

RFP 21039  
IT Infrastructure Management  
Contractor Questions and Government Response

1. It is our understanding that the requirement for 24 X 7 support is limited to “Facility Management” requirement (mentioned on Page 7 of the PWS document). For all other requirements, it is our understanding that 24 X 7 support is not required? Can the Government clarify if this understanding is correct?

a) Also, please clarify what the hours of operation by requirement will be for the Contractor’s on-site staff?

b) Will the contractor be required to provide on-call support (after hours support)? If yes, for which of the requirements mentioned in Section 3 of the PWS will this on-call support be required?

1.) The 24X7 for the facility management is correct and this can be accomplished by the existing monitoring tools. This is needed in case a piece of equipment (server, air conditioner, etc.) fails and need to be fixed. The IT Equipment Maintenance and Telecommunications Support of the contract do not have the 24/7 requirement. Any remedial or preventive maintenance, IT Equipment Maintenance and Telecommunications Support, can be performed during the period of coverage, as defined in PWS section 11 (C3).

A1. 6:30 am to 6:30 pm EST See Section 11

B2. Yes, the facility management is required to provide after hours support. Sections 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.7, 3.8, 3.9 and 3.10

2. Security Requirement -

Are *all* contractor personnel for this engagement required to hold national security clearances at the secret level or greater?

If not, are all *key* personnel required to hold national security clearances at the secret level or greater?

So that we may provide resumes with appropriate clearance levels, are any personnel specifically identified *at this time* as requiring Top Secret clearances?

The RFP, on page 1, paragraph 1 “calls for 8 (a) contractors who have Top-Secret (TS) Facility Clearance and are able to demonstrate that they have staff with TS clearances who are qualified to work on the Infrastructure Management Services contract.” However, PWS Section 10, Contractor Staff, states that “All contractor key personnel shall hold a national security clearance at the secret level or greater” and in Section 14 Security, states that "All contractor employees ... hold a national security clearance at the secret level or greater".

Please clarify the required level(s) of security clearance and the contractor personnel to which they apply.

A2. No, not all are required to hold clearances

Team Lead, the Telecommunications team Lead, the E-Mail Services Team Lead and the COMSEC Team Lead should have Top Secret Clearances

The Program Manager, The Network Services Team Lead, the Telecommunications team Lead, the E-Mail Services Team Lead and the COMSEC Team Lead and the COMSEC team members should have Top Secret Clearances along with anyone who travels overseas.

The Network Services team members, the Telecommunications team, and the E-Mail team should have Secret Clearances

3. Will any of the Key Personnel be expected to travel? If so, are backfills expected?

A3. Yes. No if the contractor can maintain the same level of performance.

4. Is there an incumbent contractor? If so, who is it and will they be allowed to bid as a prime contractor? How successful were they with regards to the performance evaluation measurement?

A4. Yes the incumbent is ASRC. The incumbent will be evaluated by the standards as set forth in the RFP. The performance evaluation was not in place on the previous contract.

5. Page 7 of the RFP - Section C, Organizational Experience, number 3 - Are the listed certifications necessary for this requirement? Also does the company have to have the cert or can the key personnel have the certs? Is it a requirement for the 8a Prime Contractor to have one or all of the certifications mentioned?

A5. Yes. Key personnel or company as stated. The Prime Contractor or key personnel must have the certifications.

6. What is the EVMS tool used by FAS?

A6. None.

7. PWS Page 8 of 41, Paragraph 3.10 Foreign Installations

a) What is the average number of foreign trips per year?

b) What is the average duration of foreign trips?

c) What is the average number of contractor personnel and their labor categories per foreign trip?

- A7. a) 3 to 6  
b) One week  
c) 1 to 3 labor categories dependent on work to be done.

8. Stated FAS Helpdesk System in place today for tracking issues, are they looking to replace? i.e. Remedy mentioned later for metrics.

A8. Footprints is being replaced by ITSM.

9. Is there an automated “official” inventory system in place today?

A9. No, it is being replaced by ITSM/Centennial

10. Will the documentation for cabling system need to be started from scratch?

A10. No.

11. Section 3.10 item c states “contractor shall provide the overseas offices” for storage and backup. What cities?

A11. The list of cities can be found on [WWW.Fas.USDA.gov](http://WWW.Fas.USDA.gov).

