

4 August 2026

Contracting Authority's Clarifications No. 2

Ref: HR-BA-ME00474-PP01

Subject: Procurement of Specialised Firefighting Vehicles

Location: Europe (non-EU), Montenegro

The answer to the request for clarifications received by the potential tenderer through the functional e-mail address inerep.mne@gmail.com from 12th June 2026 until 27th July 2026 until 15:00 hrs CET:

Request for Clarification No.1

We are preparing our tender submission for the following contract:

Contract Title: Procurement of Specialised Firefighting Vehicles

Lot: Lot 4 – Small Off-road Pickup Vehicles

Reference Number: HR-BA-ME00474 – PP01

To ensure the accuracy and competitiveness of our proposal, we require additional clarification regarding the technical specifications of the Firefighting Module.

The current documentation does not specify whether the module should be permanently fixed to the vehicle bed or mounted on a sliding platform. Since the cargo area of the base vehicle includes a cover, a sliding platform would be necessary to extend the module outwards for easier access.

Could you please provide a precise description of the mounting requirements for the Firefighting Module?

Thank you for your time, assistance, and prompt reply.

Answer No.1

The cargo area of the base vehicle with cover and the firefighting module have been defined based on the end-user's operational requirements, strictly in accordance with the Law on Road Traffic Safety of Montenegro.

The technical specifications are defined in a non-restrictive manner, so as not to limit bidders with different technical solutions. While the requested cover with upward-opening windows is a standard technical solution, this requirement does not limit the possibility of offering other equivalent methods for securing and accessing the firefighting module. It is at the tenderer's discretion to offer a module with either a sliding or a fixed platform, provided that all offered solutions fully comply with the vehicle type-approval regulations currently in force in Montenegro.

While various technical solutions within a single tender are permitted provided they are equivalent to the requirements, tenderers are not authorized to submit variant solutions as additional options in addition to their primary tender. Consequently, the tenderer must select a single model (e.g., either a sliding or a fixed platform) that most appropriately meets the technical specification. *(Please see the Contract Notice, Section 10. Number of tenders, as well as the Instruction to Tenderers, Section 1.3 and the Section 20.5)*

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Request for Clarification No. 2

We kindly request the Contracting Authority to clarify whether it would consider extending the required delivery period from the currently specified 150 days to 360 days from the date of contract signature, while maintaining full compliance with all technical and contractual requirements.

This request is based on the current market situation affecting the availability and delivery of new vehicle chassis across Europe. The procurement includes several categories of specialized vehicles that require factory-produced chassis. At present, manufacturers' lead times for new chassis frequently exceed four months and are subject to production schedules, component availability, homologation procedures, and transport logistics.

Furthermore, the completion of the vehicles requires body-building works, installation of specialized equipment, system integration, testing, and final commissioning. These processes can only commence after the chassis have been delivered and therefore directly affect the overall delivery schedule.

In view of these circumstances, the currently required delivery period of 150 days may significantly limit competition by preventing otherwise qualified manufacturers from participating, despite their ability to fully meet all technical specifications.

Therefore, we kindly ask the Contracting Authority whether it would agree to extend the delivery period to 360 days from the date of contract signature, while leaving all other tender requirements unchanged.

Answer No.2

Regarding your request for the extension of the delivery period from 120 to 360 days, please be informed that the Contracting Authority cannot grant this request and that the implementation and delivery periods remain as established in the Corrigendum No. 1.

The Contracting Authority has already proactively addressed the current market challenges and lead times for specialized vehicle chassis by significantly extending the delivery period from 120 calendar days to 210 calendar days, while the implementation period is from 150 calendar days extended to 240 calendar days, through the aforementioned the Corrigendum No. 1, which was published on 16 June 2026.

