



## ANNEX 1 - TERMS OF REFERENCE

### TRAVEL MANAGEMENT SERVICES

#### 1) Background

ARK Group DMCC (ARK) is a research, conflict transformation and stabilisation consultancy that supports local communities in conflict and fragile areas. ARK is registered in the UAE, with branch offices in London, Amman and Beirut.

ARK wishes to enter into a Long Term Agreement (LTA) with a Travel Agent(s) to cover the provision of travel management and related services hereafter referred to as "Travel Management Services". Travel Management Services shall include, but are not limited to: airline ticketing, searching itineraries for ARK staff, consultants and participants attending meetings, short-term and long-term accommodation in hotels and/or apartment hotels, hire of conference facilities, car and coach hire and advice on visa requirements and/or facilitation of visa applications.

It is anticipated that the majority of the air travel under the LTA will originate from UK and US, with a large share of the travel being within the Middle East also. Key travel data for ARK for 2021 and for January to June 2022 are as follows:

January to December 2021:

1. Total spend on travel: USD 121,400
2. Total spend on hotels: USD 25,500
3. Total spend on airfare: USD 95,900
4. Top three travel destinations: Amman, Beirut, Belfast
5. Top three itineraries: (1) LHR/AMM – AMM/LHR (2) BHD/AMM – AMM/BHD (3) LHR/BEY – BEY/LHR
6. Top three airlines used: (1) Turkish Airlines (2) Royal Jordanian Airlines (3) Middle East Airlines.

January to June 2022:

1. Total spend on travel: USD 87,500
2. Total spend on hotels: USD 7,100
3. Total spend on airfare: USD 80,400
4. Top three travel destinations: Amman, Beirut, Dublin
5. Top three itineraries: (1) BHD/AMM – AMM/BHD (2) DUB/AMM – AMM/DUB (3) LHR/BEY – BEY/LHR
6. Top three airlines: (1) Turkish Airlines (2) British Airways (3) Middle East Airlines.

#### 2) Objective

ARK is requesting proposals from Travel Agents who are interested in providing regular Travel Management Services. The successful bidder(s) shall be contracted for an initial period of two (2) years, renewable for an additional one (1) year, upon satisfactory evaluation of performance.

#### 3) Services to be provided by the Travel Agent

##### a) General

The provision of travel services by the Travel Agent shall be in line with ARK travel policy. ARK's travel policy requires the Travel Agent to book the lowest available fares. The current ARK travel policy contains the following basic principles:



- i) The Travel Agent should provide travel services from **9:00 to 18:00** during working days. In addition, the Travel Agent shall provide a 24 hours emergency service, as well as services during weekends and public holidays. A Travel Agent should be contactable at all time.
- ii) A large volume of official travel may be organised at short notice, therefore efficiency and swift communication is required.
- iii) ARK's operations are worldwide, however knowledge of the market within the Middle East especially in Lebanon and Jordan is required.
- iv) A large volume of tickets will be booked originating from the UK. Preference will be given to travel agents who are able to provide competitive rates with tickets priced to the UK market, not unfavourably priced to the UAE or other market(s) based on the country of registration of the travel agent.
- v) For audit purposes, an open book principle shall apply to support the operation between the Travel Agent and ARK.
- vi) An online travel booking tool accessed directly by ARK staff is strongly preferred but not mandatory.
- vii) The Travel Agent must be knowledgeable in the Fly America Act (FAA).