Once on website click:

- **FAS Offices**
- **FAS overseas offices**
- **At the bottom of the page there is a printer friendly page**

12. Are there data gathering methods or systems in place today for measuring the Performance Standards as defined in 4.0?

A12. No

13. Does tier – 3 support need to be provided by the contractor?

A13. Yes.

14. Is it expected that all Key Personnel must be replaced by the new contractor?

A14. No

15. EVM documentation is listed as required, but we have found this methodology is more oriented to a fixed schedule completion projects. Can a structured methodology modified to fit better to an ongoing support program be substituted?

A15. Yes

16. Can commercial products like Microsoft Project and Safran be substituted for the required custom EVM reports?

A16. Yes

17. PMP certification is stated as required for the Program Manager. Can experience with ITIL be substituted?

A17. No

18. Three systems are mentioned for the Help Desk - Footprint, TrackIt, and Remedy. Does FAS use all three of these systems currently? Is it expected that the contractor will maintain all three or is contractor expected to consolidate three systems to one?

A18. FAS is moving from Footprints to ITSM. The Contractor will maintain the ITSM system.

19. What Project Management software does FAS currently utilize?

A19. Microsoft Project 2003 going to 2007

20. Are there any available equipment specifications, manuals, etc. or does the winning contractor provide the entire repository upon assuming the contract?

A20. No, all hardware and software is commercial off the shelf.

21. Can current FAS information systems support the capture of the performance standards and the 14 metrics? Or is the winning contractor required to retrofit current FAS systems to support this capture?

A21. Yes it can. The Contractor will not retrofit.

22. All positions are located in the DC area. All OCONUS requirements will be done via travel. Correct?

A22. Yes

23. What is the transition period? In the PWS it mentions the first year, then there is the phase in period and phase out period. Please clarify the amount of time from the contract award to the

contract start date. Also please clarify the phase out period - does this mean that there is more than one contract ending with various end dates?

A23. The phase in period has been removed from the PWS. The Government's goal is to have the current contract end a month after the new contract is awarded.

24. 5. Travel is mentioned in the RFP and the PWS. Is there a estimated travel amount that you want bidders to use in the pricing breakdown? If not then can you give the following information in order to estimate a travel cost:

1. How many trips per year per site?
2. How many people per trip?
3. Where are the locations of the trips?
4. What is the length of stay?

Also will this estimate be included in the pricing evaluation?

A24. It is estimated at \$50,000 per year.

25. Section 4, Performance Standards, Table 4-1 includes information about Performance Objectives/Standards and AQL/Monitoring Methods. Please answer the following questions:

- a. Category D, Help Desk Operations includes specific performance standards that rely heavily on the FAS Helpdesk System. Please provide as many details as possible regarding the FAS Helpdesk System, such as the current software used (i.e. Remedy), current performance metrics, and monitoring methods.
- b. The Monitoring Methods listed in Table 4-1 includes a reference to the "Help Desk tracking system records (e.g. FootPrint, Remedy, Trackit)." Please provide sample reports from each system and a description of this tracking system.

A25. a) There are no current performance metrics.  
b) There are no current reports. The Contractor will use ITSM to generate them.

26. Section 11, Hours of Operation does not include OCONUS coverage. Please clarify the contractor's responsibility in providing services to OCONUS facilities under normal hours of operation, holidays, period of coverage and overtime usage.

A26. There are no special hours for overseas except for an on-call basis.

27. PWS Section 1.2 states the total number of employees in Washington, D.C., and states 1-20 employees in each of 90 offices around the world. Will the government please specify the total number of employees, including any requiring support at the COOP and hub-sites?

A27. There are less than 1300 employees in Washington and overseas.  
There are no permanent employees at the COOP site or the Hubsites.

28. The RFP states “The contractor shall use the agency’s project management software to track projects and tasks.”

Will the government please specify the software and version used? If it is custom software, will the government please provide an overview of the software?

A28. Microsoft Project 2003 going to 2007

29. Can the Government provide a complete list of all software / tools used for IT management and reporting, and that which are to be integrated for uniform reporting per the requirements in the RFP (Section 9A, Management Approach and Technical Capabilities, bullet #2)?