To ensure full transparency and equal treatment of all potential tenderers, this amendment was made publicly available on the following official platforms: the EU Tenders Electronic Daily (TED) portal (<https://ted.europa.eu/en/notice/-/detail/413481-2026>), the official website of the Ministry of Interior of Montenegro (<https://www.gov.me/mup/vanredne-situacije>), the official website of the Interreg VI-A IPA Programme Croatia – Bosnia and Herzegovina – Montenegro 2021-2027 (<https://interreg-hr-ba-me.eu/project/procurements-tenders/>), the Split-Dalmatia County website (<https://www.dalmacija.hr/aktualno/eu-projekti/inerep>), the Federal Administration of Civil Protection of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina website (<https://fucz.gov.ba/interborder-emergency-response-enhancement-project-inerep-unapredjenje-prekogranicnog-odgovora-na-vanredne-situacije/>), the Civil Protection Administration of the Republic of Srpska website

(<https://ruczrs.org/en/%d0%bc%d0%b5%d1%92%d1%83%d0%bd%d0%b0%d1%80%d0%be%d0%b4%d0%bd%d0%b0-%d1%81%d0%b0%d1%80%d0%b0%d0%b4%d1%9a%d0%b0/>), the Development-Guarantee Fund of the Brčko District website (<https://www.rgfb.com/javne-nabavke/meunarodni-projekti>), and the Firefighting Education and Technological Development Centre Split (<https://vacetras.hr/>).

The current timeframe of 210 calendar days for delivery period is considered final as these specialized firefighting vehicles are critically needed to address the rising number of technical interventions, particularly during the busy tourist season and in complex terrains, where high traffic and tunnels require swift emergency responses. The Contracting Authority previously decided to extend the implementation period to 240 calendar days (210 calendar days for delivery period + 30 calendar days for issuance of the certificate of provisional acceptance) in order to ensure that the equipment would be available to the rescue teams before the start of the 2027 year's fire season.

In order to ensure the principle of equal treatment and to allow the widest possible opening-up to competition, the Contracting Authority previously decided to extend the deadline to provide all potential bidders with sufficient time to prepare high-quality compliant tenders, so the deadline for submission of tenders was extended from 20/07/2026 to 17/08/2026 (more than 60 calendar days from publishing date of the Corrigendum No. 1).

All tenderers are reminded that by submitting a tender, they fully and unreservedly accept the conditions of the tender dossier regarding the implementation period, as amended by the Corrigendum No. 1, as the sole basis of this procedure, and any proposal exceeding the established implementation period (210 calendar days for delivery period + 30 calendar days for issuance of the certificate of provisional acceptance) will be deemed non-compliant during the technical evaluation.

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Request for Clarification No. 3

Our company is currently preparing its tender submission for the Procurement of Specialized Firefighting Vehicles (Tender ID: HR-BA-ME-00474-PP01), and we intend to participate in this procurement process.

During our preparation, we encountered an issue regarding the submission of the required Tender Guarantee. According to the information provided by our banks in Türkiye, they are unable to issue the required bank guarantee for Montenegro because the Republic of Montenegro is not connected to the international banking guarantee messaging system (SWIFT MT760 / international guarantee line).

In light of this situation, we kindly request your guidance on how we should proceed. We would appreciate it if you could advise us on whether there is an alternative method or procedure acceptable to the Contracting Authority for fulfilling the Tender Guarantee requirement under these circumstances.

We remain fully committed to submitting a compliant and competitive tender and would greatly appreciate your clarification at your earliest convenience.

Thank you in advance for your assistance. We look forward to your response.

Answer No. 3

Regarding your inquiry concerning the issuance of the Tender Guarantee for the Procurement of Specialised Firefighting Vehicles (HR-BA-ME00474 – PP01), please be informed that the Contracting Authority cannot accept any alternative methods or procedures for fulfilling this requirement. As defined in the Instructions to Tenderers, Section 11. Content of Tender, Part 3: Documentation, the Tender Guarantee must be presented strictly in the form specified in the annex to the Tender Dossier and must remain valid for 45 days beyond the period of validity of the tender.

We would like to clarify that Montenegro is fully integrated into the international SWIFT network, and commercial banks operating in the country regularly and successfully process international bank guarantees via the SWIFT MT760 messaging protocol; therefore, we recommend that your issuing bank coordinates with its international correspondent banks to facilitate the standard procedure.

