

# **PROCUREMENT SPECIFICATION FOR A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF REMOTE CONTROL DEVICES FOR DIGITAL TV (DTV) RECEIVERS**

## **1. BACKGROUND**

Consumers are faced with a number of choices in equipping themselves for DTV reception in preparation for the switch from analogue terrestrial TV reception to digital television (DTV) in the UK (digital switchover). Optimising these choices for each consumer's individual situation is difficult, given the technical complexity involved. Many need help in making the right choices. BERR is leading an Action Plan<sup>1</sup> for switchover that aims to encourage the development and availability in the UK market place of a wide range of digital TV receivers incorporating agreed "best practice" features in preparation for switchover. The proposed study addresses part of items 1.1 and 3.2 of the Action Plan.

This study will look in detail at what may be considered as one of the key user interface - the remote control for the Set Top Box (STB). Using the STB provided for the Digital Switchover Help Scheme in Copeland, the Contractor will undertake an assessment of the performance of remote controls currently on the market. This will provide objective performance data which can be read in conjunction with current agreed best practice, developed under item 1.1 of the Action Plan, to inform the future development of remote controls. The study should highlight features that will make it easier for people with particular needs, whether physical or cognitive, to use DTV... An optional package of work, selected if funding permits, is to look at a second STB, with a more limited practical trial

## **2. SCOPE OF WORK**

The contractor will undertake a study of the practical use of a representative sample of remote control units on for Help Scheme STB. People with a range of accessibility needs will participate in a short trial. From their observations the contractor will produce a comparative report detailing the best features of the units tested. They will then use this information as the basis of a detailed description of features that you would expect to find in an effective remote control unit.

An optional package of work is called for if funding permits to test a second representative STB with some of the control units tested on the Help Scheme STB

## **3. PROGRAMME OUTCOMES**

The contractor shall do the following:

- a. Undertake a practical study of remote control devices for use with the current Help Scheme STB

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.digitaltelevision.gov.uk/pdf\\_documents/publications/2007/DTVUsabilityActionPlan\\_Oct07.pdf](http://www.digitaltelevision.gov.uk/pdf_documents/publications/2007/DTVUsabilityActionPlan_Oct07.pdf)

- b. Compile a report detailing their observations on the best features
- c. From analysis of their results and other published information make recommendations for a set of features that could be usefully included in remote controls to give a high level of usability. This analysis will be part of the report

There is an option detailed below for a second smaller trial and report

#### **4. THE REQUIREMENT**

The contractor shall undertake a study and report of the best remote control units for use with the Set Top Box (STB) identified for the Help Scheme under digital switchover<sup>2</sup>. The work may be considered as containing 3 elements as listed below

- a. The contractor shall identify a limited range of typical remote control units that will work with the designated STB. They shall design and undertake a practical trial of using the remote control with people with a range of accessibility issues. This trial shall consider such issues as ease of use, ability to access and market availability
- b. The contractor shall then prepare a report detailing which are the most critical features and how they are best implemented. This shall include an objective comparison of the remote control units tested against each other
- c. From their analysis the contractor will detail features that one would expect to see in a good remote control unit suitable for people with a range of accessibility issues. This analysis shall be part of the main report. It shall be provided in a way in which it could be issued as a standalone document. In undertaking their analysis the contractor shall consider the costs of implementing features against the potential use and uptake. The contractor shall make provision in their timescale and costings for carrying out initial discussions with BERR on the features and the relative importance

An option price is requested on a shorter trial of a second representative STB that the contractor would select, and test with a single good remote control unit that they believe to be a good representative example. The test will be conducted with a smaller sample of people, and act as a control and a confidence check on the data from the main test. This second test will only be taken up if funding permits. The results of this testing shall be included as a distinct section within the final report

The wider audience needs should also be considered in the testing and reporting, as many features suitable for disabled people are also useful for the wider population, and improve ease of use. Taking cognisance of wider needs will provide greater market opportunities, reduce costs of devices designed for accessibility, and thereby encourage take-up by manufacturers and consumers

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<sup>2</sup> Manufactured by Tvonics, branded as Logik LDR V3. If the contractor does not have this device they should discuss the issue with BERR. The contractor shall use this specified device for this trial

