



**ANNEX II: TERMS OF REFERENCE**  
**Travel Agency Contract – 01 - PRO673LAD-2026**

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## **1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

### **1.1. Beneficiary country**

N/A

### **1.2. Contracting Authority**

Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfMS).

### **1.3. Relevant project background**

The UfMS is an international organisation which due to the nature of its operational activities requires its staff to travel frequently (approximately 350 business travels/missions per year).

Until the present time, travellers request quotations of flights and other transport means according to the intended business trip agenda, prepare an internal travel order form (TOF) including mission agenda, transportation quotations marking the preferred one and submit the request to internal approval procedure. Once approved, travel arrangements (bookings) are made by the Administration services with a final confirmation from the traveller and the Logistics Staff before ticket issuance.

Until the present time, UfMS has made its travel arrangements (principally flight bookings) through a travel agency primarily contacted through (standardised) e-mails, and in emergency/urgent cases through telephone.

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## **2. OBJECTIVE, PURPOSE & EXPECTED RESULTS**

### **2.1. Overall objective**

The specific objective of this contract is the provision of travel agency and other related services. The services shall comprise (non-exhaustive definition): the provision of transport tickets, accommodation, assistance for issuing visas, transportation, travel insurance coverage, duty of care support to travellers, supporting and auxiliary help-desk services or any other related services chargeable to the Contracting Authority including technical assistance in the implementation of its travel policy.

The services should be available through e-mail and by phone-call centre. Services offered via on-line (through web-based booking portal) would be considered as an extra asset during evaluation

The services shall be provided in accordance with the internal rules and regulations of the UfMS as per internal policies and the Guide to missions and authorised travel of the European Commission.

### **2.2. Purpose**

UfMS is looking to improve the efficiency of its travel management and booking processes and to reduce the overall travel costs. The objective is to select a travel management service provider that allows UfMS to:

- Use the most time and cost-efficient booking means
- Allow consolidation and monitoring of travel and accommodation bookings
- Maintain a consistent travel policy
- Leverage full travel volume to obtain appropriate corporate discounts (with airlines, hotels, etc.)



- Identify efficiency improvement opportunities
- Allow, following approval, that travel arrangements (flight and accommodation bookings) to be made by the individual staff members. In the case of managers' travels, arrangements could be made by their secretarial staff.

Allow that any specific/individual travel issues and assistance (for example modifying a flight) are dealt with directly between the traveller and the travel agency in accordance with UfMS travel policy.

### 3. ASSUMPTIONS & RISKS

Any service requested under the contract requires prior approval managed through an internal procedure.

### 4. SCOPE OF THE WORK

#### 4.1. General

Project Description

Travel services should desirably be available on-line (through web-based booking portal), and off-line (through e-mail and by phone-call centre). The on-line service should, as much as possible, offer the range of travel options and prices available on the off-line e-mail service and the phone service.

Specifically, the travel services should desirably meet the following requirements:

- an e-mail booking service in English and Spanish available all UfMS working days from 09:00 to 18:00
- a phone booking service in English and Spanish available all UfMS working days from 09:00 to 18:00
- an out of working hours phone booking service in English and or Spanish, 7 days per week, 365 days per year

Integration of Travel Agency ticketing /call for service system i.e. BMC Remedy , with UfMS systems, i.e. **Financial System (Bizagi™)** would be an important and valuable asset towards the selection of provider

#### Necessary requirements

- For each trip, proposals of different solutions/options (different flights, train, etc.) according to the agenda of the business trip ranked according to best value for money: consistent with business trip schedule and with UfMS travel policy. Minimum of 3 options will always be required; in case there aren't 3 options available, this has to be clearly mentioned.
- the booking of flights, from simple single destination tickets to more complex multi-destination tickets. The service provider shall clearly state if there are any restrictions or special terms related to the booking of flights from low-cost companies/pre-paid tickets
- the booking of hotels (providing detailed information on the services offered by hotels, location and quality) Hotels should be in line with approximately 50%-60% of the per-diem for the country as per the annex D. In case of non-availability of accommodation within the ceiling this has to be clearly stated in the travel offer and the most cost-effective options should be quoted.