A29. Nothing implemented. ITSM will be used as the Helpdesk system.

30. The RFP states “The contractor shall use the FAS Helpdesk System.”

Will the government please specify the software and version used? If it is custom software, will the government please provide an overview of the software?

A30. ITSM 6.1.0

31. The RFP states “The contractor shall execute office moves and relocations of IT equipment and peripherals including network installations according to Plans.”

Will the government please specify the source of these Plans?

A31. The government makes the plans.

32. Can the Government provide a list of current security documentation completed as part of the C&A process?

A32. This is sensitive information. C& A documentation required by NIST Special Publication 800-37

33. The RFP states “The contractor shall provide support (subcontracting permitted) for preventive and remedial maintenance of the HVAC equipment units located in the FASCF and portable spot coolers. The contractor shall bear the cost of parts, labor and materials related to preventive and remedial maintenance for the HVAC and electrical power systems.”

In order for the contractor to accurately price this requirement, will the Government please provide the number and type of units currently on site?

A33.

Type	Make	Model	Serial
HVAC  AC/Units in FASCF (Room 6950-S)	LINSKEY	DK-10	AE2-0809-1
		DK-10	AE2-0809-5
		DK-10	AE2-0809-2
		DK-10	AE2-0809-6
		DK-10	AE2-0809-3
		DK-10	AE2-0809-4
		DK-20	AE3-0249-2
HVAC Dry Cooler (outside deck)	LARKIN	PFG3A2	TXM-39443
HVAC (Air Cooled)	DATA AIRE	DTAU-0532	89-0616-A
Portable Spot Cooler	DENSO	20HFU	1287-0011
			0288-0024
			0288-0025
			0288-0038

\* All AC equipment Glycol cooled except DATA AIRE.

\* Larkin & Linskey DK-10 work together

\* McQuay & Linskey DK-20 work together

Type	Make	Model	Serial
Power Conditioner (Transfer Switch)	Controlled Power Co.		58051486B
Power Distribution Unit	Emergency Power Engineering	EP2051250	1330000
	Liebert	PPC50C	47929B
	Liebert	PPC50C	47929C
APC Switch	APC	PTE040N6082AASA1	01-475
APC Switch	APC	PTE040N6082AASA1	01-476
UPS	APC	Silcon DP340E	EE0126000870
UPS	APC	Silcon DP340E	EE0121000931
UPS	APC	Silcon DP340E	EE0125000871
UPS	APC	Silcon DP340E	EE0126000623

34. The RFP states “The contractor shall coordinate preventive maintenance on electrical power equipment and shall notify the COTR at least one month prior. The contractor shall schedule preventive maintenance during non-PC.”

Will the Government further explain the meaning of “non-PC?”

A34. PC stands for Prime Coverage which are hours 6:30 am to 6:30 pm.  
Non-PC would be hours not within that range or weekends and holidays.

35. Can the Government provide warranty status of all equipment identified in Attachments B and C, i.e., which are currently under a warranty contract and which are not?

A35. All new equipment is currently under warranty.

36. Can the Government provide further detail on the equipment to be supported with respect to its location and voltage/Hz requirements?

A36. Overseas location will use standard in-country.

37. How long will the contract phase in be (between contract award and contract start)?

A37. The phase in period has been removed from the PWS.

38. The PWS states, “The Contractor shall provide documentation that the Cognizant Federal Agency has determined that the proposed earned value management system (EVMS) complies with the EVMS guidelines in ANSI/EIA Standard - 748 (current version at time of solicitation).”

Please clarify if this information should be provided as part of the proposal or during the Pre-Award Integrated Baseline Review. Also, please clarify whether the Prime must have an approved EVMS prior to Contract Award, Start Work, or sometime after the actual Start Work?

A38. After the award and the government will determine what EVMS will be needed.

39. Paragraph 3.1i - What are the historical # of installations required by the contractor on an annual basis?

A39. 0 to 2 new overseas installations per year.

40. Paragraph 3.1k - What are the Sparing Requirements? Are they GFE?

A40. The sparing is GFE.

41. Paragraph 3.2b - What is the Program Management Software in use by the Agency? Primavera?

A41. Microsoft Project.

