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Award

London Underground Radio Contract

Transport for London

UK5: Transparency notice - Procurement Act 2023 - [view information about notice types](#)

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Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-051c34 ([view related notices](#))

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Scope

Reference

ICT15052

Description

(1) Overview

London Underground Limited (LUL) (a subsidiary of Transport for London (TfL)) intends to directly award a contract (London Underground Radio Contract) to Motorola Solutions UK Limited (Motorola) for the provision of essential hardware and software services in respect of the London Underground digital radio system (LU Radio System). Substantive service provision under the London Underground Radio Contract will not commence until November 2029.

However, LUL requires the London Underground Radio Contract to be entered into in advance of the launch of TfL's Networks and Telecommunications Procurement Project (NTPP) in order to provide continuity and security of service and to support a level playing field for NTPP (as further explained in section 4 below).

(2) Background

In September 2018, LUL entered into a contract (Connect Contract) with Thales Transport and Security Limited (now Hitachi Rail UK Limited (Hitachi)) for the provision of services to support the operationally critical digital radio and transmission system (Connect System) following expiry of the 20 year Connect PFI Contract. The Connect Contract is due to expire in November 2029.

Under the Connect Contract, Hitachi has a subcontract with Motorola for the provision of essential hardware and software support and updates for Motorola's proprietary products, which ensures continuity and safe operational service from the LU Radio System. As owner of the intellectual property rights in the Dimetra product, only Motorola can provide the necessary maintenance support and software upgrades of the Dimetra product.

(3) LU Radio System

In line with industry-wide standards, the LU Radio System uses digital terrestrial trunked radio (TETRA) technology which, alongside other features, ensures security and confidentiality of sensitive data/voice communications. TETRA is a recognised standard and is used extensively around the world for railway and airport operations. The TETRA system used in the LU Radio System is supplied by Motorola using its proprietary Dimetra product.

The Connect System, including the LU Radio System, is critical to the operation of the LU railway. The LU Radio System provides voice radio services between staff, trains and control, and operational data networks services, such as data connectivity for video. Without a fully supported radio system, it would not be possible to ensure the safe, secure, and reliable operation of the LU railway.

TfL's analysis shows that a suitably developed and mature alternative to the TETRA radio system does not currently exist and that it is likely that such an alternative will not be available to deploy throughout the LU network until at least the mid-2030s. Once available, TfL anticipates that it will then take a sizeable capital investment and several years to test such an alternative to ensure that it is suitable for operations on the LU network and then to deploy it across the LU network.

TfL has already made a series of investments, via the existing Connect Contract arrangements, to refresh various hardware and software components of the LU Radio System to keep it operationally stable and secure. Further upgrades to and ongoing maintenance and support of the LU Radio System beyond the expiry of the existing Connect Contract arrangements will need to continue to be delivered by Motorola as it owns the exclusive IP rights for the Dimetra product and these services can only be delivered by Motorola.

(4) Networks and Telecommunications Procurement Project (NTPP)

TfL's Telecommunications and Data Network Strategy (T&D Network Strategy) sets out the long-term approach to rationalising and consolidating TfL's data networks to deliver organisational benefits. As part of the T&D Network Strategy, TfL is currently planning a combined re-procurement of the Connect System services and its commodity networks contract (Access & WAN Contract) as part of the NTPP. NTPP will potentially be based around a three-lot procurement, comprising:

- Lot 1: Connectivity Services;
- Lot 2: LU Operational Radio; and
- Lot 3: Commoditised Connectivity Services.

(5) LU Operational Radio Contract

A significant proportion of the requirement for the LU Operational Radio contract (Lot 2) is overlaid on the LU Radio System, meaning that this requirement needs to be supported by Motorola through the provision of essential hardware and software support services and updates for its Dimetra product within the LU Radio System. As set out in section 3 above, TfL's analysis shows that this support will be needed until at least the mid-2030s.

To facilitate a fair, transparent and non-discriminatory competition for the NTPP LU Operational Radio contract, TfL therefore intends to enter into the London Underground Radio Contract to secure the provision of critical support services for the LU Radio System beyond the expiry of the Connect Contract in November 2029 and to enable the NTPP Lot 2 bidders to prepare their bids based on the same underlying radio system support arrangement.