- the use of individual traveller profiles (stating personal preferences) to be completed by the individual online
- indication of cost centres and unique internal IDs on travel bookings or in the final invoice

1. It should offer:

- Standard travel insurance coverage for the Secretariat staff going on Mission, at least for Europe and Mediterranean countries including Palestine and Israel. This service may be sub-contracted (purchase of individual travel insurance policies)

2. Other Ancillary services:

- Allow booking of car rental
- Visas: Staff members may need assistance in obtaining in due time their visas in order to attend an event. Such assistance will consist of the provision of all the information and documentation (e.g. administrative forms) required to obtain the necessary visas
- Participation Fee(s): When required or requested by UfMS, the travel agency shall cover the fees of congresses, fairs, conventions or other events
- Any other needed service not listed before (e.g. pick-up on arrival airport, from hotel to airport of departure, car rental - with/without driver - for intra-city travels etc.)

3. Monitoring:

- Identify and report the cost difference if the booked travel options differ from the UfMS corporate travel policies
- Monitor and report on travel bookings statistics and trends and suggest cost/convenience optimisation opportunities, coherent with UfMS travel policies
- Ensure that agreed corporate discounts, Frequent Flyer cards and the alike are automatically included /applied in all cost quotes and system registration

4. Duty of care:

- Immediately notify the traveller (cc Logistics Officer) of any event affecting a booked trip or destination, including strikes, security incidents, health events, natural disasters and changes to entry requirements, and provide/suggest alternative travel options
- Be able to report to the UfMS at any time, upon request, which travellers are on mission and their booked itineraries, so that the UfMS can locate and assist its staff in the event of an emergency
- Support the UfMS and the traveller in the event of an incident during a mission, including rebooking, extension of stay and coordination with the travel insurance provider. This support shall follow good practice on travel risk management
- Security alerts (via email)

5. Invoicing:

- **Allow invoicing per full individual dossiers per mission. i.e. 1 person, one trip with two or more destinations + hotel + conventions fees, on one single dossier for the whole individual mission and always on the same invoiced month. Invoicing should follow the implementation date logic, meaning that the service should be invoiced on the month of the**



**travelling (return date) not the purchase.**

- **Monthly invoice: for all services effectively implemented in that month, per dossier using the above-mentioned ID number and traveller name-surname per mission/business travel.**

6. Add ons:

- The potential service provider is invited to highlight any particular or additional features in its service offer which would be of benefit to UfMS
- Online tool open to travellers to register themselves (traveller profile), will be a plus.

7. Sustainable travel:

- Tenderers are invited to describe the sustainability features of their service, such as the display of estimated CO2 emissions for each proposed travel option, the flagging of lower emission alternatives (in particular rail on short routes) and carbon offsetting programmes
- Offering sustainability for the travel impact and/or implementing practical solutions to offset the carbon footprint of corporate trips will be highly appreciated. These features will be considered an asset during evaluation although they are not contractually binding requirements
- Reporting on the volume of CO2 emissions of trips and stays (flights, hotel accommodation, car rentals) forms part of the standard reporting described in Section 7
- Show train options first whenever they are a practical alternative

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8. Fees

- Fees should be charged according to service packs as detailed as an example on the categories shown on the table below:

| Type of service                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Fee multiplier | Cost                                                                                                                                                         |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Issuing tickets for maximum 2 segments (outbound + inbound) for return journey. (a segment is a travel from A to B independently of any stopover needed to arrive)                                                                                                                            | X 1            | 1 Quoted fee for Flights if same operator (1 ticket). 2 Quoted fee for Flights if different operators (2 tickets). See examples <b>a</b> and <b>b</b> below. |
| Issuing tickets for more than 2 segments for return journey                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | X 1            | 1 Quoted fee for Flights for each segment/ticket issued with different operators                                                                             |
| Urgent request. Required to be processed in less than 30 minutes                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | X 2            | 2 Quoted fees for required service                                                                                                                           |
| Any other services in addition to Flight service, i.e. other means of transportation (Train, Car renting, etc.), Hotel booking, Visa assistance, 24 hours assistance, Travel insurance for UfMS Staff and/or other services (transfers, vaccine, participation fees, conference fees, , etc.) | X 0.5          | 1/2 of the Quoted fee for each required service                                                                                                              |



|                                                                                                                        |       |                                            |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|--------------------------------------------|
| Out of working hours / weekend service request.                                                                        | X 1.5 | 1.5 Quoted fees for each required service  |
| Changes/modifications and cancelations and all other options not specifically described in any other part of the table | X 0.5 | 1/2 of the Quoted fee for required service |