According to the Contract Notice, Section 11. Tender guarantee, the guarantee amounts are fixed for each lot, specifically EUR 4,800.00 for Lot 1, EUR 1,950.00 for Lot 2, EUR 2,400.00 for Lot 3, and EUR 25,500.00 for Lot 4. It is a fundamental rule under the Section 19.1 of the Instructions to Tenderers that the presence of the requisite guarantee is verified during the public opening session, and any failure to comply with these essential requirements will result in the rejection of the tender during the administrative conformity check pursuant to the Section 20.1 of the Instructions to Tenderers, as substantial departures from the tender dossier are not permitted.

Furthermore, as stated in the preamble of the Instructions to Tenderers, by submitting a tender, all participants fully and unreservedly accept the special and general conditions of this procedure as the sole basis of the contract and waive their own conditions of sale or banking limitations.

Please be aware that any tender submitted without the required tender guarantee in the prescribed format will be deemed non-compliant and will not be considered for further evaluation.

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Request for Clarification No. 4

We kindly request a clarification regarding the following requirement under the technical specification for the Firefighting Module:

"High-pressure pump: flow ≥ 42 L/min at ≥ 150 bar; driven by an independent diesel engine ≥ 14 kW, with electric start and manual back-up."

According to our market research and consultations with manufacturers of firefighting modules and high-pressure pump systems, commercially available diesel engines with an output of approximately 14 kW or higher are generally equipped with electric starting systems. Due to their size, compression ratio and design characteristics, these engines are typically not available with a manual starting system (such as recoil starter or hand crank).

In view of the above, we kindly request the Contracting Authority to clarify the intended meaning of the requirement "manual back-up."

Furthermore, please confirm whether a firefighting module equipped with an independent ≥ 14 kW diesel engine that is electrically started only, without a manual starting mechanism, but otherwise fully compliant with all other technical requirements, would be considered compliant and acceptable.

If not, we would appreciate it if the Contracting Authority could specify which type of manual backup starting system is required and provide examples of acceptable technical solutions.

We appreciate your clarification and thank you in advance for your response.

Answer No. 4

Regarding the requirement for the starting mechanism of the independent diesel engine (≥ 14 kW) for the firefighting module, the Contracting Authority has conducted a detailed analysis of the justification provided in the Request for Clarification.

Although the initially defined specifications were met by a sufficient number of manufacturers on the market, the Contracting Authority acknowledges the technical observations regarding the limited availability of manual starting systems for diesel engines in this specific power category.

In order to ensure the principles of transparency, equal treatment and non-discrimination, and competition, as mandated by the Interreg VI-A IPA Programme Croatia – Bosnia and Herzegovina – Montenegro 2021-2027 rules, the technical specification for this item is being amended.

The requirement for the independent diesel engine (≥ 14 kW) of the firefighting module is updated to include two options:

- with electric start only, or
- with electric start and manual backup.

Both options will be considered technically compliant and acceptable.

Tenderers are reminded that all other technical characteristics, including the minimum engine power of 14 kW and the high-pressure pump flow of ≥ 42 L/min at ≥ 150 bar, remain mandatory minimum technical characteristics that must be satisfied.

Having in mind previously, in regard to the Firefighting Module, and related High-pressure pump, technical specification required is changed to: flow ≥ 42 L/min at ≥ 150 bar; driven by an independent diesel engine ≥ 14 kW, with electric start only, or electric start and manual backup. Please refer to the Corrigendum No. 2.

Tenderers are reminded that, pursuant to the Section 1. General requirements, the Point 1.8 of the Annex II + III: Technical Specifications + Technical Offer for Lot 4, they must provide documentary evidence to demonstrate that the offered equipment meets these updated requirements. Any offer that fails to meet these mandatory minimum specifications will be deemed non-compliant during the technical evaluation.

This clarification is provided to ensure the widest possible competition and the principle of equal treatment for all potential tenderers.

