



# Request For Information (RFI) For interested service providers for the Life Extension Feasibility of the Ratel Infantry Fighting Vehicle

**RFI No. 7042/04/08/2025**

Date of Issue	18/07/2025	
Enquiries	Strategic Procurement Unit	E-mail: <a href="mailto:tender@csir.co.za">tender@csir.co.za</a>
	Please use RFI No and RFI Description as subject reference	
Last date for submission of enquiries/clarifications	31/07/2025 @ 16H30	
Electronical Submission	<a href="mailto:tender@csir.co.za">tender@csir.co.za</a> (If tender submission exceeds 25MB multiple emails can be sent)	
CSIR business hours	08h00 – 16h30	
Category	Engineering Services	
Closing Date and Time	04/08/2025 @ 16H30	

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## **SECTION A – TECHNICAL INFORMATION**

### **1 INTRODUCTION**

The Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) is one of the leading scientific research and technology development organisations in Africa. In partnership with national and international research and technology institutions, CSIR undertakes directed and multidisciplinary research and technology innovation that contributes to the improvement of the quality of life of South Africans. The CSIR's main site is in Pretoria while it is represented in other provinces of South Africa through regional offices.

### **2 BACKGROUND**

This Request for Information (RFI) serves to explore the modernization of the SANDF's Ratel Infantry Fighting Vehicle (IFV) Fleet to address current challenges including component obsolescence, improve vehicle availability, and ensure operational performance. This RFI invites qualified bidders to propose suitable modernization solutions for the current SANDF Ratel IFVs, either through an upgrade program and/or a life extension program.

#### **Statement of Intent – Request for Information Participation**

The CSIR invites all interested and qualified entities to respond to this Request for Information (RFI). This RFI serves as an essential step in the strategic planning with regard to the extension of life of the aging SANDF Ratel fleet. The information gathered through this exercise will enable an understanding of the available modernization options, industry capabilities, cost structures, and implementation considerations relevant to addressing Ratel IFV component obsolescence and performance.

Bidders are strongly encouraged to participate in this RFI process, as their input will contribute to shaping potential future requirements and may inform the scope of any subsequent procurement activity. Participation in this RFI offers an opportunity for the South African Defence Industry to present innovative approaches, demonstrate expertise, and align offerings with the stated intent.

Please note, however, that this RFI does not constitute a solicitation or commitment to contract on the part of the CSIR. No contract or commercial relationship will arise from the submission

of a response to this RFI. Any future procurement activity, should it occur, will be subject to a separate and formal solicitation process, in accordance with the applicable governance and regulations.

The CSIR appreciates the time and effort of all respondents and looks forward to reviewing the submissions.

### **3 INVITATION FOR REQUEST FOR INFORMATION**

Information is hereby requested from suitably qualified service providers that can provide information on established solutions to address the Ratel challenges regarding parts obsolescence and availability of the Ratel IFV. The purpose of the RFI is to identify viable modernization options for the life extension and/or upgrade of the current Ratel IFV fleet. The focus will be on the following areas:

- a. Life extension and/or upgrade of the current SANDF Ratel IFV platform.
  - i. Addressing the currently obsolete systems and modernisation of outdated systems.
- b. Improve the availability and serviceability of the Ratel IFV.
- c. Ensure equal or improved performance compared to the current Ratel capability.
- d. Enable standardization of components with preference for parts readily available in within the SANDF and in South Africa at large.
- e. Potential vehicle armour/protection upgrades without compromising the gross vehicle mass, and functionality of the vehicle.

Respondents must indicate the duration from project initiation to final delivery. Details such as production line readiness, project kick off time, system design, vehicle system upgrades, assembly and testing must be included in the timeline overview.

### **4 RFI REQUIREMENTS**

All proposals are to be submitted in a format specified in this enquiry (as applicable). However, service providers are welcome to submit additional or alternative proposals over and above the originally specified format (e.g. other capabilities that you may be deemed relevant).

Respondents are required to submit a proposal addressing the following:

#### **4.1 Technical Response guidelines/ considerations**

The following must be submitted as part of the technical proposal:

**4.1.1. Company Profile**

- a. Company profile with relevant experience and proven capability in product design and life extension of similar vehicles.
- b. Evidence of prior experience in working with the SANDF and/or defence related entities.
- c. Provide documentation confirming that the bidder and key personnel possess the necessary security clearances. Include details such as clearance level and validity.

**4.1.2. Technical Scope of Life Extension Program**

Respondent must outline the technical approach and modernization program proposed to extend the service life of the fleet.