Examples to clarify according to different scenarios:

a) Flights Barcelona – Brussels – Barcelona plus reservation of hotel

**2 segments + hotel**

Total cost: 1 Quoted fee for Flights (return ticket with same operator, one ticket: i.e. Vueling) + 1/2 of the Quoted fee for Hotel booking.

b) Flight Barcelona -Brussels – Barcelona, plus reservation of hotel

**2 segments + hotel**

Total cost: 2 Quoted fees for Flights (inbound and outbound flight issued with different airlines, 2 tickets: i.e. Vueling + Brussels Airlines) + 1/2 of the Quoted fee for Hotel booking

c) Flights Barcelona – Cairo – Barcelona plus hotel reservation, plus assistance for visa, plus payment of conference registration fees.

**2 segments + hotel + visa assistance + conference registration fees.**

Total cost: 1 Quoted fee for Flights (return ticket with same operator, one ticket: i.e. EgyptAir) + 1/2 of the Quoted fee for Hotel booking + 1/2 of the Quoted fee for Visa assistance + 1/2 of the Quoted fee for the conference registration fees = 2.5 fees in total

d) Flights Barcelona – Rome – Tunis — Barcelona.

**3 segments**

Total cost: 3 Quoted fees for Flights (if different airlines are involved in each segment, 3 tickets: i.e. Vueling + Alitalia + Tunisair)

e) cancelation of Flights Barcelona – Brussels – Barcelona plus reservation of hotel.

0.5 fee for cancelling flights + 0.5 fee for cancelling hotel.

**9. Geographical areas to be covered**

- UfMS staff travel destinations concern European Union, and countries surrounding the European Union and the entire Mediterranean coast, including all UfMS member states territories. In specific occasions, transcontinental flights might be required (US, Brazil, etc.)



#### 4.2. Specific activities

##### 1. Step 1/4 - Requests

Requests for services will be submitted to the travel agency via automatic email through our financial system by:

- Travellers themselves
- Assistants/PAs on behalf of travellers

##### 2. Step 2/4 - Sending of options

On receiving a request, the dedicated travel agent shall reply with a minimum of 3 possible travel options to the person who sent the request copying the designated generic email always. In case there aren't 3 possible travel options it has to be clearly stated.

The response to a request shall take the form of list of **comprehensive numerated proposals (Offer 1, Offer 2, Offer 3, etc) ranked according to best value for money (most-cost effective option):** combination of most economical rates and convenience according to the agenda and UfMS travel policy.

It should include options on possible routes, schedules, type of accommodations, etc. and relevant cost quotations, as well as information on the availability of the proposed options, any applicable restrictions, and deadline for confirmation.

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*Note: the expected timelines to respond to a request as well as the expected number of options are described in detail in the "Service Level" section below.*

##### 3. Step 3/4 - Internal Validation/Authorization

The validation/**authorization of the travel** will be done internally. The financial system will send a pre-defined email with the Travel Order Confirmation to the travel agent, the traveller and the UfM staff member in charge of missions. The email will mention the original request and the selected options with the following format:

Dear Travel Agent,

The following trip has been signed and approved.

Please proceed by issuing the ticket as described in the attached document.

Passenger:

Reservation Code:

Cost Centre:

Comments:

**Only Travels/missions authorised/approved can be issued.**

The UfM staff member in charge of missions will reconfirm the services to be acquired.

**N.B. issuing tickets, booking hotels, etc, may only be made by the Agency for authorized/approved travel/mission and after confirmation from the staff members previously authorised**

**The UfMS will communicate the names and contact details of its staff members authorised to confirm bookings, changes, or any other transactions.**



#### 4. Step 4/4 - Ticket/booking confirmation issuing and delivery

Upon receipt of the confirmation from the authorised staff, the travel agency shall issue the tickets and/or booking references, and send the appropriate documentation (i.e. electronic tickets, booking confirmations, travel itineraries to both the traveller and the authorised staff who confirmed the reservation(s).

