



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP) FOR PROVISION OF INTERNAL AUDIT SERVICES FOR FINANCIAL YEARS 2027/28 – 2031/32

TERMS OF REFERENCE Reference Number: SASO/2026/4

1.0 BACKGROUND

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) is a Regional Economic Organisation consisting of sixteen (16) member states: Angola, Botswana, Comoros, Democratic Republic of Congo, Eswatini, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, United Republic Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

The aviation sector plays a vital part in contributing to the economies of the SADC Member States. Air transport is increasingly becoming the preferred mode of transport for the movement of people and goods into and out of the SADC region, and within the SADC Member States, for purposes of tourism and trade in particular. The SADC Protocol on Transport, Communication and Meteorology requires Member States to harmonise their policies and procedures on civil aviation and foster the development of International Civil Aviation through cooperative arrangements.

SADC Member States have found it imperative to establish a regional organisation responsible for enhancing the safety of civil aviation in the regional bloc. This follows the inadequacy of skilled, qualified and competent technical experts from within Member States to fulfil their safety obligations, respectively and contribute to the safety requirements of the Region.

The aim of the SADC Aviation Safety Organisation (SASO), established under the Principle of Subsidiarity, is to promote the safe and efficient use and development of civil aviation within the SADC Region. A Secretariat is established to facilitate day-to-day operations. It is a legal entity hosted by the Kingdom of Eswatini and observing its laws of the Kingdom.

The principle of subsidiarity, approved by the SADC Council of Ministers at its meeting held in Grand Baie, Mauritius, in August 2004, is a cost-effective means that promotes accountability and sustainability. It is in line with the SADC Treaty, which provides for the involvement of the people of the SADC Region and key stakeholders in the process of

regional integration.

As stipulated in Article 6 of the SASO Charter, the objectives of the SASO are to:

- (a) Promote the safe and efficient use and development of civil aviation within and outside the Member States;
- (b) Assist the Member States in meeting their safety oversight obligations and responsibilities under the Convention on International Civil Aviation signed in Chicago on 7 December 1944 and its safety-related Annexes and Documents;
- (c) Promote the implementation of industry best practices within the Member States;
- (d) Develop a regional system and assist Member States in aircraft accident and incident investigation; and
- (e) Sustain the management of SASO in general administration, operations including human resource optimization and finance.

2.0 OVERALL OBJECTIVE

The Internal Audit function will be an objective assurance and consulting activity, which will assist SASO to accomplish its objectives, by bringing a systematic approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness and efficiency of risk management, control and governance processes within the organization.

2.1 Specific Objective

2.1.1 Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, at the financial statement and assertion levels, through understanding SASO and its environment, including SASO's internal control, thereby providing a basis for designing and implementing responses to the assessed risks of material misstatement.

2.1.2 To obtain an understanding of the SASO effective processes for:

- a) Identifying business risks relevant to financial reporting objectives.
- b) Estimating the significance of the risks.
- c) Assessing the likelihood of their occurrence; and

d) Deciding about actions to address those risks.

2.1.3 Plan and Organize the Audit based risk assessment to provide satisfactory assurance that the financial statements are free of misstatement due to fraud and errors.

2.1.4 Ascertain that the revenue received by the organization have been applied for the intended purpose and have been accounted for in accordance with SASO Charter, Financial Rules and funding agreements.

2.1.5 Review and report on effectiveness of the organizations internal control systems in accordance with the International Auditing Standards (IAS)

2.1.6 Review and report on the effectiveness of the Finance system, Human Resource

Management, Procurement system as well as the funding structure.

2.1.7 Give reasonable assurance on the effectiveness of the Organization's IT system.

2.1.8 Develop an Enterprise Risk Register for SASO

2.1.9 Undertake any other tasks as may be necessary to fulfil the professional obligation of rendering a sound opinion on the financial statements of the contracting entity.

3.0 REQUIREMENT FOR THE EXTERNAL AUDIT SERVICES

A firm seeking to apply should be registered in their state of origin and must have been in operation for at least five years providing both audit and tax services. Additionally, the firm must demonstrate experience in auditing International/Regional Institutions.

3.1 Eligibility Criteria

- a) The firm should be approved by local Institute of Accountants and Auditors
- b) The firm must have at least 2 Partners
- c) The Partners should be in good standing with their local Institute of Accountants and Auditors
- d) The firm should have been in practice for a period of not less than 5 years
- e) The Partners must be full time Practitioners,
- f) The firm must have a physical address and valid practicing licenses

- g) The firm must have 5 years' experience in audit of International/Regional Institutions
- h) The firm must demonstrate sufficient quality control measures.
- i) The firm must have at least three referees who must be its clients.
- j) The firm must be able to provide tax consultancy services and secretarial services

3.2 The following Information should also be provided:

- a) Copy of certificate of incorporation / registration
- b) Professional practicing Certificate
- c) Valid certificate of tax compliance
- d) Valid certificate of good standing from the local Institute of Accountants and Auditors
- e) A detailed company profile showing list of clients among them being International/Regional Institutions audited by the Firm.
- f) Partners and key staff curriculum vitae

4.0 MANDATORY PROPOSAL

4.1 The technical proposal should include but not be limited to the following:

4.1.1 Methodology and workplan for the assignment.

4.1.2 The distinctive differentiation features and attributes from other firms.

4.1.3 The staff turnover experience in the last 3 years. Demonstrate staff continuity during the assignment for the quality and timeliness outputs.

4.1.4 The reputation of the firm, including the outcome of any inspection or oversight reviews done recently (if applicable).

4.1.5 The representation and network in other jurisdictions your firm has been involved in.

4.1.6 State the provision for the frequency and the manner in which the communication of matters arising will be made to management and/or Finance Working Group during the auditing process.

