please validate our understanding.	Understanding of the Applicant is correct.										
5.	Chapter- 2. Clause No. 2.1.1	Ministry of Power (MoP), Govt. of India has issued a Project Implementation Agency (PIA) Scheme under which PFCCCL under RDSS Scheme.	We request PFCCCL to share the details of expected project areas (i.e., States, DISCOMs, Area wise Meters, Mix of meters etc)	The same shall be communicated at the RFP stage.										
6.			Kindly clarify whether PFCCCL will secure the smart metering project from States through nomination or competitive bidding. In case of competitive bidding route, will the empanelled AMISPs be allowed to bid independently in the tender?	PFCCCL may secure projects on nomination/ competitive bidding route. In case of competitive bidding route, the empanelled AMISPs can bid independently in the tender										
7.	Chapter- 2. Clause No. 2.2.3	Appointment of AMISP by PFCCCL: PFCCCL will select AMISPs from amongst the empanelled agencies by PFCCCL as PIA under each Group.	According to press release dated 11.8. 2023, PFC and REC have been designated as nodal agencies (PIA) for RDSS scheme, with specific States allocated to PFC. Many of these states have already commenced independent execution. Please provide an estimate of prospected meter quantity, as approx. 20 cr meters have already been tendered.	The same shall be communicated at the RFP stage.										
8.	Chapter-2. Clause No. 2.2.4	Key changes compared to provision of SBD is provided in Chapter 3 of this RFE. In case of any conflict between provisions of this RFE and SBD, the provisions of this RFE will prevail.	Please confirm all the conflict points before submission of the RFE	The provisions of RFE shall prevail										
9.	Chapter- 2. Clause No. 2.3	Brief description of Empanelment Process	Please confirm whether Applicants are required to submit Covering letter of application only or all the forms of SBD with PQR documents	Applicants are required to submit the Application in physical form in line with clause 3.7 and 3.8 of the RfE.										
10.			Kindly let us know mode of submission of technical proposal. Whether it has to be submitted in electronic mode only at your e-Procurement Portal or Physical (Hard Copy) submission of Technical Proposal is also required. Kindly specify documents to be submitted in original/hardcopy.	As part of the Technical Proposal, Applicants are required to submit all applicable documents as per the provisions of the RfE and SBD (i.e. Forms, Annexures, supporting documents, documentary evidence for meeting Qualification Requirements etc.).										
11.	Chapter- 2. Clause No. 2.3.5	<p>The estimated project cost for various Groups for the purpose of evaluation of Qualification Requirements and other provisions of the SBD shall be as follows:</p> <p>Group Estimated Project Cost (INR Cr):</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Group</th> <th>Estimated Project Cost (INR Cr)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Group 1</td> <td>180 (considering 2 lakhs nodes)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Group 2</td> <td>900 (considering 10 lakhs nodes)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Group 3</td> <td>1,800 (considering 20 lakhs nodes)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Group 4</td> <td>4,500 (considering 50 lakhs nodes)</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Group	Estimated Project Cost (INR Cr)	Group 1	180 (considering 2 lakhs nodes)	Group 2	900 (considering 10 lakhs nodes)	Group 3	1,800 (considering 20 lakhs nodes)	Group 4	4,500 (considering 50 lakhs nodes)	<p>We believe the gap between Group 3 and Group 4 is quite large, and a company with a qualification between these two groups (e.g. 45 lakh consumers) may not qualify for the higher group. Therefore, we suggest adding one or two intermediate groups between Group 3 and Group 4, with a consumer gap of 15 lakh or 10 lakh respectively. This will add more empanelment for higher quantity & competitive prices. Please also reduce the estimated project cost for group 4. As per the REC estimation, the projected cost for each node is 6000 per metre, hence the anticipated cost for 50 lakhs meters is 3000 Cr. So, please lower the estimated cost for Group 4 to 3000 Cr. This will allow wider participation, resulting in a competitive bidding procedure against the RFP floated under the same group</p>	The provisions of RFE shall prevail
Group	Estimated Project Cost (INR Cr)													
Group 1	180 (considering 2 lakhs nodes)													
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12.			Kindly Amend this "The estimated project cost for various Groups for the purpose of evaluation of Qualification Requirements and other provisions of the SBD shall be as follows: Group-1: 180 Crore (considering 2 lakhs nodes) Group-2 : 540 Crore (considering 6 lakhs nodes) Group-3 : 900 Crore (considering 10 lakhs nodes) Group-4 : 1800 Crore (considering 20 lakhs nodes) Group-5 : 4500 Crore (considering 50 lakhs nodes)		
13.			As per RFE, the estimated project cost is divided into 4 categories. It is requested to clarify whether each group is considered as one standalone project or combination of more than one project.	Provisions of RFE are amply clear in this regard.	