**Upon reception of confirmation for issuing: In the event of an increase of price of >250 EUR of the original quotation, the provider shall request re-authorization to the UfMS again before issuing. This ceiling of 250 EUR may be revised during implementation**

*Note: the expected delivery timeline is described in the "Service Level" section below.*

#### 5. Other features of the process

Among the proposed travel options, the most economical and the more cost-efficient options must be highlighted.

With each proposal, the travel agency ideally must indicate by email:

- How long the reservation can be held at the indicated price
- Any condition to be fulfilled in order to benefit from the quoted price

The travel agency must also alert the requester in case of low remaining seat/room availability. The travel agency shall also take into account the travel booking preferences of the traveller, provided that they are compliant with the UfMS travel policy

Travel agency shall seek to utilize miles and reward points gained through flight purchases and miles accumulated from former years. Usage of miles could be in the form of free flights, upgrades or any other type of airline benefite.

#### 6. Electronic process

Tenderers should note that the ordering process may be proposed in the framework of a **self-booking tool**, allowing running the same process as described above through a web-based system.

Thus, the tenderers are also required to provide capabilities and prices for all operations through this channel.

#### 7. Service level

Responses to requests for services shall be provided by email within:

- **3 working hours** for regular requests
- **30 minutes** for urgent requests

For out of office hours assistance requests, the travel agency shall be able to answer immediately by the channel through which the request has been made.

Unless the request concerns a specific schedule, at least **3 travel options** must be provided by the travel agency, in case there aren't it has to be clearly stated.



The validation is up to UfMS authorised staff, provided that they are duly informed on the price validity conditions.

Upon validation/confirmation of the booking/s by the UfMS, the ticket/booking confirmation shall be issued and delivered electronically within:

- **3 working hours** for regular requests
- **30 minutes** for urgent requests

#### **4.2.1. Project management**

Responsible body

The Contracting Authority is the UfMS. The Corporate and Support Services Unit within the Legal & Administration Department, will act as Responsible body.

Project Manager

One or more members of the Corporate and Support Services Unit will be directly responsible for the management of the assignment. Namely the Logistics Officer and the Head of Unit.

Management structure

A single service provider representative (account manager) will act as a single point of contact with a designated contact within UfMS.

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A minimum of **1 travel agent** should be **dedicated to the UfMS account** and UfMS should have direct phone line and email with this agent.

The dedicated travel agent shall know thoroughly UfMS' travel policy and regulations and shall provide advice and a service of screening of compliance to travellers in regards to possible schedules for flights in relation to their agenda.

The Account Manager shall be the sole interlocutor for all contractual and financial aspects of the contract and the individual assignments and is the only formal contact point between the Provider and the UfMS. The Provider is responsible for the invoicing, invoices accuracy and for the supporting documents.

## **5. LOGISTICS AND TIMING**

### **5.1. Location**

Services may be executed on the Provider's premises or in the UfMS headquarters. An inception meeting will be organized after the signature of the contract to establish the work program and to solve all questions and fine tuning of the service (i.e request for services, ...).

Regular meetings could also be arranged for the purpose of follow up or problem solving.

### **5.2. Commencement date & Period of implementation**

The intended commencement date is the 27/01/2027 and the period of implementation of the



contract will be 48 months from this date. Please see Articles 19.1 and 19.2 of the Special Conditions for the actual start date and period of implementation.

## **6. REQUIREMENTS**

### **6.1. Personnel**

#### **6.1.1. Experts**

All experts who have a crucial role in implementing the contract are referred to as experts. The profiles of the experts for this contract are as follows:

##### **Expert 1: Account Manager**

The minimum requested profile is:

- At least 2 years of experience at senior level in administrative management of international travel services.
- Proficient in written and spoken English. Spanish will be an asset.

