



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, Beirut and Yemen.

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 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 with a large share of the travel being within the Middle East also. Key travel data for ARK for 2023 are as follows:

January to December 2023:

1. Total spend on travel: USD 309,961.00 (AED 1,137,556.92)
 - o Hotels: USD 43,431.80 (AED 159,394.71)
 - o Airfares: USD 266,529.21 (AED 978,162.21)
2. Top three travel destinations: Beirut, Amman, London
3. Top three itineraries: LHR/BEY/LHR, LHR/AMM/LHR, MAN/BEY/MAN
4. Top three airlines used: Middle East Airlines, Royal Jordanian, British Airways

2) Objective

ARK is requesting proposals from Travel Agents who are interested in providing regular Travel Management Services. The term of the agreement shall be for 3-years subject to satisfactory annual performance reviews.

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 GST** during working days. In addition, the Travel Agent shall provide a 24 hours emergency service and services during weekends and public holidays. A Travel Agent should be contactable at all times.
- ii) Due to the nature of work and areas where ARK operates, travel may need to be organised at short notice, therefore an efficient process and timely communication is required.
- iii) ARK's operations are worldwide, however knowledge of the Middle East travel market particularly in Lebanon and Jordan is required.



- iv) A large volume of ticket bookings for travel originating from the UK will be required. 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 mandatory.
- vii) The Travel Agent must have extensive knowledge and experience in 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 inform ARK of ticketing deadlines and other relevant information for each reservation.. 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 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 have knowledge of and be prepared to offer special fares, restricted fares, discount fares, and bulk fares 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 assign a dedicated point of contact to 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, and listed as appearing on international sanctions imposed by US, UK, Canada and all other foreign government sanctions.

6) Payments and Invoicing

- a) ARK prefers a 30-day+ credit limit with the Travel Agent. This can however be negotiated with the successful Travel Agent on a case by case basis.
- b) ARK is subject to stringent audit inspections due to its government funding. Therefore, the Travel Agent is required to send ARK an itemised invoice for each booking which should reflect 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.
- c) ARK requires a summary of transactions on a bi-monthly basis every 2nd and 16th of each month if the final Statement of Account (SoA) is not yet available, for Finance reconciliation and reporting purposes.

7) Management Reporting

The Travel Agent shall provide a monthly management report summarising all travel bookings latest every 15th of the month which should reflect the following information:

- i) Invoice details (Invoice number, invoice amount, invoice date, PNR no.,
- ii) Traveller's name
- iii) Cost centre
- iv) Service type (air travel, hotel, rail)
- v) Vendor
- vi) Routing
- vii) Departure and destination points
- viii) Departure date
- ix) Class of travel
- x) Ticket type (new ticket, exchange, refund)
- xi) Booking method (online, offline)
- xii) Total Carbon Footprint

Updates on airline rates, promotions and policy changes would be advantageous.

8) Performance Evaluation and Review

- a) The Travel Agent will have regular meetings with ARK to discuss issues of mutual concern, to evaluate the travel agent's performance, and identify ways in which both parties can improve travel management and achieve greater cost savings.

An Issue log will be created to record and measure deviation from agreed service quality.

Category	Details	Target
Agent	Qualifications of the travel consultant, professionalism and customer centric approach, well versed with ARK Travel Policy	100%
Accounts	Correctness of statements, invoices/billing, refunds are actioned within the agreed period	100%
Responsiveness	Timely response to emails, phone calls according to the agreed response time	90%
Travel Booking System Support	Promptness for system integration, timely notification for system maintenance and updates, no deviation with the agreed system set up	100%
Reporting	Provide monthly report with accurate details on the agreed timeline.	90%