Request for Clarification No. 5

Following a review of the Technical Specifications for Lot 4 – Small Off-road Pickup Vehicles, we respectfully submit the following observations regarding several technical requirements which, in our opinion, unnecessarily restrict market competition and are not objectively justified by the operational purpose of the vehicle.

The principles of equal treatment, proportionality and ensuring effective competition represent fundamental principles of procurement procedures financed under EU IPA funds. Technical specifications should therefore be based on functional and operational requirements rather than on characteristics that unnecessarily limit the number of eligible manufacturers.

Accordingly, we kindly request that the following requirements be reconsidered.

1. Maximum engine displacement of 2,000 cm³

The requirement states:

Engine displacement: max. 2,000 cm³.

Engine displacement, by itself, is not an objective indicator of:

- vehicle performance,
- emissions,
- fuel consumption,
- reliability,
- operational suitability for firefighting purposes.

These characteristics are already regulated through other requirements, including the minimum engine power and EURO 6 emission standard.

Consequently, limiting engine displacement to a maximum of 2,000 cm³ excludes several internationally recognized pickup platforms without any demonstrated operational justification.

We therefore respectfully request that this requirement be deleted or replaced with functional performance requirements only.

2. Mandatory 6-speed manual transmission

The specification requires:

Transmission: 6-speed manual (+1 reverse).

Modern pickup vehicles are increasingly offered exclusively or predominantly with automatic transmissions, particularly in higher payload configurations.

Automatic transmissions provide at least equivalent, and in many operational situations superior:

- off-road capability,
- towing performance,
- driver safety,
- operational efficiency.

No technical explanation is provided as to why an automatic transmission would be unsuitable for the intended firefighting application.

The requirement therefore unnecessarily excludes a significant portion of the available market.

We respectfully propose replacing this requirement with:

Manual or automatic transmission.

3. Minimum wheel size of 18"

The specification requires:

Wheels: minimum 18".

Wheel diameter is not, in itself, a performance criterion.

Smaller wheel diameters (for example 16" or 17") are commonly used on professional off-road and utility vehicles because they frequently provide:

- improved off-road performance,
- greater tire sidewall protection,
- lower operating costs,
- wider tire availability.

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No operational justification has been provided explaining why wheels smaller than 18" would fail to satisfy the intended purpose.

We therefore request that the requirement be amended to allow smaller wheel diameters provided all other vehicle performance requirements are fulfilled.

4. Minimum engine power expressed simultaneously as 120 kW (164 hp)

The specification requires:

Power: ≥ 120 kW (164 hp).

This requirement is technically inconsistent.

A power output of 120 kW does not correspond to 164 hp, depending on the conversion system used (kW $\leftrightarrow$ PS $\leftrightarrow$ mechanical horsepower).

As written, the specification creates ambiguity regarding compliance and may result in unequal interpretation during evaluation.

We kindly request clarification by expressing the requirement in one measurement unit only, preferably:

Minimum engine power: 120 kW

or

Minimum engine power: 164 hp

but not both simultaneously unless the numerical values are mutually equivalent.

Conclusion

The above requirements appear to be based on specific technical characteristics rather than operational performance.

We respectfully request that the Contracting Authority reconsider these requirements in order to:

- ensure wider market participation,
- preserve equal treatment of economic operators,
- maintain compliance with the principles governing procurement procedures financed by European Union funds.

We appreciate your consideration of these observations and respectfully request publication of any resulting clarifications or amendments through the official procurement documentation.

The combined effect of the above technical requirements significantly limits the number of economic operators capable of submitting a compliant offer and may therefore reduce the level of effective competition, contrary to the fundamental procurement principles applicable to EU-funded procedures.

Answer No. 5

Below please find clarifications provided as numbered above:

1. Maximum engine displacement of 2,000 cm³

According to many years of experience and the needs of the end user, a vehicle with a smaller volume engine was requested, for the simple reason that a larger engine means a heavier vehicle with a lower payload. Reduced payload means lower capacity of the water tank and therefore less efficiency in firefighting. There are several vehicle manufacturers on the market with these engine characteristics.

