



ONTARIO POWER AUTHORITY
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
FOR
APPROXIMATELY 100 MW OF RENEWABLE FUELLED
COMBINED HEAT AND POWER GENERATION IN ONTARIO
FROM PROJECTS GREATER THAN 10 MW IN SIZE
(“CHP III RFP”)
FAIRNESS REVIEW

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents our findings and conclusions as Fairness Advisor for the Request for Proposals (“RFP”) process for the procurement of approximately 100 MW of renewable fuelled combined heat and power generation in Ontario from projects greater than 10 MW in size (“the RFP”). The purpose of this RFP was to identify Selected Proponents to provide combined heat and electricity generation projects in Ontario, which were fuelled by Renewable Fuels. This is a final report on the RFP process. We were engaged in June 2008 and were involved in an advisory capacity to the OPA during the finalization of the RFP document, prior to the Proposal Submission Deadline, and throughout the evaluation period.

The Fairness Advisor acted as a neutral, disinterested and independent monitor for the procurement process. We were not part of the RFP development or evaluation teams. We reported directly to the OPA project manager responsible for the RFP process.

In our opinion, the evaluation process was transparent. The evaluation criteria and process were clearly stated in the RFP. The Mandatory Requirements were objectively stated, which permitted an objective determination of compliance to be made. The Rated Criteria were described in detail and the point score allocation for each criterion was disclosed in the RFP. The five-stage evaluation process for applying these criteria and identifying the Selected Proponents was clearly set out in the RFP.

We believe that all the RFP consultation sessions were conducted in an appropriate manner. All Registered Participants were afforded the same opportunity to meet with the OPA and to communicate matters of interest

about their proposed Project to the OPA. Both the Registered Participants and OPA complied with the Individual Information Session protocol. Changes to the RFP as a result of the Individual Information Sessions were objectively justified and enhanced the clarity and transparency of the RFP.

We are satisfied that the evaluation of the Proposals was conducted in accordance with the process set out in s. 3 of the RFP by applying the evaluation criteria set out in s. 3 and applying these criteria using the process set out in that same section. We detected no bias or favouritism towards or against any particular Proponent. The Proposals were evaluated strictly against the Mandatory Requirements and Rated Criteria published in the RFP.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This report presents our findings and conclusions as Fairness Advisor for the Request for Proposals (“RFP”) process for the procurement of approximately 100 MW of renewable fuelled combined heat and power generation in Ontario from projects greater than 10 MW in size (“the RFP”). The purpose of this RFP was to identify Selected Proponents to provide combined heat and electricity generation projects in Ontario, which were fuelled by Renewable Fuels. This is a final report on the RFP process. We were engaged in June 2008 and were involved in an advisory capacity to the OPA during the finalization of the RFP document, prior to the Proposal Submission Deadline, and throughout the evaluation period.

Our report addresses the following aspects of the RFP process:

- Wording of the RFP document;
- Adequate communications to CHP III Parties;
- Adequate notification of changes in requirements;
- Confidentiality and security of Proposals and evaluations;
- Qualifications of the evaluation team;
- Compliance with the process;
- Objectivity and diligence respecting the evaluations;
- Proper use of assessment tools;
- Conflict of Interest; and,
- Debriefings.

The following sections in this report elaborate on these aspects of the RFP process. Capitalized terms in this report have the same meaning as

capitalized terms in the RFP and are defined in Appendix A - Glossary of Terms of the RFP, or in the Power Purchase Agreement (“PPA”) as set out in Article 1.1.

This report is prepared for the specific purposes of the Ontario Power Authority (“OPA”). Any other person that wishes to review this report must first obtain the written permission of the OPA and Knowles Canada (“Knowles”). Knowles or the individual authors of this report bear no liability whatsoever for opinions unauthorized persons may conclude from this report. This report is based on our observations of the RFP process and representations about the process made to us by the OPA. This report is intended to be read as a whole document.