A number of features of remote control units are already described in the Digital Television Group publication, the D Book. These features are accepted, and the contractor study shall build further on these requirements in their study. If a copy of the relevant sections of the D Book is required for the purposes of this contract it can be supplied on request from BERR

The contractor shall note previous work in this area, and build on it. In particular there are two previous reports<sup>3</sup> prepared for DTI from Scientific Generics and i2 Media

The contractor shall supply documentation in PDF and Microsoft Word format to BERR

## **5. PROCESSES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The project manager for BERR is Simon Hicks, Head of Technology in CCI Unit. He may be contacted as follows:

Address: Simon Hicks, CCI Unit, Bay UG25, 1 Victoria Street, London SW1H 0ET

Tel: 020 7215 1028

Fax: 020 7215 5442

Email: [simon.hicks@berr.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:simon.hicks@berr.gsi.gov.uk)

He should be contacted for matters relating to the activities of the tender and contract, and contractual issues

Invoices should be sent to Mike Dunne at the address above, or electronically to [mike.dunne@berr.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:mike.dunne@berr.gsi.gov.uk)

The Contractor shall appoint a person to act as manager and point of contact for this contract. This person shall be readily available in normal working hours to answer queries and discuss the substance of the work. Where large parts of the work are the responsibility of others in the organisation these individuals should be made known to BERR, and readily accessible.

Tenderers shall provide a proposed schedule of events as part of their tender. The chosen contractor shall confirm their draft schedule and provide further details

## **6. CONTRACT MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING**

The contractor's project manager shall liaise with the BERR project manager in a timely manner to discuss contract progress and unforeseen delays

The key performance stages are the 3 points listed at section 3. A fourth point will be added relating to the option 2<sup>nd</sup> set of tests and reporting, if this option is taken

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<sup>3</sup> These 2 reports may be found at [http://www.digitaltelevision.gov.uk/publications/pub\\_eq\\_needsconsumer-april06.html](http://www.digitaltelevision.gov.uk/publications/pub_eq_needsconsumer-april06.html)

## **7. PROJECT TIMETABLE**

The Project will be completed by 28 March 2008. A substantial part of the report, and ideally a proposed final draft shall be available by 14 March 2008

## **8. PAYMENTS AND EXPENSES**

Payment of the agreed fee for this contact will take place as a single sum upon successful completion. The contract will be for a single all-up cost and no other fees (such as expenses) will be paid in addition. The contractor is expected to anticipate all necessary funding issues and include them in their quotation.

If there are specific issues that the contractor feels merit payment in advance they shall state them in their tender and agree them prior to contract

## **9. PROCUREMENT NEEDS**

Statements in this specification expressed using “will” or “shall” shall be taken as mandatory or essential requirement. The use of other wording of intent implies that the Contractor has some flexibility, but in the event of ambiguity should refer to the Project Manager for interpretation

Tenderers should note that there is a need to undertake the work within the specified timeframe, and it is designed to be a relatively compact task. Detailed designs and complex testing are not expected, we are seeking to achieve something that whilst it is specific and objective is broad-brush in nature

Intellectual property generated under this contract shall belong to BERR. BERR shall be able to freely disseminate in any form material provided by the Contractor (apart from that which the Contractor has derived in confidence from third parties)

## **10. TENDERS**

In their response to the tender the Tenderer shall give a response to each section of this specification indicating that they understand each of the requirements, and if appropriate explaining how they would undertake the requirement

Tenderers shall provide written and electronic versions of their proposal to BERR by 1200 midday on 11 January 2008. Written responses shall be made to:

Mr Herbee Thomas  
CCI Unit  
Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (BERR)  
Bay UG25  
1 Victoria Street  
London  
SW1H 0ET  
United Kingdom

Electronic responses shall be sent to: [herbee.thomas@berr.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:herbee.thomas@berr.gsi.gov.uk), and copied to [simon.hicks@berr.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:simon.hicks@berr.gsi.gov.uk)

Queries relating to the tender should be sent by email to Simon Hicks as shown in section 5. Applicants requiring a prompt reply should lodge their query by 0900 on 20 December 2007. Applicants should note that queries and replies will be copied to all other applicants if they provide substantive detail