42. Paragraph 3.3....stipulates that a Summary of the FAS Network Architecture is included in Appendix B? Where in Appendix B?

A42. See pages 34 thru 39.

43. How many calls does the Help Desk receive? Monthly? Quarterly? Yearly?

A43. 1,200 monthly, 3,600 quarterly, 14,400 yearly

44. Has there been an analysis done to categorize the service request and develop trending data?

A44. No.

45. What are the primary systems for Help Desk and Service Assurance being utilized today? How are they being utilized?

A45. Footprints is being replaced by ITSM.

46. Is there a workflow or business rules in place for the current Help Desk system?

A46. No.

47. Are there any VISIO or network diagrams that can be released that will enable the vendors to develop a comprehensive solution?

A47. No, this is sensitive information standard network components are used.

48. How many users are there by location for each network (SIPR, Unclass, JWICS?)

A48. 1300 Unclass and all are potential SIPR.

49. ITIL is referenced in the RFP and the PWS, but is not a required certification for any of the Key Personnel. What role do you see IT Service Management best practices (ITIL etc.) to achieve the desired evolution from T&M to performance-based firm fixed price contracting?

A49. The Government does not have an anticipated time frame to change the contract from T&M to FFP. The Government would work with the Contractor and the change would be made through a contract modification.

50. Is there an ITIL strategic plan that has been presented to the CIOs/stakeholders in the past 6 months? Any frameworks?

A50. No.

51. Have there been any interim steps taken over the past year to achieve ITIL?

A51. ITSM has been purchased.

52. What is the current maturity ranking of the existing ITIL processes that are implemented?

A52. None.

53. How many of the current government IT staff is ITIL certified and at what level and what role and function do they provide?

A53. None.

54. What are the current SOPs in place to solve a service request? What Help Desk documentation is being used today?

A54. None.

55. Will the metrics be modified as the initiative makes progress and can new additional metrics be suggested?

A55. Yes after the award.

56. PWS, Section 3.10 (Page 8). Please clarify whether the FAS travel procedures referred to in this section are the same as the procedures provided in Section 13.

A56. Yes.

57. PWS, Section 3.9-Hardware Maintenance, Bullet D (Page 8). The PWS states that “The contractor shall perform preventive maintenance on all IT equipment. The contractor shall consult the original equipment manufacturers documentation to identify the preventive maintenance schedule for all equipment. Preventive maintenance shall be performed during normal working hours unless otherwise specified by the COTR.” What is the scope for this requirement? Servers or desktops/laptops/printers/routers/switches? How many of each? Of the list, how many items are covered by manufacturers warranty and for how long?

A57. The Contractor will follow OEM requirements for all equipment on pages 36 thru 39. New equipment is covered under warranty.

58. PWS, Section 3.11-System Documentation and Operating Procedures (Pages 8-9). The PWS states that “The Contractor shall use industry best practices (e.g. ITIL) to compile, maintain current, and make accessible to FAS ITD staff a repository of all specifications, manuals, drawings, repair standards, parts lists, inventories, CM documentation, contractor-developed software programs, capacity/usage data, and service request tracking system documentation to properly maintain, supply, support and upgrade the infrastructure.” We assumes that such a repository exists, that it is current, and that it will be turned over on contract award. Is this assumption accurate?

A58. All existing documentation will be turned over at award. Contractor will be required to supplement and maintain all required documentation.

59. PWS, Section 4-Performance Standards (Pages 9-10). Will physical inventory audits be required for all 90 sites across the globe, or will electronic inventory audits suffice? How frequently should such audits take place?

A59. Electronic will suffice at least once a month.

60. PWS, Appendix B - Network Architecture and Equipment (Pages 34-35). What is the migration timeline for the Tru64 DEC Alpha servers?

A60. Two years.

61. PWS, Equipment (Pages 36-39). Does the government have a firm refresh schedule for infrastructure components, or does the government expect industry to propose a schedule?

A61. Yes, once every three years.

62. PWS, Equipment (Pages 36-39). For equipment that will not support the new IOS, will FAS replace this equipment prior to award of this contract? Does FAS intend to issue waivers for equipment without proper security configuration?

A62. No new IOS planned.