4.1.7 The estimated depth of the scope of the audit.

4.2 The financial proposal should:

4.2.1 Have a separate item of the audit fees and other estimated charges to be incurred.

4.2.2 State the billing rates for classes of professional personnel for each of the last 3 years.

4.2.3 Include projected fees for the subsequent two years. The fees proposed may be subject to negotiations if the proposal meets all the other selection criteria.

NOTE: SASO is not obligated to select the bid with the lowest quoted fees, but rather, the highest value for money.

4.3 Proposed task completion timelines

4.3.1 The proposal must provide the timeline within which the applicant expects to complete the assignment.

4.1.2 The timeline proposed may be subject to negotiations if the proposal meets all the other selection criteria and satisfies SASO that the firm is the best suited for the assignment.

4.1.3 The duly signed Audit report per quarter must be received by 30 of the following month at the end of the quarter.

5.0 EXPECTED DELIVERABLES:

5.1 Assignments are to be performed in accordance with the Global Internal Audit Standards, which are professional standards for the auditing of financial information. Such work shall further be subject to an external quality assurance review as and when required by SASO.

5.2 All audit reports and working papers will be deposited in the Executive Director's Office at the conclusion of each audit and will be the property of SASO.

5.3 The performance of each assignment shall be in accordance with the approved annual internal audit plan.

5.4 In carrying out the work, the successful service provider must ensure that their staff maintain their objectivity by remaining independent of the activities they audit.

5.5 On a mutually agreed basis, the responsible Partner/ Director shall meet with the Chairperson of the Finance Working Group, Executive Director and Management to report on progress of the work.

5.6 For planning and conducting its work to the internal auditor should seek to identify serious defects in the internal controls, which might result in possible malpractices.

5.7 Any material defects must be reported immediately to the Civil Aviation Committee.

5.8 The successful bidder may be required to attend strategic workshops as and when required from time to time. The cost of attendance will be for the account of SASO.

5.9 Key Performance Indicators

Key Responsibilities	Activities	Results Indicators (Including all applicable evidence to substantiate against all key responsibilities)
Regularity audits	Audits on all the SASO activities as determined by the approved Annual Internal Audit Plan per the following auditing guidelines: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning the audit • Examining, monitoring, and evaluating information • Communicating results • Follow up actions by management on findings and recommendations 	To advise management on compliance with regulations, policies, and best practices as well as the status of internal controls within SASO.

Fraud prevention, detection, and action	Assist with investigations in terms of the entity's Fraud, Prevention, Detection and Response Plan.	To minimize fraud in the entity
Ad hoc audits	Audit issues as and when required be investigated as delegated by the Civil Aviation Committee.	To report findings to the Civil Aviation Committee in order to determine whether further actions are required.
Audit of Predetermined Objectives	Executing audits in terms of the approved audit plan	To determine whether the strategic documents and plans are correctly aligned and implemented and that targets are being achieved.
Reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reporting on all the activities of the Internal Audit Function to the Civil Aviation Committee • Meetings on a regular basis • Evaluation of outputs 	In order for the Management and the Civil Aviation Committee to evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of the Internal Audit Function. To ensure that the Civil Aviation Committee is furnished with correct and up to date information
Advisory services	Verbal and written advice	Enhance the quality of internal audit and governance

6.0 INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMISSION OF EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

6.1 Audit firm(s) who meet the requirements of the TORs and the commercial and contractual conditions, and if the auditor finds any ambiguity, omission or internal contradictory, or any feature that is unclear or that appears restrictive, they should seek clarification before the closing date of submission.

6.2 The Audit Firm should ensure that they submit a full proposal, including all the supporting documents requested. It is essential to ensure accuracy in the curriculum vitae of key staff submitted. The curriculum vitae should be signed by the consultants and the key individuals and dated. Noncompliance with important requirements will result in rejection of the proposal.

6.3 Once the proposals are received and opened, auditors shall not be required nor permitted to change the substance, the key staff and so forth.

6.4 The process of proposal evaluation shall be confidential.

6.5 The financial proposal should be in United States Dollars (USD) comprising fees only.

6.6 Bidders are requested to submit (1) one ORIGINAL and (3) Three COPIES clearly marked

“ORIGINAL” or “COPY” for each technical and financial offer; and,

6.7 Bidders are reminded to clearly mark technical and financial offer in separate envelopes. Interested external audit firms with international recognition should submit their proposals, clearly indicating ‘Proposal for the Provision of External Audit Services’ on or before 31st July 2026 to the following address:

All interested Vendors must submit their applications to info@saso.int 31 July 2026, at 11:59 pm.

NOTE: Every proposal must meet all the requirements as indicated in this TORs document.

Incomplete proposals and Proposals received after this date shall not be considered.

7.0 EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS - (Technical and Financial)

7.1 The Technical proposal shall be evaluated as follows:

- a) Understanding of Terms of Reference 20
- b) Experience of consultant/firm 50
- c) Key personnel’s qualification 30

7.2 Minimum eligible technical score is 75%

7.3 The competitive Financial Proposal (LFP) for eligible proposal will be selected for further negotiations.

8.0 COMPLAINTS PROCESS

This call for Expression of Interest does not constitute a solicitation and the SASO reserves the right to change or cancel the requirement at any time during the EOI process.

SASO also reserves the right for a firm's compliance with additional conditions when issuing the final solicitation documents. Submitting a reply to a call for EOI does not automatically guarantee receipt of the solicitation documents when issued. Invitations to bid or requests for proposals will be issued in accordance with SASO rules and procedures. Any grievances and or complaints arising from the evaluation process and final tender award can be addressed, in writing, to the

Executive Director

SADC Aviation Safety Organization

P O Box 7919

Mbabane

Eswatini