TfL considers this approach to be the best way of maximising competitive tension for the NTPP Lot 2 procurement and ensuring a level playing field for all bidders. The London Underground Radio Contract will be made available to the Lot 2 bidders during the procurement for this purpose. The London Underground Radio Contract may then be novated to the successful Lot 2 bidder (at which point it will become a sub-contract to the 'prime' contract between the successful Lot 2 bidder and TfL), or the successful Lot 2 bidder may be appointed by TfL to act as TfL's managing agent.

Contract 1. London Underground Radio Contract

Supplier

- MOTOROLA SOLUTIONS UK LIMITED

Contract value

- £147,935,197 excluding VAT
- £177,522,236 including VAT

Above the relevant threshold

Earliest date the contract will be signed

22 December 2025

Contract dates (estimated)

- 21 November 2029 to 20 November 2035
- Possible extension to 20 November 2040
- 11 years

Description of possible extension:

The London Underground Radio Contract will commence on signature, although substantive service provision will not start until the existing Connect Contract has expired and services under the LU Operational Radio Contract have commenced, anticipated to be November 2029.

TfL can extend the London Underground Radio Contract for further extension periods.

The relevant periods that make up the contract term are described below.

From contract signature of the London Underground Radio Contract until commencement of the Initial NTPP Motorola Term, there will be a transitional period known as the Pre-NTPP Term during which Motorola will not be providing substantive services, but will be required to support TfL's procurement of the wider NTPP services. This is expected to last from date the London Underground Radio Contract is signed until the commencement of the LU Operational Radio Contract following the conclusion of the NTPP procurement.

When TfL enters into the LU Operational Radio Contract, the Pre-NTPP Term under the London Underground Radio Contract will end and what is known as the Initial NTPP Motorola Term will begin. Initially, this will involve transitional activities under both contracts in advance of taking over services from the Connect Contract before live services commence under the LU Operational Radio Contract. November 2029 is the current estimate for when this will happen, but this may be revised in due course.

The Initial NTPP Motorola Term will then last until the date which is 6 years from the date on which live services commence under the LU Operational Radio Contract, subject to the Initial NTPP Motorola Term not going beyond 31 December 2035.

TfL then has the following rights to extend the term of the London Underground Radio Contract:

- First NTPP Extension Period: 24 months immediately following the end of the Initial NTPP Motorola Term.
- Second NTPP Extension Period: 24 months immediately following the end of the First NTPP Extension Period.
- Final NTPP Extension Period: 12 months immediately following the end of the Second NTPP Extension Period.

However, no extension period can go beyond an agreed longstop date of November 2040, unless the parties agree otherwise by way of variation.

Other than the longstop date, TfL's right to extend the London Underground Radio Contract is not subject to any particular restrictions or requirements, save as to notice periods.

TfL anticipates that the reasons for which it may elect to extend the London Underground Radio Contract will be connected to the availability of alternative technologies and systems to TETRA radio, and the time, cost and risks associated with testing and deploying such an alternative.

Options: The London Underground Radio Contract contemplates Motorola offering upgrades to the Dimetra system via an upgrade projects regime. This enables LUL to remain on in-support versions of Dimetra and to address the impact of changes to LUL's network and the type and quantities of radio equipment needed to ensure safe, compatible and secure support for LU's operations.

Main procurement category

Services

CPV classifications

- 64000000 - Postal and telecommunications services

Contract locations

- UK - United Kingdom

Other information

Description of risks to contract performance

LUL has identified the following known risk for the purposes of paragraph 5 of Schedule 8 to the Procurement Act 2023:

That any replacement technology to TETRA systems such as Dimetra is not suitable (for, *inter alia*, reasons to do with readiness, functionality, viability or economics) to enable LUL to transition to it within the term of the London Underground Radio Contract such that LUL requires additional or extended performance of the London Underground Radio Contract.

Other Information:

Please note a minor correction to UK1 Pipeline Notice reference 2025/S 000-024355 where the project reference was incorrect.