63. PWS, Section 12-Government Furnished Property. In order to appropriately estimate ODC's, can the government provide us a list of GFE?

A63. The list is in Section 12 (a).

64. Section 6 (Deliverables and Reporting) – please define what is meant by “output products”

A64. Printouts that leave the computer facility.

65. Shall we assume that all of the items in scope for Standard Operating Procedures have existing procedures and that the deliverable is to update the SOPs as necessary. If this is not the case, please identify which areas have no SOPs.

A65. No it is up to the Contractor to propose a solution and SOP

66. Section 12 Government Furnished Property – Are we correct to assume that workspace is provided only at the South Building and not at the Reporters Building or Portals building? Is workspace provided at the NITC or any OCONUS location, for example, the hubs in Brussels, Tokyo and Buenos Aires? Please provide a count of cubicles available at each location where the government provides workspace.

A66. Workspace is provided throughout the Washington complex depending on the staffing plan and workload.

67. Section 15 (Earned Value Management) – generally EVM is most cost-effective when applied to projects, not to operational support. Does the government wish that EVM be applied to the contract as a whole or only to applicable projects?

A67. To applicable projects.

68. Section 4 (Performance Standards), Category H – requires the contractor maintain an inventory of all equipment and system resources, however the equipment inventory shows numerous models that are no longer vendor-supported. Will the government accept a tiered inventory AQL that distinguishes between supported/in-warranty, supported/out-of-warranty and unsupported products?

A68. Yes

69. Does the government have a defined “refresh cycle” for equipment upgrade/replacement? For example, are there plans to replace unsupported printer models, to consolidate the number of vendors and variety of printers? When is the next PC refresh expected for the HQ and the overseas locations?

A69. Three year replacement cycle  
Printers are now being replaced  
Headquarters refresh spring 2009  
Overseas 2011

70. Please provide call volume and type statistics for the current Help Desk.

A70. 1200 per month all types

71. How many conference rooms require laptop and projector support? How often is support required?

A71. 11 conference room with weekly support

72. Please provide a network diagram or other pictorial representation of the FAS network and its interfaces.

A72. This is sensitive information standard network components are used.

73. PWS Paragraph 3.7 i requires the contractor to perform COMSEC custodial duties. Will the contractor be required to perform OTAR/OTAT for remote sites?

A73. No.

74. How many and what type of COMSEC equipment must be managed?

A74. Contractor must be familiar with DOD Standard equipment.

75. Do any of the overseas sites have SIPRNET? If so, how many?

A75. Overseas SIPRNET is provided by the State Department.

76. How many overseas FAS personnel are supported by this contract?

A76. About 500.

77. Is the NITC considered the FASCF?

A77. Yes, it is considered the FASCF.

78. Do all FAS General Support Systems and Major Applications have current ATO's? What is the current count of GSS? What is the current count of Major Applications?

A78. Yes one GSS (IOAT), 11 major applications.

79. Reference - RFP, Section 9.A.2 Management Approach and Technical Capabilities, page 6

The requirement requests “A sound technical approach for tool integration and uniformed reporting capabilities. This consists of evaluating the offerors plan to (1) consolidate and upgrade existing set of tools with an overall objective to simplify the current infrastructure support environment/operation...”

Are the “existing set of tools” provided by the Government, or are tools such as server/network monitoring and security scanning, to be provided by the contractor?

Please provide a list of the “existing set of tools” in use by FAS.

A79. Existing set of tools is equivalent to program management software. The current software is Microsoft Project.

80. Reference - PWS, Section 1.3 Scope, page 1 of 41

This section states “The contractor shall provide all personnel, tools, materials, supervision and other items necessary to perform these tasks. The services under this contract cover all FAS locations.”

Please provide the Government’s definition of “tools and materials?”

Please clarify the scope of support for international locations? For example, are tasks like server administration, or performing the physical tasks associated with system back ups (handling physical back-up media) considered in-scope?

A80. The Government expects the Contractor to provide standard tools used by the industry.

Only remote administration for overseas sited.

81. Reference - PWS, Section 3.3 Network Services and Operations, sub-paragraph k, page 4 of 41

The requirement states “The contractor shall protect data through the use of data backup and redundancy techniques and arranging for off-site storage of backup data.”