14.	Chapter- 2. Clause No. 2.3.6	The Applicant shall be required to provide Security Deposit of INR One Crore (INR 1,00,00,000). Applicant shall provide the Security Deposit in the form of four (4) unconditional and irrevocable bank guarantee of INR Twenty-Five Lakhs (INR 25,00,000) each. An Application shall be summarily rejected if it is not accompanied by the Security Deposit. The Applicant shall be asked to submit Bid Security during the RFP process in line with the SBD.	Please provide the details of the beneficiary's name to whom the BG is being issued, the address, bank account details with IFSC code. Please also confirm the BG validity period.	Bid Security (in the form of Bank Guarantees) to be submitted at the RfE stage shall be in line with provisions of SBD (including the formats) In the format of Bid Security, "PFC Consulting Ltd." has to be mentioned in place of "Utility". During the instant empanelment stage, the Applicant has to submit the Bank Guarantees with validity upto 30 months from the last date of submitting the Application. In case any Applicant is submitting its Application after 90 days from the last date of submitting the Application in line with clause 2.3.8 of the RfE, the Bank Guarantees would have to be valid upto 6 months beyond the completion of tenure of the present empanelment of 2 years. The Bank Guarantees need to be issued from any Commercial Bank and would be in favour of: PFC Consulting Limited, 9th Floor, A-Wing, Statesman House Connaught Place, New Delhi – 110001 (Bank details: ICICI Bank A/c No. : 000705036117 IFSC Code: ICIC0000007 9A, Phelps Building, Connaught Place, New Delhi-110001)	
15.			Kindly confirm, if bank guarantee can be given from international bank or it is mandatory to provide bank guarantee from nationalised bank only. Also, kindly consider reducing the amount to 5 Lacs.		
16.			We kindly request you to provide format of the Bank Guarantee for Bid Security as there are some changes w.r.t PIA, Applicant etc.		
17.			We presume that Security Deposit of Rs 1 crore in form of bank guarantee (Rs. 25 Lakh each) and application fee of Rs. 1 lakh plus GST need to be submitted if any single entity applying for all groups in one application. Please confirm.		The understanding of the Applicant is correct
18.			Various places in the RFE mention that the bid security shall be submitted at the stage of the RFP, whereas it is also mentioned that bid security details should be provided in section 3.9, Format of the Covering Letter of the Application.		The provisions of RFE shall prevail.
19.			Presently, the security deposit amount is same for 2 lakhs and 20 lakhs Smart Meters, which is not justified. The security deposits amount shall be different for different group proportionately. In case an applicant wants to apply for 4 groups, the applicable Security Deposit should be cumulative of Security Deposit amount of all the group.		Applicants are required to submit the Bid Security during the empanelment process in line with clause 2.3.6 of the RfE which is only for the empanelment process.
20.	We understand that in subsequent RFPs from Discoms, applicants are not required to deposit any Security Deposit further and security deposit submitted during RFE shall suffice. However, in event of	Further, during the RfP stage, Bidder would be required to submit additional Bid Security under the RFP process based on size of the project as per terms of the SBD.			

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			award of Contract, empanelled vendor needs to submit PBG and that also to PFCCCL not DISCOM. Please validate our understanding.	