2.0 ROLE OF FAIRNESS ADVISOR

The OPA conducts procurement in a manner that stands the test of public scrutiny, encourages competition and reflects fairness in the spending of public funds. Competition among Proponents is encouraged through open processes that afford vendors equal access to OPA procurement opportunities.

To provide the vendor community with the confidence that the contemplated procurement is conducted in a fair manner that is consistent with the above-mentioned principles, the OPA often retains the services of a Fairness Advisor to monitor the process and to advise it on matters that pertain to the fairness of the procurement process.

The Fairness Advisor acted as a neutral, disinterested and independent monitor for the procurement process. We were not part of the RFP development or evaluation teams. We reported directly to the OPA project manager responsible for the RFP process.

3.0 BACKGROUND

On 10 April 2008, the Ontario Minister of Energy directed the OPA (“Ministerial Directive”) to commence a process to procure approximately 100 MW of power from combined heat and power projects fuelled by renewable energy sources (“CHP III”). The first step in this process was the issuance of a non-binding request for expressions of interest on 24 June 2008 (“CHP III RFEI”) to engage and consult with interested parties regarding CHP III. The OPA was encouraged with both the numbers and quality of the responses to the CHP III RFEI. A stakeholder information session was held on 19 August 2008. Subsequent to the CHP III RFEI, the OPA decided to issue a request for proposals for CHP III (“CHP III RFP”) on 9 March 2009.

4.0 RFP DOCUMENT

As Fairness Advisor, our main task was to provide advice to the OPA on drafting the RFP to ensure that the evaluation process was transparent. The RFP document had to accomplish three tasks:

1. Clearly identify and describe the nature of the opportunity;
2. Provide CHP III Parties with the information they needed to prepare a Proposal that demonstrated their ability to respond to the evaluation criteria; and
3. Describe the necessary and desirable qualifications for the Selected Proponents and clearly set out these evaluation criteria and the process for applying them.

In achieving these objectives, the evaluation criteria had to be developed such that they were objectively justified by the requirements of a Facility. Mandatory requirements should not be so narrowly developed to unduly restrict participation in the competitive process. Sufficient response time and information had to be provided to permit those unfamiliar with the OPA and its procurement processes to prepare a Proposal.

We are satisfied that the RFP stated all the evaluation criteria used in the evaluation process, and provided an appropriate process for consistently and fairly evaluating the Proposals. The RFP was not written in an unduly restrictive manner, and was not biased towards any particular Proponent.

The evaluation criteria were objectively justified in that they assessed the technical aspects of a proposed Facility, the experience of the Proponents to develop and construct a Facility, Proponents' financial capability, Host financial strength, status and duration of the off-take agreement, and desirable characteristics and attributes of the Proponents' projects such as progress seeking municipal and regional approvals, progress obtaining an environmental assessment, status of the EPC contract, etc.

Section 1 – Introduction, provided background information for Proponents. Section 1.1 set out the purpose of the RFP. Section 1.2 explained the Ministerial Directive and described the steps taken to date by the OPA to satisfy it. Section 1.3 explained the eligibility requirements, and in particular that CHP II RFP and RES III RFP Proponents were eligible if they had not responded to either one of these RFP processes. The RFP provided for them to transfer their registrations over to the CHP III RFP.

Section 2 – Process Overview provided information on the RFP process. Section 2.1 established that there were two distinct phases to the RFP: Registration Submission to become a Registered Participant; and submission of a Proposal to become a Proponent. The Timetable for the RFP was set out in s. 2.2, and in s. 2.3 it was explained how a delay to this Timetable would be handled by the OPA. In s. 2.4 the OPA set out the rules for communications about a proposed Project, and prohibited certain types of communication. Section 2.5 Registration Preparation and Submission, set out the registration process for the RFP. Section 2.6 Individual Information Sessions described that each Registered Proponent was entitled to have an Individual Information Session with the OPA to discuss its proposed Project, the RFP, or the form of CHP III PPA. Section 2.7 described how Proponents should prepare their Proposals and explained what the submission

requirements were and how to comply with these requirements. Other subsections in s. 2 dealt with notification of Selected Proponents, Debriefings, Confidentiality, and issuance of Addenda to the RFP.