This threshold has been established by the Contracting Authority to ensure a balance between high operational performance and the long-term sustainability of the fleet, including fuel efficiency and standardized maintenance across municipalities involved.

The requirement for the engine displacement to be a maximum of 2,000 cm³ remains unchanged and is considered a mandatory technical characteristic.

Any offer proposing an engine displacement above 2,000 cm³ will be deemed non-compliant during the technical evaluation.

2. Mandatory 6-speed manual transmission

The preference for manual transmission was an operational decision based on the specific needs for technical interventions in the complex terrains (off-road driving), tunnels, and high-traffic areas described in the described in the Section 6 (Description of the contract) of the Contract Notice. Even though sufficient number of manufacturers on the

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international market offer pickup platforms that fully comply with the requested manual transmission, the Contracting Authority recognizes that allowing alternative transmission types may enhance wider market participation and preserve the principle of equal treatment of economic operators.

Therefore, to ensure compliance with the fundamental principles governing procurement procedures financed by the European Union, the technical specification for the transmission of the vehicles under Lot 4 is hereby amended to allow manual or automatic transmission. Please refer to the Corrigendum No. 2.

Both manual and automatic transmission solutions will be considered technically compliant and acceptable, provided that the offered vehicles meet all other mandatory minimum technical characteristics set out in the Annex II + III: Technical Specifications + Technical Offer for Lot 4.

Tenderers are reminded that, pursuant to the Section 1. General requirements, the Point 1.8 of the Annex II + III: Technical Specifications + Technical Offer for Lot 4, they must provide documentary evidence to demonstrate that the offered equipment meets these updated requirements. Any offer that fails to meet these mandatory minimum specifications will be deemed non-compliant during the technical evaluation.

3. Minimum wheel size of 18"

This specific dimension has been established by the Contracting Authority to ensure optimal vehicle stability, ground clearance, and load-bearing capacity when the vehicle is fully equipped with the required firefighting module and a payload of $\geq 1,000$ kg.

While the Contracting Authority acknowledges the tenderer's arguments regarding smaller diameters, the 18" threshold is necessary to accommodate the heavy-duty braking systems and suspension components required for swift emergency responses in the complex terrains and tunnels described in the Section 6 (Description of the contract) of the Contract Notice (very often vehicles use for interventions in highly demand difficult terrains where higher clearance is highly important).

The requirement for a minimum wheel size of 18" remains unchanged and is considered a mandatory minimum technical characteristic for the Lot 4.

Any offer proposing less than 18" of a wheel size will be deemed non-compliant during the technical evaluation.

4. Minimum engine power expressed simultaneously as 120 kW (164 hp)

The Contracting Authority acknowledges the potential for ambiguity regarding the simultaneous use of kW and hp values as noted in the request for clarification.

To ensure the principles of transparency and the equal treatment of economic operators, the technical specification for the engine power under Lot 4 is hereby amended. Please refer to the Corrigendum No. 2.

The value expressed in horsepower (164 hp) is deleted from the technical requirements.

The mandatory minimum engine power requirement is strictly defined as ≥ 120 kW.

For the purposes of the technical evaluation, the unit expressed in kW shall be the sole binding measurement. Any offered vehicle must demonstrate a minimum power output of 120 kW at 3,600 rpm to be considered compliant.

In the event of any discrepancy between different units of measurement, the SI unit (kW) shall prevail as the mandatory technical requirement.

This clarification ensures there is no ambiguity during the evaluation process and maintains compliance with the principles governing procurement procedures financed by the European Union.

Tender related documentation that is subject of this procedure, as well as the entire tender procedure being prepared/implemented in accordance with the applicable international open procedure as defined in the Interreg VI-A IPA Programme Croatia – Bosnia and Herzegovina – Montenegro 2021-2027 Implementation Manual, Section 6.1.2. Procurement rules for all other PPs.