- a. Present a scope of work for the upgrade/life extension of the Ratel IFV that would address the vehicle's powertrain, suspension and braking system, structural refurbishment, electrical system, communication systems, fire suppression, and other systems such as add-on armour protection.
  - i. The proposal may not be limited to the systems listed, nor does it have to include all of the systems listed.
  - ii. Where add-on armour protection is included, the proposal should provide for the armour as a fitted for, but not with option.
  - iii. Where fire suppression system modernization is included, maintenance thereof by a qualified local service provider throughout the operational lifespan of the Ratel fleet must be assured.
- b. Comment on the level of maturity and operational readiness to implement the upgrade/life extension proposal for the Ratel IFV fleet.
- c. Comment on the compatibility of the proposed solution with the current Ratel vehicle's tyre specification and Run-Flats Inserts.
- d. Provide guidance on the degree of compliance with applicable standards including national or international military standards.
  - i. Highlight any certification or testing that was undertaken to validate performance where applicable.
  - ii. Highlight any certification or testing that still needs to be undertaken to validate performance where applicable.

- e. Comment on the degree of standardisation of key component that are available within the SANDF, where applicable.

#### **4.1.3. Obsolescence Management**

Respondents shall describe their proposed obsolescence management strategy, including the following:

- a. Confirm the expected life extension duration of the Ratel IFV that the proposed modernization program offers.
- b. Demonstrate the market footprint of the proposed components considered in their upgrade/life extension program.
  - i. Provide a breakdown of the source of supply of key components, stating which country key component or sub-systems are supplied from.
  - ii. Indicate risks associated to the supply of service packs throughout the extended lifespan.
- c. Provide guidance on how the risks associated with discontinuation or end of life of parts will be mitigated.

#### **4.1.4. Financial Offer**

- a. Provide a unit price for the proposed modernization of the Ratel IFV for an assumed quantity of 120 vehicles.
  - i. Itemize pricing for key sub-systems
  - ii. Itemize pricing of key activities/services including, Ratel IFV transportation costs
- b. Pricing must be accurate within  $\pm 15\%$ , and include engineering services, component procurement, labour, testing and certification, logistics and any other associated cost to the project.

#### **4.1.5. Execution Strategy**

- a. Propose a rollout plan for the proposed modernization program for an assumed quantity of 120 Ratel IFVs. This should include the following aspects: Location of the production facility, the facility's throughput capacity, availability of appropriate equipment for heavy vehicle modifications, and an approach for the transportation of non-serviceable Ratel IFVs from current locations.

- i. Indicate the timeline to set-up the production line for the roll out of the proposed modernization program for an assumed quantity of 120 Ratel IFVs
- ii. Provide an expected delivery schedule for an assume quantity of 120 Ratel IFVs

#### **4.1.6. Planned Subcontracted Services**

- a. Demonstrate capacity and intent to serve as primary contractor.
  - i. Indicate which services are provided in-house and which will be done through a subcontractor. Provide details of the subcontractors for key aspects of the proposed modernization program, where applicable.

#### **4.1.7 RFI Deliverables**

Respondent are expected to respond to this RFI with a proposal considering all requirements of this RFI, as well as alternative options that the bidder deems relevant that will serve the intent of this RFI.

#### **4.1.8 Definitions for Reference**

To assist respondents in developing accurate and relevant responses, the following definitions apply in the context of this RFI:

- a. Upgrade Program: A targeted initiative aimed at replacing or enhancing current systems and components with newer, more advanced or more capable technologies to increase performance and extend functional capabilities.
- b. Life Extension Program: A structured refurbishment effort that restores or maintains the original capabilities of the vehicle platform by replacing obsolete or failing components, without introducing significant new capabilities, with the aim to extend the vehicle's service life while maintaining baseline performance.
- c. Modernization Program: An overarching program that may incorporate both upgrades and life extension measures, focused on ensuring the fleet remains operationally relevant, reliable, and maintainable for an extended period, while addressing component obsolescence.

## SECTION B – TERMS AND CONDITIONS

### 5 SUBMISSION OF INFORMATION

- 5.1 All information/proposals are to be submitted electronically to [tender@csir.co.za](mailto:tender@csir.co.za). No late proposals will be accepted.
- 5.2 All proposals will only be considered if received by the CSIR before the closing date and time (***as indicated on the cover page***). The CSIR business hours are between **08h00** and **16h30**.
- 5.3 All proposal submissions are to be clearly subject-referenced with the **RFI number and RFI Description**.
- 5.4 Proposals submitted must be signed by a person or persons duly authorised.
- 5.5 Proposals submitted at incorrect location and/or address, will not be accepted for considerations and where practicable, will be returned unopened to the Bidder(s).
- 5.6 Proposals received after the closing date and time, at the address indicated in the bid documents, will not be accepted for consideration and where practicable, will be returned unopened to the Bidder(s).
- 5.7 All dates and times in this bid are South African standard time.
- 5.8 Any time or date in this bid is subject to change at the CSIR's discretion. The establishment of a time or date in this bid does not create an obligation on the part of the CSIR to take any action or create any right in any way for any bidder to demand that any action be taken on the date established. The bidder accepts that, if the CSIR extends the deadline for bid submission (the Closing Date) for any reason, the requirements of this bid otherwise apply equally to the extended deadline.
- 5.9 Documents submitted via cloud solutions such as: WeTransfer, Google Drive, Dropbox, etc. will not be considered.
- 5.10 The naming / labelling syntax of files or documents must be short and simple.