Section 3 – Evaluation Process, disclosed in detail the evaluation criteria and the process for applying these criteria. Proposals were evaluated by applying both Mandatory Requirements and Rated Criteria. The RFP disclosed a five-stage evaluation process:

- Stage 1 – Proposal Completeness Requirements, where Proposals were reviewed to determine if they were complete and satisfied the Proposal Completeness Requirements, which were set out in s. 3.1. Only those Proposals that satisfied all of the Proposal Completeness Requirements were advanced to the next stage of the evaluation process;
- Stage 2 – Mandatory Requirements, where each Proposal was evaluated for compliance with the Mandatory Requirements set out in s. 3.2. Sections 3.2.1 to s. 3.2.23, inclusive, detailed each of the Mandatory Requirements. Each of these subsections described the required documentation that needed to be provided in each Proposal to substantiate compliance with the Mandatory Requirements. Only those Proposals satisfying all of the Mandatory Requirements would be advanced to the next stage of the evaluation process;
- Stage 3 – Rated Criteria, where each Proposal was rated against the Rated Criteria set out in s. 3.3. These criteria addressed characteristics and attributes of a proposed Project, which are summarized in Table 1. Section 3.3 explained these Rated Criteria were designed to allow the OPA to evaluate the merits of the Proponent and proposed Project. Sections 3.3.1 to

Sections 3.3.4, inclusive, described each Rated Criterion in detail and indicated the allocation of points based on the response given in a Proposal. Proposals had to score at least 40 points in Stage 3 to advance on to the next stage of the evaluation process;

- Stage 4 – Economic Bid Evaluation, where each of the Proposals advanced from Stage 3 had its Evaluated Cost and Adjusted Evaluated Cost calculated. Sections 3.4.1 and 3.4.2, inclusive detailed how a Proposal's Evaluated Cost and Adjusted Evaluated Cost were calculated. The Economic Bid Evaluation Model posted to the Generation Procurement Website was used to arrive at the Evaluated Cost for each Proposal. This Evaluated Cost was then factored by the Proposal's Stage 3 score for the Rated Criteria to arrive at an Adjusted Evaluated Cost; and

- Stage 5 – Selection of Contract Facilities, where Proposals were screened based on their proposed Connection Point to account for transmission limitations within Restricted Circuits, Zones, and Areas set out in Appendix Q to the RFP. A Circuit screening, followed by a Zone screening, and then finally an Area screening is done to determine if Proposals were within the pre-determined transmission capacities for each of these types of screens based on geographic location in the province. As was set out in s. 3.5.2, those Proposals that did not exceed allowable transmission limitations became the Initial Stack of Proposals.

In s. 3.5.3 Final Stack of Proposals, the OPA would apply a Threshold Percentage of 115 percent to the Proposals in the Initial Stack of Proposals. In doing so, each Proposal's Adjusted Evaluated Cost would be compared to the weighted average Adjusted Evaluated Cost of the other Proposals in the Initial Stack. If a Proposal's Adjusted Evaluated Cost exceeded the weighted

average Adjusted Evaluated Cost of the other Proposals by more than the Threshold Percentage, the OPA reserved the right to reject that Proposal. The OPA reserved the right to reject any Proposal, except for the Proposal with the lowest Adjusted Evaluated Cost, that had an Adjusted Evaluated Cost exceeding the Threshold Percentage. The OPA reserved the right repeat this process for a Threshold Percentage of 125 percent.

Those Proposals not being rejected from the Initial Stack would form the Final Stack of Proposals. In s. 3.5.4, the RFP set out that Proponents whose Proposals were included in the Final Stack would become the Selected Proponents.

Table 1 - Summary of Rated Criteria

Section	Overview of Rated Criteria	Maximum Point Scores
3.3.1	Project Maturity	25
3.3.2	Host Facility Risk Mitigation	25
3.3.3	Proponent Team Experience	15
3.3.4	Financial Assessment	35
	TOTAL MAXIMUM POINT SCORE	100
	Minimum Required Total Point Score	40

Section 4 – General Terms and Conditions, set out the terms and conditions of the RFP process, including the reserved rights of the OPA. Section 4.3 established that the CHP III PPA and was an integral part of the RFP. Section 4.9 established that the Selected Proponents were required to execute the CHP III PPA in their final form.

