

**Annex - Replies to the questions in relation to the upcoming BMVI Specific Action BMVI/2025/SA/1.2.3**

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Number	Question(s)	Reply
1.	Is the field of operation a closed list or can additional fields be proposed?	<p>The list of “theatres of operation” for the equipment types indicated in the concept note shared for the webinar of 6 March 2025 is non-exhaustive.</p> <p>The proposed technical equipment and systems under the upcoming specific action are not limited to deployments in specific operational areas.</p> <p>They should, however, be made available where needed based on the operational situation and their suitability as decided in the Annual Bilateral Negotiations and agreements between the Agency and the Member States.</p>
2.	Is only uncrewed equipment eligible under the call?	<p>Yes, the proposed scope of the upcoming specific action is for uncrewed equipment that can be operated remotely. Its focus is on equipment types that can complement what already exists and strengthen the overall surveillance capabilities to be used in Frontex operational activities.</p>
3.	Will Frontex develop technical standards for the equipment items?	<p>The Agency will support Member States with the development of Concepts of Operation, Concepts of Use and technical requirements,</p>

		<p>drawing on findings from its concluded, ongoing and upcoming pilot projects as well as its technical specifications for existing contracts.</p> <p>To foster interoperability, safety and security, these requirements will where possible refer to already established international standards as well as the Agency's existing standards adopted by Management Board Decision 51/2021.</p> <p>In relation to the Agency's existing standards adopted by Management Board Decision 51/2021, the call documents will detail which parts of the respective standards are applicable.</p>
4.	What type of boats can be covered (e.g. not only on rivers)?	<p>The proposed scope of the upcoming specific action includes uncrewed patrol boats envisaged for patrols on rivers by the external borders, for which there has been an increasing need in Frontex operational activities in recent years.</p> <p>Uncrewed patrol boats envisaged for patrols on other littoral operational theatres, such as ports in the vicinity of critical infrastructure by the external borders or coastal areas susceptible to illegal landings, may also be considered.</p>
5.	Would an Offshore Patrol Vessel for border surveillance with advanced capabilities (Radar, EO sensor, communications) and helipad (Length > 80 meters) be eligible? If not, would it be eligible in future calls?	<p>The proposed scope of the upcoming specific action does not include Offshore Patrol Vessels, as these types of vessels have been addressed in previous calls, this specific action will focus on novel equipment types that can complement what already exists and strengthen the overall surveillance capabilities to be used in Frontex operational activities.</p>

		Consideration will be paid to Offshore Patrol Vessels in possible future calls, if deemed necessary to deliver on the ambition of the Agency's Capability Roadmap.
6.	Can the purchased equipment - patrol boats - also be used at sea in bays (if their use is adapted to Frontex needs)?	The proposed scope of the upcoming specific action is intended to strengthen the capability of carrying out surveillance on rivers at the external borders. If suitable and if there is an operational need, the uncrewed patrol boats may also be used in other littoral operational theatres such as bays and ports.
7.	Will the call allow for remote-controlled underwater equipment of the ROV type?	No, the proposed scope of the upcoming specific action does not include remote-controlled underwater equipment.
8.	Is it possible to include land borders in the areas of implementation in the procurement of aviation equipment?	<p>Yes, the airborne surveillance equipment and systems are not limited to a specific type of border.</p> <p>The possible 'theatres of operation' indicated for the different types of equipment in the concept note shared for the webinar, is a non-exhaustive list.</p> <p>The call will clarify that all airborne surveillance types of platforms covered by the scope of the specific action, and not only the low altitude surveillance, may be used at the land borders.</p>
9.	Is it possible to expand the equipment catalogue with mobile surveillance equipment – mobile surveillance units?	The proposed scope of the upcoming specific action includes a command, control and support capability that should also operate in remote areas. However, it does not include land borne surveillance vehicles.
10.	If a drone will be seconded to the Agency, would the Member State also need to second telepilots (if so, as Crew Members)?	Yes, Member States would also need to provide the equipment and the remote crews – e.g. "telepilots" and any other types of crew members required to operate the equipment.