##### **Expert 2: Travel Agent**

The minimum requested profile is:

- At least 3 years of experience in travel services.
- Proficient in written and spoken English. French and/or Spanish will be an extra asset.

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#### **6.1.2. Other experts, support staff & backstopping**

CVs for experts other than the experts should not be submitted in the tender. The Contractor shall select and hire other experts as required according to their needs. The selection procedures used by the Contractor to select these other experts shall be transparent, and shall be based on pre-defined criteria, including professional qualifications, language skills and work experience.

Cost for backstopping and support staff, as needed, are considered to be included in the financial offer of the tenderer.

### **6.2. Office accommodation**

Office accommodation for each expert working on the contract is to be provided by the Provider.

### **6.3. Facilities to be provided by the Provider**

The Provider shall ensure that experts are adequately supported and equipped. In particular, it shall ensure that there is sufficient administrative, secretarial and interpreting provision to enable experts to concentrate on their primary responsibilities. It must also transfer funds as necessary to support its activities under the contract and to ensure that its employees are paid regularly and in a timely fashion.

### **6.4. Equipment**

No equipment is to be purchased on behalf of the UfMS as part of this service contract or transferred to the UfMS at the end of this contract.



## 7. REPORTS

### 7.1. Reporting requirements

Invoicing, reporting and expenditure verification could be under the following two options to be agreed in the kick-off meeting between the two parties:

- Monthly
- Quarterly

Invoicing: At the beginning of each period of invoicing, the travel agency shall invoice all the respective services delivered/implemented during the period of invoicing. The payment will be done in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Contract.

In particular, the invoice shall specify the total amount due, the period to which the invoice refers to, and shall contain the Framework Service Contract reference number, and the mission reference number (TOF number).

It comprises 2 components:

- |                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>a) Fees /</b>         | Fees must be quoted for the overall services to be provided and include all costs incurred (management, salaries, social security payments, access to terminology and documentary databases, etc.) and the commercial margin.                                                                                        |
| <b>b) Reimbursable /</b> | Reimbursable items correspond to services that are usually provided by third party service providers, identified by the Provider. All items required by the UfMS must be proposed in the response to the concerning order form/specific request. The reimbursable items will be made on the basis of the real costs. |

**The travel agency must attach the relevant** booking confirmation(s) (and/or cancellations) to each invoice and/or credit note or state clearly what the different items refer to in terms of the services provided

The invoice and/or credit note shall be accompanied by a detailed and itemised report describing the services provided during the period of invoicing in question. The report shall be itemised by TOF (travel order form), and specify as a minimum:

The following only as an example:

- Date of request
- Date of booking
- Name of the traveller
- Name of the Unit/Division (acronym)
- Mission reference number provided by UfMS (TOF number composed by 12 digits)
- Type of service (e.g. plane/train ticket, hotel, etc.)
- Company / Service provider
- Travel itinerary (if applicable)
- Dates and times of travel (if applicable)
- Name of the hotel (if applicable)
- Duration of stay in the hotel (if applicable)



- Travel agency's transaction fee (must always be shown separately for each item)
- Any VAT amounts (if applicable) must be indicated separately

Reporting: The travel agency will be required to submit detailed management information reports to the UfMS at the beginning of the following period of invoicing. The respective reports should be clear and useable, and sent electronically to UfMS, in a format compatible with Excel.

The required reports shall provide statistics on the types and volume (in terms of both value and numbers) of transactions, and include indicatively the following breakdowns:

- by type of service (transport, hotels, agency fees, other),
- by given period,
- cancellation rate,
- modification rate,
- by companies/service providers,
- for transport:
  - o by transportation modes,
  - o by type of fares
  - o flexible vs non-flexible tickets
- by traveller,
- by department/division/unit,
- by city/country of arrival,
- by routes (from/to),
- savings/expenses tracking.
- volume of CO2 emissions

UfM may require quarterly dashboard reporting on key performance indicators, including **Financial KPIs** (total spend, total fees, emissions), **Travel KPIs** (top destinations, top airlines, cancellations, emergencies), and **Compliance KPIs** (business-class travel).

The account manager and the UfMS will review these reports at a service review meeting held at quarterly. The meeting may be held remotely.