21.	Chapter- 2. Clause No. 2.3.7	Applicants at the end of the empanelment process shall be empanelled in the applicable Group(s) for which the Applicant has applied for subject to meeting the qualification requirement as per the SBD.	Kindly clarify if an applicant (Sole bidder/consortium) can apply in more than one group in the same application.	The provisions of RfE are amply clear in this regard.
22.	Chapter- 2. Clause No. 2.3.8	During the tenure of empanelment, the empanelment process will be kept open. After ninety (90) daysPFCCCL doesn't take any liability whatsoever towards any Applicant not being able to get itself empanelled prior to issuance of RFP.	We understand that we can submit our application within 90 days of closure of this RFE. Kindly Clarify.	The provisions of RfE are amply clear in this regard.
23.	Chapter- 2. Clause No. 2.4.1	For each project during the Empanelment Period, PFCCCL shall invite Financial Proposalsas on the date of issuance of RFP, for the applicable Group.	Kindly state the value addition envisaged by PFCCCL as a PIA when compared to utility driven RDSS projects.	PFCCCL would be responsible for implementation of the project on behalf of the Discom
24.	Chapter- 2. Clause No. 2.4.3	At RFP stage, PFCCCL may ask for additional documents from the empanelled of the submitted documents carried out by PFCCCL at the RFE stage.	If the empanelment is done by evaluating the Pre- Qualification requirement as per SBD clause, kindly clarify the need of qualification documentation during RFP process along with price bids. We understand that we are not supposed to submit any QR documents now with the empanelment application.	The provisions of RfE are amply clear in this regard.
25.	Chapter- 2. Clause No.2.4.6	Non submission of Financial Proposal by the Bidder shall lead to invocation of Security Deposit by PFCCCL. such forfeiture of Security Deposit shall not be applicable in case the bid invited is for less than One Lakh (1,00,000) meters at the RFP stage.	Please remove this unilateral clause and penalization of vendor, even if it is not commercially viable project as per internal framework of empanelled organization.	Clause 2.4.6 of the RfE addresses the concerns of the Applicants, as per which in the event of non-submission of Financial Proposal by the Bidder as a first instance, the Security Deposit shall not be invoked. Further, forfeiture of Security Deposit shall not be applicable in case the bid invited is for less than one lakh (1,00,000) meters at the RFP stage.
26.			Please remove the clause of mandatory submission of financial bid and forfeiture of bid security on non-submission as details related to project area along with detailed specs to be shared as part of RFP is not known empanelment stage	
27.			Bidders are required to compulsory participate for all tenders released for a particular group under which they are empanelled. Since group consists of many states, bidder may not be interested in participating in a particular state. Thus, options must be provided to the bidder for opting out from participating in tenders. Since, interest of bidder becomes solely important part for execution of project, this needs to be considered. Also, some technical parameters may vary from one utility to another utility, which may restrict bidders to participate	The provisions of RFE shall prevail.
28.			Bidder should know about the location first before making a choice to participate or not and this is possible at RFP stage.	
29.			Please remove Security deposit invocation. Submission of financial proposal for respective future RFP of specific Discom should be at discretion of AMISP/Lead bidder without penalty of Security Deposit forfeiture as successful project execution depends on many additional condition like the geographical area of project, project feasibility with AMISP, variability in terrain, project value and other critical factors.	
30.			Please confirm our understanding that in case empanelled bidder does not submit Financial Bid during RFP, it will not be blacklisted/ debarred/ banned/ suspended by PFCCCL.	
			Say any bidder is empanelled in Group-1 & Group-2 as per current financial year. But at the time of RFP, financial year changes and bidder's QRs do not match with RFP. In that case, bidder will not be participating in that bid. So, in that case Security Deposit will not be invoked by PFCCCL.	The understanding of the Applicant is correct. The understanding of the Applicant is correct. However, the empanelled agency would be required to submit the documentary evidence regarding the Qualification Requirements when the RfP is issued by PFCCCL.