The RFP was accompanied by 20 appendices, Appendices A to T, inclusive, which contained certain necessary forms and other relevant information necessary for preparing a Proposal.

In our opinion, the evaluation process was transparent. The evaluation criteria and process was clearly stated in the RFP. The Mandatory Requirements were objectively stated, which permitted an objective determination of compliance to be made. The Rated Criteria were described in detail and the point score allocation for each criterion was disclosed in the RFP. The five-stage evaluation process for applying these criteria and identifying the Selected Proponents was clearly set out in the RFP.

5.0 RFP CONSULTATION STRATEGY

In order to reduce the complexity and risk for Proponents and OPA alike, the OPA embarked on a consultation strategy with Registered Participants. This process was consistent with the overall OPA goal of engaging its stakeholders in these processes. In our experience this is a rather common process for large, complex procurement initiatives.

The OPA conducted a Technical Information Session on 2 February 2009. The Technical Information Session was open to any prospective CHP III Party. At this Technical Information Session the OPA presented an overview of the RFP, reviewed the evaluation criteria, and presented an example of how Evaluated Cost was calculated given the information in an Economic Bid Statement. An overview of the CHP III PPA was also given at the Technical Information Session. We were in attendance at the Technical Information Session as an observer.

Once an interested party became a Registered Participant it was entitled to an Individual Information Session to discuss its proposed Project with the OPA. The purpose of these Individual Information sessions was to provide each Registered Participant with an opportunity to meet with the OPA and to discuss the RFP process, the form of CHP III PPA and, on a confidential basis, the technical elements of its proposed Project. These information sessions were offered only to Registered Participants and only as an aid to their understanding of the RFP and the form of CHP III PPA. Any information presented by the Registered Participants during these sessions was not evaluated if the Registered Participant became a Proponent unless that content was presented in its Proposal. No members of the evaluation team were present at these Individual Information Sessions.

A protocol for the conduct of the Individual Information Sessions was included in s. 2.6 Individual Information Sessions. The purpose of this protocol was to establish a set of rules for the conduct of the sessions. All

Registered Participants without exception, and the OPA, complied with the Individual Information Session protocol set out in s. 2.6.

The information sessions were scheduled by the OPA with Registered Participants on a first come, first served basis. No Registered Participant who wanted an information session was denied one.

The information sessions were held at the OPA offices in Toronto, Ontario. The same two representatives of the OPA met with Registered Proponents each time. As Fairness Advisor we monitored the sessions. Each session was one hour in duration.

The sessions were conducted informally in the sense that each Registered Participant was free to set the agenda for the session and could raise whatever matters that it wished. In general, the matters that were raised dealt with the RFP requirements and the CHP III PPA. For some matters, the OPA felt that it was in a position to respond directly to the Registered Participant, whereas for others, the OPA reserved comment and requested that the Registered Participant submit a written question via the Generation Procurement Website. The OPA kept a detailed log of matters raised by the Registered Participants and, when all the information sessions were over, a number of changes were made to the RFP, CHP III PPA, by means of Addenda. Questions posed about the process, and OPA answers to these questions, were posted without attribution to the Generation Procurement Website. We reviewed these changes to the RFP and we believe that they were objectively justified and enhanced the clarity and transparency of the RFP.

In summary, we believe that all the RFP consultation sessions were conducted in an appropriate manner. All Registered Participants were afforded the same opportunity to meet with the OPA and to communicate matters of interest about their proposed Projects to the OPA. Both the Registered Participants and OPA complied with the Individual Information

Session protocol. Changes to the RFP as a result of the Individual Information Sessions were objectively justified and enhanced the clarity and transparency of the RFP.

