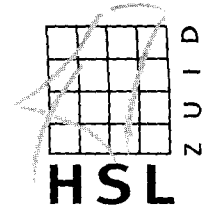


VenW / DGMO-2009/5280

Subject  
Tender HSL-Zuid Transport Contracts



Prism Rail Plc.  
Attn. G. Fearnley  
32, Ludgate Hill  
EC4M 7DR London  
United Kingdom

Dear Mr. Fearnley,

On 16 June I wrote to inform you about the decision by the Dutch Cabinet to proceed with the tender for the HSL-Zuid transport contracts. A debate in Parliament on the 29th of June did not lead to any changes of the governments decision, which means that the decision to offer the HSL-Zuid transport contracts for tender is now official and irrevocable. The tender process will not be stopped provided enough consortia qualify and compliant bids are received.

The Qualification phase will start on 17 July when we will send the Qualification Document (QD) to all Registered Parties. This document describes the exact criteria for companies and consortia, which need to be met in order to qualify for an invitation to tender.

The most important criteria were already discussed with you in the Market Dialogue, like:

1. Experience in operation of train services;
2. Experience in passenger transport by other transport modes;
3. Adequate insights in the Dutch passenger transport market;
4. At least one Registered Party per consortium;
5. A company may, directly or indirectly, only qualify once;
6. A consortium may not include more than one of the current Thalys partners (NS, DB, NMBS and SNCF);
7. The Incumbent Railway Companies (NS, NMBS and SNCF) along the Amsterdam- Brussels-Paris corridor have to co-operate with the government's efforts to create a level playing field.

Companies may apply for the international contract, the domestic contract and/or a combined contract. A single application will be sufficient for both the domestic and international contracts and the combination of the two. A Registered Party may, however, adapt the exact composition of its proposed consortium per contract, in which case a separate application must be lodged for each of these contracts.

Date  
4 July 2000  
Our reference  
HSL-Zuid U-77870  
Your reference  
-  
Contact person  
Roel Testroote  
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@hslzuid.com

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Hogesnelheidslijn-Zuid  
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3511 GC Utrecht  
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The timetable for the tender procedure is as follows:

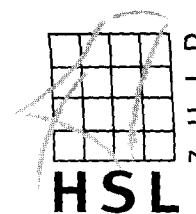
Steps	Expected timing
Issue of the Qualification Document	17 July 2000
Qualification phase	17 July 2000 – 15 September 2000
Issue of the Invitation to Tender	October 2000
Bidding phase	October 2000 – February 2001
Issue of the Invitation to Negotiate	March 2001
Negotiating phase	March 2001 – June 2001
Contract close	June 2001

I look forward to sending you a copy of the Qualification Document on 17 July. If, in the meantime, there is anything which you would like to discuss, please feel free to contact Mr. Roel Testroote (0031 30 2728 831).

Yours sincerely,



Ir. W. Korf  
Project Director HSL-Zuid



Datum  
4 July 2000  
Kenmerk  
HSL-Zuid U-77870  
Blad  
2/2