## **6 VALIDITY PERIOD OF RESPONSES**

Each **information/proposal** shall be valid for a period of three (3) months calculated from the closing date.

## **7 ENQUIRIES AND CONTACT WITH THE CSIR**

- 7.1 Any enquiry regarding this RFI shall be submitted in writing to CSIR to the email and format outlined in the table on cover page of this RFI document.
- 7.2 Any other contact with CSIR personnel involved in this tender is not permitted during the RFI process other than as required through existing service arrangements or as requested by the CSIR as part of the RFI process.

## **8 MEDIUM OF COMMUNICATION**

All documentation submitted in response to this Request for Information must be in English.

## **9 COST OF EXPRESSION OF INTEREST**

Service providers are expected to fully acquaint themselves with the conditions, requirements and specifications of this RFI before submitting responses. Each service provider assumes all risks for resource commitment and expenses, direct or indirect, of RFI preparation and participation throughout the RFI process. The CSIR is not responsible directly or indirectly for any costs incurred by service providers.

## **10 CORRECTNESS OF RESPONSES**

- 10.1 The service provider must confirm satisfaction regarding the correctness and validity of their RFI.

## **11 VERIFICATION OF DOCUMENTS**

- 11.1 Service providers should check the numbers of the pages to satisfy themselves that none are missing or duplicated. No liability will be accepted by the CSIR in regard to anything arising from the fact that pages are missing or duplicated.

## **12 ADDITIONAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

- 12.1 Service providers shall not assume that information and/or documents supplied to CSIR, at any time prior to this request, are still available to CSIR, and shall consequently not make any reference to such information document in its response to this request.
- 12.2 Copies of any affiliations, memberships and/or accreditations that support your submission must be included in the response.
- 12.3 An omission to disclose material information, a factual inaccuracy, and/or a misrepresentation of fact may result in the disqualification of a response, or cancellation of any subsequent contract.
- 12.4 Failure to comply with any of the terms and conditions as set out in this document will invalidate the response.

## **13 CSIR RESERVES THE RIGHT TO**

- 13.1 Extend the closing date.
- 13.2 Verify any information contained in a response;
- 13.3 Request documentary proof regarding any tendering issue;
- 13.4 Cancel or withdraw this RFI as a whole or in part; and
- 13.5 Not to include any supplier on the list of suppliers on the approved database based on functional criteria not met.

## **14 PERSONAL INFORMATION**

- 14.1 Each Party consents to the other Party holding and processing “personal information” (as defined in the POPI Act) relating to it for legal, personnel, administrative and management purposes (including, if applicable, any “special personal information” relating to him/her, as defined in the POPI Act). Notwithstanding the generality of the aforesaid, each Party hereby undertakes to comply with all relevant provisions of the POPI Act and any other applicable data protection laws. The bidder further agrees to comply with all CSIR’s reasonable internal governance requirements pertaining to data protection.
- 14.2 Each Party consents to the other Party making such information available to those who provide products or services to such parties (such as advisers, regulatory authorities,

governmental or quasi-governmental organisations and potential purchasers of such Party or any part of their business).

14.3 While performing any activity where a Party is handling personal information as a “responsible party” (as defined in the POPI Act), each Party undertakes that it will process the personal information strictly in accordance with the terms of the POPI Act, this Contract, and the other Party’s instructions from time to time, and take appropriate operational measures to safeguard the data against any unauthorised access.

14.4 Each Party acknowledges that in the course of conducting business with each other, each Party intends to maintain and process personal information about the other Party in an internal database. By signing this Contract, each Party consents to the maintenance and processing of such personal information.

Where relevant, the bidder shall procure that all of its personnel, agents, representatives, contractors, sub-contractors and mandataries shall comply with the provisions of this clause 30 (Personal Information). The CSIR shall be entitled on reasonable notice to conduct an inspection or audit bidders compliance with the requisite POPI Act safeguards.

## **15 DISCLAIMER**

This RFI is an expression of interest only and not an offer document; answers to it must not be construed as acceptance of an offer or imply the existence of a contract between the parties. By submission of its RFI, service providers shall be deemed to have satisfied themselves with and to have accepted all Terms & Conditions of this RFI. The CSIR makes no representation, warranty, assurance, guarantee or endorsements to service provider concerning the RFI, whether with regard to its accuracy, completeness or otherwise and the CSIR shall have no liability towards the service provider or any other party in connection therewith.