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31.	Chapter- 2. Clause No. 2.4.7	In addition to the GBS under RDSS, PFCCCL may consider providing an additional payout. shall be ten percent (10%) in line with the broad boundary conditions specified in the PIA scheme of MoP.	Please state the conditions, if any, upon which additional payout on top of GBS will be extended. Kindly provide information of additional payout to AMISP at RFE stage itself. The clarity is required for approval of the participation, broader assessment of the fund required etc. by the board of the bidder to take an informed decision.	The same shall be communicated during RFP stage.
32.	Chapter- 2. Clause No. 2.4.8	PFCCCL may at its discretion conduct an e-reverse auction	Kindly confirm in what case e-reverse auction will be held. Will it be held before submission of any price bid for any tender/RFP or any other condition?	The details regarding the e-auction process would be intimated at the RfP stage.
33.	Chapter- 3. Clause No. 3.1	Clause 29.2 under "Section – 3: Instructions to Bidders and Bid Data Sheet" of the SBD shall be revised as follows: "..... PFCCCL, establish a Direct Debit Facility as mentioned in GCC Clause 5.2"	We understand that PFCCCL shall be an additional party to whole remittance mechanism. Please validate our understanding.	The provisions of RfE are amply clear in this regard.
34.			Kindly confirm the starting date of contractual timeline as it is depending upon establishment of DDF by utility in favour of PFCCCL.	The provisions of RfE shall prevail.
35.			We assume that, we can change OEM Partner at time of bid.	The provisions of RfE and SBD shall prevail.
36.	Chapter-3. Clause No. 3.3,	5.2.7_ In this regard, Utility PFCCCL shall create a separate not be restricted to the area where the AMISP is providing services but for the entire area of supply of the Utility.	Payment mechanism, to AMISP as per RFE does not safeguard it as PFCCCL shall make payment only after receiving it from utility.	The provisions of RfE shall prevail. As payments to PFCCCL from Utility would be secured through payment security mechanism as per SBD, the payments to AMISP would, in turn, be also secured.
37.			In case of Escrow or any other arrangement, such arrangement shall be backed by a Fixed Deposit of 6 months AMISP Service Charges so that even in case PFCCCL is in non-compliance with Utility, our payments and system performance are secured.	The provisions of RfE shall prevail.
38.			We propose that PFCCCL shall process AMISPs payment without delay and it should not be linked with PFCCCL's payment from Utility.	The provisions of RfE shall prevail.
39.	Chapter-3. Clause No. 3.5	AMISP service charge along with Lumpsum payment per meter paid by Utility PFCCCL to the AMISP will be considered as an Operational Expenditure on Utility's PFCCCL's account"	Kindly provide methodology of processing the payments against lumpsum and additional payout.	The same would be in line with the RfE and SBD.
40.			Kindly provide the payment terms and request you to pay as per capex mode to get more competitive bids.	
41.	Chapter-3. Clause No. 3.6	Clause 7.4 and 7.5 under "Section – 7: Contract Form and Conditions of Contract" of the SBD shall be revised as follows: "7.4 If the AMISP achieves milestone of "Installation Milestone immediately succeeding month on receipt of the corresponding amount by PFCCCL from the Utility"	We understand that DDF will be between PFCCCL & utility only and once payment are received by PFCCCL from utility then further payment shall be released to AMISP/bidder. We request any delay/non execution of the signing of DDF between PFCCCL & utility or any change in terms beyond SBD must not be bounded on AMISP. Please allow AMISP to have the right to evaluate the terms and condition to execute the agreement and also its bid security must not be forfeited for the same if the contract doesn't get executed because of the same.	The same would be in line with clause 3.3 of RfE.
42.			Our payment shall not be linked to payment from utility. Since we are going to sign contract with PFCCCL, the responsibility of the payment should be of PFCCCL.	The query of the applicant pertains to Clause 3.3 of the RfE. Payments of AMISP shall be secured in line with clause 3.3 of the RfE.