6.0 ADEQUATE TIME TO PREPARE A PROPOSAL

Proponents required sufficient time to prepare Proposals in response to the RFP. The larger the scope of the RFP and more complex it is, the longer the time that should be provided for Proponents so that they can understand the RFP requirements, assimilate the information in the RFP, conduct whatever research they deem necessary, and prepare a response to the RFP.

Table 1 - RFP Timetable

Release of the draft CHP III RFP	19 January 2009
Release of the draft CHP III PPA	26 January 2009
Question and Comment Period I (public)	19 January to 13 February 2009
Technical Information Session (public)	2 February 2009
Question and Comment Period II (public)	19 February to 24 February 2009
Release of final CHP III RFP and final CHP III PPA	9 March 2009
Registration Form Submission Deadline	19 March 2009 at 15:00:00 Eastern Prevailing time
Question and Comment Period III (Registered Participants only)	20 March to 17 April 2009
Individual Information Sessions (Registered Participants only)	23 March to 25 March 2009
Deadline for Issuing Addenda	7 May 2009
Proposal Submission Deadline	11 June 2009
Targeted Process Completion Date	August 2009

The RFP was issued on 19 January 2009 (“Issue Date”) and closed on 11 June 2009. (Proposal Submission Deadline). Proponents had 99 clear business days (a day other than the Issue Date, Proposal Submission Deadline, Saturday, Sunday or a Statutory Holiday) and 141 clear calendar days (any calendar day other than the Issue Date and Proposal Submission Deadline) to prepare Proposals in response to the RFP. In our opinion, the amount of time

Proponents had to respond to this RFP was adequate given the size and complexity of the undertaking.

7.0 ADEQUATE COMMUNICATION TO PROPONENTS

It was important that all Proponents had timely access to the same and adequate information about the RFP and the associated process at the same time.

Subsection 2.4.1 instructed CHP III Parties that the RFP, CHP III PPA, and other RFP-related documents were available at the Generation Procurement Website. The URL for this website was given in Appendix A – Glossary of Terms. Section 2.11 set out that the RFP and CHP III PPA could only be changed by means of an Addendum and that any Addenda were publicly available at the Generation Procurement Website.

In s. 2.4.1, CHP III Parties were requested to relay questions and comments through the Generation Procurement Website. Also, if a CHP III Party had a specific question about communications in general, such a question could be submitted to the OPA via the generation.procurement@powerauthority.on.ca email address. During the RFP process, including the evaluation of Proposals, we were aware of no instance where any CHP III Party communicated with the OPA using a communications channel not provided for in the RFP.

All RFP-related documents were posted to the Generation Procurement Website. Questions received and answers given were also posted to that same website. We reviewed questions received and answers posted. Any information identifying a CHP III Party was removed by the OPA prior to posting the question and answer. The RFP also provided an email address for CHP III Parties to communicate with the OPA at any time during the process. Questions received and OPA answers were also posted to the Generation Procurement Website.

8.0 ADEQUATE NOTIFICATION OF CHANGES IN REQUIREMENTS

All Proponents received the same and adequate notification about changes to the RFP requirements.

There were two Addenda issued. Questions by CHP III Parties and answers by the OPA were periodically posted to the Generation Procurement Website. All questions were rendered anonymous for posting so that the CHP III Parties asking the questions were not identified.

The second Addendum was posted to the Generation Procurement Website on 26 May 2009. The purpose of this Addendum was to extend the Proposal Submission Deadline to 11 June 2009. This was after the deadline for issuing Addenda set out in the Timetable, however, in s. 2.11 the OPA reserved the right to issue Addenda after this deadline. By virtue of the Addendum itself, the Proposal Submission Deadline was extended.

9.0 CONFIDENTIALITY AND SECURITY OF DOCUMENTS

All Proposals and evaluation documents were kept strictly confidential and in secure locations. Documents relating to the RFP process were also kept secure. During development of the RFP the draft document was circulated only to those that were working on the document or that were reviewing and commenting on the document.