		These would be considered as crew members in the Annual Bilateral Negotiations process and counted as Category 3 contributions, in line with Regulation (EU) 2019/1896.
11.	Will the upcoming call take into account joint procurement (MS-Frontex)?	<p>The upcoming specific action does not envisage the inclusion of specific conditions or more favourable assessment criteria for applications indicating the intention to purchase the equipment through joint procurement schemes with the Agency.</p> <p>Experience gained shows that procurement of such large-scale equipment for border management is challenging, and delays are frequent. Recourse to joint procurement schemes presupposes the establishment and agreement of detailed practical arrangements on elements such as the evaluation of the tenders, the award of contract, the applicable law and the court for disputes, which would increase the complexity of the procurement procedures and affect the timely delivery, registration and deployment of the equipment under the timeframe of the specific action. The possibility to carry out joint procurement schemes with the Agency is open to Member States wishing to proceed in this sense with actions under their programmes for which the EU co-financing rate is the same as for specific actions.</p>
12.	Would it be envisaged to also fund the services provided along with the deployment of the equipment (such as maintenance of drones in operational condition, navigability study to define pertinent zones and the conditions under which drones would be deployed) OR to reinforce the national authorities' services relevant for the acquisition of drones?	The upcoming specific action will only cover the purchase costs of the equipment. Costs related to through-life management of equipment will not be eligible.

13.	<p>Could the specifications of Medium-Altitude Long Endurance Medium Area Equipment type I be broadened so that rotary wing unmanned vehicles / Max Take-off Weight of 800kg range / up to 8-10 hours endurance is considered.</p>	<p>The upcoming specific action will include uncrewed rotary wing aircraft.</p>
14.	<p><i>There are some concerns in relation to the scope of this specific action call.</i></p> <p><i>While we are aware of Frontex's reasoning in the concept paper, our operational needs might be mis-aligned with the proposed equipment scope.</i></p> <p><i>Currently, there is a need for seaborne surveillance equipment – vessels for medium range maritime border patrols and rescue missions or uncrewed, autonomous, maritime (e.g., not only for river surfaces) patrol vessels, potentially with artificial intelligence elements and minimal need for direct operational input from the border guard authorities to carry out surveillance. The uncrewed autonomous nature of the latter would be in line with the vision set out in the draft call for proposal document.</i></p> <p><i>The existing EU funded vessels that participate in Frontex operations are generally in reasonable condition; however, due to their intense use during these joint operations, the vessels require some refurbishment works that are outside of regular maintenance scope, for example, engine replacements, to avoid potential equipment failure or disruptions due to component conditions. This would be a balanced solution to provide cost-efficiency, while maintaining the operational readiness and</i></p>	<p><i>The scope of this call is intended to strengthen the capability of carrying out surveillance on rivers at the external borders. If suitable and if there is an operational need, they can also be used in other littoral operational theatres such as bays and ports. The proposed scope focuses on novel equipment types, uncrewed, that can complement what already exists and strengthen the overall surveillance capabilities to be used in Frontex's operational activities.</i></p> <p><i>The use of equipment and systems operated remotely without crews on board have to date almost solely been provided by the Agency. The proposed scope has thus been designed to encourage Member States to acquire these types of equipment for subsequent inclusion in the Technical Equipment Pool.</i></p>

	<p><i>longevity of equipment at the disposal of Frontex. Despite the crewed nature of this equipment type, we believe it is important to consider the importance of the existing Frontex equipment pool contributions (e.g., the alternative costs in the case of their potential unavailability) and its significant part for border surveillance capabilities both at Frontex and at national level.</i></p> <p>Would the project activity to renew patrol boats be acceptable within the framework of the upcoming call? Renewal of the boats would include the purchase and replacement of new outboard engines - the service life of the old engines is already more than 5 years.</p>	<p>No, this is outside the scope of the upcoming call under the specific action that is aimed at further strengthening the Technical Equipment Pool with additional equipment and does not include modernisation of equipment acquired under previous calls.</p> <p>Acknowledging that equipment acquired under previous calls may require upgrades or life-extensions, other avenues to secure funding could be explored, including from the Member States' programmes.</p>
15.	<p>We would like to know whether the following items would also be eligible under the Specific Action Call – Frontex Equipment under Border Management and Visa Policy Instrument:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Drone Detection System for Vehicles</li> <li>2. Portable Drone Detection System</li> <li>3. Dronegun</li> </ol>	<p>No, these items are not eligible. The proposed scope of the upcoming specific action does not include Drone Detection and Neutralisation systems.</p>