43.			For these considerable amounts of payment involved & regular completion of milestone by AMISP/bidder, payment shall be released immediately by PFCCCL after submission of invoice. AMISP payment shall not be linked with DDF between PFCCCL & utility	
44.	General	General	We understand that financial bid shall be submitted at time of bid and is not required at time of Empanelment. Kindly Clarify.	The understanding of the Applicant is correct
45.			Please confirm if the bidder can participate in this RFE as an OEM also while bidder can participate as sole bidder/ member of consortium as per SBD it is acceptable.	The provisions of RfE and SBD shall prevail.

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46.			Kindly confirm whether a bidder is eligible to participate directly in an open tender in which PFCCCL intends to participate, using the same empanelled vendor credentials and there will be no rejection of bid.	In case any Discom carries out bid process on its own in parallel to the RfE/ RfP process being carried out by PFCCCL, there would be no restriction for bidders to participate in the tender floated by Discoms directly
47.		Please confirm that empanelled AMISP will be allowed to participate by itself in upcoming AMISP tenders in addition to submission of financial proposal to PFCCCL under empanelment for the same tender. The aforesaid shall not be considered as conflict of interest by PFCCCL and how it will be ensured that Utility inviting AMISP will also not consider this as conflict of interest.		
48.			Whether the Empanelment process would be applicable only for RDSS projects or applicable to non-RDSS projects as well. We request you to allow non RDSS projects as well under this empanelment process.	

Queries as per SBD

S No	SBD reference	Applicant's Understanding	Applicants' Queries	PFCCCL's Response
For Smart Meter Communication Module:				
1	Annexures-F "General requirement for common pluggable communication module for Smart Meters"	Considering that the new Smart Meters may use different types of communication technologies (RF/PLCC/Cellular, etc.), thus in order to enable different communication modules to be used in the same meter, it is necessary to use a universal interface and a particular size irrespective of the choice of communication technology that defines the dimensions of the communication slot as well as physical placement and location of connectors. The following example recommendations will go a long way in assuring interoperability whilst still complying with the provisions of IS 16444 and IS 15959 standards.	Since every meter manufacturer has its own size of meters and their respective modules therefore size of module may vary according to the different manufacturers. We request you to kindly delete the requirement of NIC module size and kindly confirm the acceptability of the same.	Provision of SBD shall prevail
2	Annexure -F, "Part-III Module 3-D views (For Representational Purpose Only)"	(A.) Module in Meter. (B.) Module Dimension	Every meter manufacturer has different design, So please accept module as per meter manufacturer's own design.	Provision of SBD shall prevail
For 1P & 3P Polycarbonate Meter Box: -				
3	Annexures-O "Specifications of 1-ph and 3-ph Polycarbonate Meter Box and 2:1 & 4:1 Meter Box for 1-ph Consumers, SCOPE.	This specification covers technical requirements of design, manufacture, testing at manufacturer's works, packing, forwarding, supply and unloading at store/site and performance of single-phase meter box intended to contain one number single phase whole current energy meter complete with all accessories for trouble free and efficient operation. Similarly, in, Page no.297, In last clause 2:1 & 4:1 Meter Box arrangement for 1-ph Consumers it is mentioned that The bidder shall provide the design specification for the arrangement of 1:1 Meter box for 1-ph Consumers in Polycarbonate meeting the quality requirements as mentioned in the specification for Polycarbonate boxes.	From both clauses, we understand that you need only 1:1 meter box arrangement i.e. one meter box shall contain one meter only and other arrangements of 2:1 and 4:1 are not required. Kindly re-confirm.	Provision of SBD shall prevail Provision of SBD shall prevail.