Proposals and associated evaluation documents were kept in secure locations at all times. The Proposals were kept at OPA offices in Toronto, Ontario, until they were distributed to the evaluators. Evaluation documents were also stored in secure locations at OPA offices. The contents of the Proposals and identities of the Proponents were only known to the evaluation team members, those supporting the evaluation team, and the Fairness Advisor.

Evaluators were permitted to take Proposals they were evaluating to their individual offices, but at all times the documents were under the care and control of the evaluators. All deliberations of the evaluation team were conducted behind closed doors at OPA offices, in Toronto, Ontario.

The evaluators, and those supporting the evaluators, who were OPA employees were bound to keep all RFP-related information confidential by virtue of their employment contracts. Non-OPA employee evaluators or advisers were required to sign a confidentiality agreement, which was an undertaking to keep the contents of the Proposals and any information related to the evaluation process confidential. This undertaking survived past the end of the evaluation process.

We are not aware of any discussions about any Proposal or its evaluation among anyone except the evaluators, those supporting the evaluators, and us. To our knowledge, no information about the Proposals or evaluation was

communicated in any form to persons not directly involved with the evaluation process.

We are satisfied that the Proposal contents and all information generated in the evaluation process was kept secure and confidential at all times.

10.0 QUALIFICATIONS OF THE EVALUATION TEAM

The evaluation team members had the appropriate knowledge and expertise to review and evaluate the Proposals. An evaluation team composed of four members: two from the OPA; one from the IESO; and, an external consultant, who acted as chair. All of the evaluators had energy industry experience and backgrounds. None of the OPA evaluators worked in the Electricity Resources group.

All evaluators had reviewed the RFP and familiarized themselves with the evaluation tools prior to commencing their evaluation of the Proposals. A training session was held to explain the evaluation process and evaluation tools to the evaluators. We attended this session as an observer.

In summary, all the evaluators were qualified to undertake the evaluation of the Proposals and we have no concerns about the qualifications of any of the evaluators.

11.0 COMPLIANCE WITH THE PROCESS

In order to ensure a fair process, the procedures and process established for conducting the procurement and published in the RFP were followed and applied equally to all Proponents. We are of the opinion that the evaluation process outlined in the RFP was complied with by the evaluators.

Three (3) Proposals were received by the Proposal Submission Deadline. The OPA subjected each Proposal to the Stage 1 - Proposal Completeness Requirements stage in the evaluation process. One Proposal failed to satisfy a Mandatory Requirement. The OPA disqualified this Proposal and it was set aside and not evaluated further. We concurred with this decision by the OPA. The other two Proposals satisfied the Proposal Completeness Requirements and were advanced to Stage 2 of the evaluation process. We reviewed the Proposals as well and concur that these two satisfied the Proposal Completeness Requirements in s. 3.1 of the RFP.

The Proposals were reviewed and evaluated individually by the evaluators, and then the evaluators met as a group and conducted a consensus evaluation session for Stage 2 and Stage 3 of the evaluation process. The evaluation team was also present during Stage 4 of the evaluation process. We attended both of the consensus evaluation sessions for Stage 2 and Stage 3, as well as the Stage 4 evaluation, as an observer and the Proposals were evaluated strictly against the evaluation criteria published in s. 3 of the RFP.

In Stage 2 - Mandatory Requirements, each of the Proposals was evaluated against the Mandatory Requirements set out in s. 3.2 of the RFP. Both Proposals satisfied all of the Mandatory Requirements and were advanced to Stage 3 of the evaluation process.

In Stage 3 – Rated Criteria, the evaluators rated the remaining Proposal against the Rated Criteria set out in s. 3.3.1 to s. 3.3.4, inclusive. Both Proposals satisfied the Minimum Required Total Point Score set out in s. 3.3 required to advance to Stage 4 – Economic Bid Evaluation.

In Stage 4 – Evaluation and Selection Process, this Proposal's Economic Bid Statement were opened. There were no irregularities with either Economic Bid Statements. The contents of the Economic Bid Statements were input into the Economic Bid Evaluation Model, which was downloaded from the Generation Procurement Website. The Economic Bid Evaluation Model was run for each Proposal to generate an Evaluated Cost for the Proposals. Once this was completed the Evaluated Cost for each Proposal was adjusted using each Proposal's respective Stage 3 score using the adjustment formula set out in s. 3.4.2 to calculate each Proposal's Discount Factor. The Proposal's Evaluated Cost was multiplied by its corresponding Discount Factor to yield an Adjusted Evaluated Cost for the Proposal.