The correct project reference is: WS2534533174

Conflicts assessment prepared/revised

Yes

Procedure

Procedure type

Direct award

Direct award justification

- Single supplier - intellectual property or exclusive rights
- Single supplier - technical reasons

(1) Direct Award - Conditions met

The London Underground Radio Contract will be a direct award under section 41 and Schedule 5 Procurement Act 2023.

This is on the basis that only Motorola can supply the services required due to the following conditions being met:

Schedule 5, Paragraph 5

(a) due to a particular supplier having intellectual property rights or other exclusive rights, only that supplier can supply the goods, services or works required; and

(b) there are no reasonable alternatives to those goods, services or works.

Schedule 5, Paragraph 6

(a) due to an absence of competition for technical reasons, only a particular supplier can supply the goods, services or works required; and

(b) there are no reasonable alternatives to those goods, services or works.

(2) Direct Award - Justifications

(i) Intellectual Property/Technical Reasons

As referenced in the Scope section, the TETRA radio system used in the Connect System is supplied by Motorola using its proprietary Dimetra product and is critical to the operation of the LU railway. Without a fully supported radio system it would not be possible to ensure the safe, secure, and reliable operation of the LU railway.

As owner of the intellectual property rights in the Dimetra product, only Motorola can provide the necessary OEM-level maintenance support and software upgrades of the Dimetra product in order to ensure continuity and safe operational service from the LU Radio System.

LUL therefore intends to contract with Motorola for such support and upgrades.

(ii) No Reasonable Alternatives

TfL has carried out a detailed review of alternatives to using a TETRA-based system, including FRMCS (5G) and MCX over MNO (4G/5G).

That review has concluded that (1) the currently available alternative radio technologies are not suitable replacements to TETRA-based technology, (2) a suitable replacement technology to TETRA and TETRA-based systems such as Dimetra is at least a decade away, (3) it is not feasible to replace Motorola's Dimetra system with an alternative TETRA-based system, and (4) once available, migration away from Dimetra/TETRA-based systems to an alternative would take several years to complete, during which LU must retain full use of Dimetra to maintain safe and reliable operations.

There are no drop-in replacements for the current Dimetra-based radio system. Each LU train is equipped with a bespoke Dimetra train radio unit, designed to meet specific requirements including electrical compatibility, integration with LU's power supply voltages, physical constraints, and data and control interface requirements.

The LU Radio System also uses a bespoke dispatcher sub-system that is tailored to

provide the essential user interface for LU radio dispatchers, and any future replacement radio system would also require such customisations which, due to their safety criticality, will require extensive development and testing.

When one is available, the effort, risk and cost of migrating to an alternative technology would be substantial, both in terms of capital expenditure and operational risk. It would also take several years to complete, during which LU must retain full use of Dimetra to maintain safe and reliable operations. This reinforces the need for continued investment in Dimetra and long-term support from Motorola.

Additionally, compliance with the Security of Network & Information Systems Regulations (NIS Regulations) requires that the LU radio system receive vendor support such as cyber security vulnerability updates and, whilst the system remains on Dimetra, that Motorola support is critical.

Therefore, TfL considers that it may directly award the London Underground Radio Contract under paragraph 5 (and/or under paragraph 6) of Schedule 5 of the Procurement Act 2023 on the basis that due to its intellectual property rights in the Dimetra product and/or because of technical reasons related to the nature of the Dimetra product, only Motorola can provide and deliver the necessary services and works required to support the LU Radio System and there are no reasonable alternatives to the Dimetra product or the works and services required to support that product.

Supplier

MOTOROLA SOLUTIONS UK LIMITED

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Region: UKI32 - Westminster

Small or medium-sized enterprise (SME): No

Voluntary, community or social enterprise (VCSE): No

Contract 1. London Underground Radio Contract

Contracting authority

Transport for London

- Public Procurement Organisation Number: PHMT-6197-NWNZ

5 Endeavour Square

London

E20 1JN

United Kingdom

Email: BSFAribaAdministration@tfl.gov.uk

Region: UKI41 - Hackney and Newham

Organisation type: Public authority - central government