FOR LTCT SMC Meter Box: -				
4	Annexure-P, "Specifications of LTCT Meter Box, Scope"	Meter boxes shall consist of two separate chambers, one suitable to accommodate LT TVM and other suitable for installation of 4 nos. single core, single ratio, ring type Current Transformers (CTs) of current ratios as per requirement in the RfP.	Please specify Quantity wise LT CTs Ratios.	The same shall be provided at the RfP stage

S No	SBD reference	Applicant's Understanding	Applicants' Queries	PFCCL's Response
5	Annexure-P, "Specifications of LTCT Meter Box, Constructional Features of Meter Box"	Both the chambers of box shall be independent from each other. Similarly in same clause, 4th para, it is mentioned that If any portion of box is closed, it shall not be possible to approach it by opening the other portion and vice-versa.	As Meter Box shall have two chambers, upper chamber to house 3 phase meter and lower chamber to house 04 nos. ring type LT CTs. So in that case, as per specification requirement of both chambers independent from each other is not safe for ingress of protection (IP). We shall provide Meter Box with upper chamber overlapped on the lower chamber, for ingress protection of dust and water. So please delete these clauses	Provision of SBD shall prevail
6	Annexure-P, "Specifications of LTCT Meter Box, Constructional Features of Meter Box"	It shall be moulded in a single piece forming the body of the Meter Box and CT chamber with SMC lid/shed fitted with the base by two nos. concealed brass hinges.	Please also accept Stainless steel / MS with good plating hinges to be fitted with meter Box body base and cover. Stainless steel/ MS with good plating hinges also have sufficient strength. So, kindly confirm the acceptance.	Provision of SBD shall prevail
7	Annexure-P, "Constructional Features of Meter Box"	The box should have a front door opening with a window provided with toughened glass of minimum 4.0 mm. thickness for viewing and taking meter reading.	Please also accept viewing Window in polycarbonate material having minimum thickness of 2.0mm. Kindly confirm acceptability of the same.	Provision of SBD shall prevail.
8	Annexure-P, "Constructional Features of Meter Box"	The meter box should neither melt nor become soft or distort when tested up to temperatures 2500C. (As per IS 13360-part 6 sec 10 1992 by 'A' capillary tube method.	It seems there is a typographical error. We think it should be 250°C instead of 2500C. Please re-confirm your requirement.	The understanding of the Applicant is correct. It is 250°C
9	Annexure-P, "Material of Meter Box"	As per Annexure-P, Specification of LTCT Meter Box in "Construction feature of meter box" it is mentioned that meter box shall be made of SMC material. Whereas in same Annexure-P, on Page no 299, in Material of meter box LTCT Polycarbonate Boxes is also defined.	Both are contradictory requirement. We shall provide meter box made of SMC. Kindly confirm.	Provision of SBD shall prevail.
10		Material of meter box should not get soften on heating. (Heat distortion temperature should be above 1702 C.)	It seems there is a typographical error. We think it should be 170°C instead of 1702C. Please re-confirm your requirement.	The understanding of the Applicant is correct. It is 170°C
11	"RATING PLATE"	Manufacturers should Screen Print the following information on each meter box. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name of Manufacturer • Year of manufacturing • Type of Meter • PO NO with Date • Meter Box Number • Property of "Utility" 	Following details shall be provided as printed on metallic name plate duly riveted on meter box cover. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name of Manufacturer • Year of manufacturing • Type of Meter • PO NO with Date • Property of "Utility" Also, please delete requirement of printing of "Meter Box Serial number" on meter box cover. And we cannot understand the requirement of detail of 'Type of Meter' on the SMC box. Please clarify. OR 'Type of Meter' should be replaced by 'Rating of CTs'. Kindly confirm the acceptance.	Provision of SBD shall prevail.
For HT, Meter: -				
12	Section A: Bill of Materials and Services for Smart Meters	Three phase CT/PT operated Smart Meter – Feeder Meter with CTs, control cables, with DI provisions Meter Box and Back-end IT Infra with associated works and requisite no. of polycarbonate seal	Please clarify that for CT/ PT Meters weather Meter boxes are required or not. Since, meter box technical specification is not received with Tender.	The same shall be provided at the RfP stage

Please Note: No further queries related to RfE shall be entertained/ considered.