Both Proposals were advanced to Stage 5 – Selection of Projects. In Stage 5, the evaluation team applied the Circuit Screen, the Zone Screen, and the Area Screen to both Proposals. Both Proposals passed these screens and were placed in the Initial Stack. OPA then applied the Threshold Percentage of 115 percent to both Proposals, and exercised its discretion to reject a Proposal that had an Adjusted Evaluated Cost that exceeded 115 percent of the other Proposal in the Initial Stack. The remaining Proposal was placed into the Final Stack and the Proponent who submitted this Proposal became a Selected Proponent.

We are satisfied that the evaluation of the Proposals was conducted in accordance with the process set out in s. 3 of the RFP by applying the evaluation criteria set out in s. 3 and applying these criteria using the process set out in that same section.

12.0 OBJECTIVITY RESPECTING THE EVALUATIONS

The Proposals received were evaluated objectively and diligently, as evaluators owed a duty of care to Proponents to do so. We attended all evaluation sessions and we are satisfied that there was no external pressure placed on the evaluation team with regard to the evaluation of any Proposal. We are satisfied that all Proposals were objectively evaluated against the evaluation criteria published in s. 3 of the RFP.

The Stage 1 - Proposal Completeness Requirements were objectively stated as each Proposal had to provide the content set out in s. 3.1. The OPA was able to determine objectively that a Proposal passed Stage 1 - Proposal Completeness Requirements.

The OPA decided that evaluators would use the consensus approach to determining compliance of each Proposals with the Mandatory Requirements and Rated Criteria. The consensus evaluation meetings were held after the evaluators had completed their individual evaluations. We attended these consensus meetings and detected no bias or favoritism by the evaluators during their participation in the consensus evaluation sessions.

In summary, we detected no bias or favoritism towards or against any particular Proponent. The Proposals were evaluated strictly against the Mandatory Requirements and Rated Criteria published in the RFP. A record of the consensus scoring reached was maintained and kept by the team leader.

13.0 PROPER USE OF ASSESSMENT TOOLS

Assessment tools used by the evaluators to evaluate the Proposals had to reflect the evaluation criteria set out in s. 3 of the RFP. We reviewed all the evaluation tools and we are satisfied that they accurately reflected the published evaluation criteria.

14.0 CONFLICT OF INTEREST

For the RFP process to be fair there had to be no Conflict of Interest between the evaluators and the Proponents and between the Proponents and anyone involved in planning or conducting the procurement. Proponents must also not have had access to confidential information of the OPA as it pertains to the RFP.

Proponents were required to disclose and declare any actual or potential Conflict of Interest, which was defined in Appendix A Glossary of Terms. None of the Proponents indicated any actual or potential Conflict of Interest.

Prior to the start of the evaluation process, evaluation team members, as well as those who were supporting and advising them, were informed of the requirement to disclose any actual or potential Conflicts of Interest. Each evaluator, as well as those supporting the evaluators, was asked to sign a declaration that they were not in a potential or actual Conflict of Interest in undertaking their role in the process. The OPA informed us that all the evaluators, as well as those who were supporting and advising them, signed this statement.

15.0 DEBRIEFINGS

We attended the debriefing sessions for the unsuccessful Proponents. A session was held for each unsuccessful Proponent. Each one was given feedback from the OPA on why its Proposal was not successful, and no other Proposals were discussed.

16.0 CONCLUSIONS

In summary, based on our review, we are satisfied that the RFP process was conducted in a procedurally fair, open, and transparent manner. All Proposals received were evaluated against the evaluation criteria published in the RFP. We detected no bias either for or against any particular Proponent in the application of the evaluation criteria. The evaluation criteria published in the RFP were applied objectively to each Proposal.