Does the Government currently have an off-site storage agreement, which the contractor will be interacting with for off-site storage, or does the Government anticipate the contractor will enter into a separate agreement for this service?

A81. The Government will provide the service.

82. Reference - PWS, Section 3.8 Facility Management, sub-paragraph c, page 7 of 41

The Government has required “The contractor shall provide support (subcontracting permitted) for preventive and remedial maintenance of the HVAC equipment units located in the FASCF and portable spot coolers. The contractor shall bear the cost of parts, labor and materials related to preventive and remedial maintenance for the HVAC and electrical power systems.”

Several leading HVAC/Electrical contractors have been consulted on this requirement, and all have stated that a meaningful quote would not be possible without a listing of equipment that this requirement covers. What shall contractors use as the basis of estimate for the “cost of parts, labor and materials related to preventive and remedial maintenance for the HVAC and electrical power systems?”

A82. See Question 33.

83. Reference - PWS, Section 10.1 Key Personnel

Please clarify the three qualifications listed under each “key personnel.” Are these mandatory requirements for the listed position, or characteristics the Government is looking for which may be substituted for other relevant education/certifications such as Telecommunications Team leader – Cisco Certified Network Engineer (CCNE) vs. Certified Information Systems Security Professional (CISSP), or Helpdesk Support Team Leader – Help Desk Institute Support Center Certification vs. MSCE?

A83. These are the minimum mandatory requirements. The CISSP may be substituted with CCIE.

84. Reference - PWS, Section 11 Hours of Operation, paragraph c.2 Facilities Management, page 24 of 41

The requirement states “The period of coverage (POC) at the FASCF shall be 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Government holidays. The contractor shall respond to problems reported for electrical power, air conditioning or environmental controls 24-hours per day, USDA Foreign Agricultural Service 7-days per week, including holidays and other non-work days. The maximum response time shall be two (2) hours by a fully trained, qualified technician.”

How is the contractor notified to respond to these FASCF problems outside of the period of coverage? Is the FASCF manned by contractor staff 24/7/365?

A84. There are automated devices that can notify specific telephone numbers.

85. Reference - PWS, Section 15 Earned Value Management (EVM), page 27 of 41

EVM is a valuable tracking and reporting tool and is appropriate for project based activities such as deploying new hardware/software, but might not be for infrastructure management activities such as help desk or computer operations. Is this consistent with the Government’s intended use of EVM?

A85. Yes.

86. Reference: PWS, Section 9.1 Phase In

In order to mitigate risk and ensure a smooth transition, will the Government fund reasonable labor efforts of the new Contractor during the transition Phase-in period?

A86. The Phase in period has been removed.

87. RFP page 1) – The RFP indicates that travel is required to the offices, the hub-sites, and the COOP site. Does that mean that the only location where there will be permanent staff and space to accommodate them is at the Washington, DC locations?

A87. Yes.

88. (PWS section 10.1.d) - Is the Telecommunications Team Lead equivalent to an Information System Security Officer (ISSO), or would the ISSO be a non-key position supporting the Telecom Team Lead? We noted that one of the personnel qualifications of the Telecom Team Lead is CISSP certification.

A88. Supports the Telecom Team Lead.

89. (PWS, Helpdesk Services, 3.5.f) - Which locations have video conferencing rooms?

A89. Only at the Washington Headquarters.

90. (PWS, Helpdesk Services, 3.5.g) - Which locations may need video projector/laptop hook-ups and does FAS own the necessary equipment?

A90. All overseas posts have laptops with Video conference capabilities.

91. (PWS, general question) - Will all communication (i.e., helpdesk interaction, etc.) be in English?

A91. Yes.

92. (PWS, FAS Equipment, page 36) - Is it possible to get the breakdown of where (addresses) the equipment is located?

A92. All equipment is located in Washington, the COOP site and the Overseas Posts.

93. Will the Government accept interim clearances at the time of award?

A93. Yes.

94. Does the Government have any foreign language requirements?

A94. No.

95. Per Page 32, paragraph 3.11 "System Documentation and Procedure" in PWS: 1.) What is the level of documentation that is currently available (please provide a list)?; 2.) What is the last date that the documentation was updated (please provide a date stamp)?