**b) Reservation and Ticketing**

- i) For every booking request, the Travel Agent must demonstrate lowest available fare of the day has been sourced, including options with stop-overs provided layover time is no more than four (4) hours.
- ii) In the event that a booking request cannot be fulfilled, the Travel Agent shall notify the requesting party of the problem and present alternative routings/quotations for consideration.
- iii) The Travel Agent shall accurately advise ARK of ticketing deadlines and other relevant information every time a reservation is made. The ability to hold reservations without a fee is essential. Fares which entail restrictive conditions (such as penalties) must be clearly stated when a quotation is provided.
- iv) The Travel Agent shall promptly issue detailed itineraries and shall keep ARK well-informed of carrier schedule changes, as well as other alterations affecting travel. When necessary, tickets and invoicing shall be modified to reflect these changes.
- v) For wait-listed bookings, the Travel Agent shall provide regular feedback on flight status.
- vi) If possible, the Travel Agent shall advise on and/or handle travel document applications such as visas.
- vii) Air tickets shall be issued only on approved ticket stock of the International Air Transportation Association ("IATA") or ticket stock of recognised, reputable airlines as approved by ARK.
- viii) The Travel Agent shall only act on travel requests submitted by the responsible staff named by ARK unless otherwise notified.
- ix) The Travel Agent shall not favour any particular carrier when making reservations. The exceptions are for US carriers where the Travel Agent must adhere to the Fly America Act when instructed by ARK.



- x) The Travel Agent shall assist ARK in negotiating with airlines preferred fare conditions, such as flexible ticketing deadlines and discounts.
- xi) Where possible, the Travel Agent shall advise on market practices and trends that could result in savings for ARK.
- xii) The Travel Agent must be knowledgeable of and be prepared to offer special fares, restricted fares, discount fares, and bulk fares for use whenever appropriate.
- xiii) If possible, frequent flier miles should be accredited to ARK as a corporate client rather than individual ticket holders.

**c) Flight Cancellation and Refunds**

- i) The Travel Agent shall process duly authorised flight changes / cancellations as required.
- ii) The Travel Agent shall immediately process airline refunds for cancelled travel requests.
- iii) The Travel Agent shall refund tickets within one (1) month.
- iv) The Travel Agent shall cover cancellation and / or reservation change costs which are due to no fault of ARK.

**4) Qualifications of the Travel Agent**

- a) The Travel Agent shall have in its office all the necessary equipment and facilities, and shall employ a sufficient number of experienced and professionally trained staff to handle travel requests from ARK.
- b) The Travel Agent shall also be required to devote at least one point of contact providing dedicated services to the travel needs of ARK.
- c) The successful Travel Agent shall have the following minimum qualifications:
  - i) Accredited BSP/IATA Travel Agent.
  - ii) Maintain a good track record in serving private businesses, organisations, embassies and/or multinational corporations.
  - iii) Employ competent and experienced travel consultants.
  - iv) Willing and able to guarantee the delivery of services in accordance with the performance standards required by this TOR.
  - v) Financially stable.

**5) Duration**

- a) The LTA shall commence at a date agreed by both parties for a period of 24 months. The LTA can be renewed for an additional year.
- b) Either party may terminate the LTA upon 60 days' notice, in writing, to the other party.



- c) ARK reserves the right to terminate the LTA immediately in the event of the Travel Agent entering into liquidation or bankruptcy.

## **6) Payments and Invoicing**

- a) ARK favours a one (1) month line of credit with the Travel Agent. This can however be negotiated with the successful Travel Agent on a case by case basis.
- b) The Travel Agent shall send ARK an itemised invoice for each booking which should reflect at least the following information:
  - i) Ticket details for air travel (flight number, date, ticket number).
  - ii) Traveller's name.
  - iii) Departure and destination points.
  - iv) Actual cost to airline and Travel Agent booking fee separately identifiable.
  - v) Issuance date.
  - vi) Invoice number.

## **7) Management Reporting**

The Travel Agent shall submit a monthly management summary to ARK on bookings made. Updates on airline rates, promotions and policy changes would be advantageous.

## **8) Performance Evaluation and Review**

- a) The Travel Agent shall meet periodically with ARK to discuss issues of mutual concern, to review the Travel Agent's performance and to discuss improvements which the Travel Agent or ARK should make in order to achieve more effective travel management and greater savings.
- b) The Travel Agent shall arrange meetings minimum once a year to discuss travel updates and other travel matters with ARK. The Travel Agent shall make ARK aware immediately of major industry changes, which have a broad impact on its travel policy or procedures.
- c) The Travel Agent shall monitor on a continual basis the quality of travel services provided to ARK.