Access to an online management information dashboard presenting the same data in real time will be considered an asset during evaluation.

Please note that the final breakdowns of report will be agreed between UfMS and the successful tenderer.

## 7.2. Expenditure verification

UfMS requires an expenditure verification report by an external auditor in order to proceed with the payments. It is up to the Travel Agency to choose and contract the external auditor. The UfMS reserves the right to reject the proposed auditors and request to be changed. The costs of this regular expenditure verification should be considered separately as a reimbursable. The contracts foresee a fixed provision of 50.000 € for the incidental expenditure for the whole duration: 48 months.



The auditor/expenditure verifier must meet at least one of the following conditions:

- The Expenditure Verifier is a member of a national accounting or auditing body or institution which in turn is a member of the International Federation of Accountants (IFAC).
- The Expenditure Verifier is a member of a national accounting or auditing body or institution. Although this organisation is not member of the IFAC, the Expenditure Verifier commits to undertake this expenditure verification in accordance with the IFAC standards and ethics set out in these ToR.
- The Expenditure Verifier is registered as a statutory auditor in the public register of a public oversight body in an EU member state in accordance with the principles of public oversight set out in Directive 2006/43/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council (this applies to auditors and audit firms based in an EU member state)<sup>1</sup>.

The Expenditure Verifier is registered as a statutory auditor in the public register of a public oversight body in a third country and this register is subject to principles of public oversight as set out in the legislation of the country concerned (this applies to auditors and audit firms based in a third country).

Please see the Annex VI - Terms of reference and report of factual findings v2025 - for more details.

### **7.3. Payments**

Invoices will be paid to the travel agency via bank transfer within a maximum period of 45 days. This includes the expenditure verification signed and stamped.

### **7.4. Pre-financing**

The UfMS offers to the awarded tenderer the possibility to pre-finance 1, 2 or more months' worth of fees and average reimbursable. Shall the awarded tenderer wish to use this benefit; all points, limits and procedure will be discussed and agreed during the initial meeting.

## **8. OTHER SPECIFIC CONDITIONS APPLYING TO THE CONTRACT**

### ***Quality trial Period***

The contract will include a quality trial period of a maximum of three (3) months, during which the quality of the services performed of the selected tenderer will be ascertained. Should a negative conclusion may be reached, UfMS will address to the successful tenderer a report with its observations and comments, this procedure then leading to a formal decision being communicated to the selected tenderer. In case of unsuccessful conclusion of the quality trial period, UfMS shall clear its accounts with the service provider and assign the contract to the next best tenderer from among those that qualified for the assignment, again subject to successful completion of a trial period of a maximum of 3 months.

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<sup>1</sup> Directive 2006/43 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 May 2006 on statutory audits of annual accounts and consolidated accounts, amending Council Directives 78/660/EEC and 83/349/EEC and repealing Council Directive 84/253 EEC.



### ***Offsettings***

Sustainable policies for corporate travel:

- Reports with detailed information on the volume of CO2 emissions for the trips and stays of the staff (footprint of flights, hotel accommodation, car rentals, etc) for the purposes of CO2 measurement and visibility. Offering sustainability for the travel impact and/or implementing practical solutions to offset the carbon footprint of corporate trips will be highly appreciated.

### ***Protection of personal data***

In the performance of the contract, the Provider will process personal data of travellers, including identity and passport data, contact details, itineraries, traveller profiles and, where applicable, documentation for visa purposes. The Provider shall process such data only for the purposes of the contract and on the instructions of the UfMS, keep it confidential, apply appropriate technical and organisational security measures, refrain from transferring it to third parties except as necessary to make the requested bookings, and delete or return it at the end of the contract. The Provider shall comply with the data protection legislation applicable to it, including Regulation (EU) 2016/679 (GDPR) where applicable, and shall inform the UfMS without undue delay of any personal data breach affecting UfMS travellers.

## **9. ANNEXES**

The annexes attached to the Tender Dossier are indicative only and they may be modified and/or updated by the UfMS in the course of implementation of the FWC.

**Annex A - UfMS travel policies**

**Annex B - Travel Stats**

**Annex C - Guide to missions**

**Annex D - Per-diem rates**