

Tender - T-2025-1492 - Barges and Tugs for Sydney New Year's Eve

File No: X117678.003

Tender No: T-2025-1492

Summary

This report provides details of the tenders received for Barges and Tugs for Sydney New Year's Eve.

Owned and produced by the City of Sydney (the City), Sydney New Year's Eve is a local and global celebration.

The fireworks displays are an essential element of the event. Platform barges are required as the main firing platforms for the fireworks displays on Sydney Harbour, along with tugs to move the barges to and from their allocated positions.

The City undertook a Request for Tender (RFT) for the supply of Barges and Tugs for Sydney New Year's Eve for an initial period of 2 years to cover the 2026 and 2027 events with the option to extend for a further 2 years to cover the 2028 and 2029 events.

This report recommends that Council accept the tender offer of Tenderer A for the provision of Barges and Tugs for Sydney New Year's Eve.

Recommendation

It is resolved that:

- (A) Council accept the tender offer of Tenderer A for the provision of Barges and Tugs for Sydney New Year's Eve for:
 - (i) the price and contingency outlined in Confidential Attachment A to the subject report; and
 - (ii) the schedule of rates outlined in Confidential Attachment B to the subject report, for a period of 2 years (2026 and 2027), with the option of an extension of 2 years (2028 and 2029) if appropriate;
- (B) Council note that the total contract sum and contingency for Barges and Tugs for Sydney New Year's Eve is outlined in Confidential Attachment A to the subject report;
- (C) authority be delegated to the Chief Executive Officer to finalise, execute and administer the contracts relating to the tender; and
- (D) authority be delegated to the Chief Executive Officer to exercise the option referred to in clause (A), if appropriate.

Attachments

Attachment A. Tender Evaluation Summary (Confidential)

Attachment B. Schedule of Rates (Confidential)

Background

1. Sydney New Year's Eve is one of the world's biggest annual celebrations, and a Hallmark Event for NSW. The event includes 2 main fireworks displays, a Welcome to Country ceremony on Sydney Harbour, and lighting and projections on the Sydney Harbour Bridge. In addition, the City provides a number of free vantage points and services for the general public.
2. To provide the necessary platforms from which to fire the fireworks displays, the City requires a number of barges, configured into specific firing platforms, as well as tugs and coordination services to move the barges into position to ensure their correct placement during the event as conditions change (e.g. wind, tides).
3. The City undertook a Request for Tender (RFT) for the supply of barges and tugs for the 2026 and 2027 Sydney New Year's Eve, with an option to extend for a further 2 years to cover the 2028 and 2029 events.
4. The scope of work in the Request for Tender included:
 - (a) Provision of firing platforms comprising steel barges of specified dimensions and configurations
 - (b) Sufficient tugs and labour to manoeuvre barges for loading, positioning, firing, and unloading during the event
 - (c) Installation and removal of moorings and anchoring systems for firing platforms
 - (d) A qualified coordinator to manage barge and tug operations from the event control room and
 - (e) Delivery of planning, approvals, WHS documentation, and post-event reporting.

Invitation to Tender

5. The Request for Tender was available on the City's eTendering portal, Tenderlink, on 11 September 2025. The closing date was on 10 October 2025.
6. The Request for Tender was also available on the Supply Nation and NSW Indigenous Chamber of Commerce websites via their member opportunity boards.

Tender Submissions

7. A total of 2 submissions were received from the following organisations:
 - Ausbarge Marine Services Pty Ltd (ABN: 79 681 804 240)
 - Polaris Marine Pty Ltd (ABN: 47 147 809 667)
8. No late submissions were received.

Tender Evaluation

9. All members of the Tender Evaluation Panel have signed Pecuniary Interest Declarations. No pecuniary interests were noted.
10. The relative ranking of tenders as determined from the total weighted score is provided in the Confidential Tender Evaluation Summary – Attachment A.
11. All submissions were assessed in accordance with the approved evaluation criteria being:
 - (a) The lump sum price and schedule of prices
 - (b) Demonstrated organisational capacity to deliver the services and relevant experience in delivering comparable services as required under the contract
 - (c) Proposed methodology and demonstrated procedural competency in event environment including operations, communications and maintenance
 - (d) Relevant experience and technical ability of the key personnel and allocation of personnel resources in order to deliver the services
 - (e) Demonstrated commitment to sustainability outcomes
 - (f) Demonstrated commitment to engagement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees, modern slavery and fair work guidelines
 - (g) Insurances are compliant with the City's standard insurance requirements as detailed in the Agreement
 - (h) WHS documentation and
 - (i) Financial and commercial integrity.

Performance Measurement

12. General Key Performance Indicators:
 - (a) Key Objectives /Deliverables
 - (i) Services are delivered as per the specification.
 - (b) Quality of work
 - (i) Quality services are delivered as per the specification.
 - (c) Time
 - (i) Key tasks are delivered as per the key dates in the specification, and other tasks carried out per the schedule agreed in operational meetings and correspondence.

- (d) Reporting
 - (i) The Service Provider provides regular, effective and accurate reporting to the contract manager or nominated delegate. The Service Provider delivers the post event report.
- (e) Communication
 - (i) The Service Provider provides regular and effective communication regarding operational and contract managers – both in the delivery of expected tasks, and in particular informing the Contract Manager or nominated delegate of unexpected issues, challenges or necessary changes to the tasks or services being undertaken.
- (f) WH&S compliance
 - (i) The Service Provider and all their workers perform and deliver the services both safely and in line with WH&S laws & regulations and City of Sydney policy.

Financial Implications

- 13. Sufficient funds will be allocated for this project in the draft 2026/27 budget and future year forward estimates.
- 14. The total contract sum and contingency for Barges and Tugs for Sydney New Year's Eve is detailed in Confidential Attachment A.

Risk

- 15. Risks associated with the service and delivery have been considered as part of the contract. Our approach to market is within the City's risk appetite, which states:
 - (a) We are open to taking risks that align with our strategic objectives and are within our capacity to manage effectively.
 - (b) We identify and evaluate emerging risks to ensure timely and appropriate responses.
 - (c) We comply with our legal and regulatory requirements.
 - (d) Our risk appetite emphasises the integration of sustainable practices into infrastructure asset management, considering environmental impacts, climate change resilience and community engagement.

Relevant Legislation

16. The tender has been conducted in accordance with the Local Government Act 1993, the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021.
17. Local Government Act 1993 - Section 10A provides that a council may close to the public so much of its meeting as comprises the discussion of information that would, if disclosed, confer a commercial advantage on a person with whom the council is conducting (or proposes to conduct) business.
18. Attachments A and B contain confidential commercial information of the tenderers and details of Council's tender evaluation and contingencies which, if disclosed, would:
 - (a) confer a commercial advantage on a person with whom Council is conducting (or proposes to conduct) business; and
 - (b) prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied it.
19. Discussion of the matter in an open meeting would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest because it would compromise Council's ability to negotiate fairly and commercially to achieve the best outcome for its ratepayers.

Critical Dates / Time Frames

20. To ensure the organisation has sufficient time to plan and deliver event services for 2026 Sydney New Year's Eve, executed contracts must be in place by early 2026.

Options

21. No alternate options were identified.

EMMA RIGNEY

Executive Director City Life

Elliot Chambers, Head of Production, Major Events and Festivals