During preparation of the tender dossier, as well as the Corrigendum No. 1 and the Corrigendum No. 2, we took into consideration, among other aspects that are highlighted in the applicable tender procedures, following: transparency, equal treatment and non-discrimination, competition, visibility, rule of language to be used, rule of nationality, rule of origin, and conflict of interest.

Ensuring wider market participation, preserving equal treatment of economic operators and maintaining compliance with the principles governing procurement procedures financed by European Union are mainstreaming throughout entire tender process.

Request for Clarification No. 6

We respectfully request that you reconsider the following technical specification:

"High-pressure pump: flow ≥ 42 L/min at ≥ 150 bar; driven by an independent diesel engine ≥ 14 kW."

We believe that this requirement is unnecessarily restrictive and significantly limits competition without sufficient technical justification.

The requirement for a high-pressure pump delivering at least 42 L/min at 150 bar, combined with an independent diesel engine of at least 14 kW, effectively excludes alternative technical solutions that are widely used in firefighting applications and provide equivalent operational performance.

Modern portable firefighting systems equipped with petrol (gasoline) engines and high-pressure pumps operating at 100 bar with a flow rate of 42 L/min are commonly used by fire and rescue services worldwide. These systems provide excellent extinguishing performance, are lighter, require less maintenance, and are particularly suitable for rapid intervention in wildland, forest, and remote-area firefighting operations.

There is no technical evidence demonstrating that an operating pressure of 150 bar provides a decisive operational advantage over a 100-bar system when the required water flow and firefighting effectiveness are maintained. Fire suppression performance depends on the overall design of the pump, nozzle, hose system, and water application efficiency, rather than on pressure alone.

Similarly, limiting the engine type exclusively to diesel unnecessarily excludes high-performance petrol-powered units that fully satisfy the intended operational requirements while offering additional benefits, including lower weight, reduced acquisition cost, and easier field handling.

To promote fair competition while maintaining the required operational capability, we respectfully propose that the specification be amended as follows:

"High-pressure pump with a minimum max flow rate of 42 L/min, operating at a max pressure of at least 100 bar or equivalent firefighting performance, powered by an independent petrol or diesel engine at least 13HP to achieve the specified pump performance."

This amendment would allow participation by a broader range of qualified manufacturers while fully preserving the operational effectiveness of the equipment required

We respectfully request that you review and amend this technical specification accordingly in order to ensure fair competition, equal treatment of bidders, and compliance with the principles of public procurement.

Answer No. 6

The operating pressure of 150 bar has been established as a minimum requirement to ensure optimum extinguishing efficiency and effective water atomization, which is critical for swift emergency responses in closed spaces such as tunnels and other complex terrains described in the Section 6 (Description of the contract) of the Contract Notice.

Furthermore, past firefighting practice in Montenegro, under various conditions and circumstances, has demonstrated that pumps with an operating pressure lower than 150 bar are insufficiently effective to respond to the specific challenges that firefighters encounter in the field.

Consequently, lowering this parameter from 150 bar to a 100-bar system would lead to ineffective field responses in emergency actions which implies distance in providing firefighting safety measures.

Requirement for a diesel engine is based on essential operational and safety considerations. Diesel fuel's lower volatility compared to petrol significantly reduces fire and explosion risks during technical interventions in high-temperature environments. Logistically, as the base pickup vehicles for the Lot 4 are also diesel-powered, maintaining a single fuel type for both the vehicle and the firefighting module is vital for operational efficiency and prevents refueling errors during high-stress emergency operations. A reduction in pump pressure or a change to a more volatile fuel type does not fulfill the safety and performance standards established by the Contracting Authority.

Regarding your request to reconsider the technical specifications for the firefighting module's pump and engine, the Contracting Authority informs you that the requirements for a high-pressure is changed as explained under the Answer No. 4, as follows: "High-pressure pump: flow ≥ 42 L/min at ≥ 150 bar; driven by an independent diesel engine ≥ 14 kW, with electric start only, or electric start and manual backup". Please refer to the Corrigendum No. 2.

Any offer proposing less than defined by this Corrigendum for high-pressure pump will be deemed non-compliant during the technical evaluation.