A95. Standard C&A documentation NIST Special Publication 800-37 done in 2007.

96. When was the most recent security assessment performed (please provide date stamp)?

A96. 2007.

97. When the last security was performed, what standards were leveraged (i.e., FISMA, etc)?

A97. 2007 NIST Special Publication 800-37.

98. Based on the security assessment outcomes, understanding results cannot be shared for security reasons; do you foresee major architectural re-engineering requirements as part of the critical engineering services to be provided under this contract?

A98. The C&A documentation identified no problems.

99. How frequently does FAS recycle hardware/software (within the corporate lifecycle policies)?

A99. Three years.

100. When was the last FAS hardware refresh performed?

A100. Spring 2006.

101. How does FAS classify the level of maturity of its current process, procedures and policies (i.e., CMMI Level 1, Level 2, Level 3, Level 4 or Level 5) and/or what types of standards have been institutionalized (i.e., ISO 9000, et cetera)?

A101. None.

102. Reference: Acquisition Services Directorate letter dated November 21, 2008, Page 1, Request for Proposal Instructions, Services Required which states: "The majority of the services required shall be provided on the government site."

Question/Comment: Please advise as to what services are to be provided that are not on the government site. Is the Contractor to provide any office facilities for any personnel who would work on this contract and not be located at an office at the Government site? Please clarify.

A102. All work will be done at a government site except the hubsites are at commercial sites at this time.

103. Question/Comment 7: This Table lists the deliverables requirements. We assume that the deliverables for the Transition Plan (see PWS Section 9) and Quality Control Plan (see PWS Section 7) would be added to this Table. Annual updates would also be required for the Quality Plan. Reference is also made by the Government to the delivery of the QASP 30 days after Contract Award in PWS ,Section 8. Is the QASP the same document as the Quality Control Plan.? Would the Government please clarify all deliverables requirements for these three documents.

A103. The documents are different. The Quality Control Plan defines the standards. The QASP is the inspection procedures, the transition plan will be how the transition will be planned and managed.

104. Reference: PWS, Page 19, Section 8, Quality Assurance, which states: "A detailed plan for each ITIL Service Delivery and Support area is then developed by the Contractor

(service supplier) to ensure that it meets the service quality requirements set forth in the QASP.”

Question/Comment 12: Are these ITIL documents/processes a separate document (or documents) from the Quality Control Plan as referenced in Section 7, Quality Control, or is it the same? If it is different are there deliverable requirements that the Government has for these documents to be created by the new contractor, and if so, when are they due to the Government? Please clarify the ITIL service Delivery and Support area processes requirements in terms of documentation and what the deliverable requirements are. Also, please clarify that this is the same or a separate requirement from the Quality Control Plan, or a supplement to the Quality Control Plan. Does the Government currently possess any ITIL Service Delivery and Support area documentation and/or processes definitions from the current contractor? If so, when and how will these be made available to the new contractor? What is the level of maturity of the currently implemented processes and procedures? Are there any implemented ISO, CMM or ITIL processes implemented and if so, which areas?

A104. The Quality control plan submitted should be based on the ITIL best practice for each ITIL service and support area. No current practices are implemented.

105. Reference: PWS, Appendix B, Network Architecture and Equipment

Question/Comment 18: Please provide the number and types of servers and their locations that must be supported for this contract. If possible please identify the specific platforms or platform types that must be supported at each location...network servers, mail servers, application servers, file servers, print servers. Also, please indicate how many of each server type are virtualized.

A105. Equipment is located at Washington, Overseas, COOP and Hub-sites. Platforms must be supported as specified in Appendix B, Network Architecture and Equipment.

106. Reference: PWS, page 4, Section 3.3, which states: “The contractor shall perform all backup and restore functions for entire network. The contractor shall protect data through the use of data backup and redundancy techniques and arranging for off-site storage of backup data.” PWS, page 1, Section 1.2 which states: “FAS Headquarters has approximately 600 employees located in the USDA South Building, Portals Building, and Reporters Building. FAS has approximately 90 offices around the world with 1 to 20 employees in each office, and 3 regional hub-sites to support email located in Brussels, Tokyo, and Buenos Aires. The FAS Continuity of Operations (COOP) site is located in the National Information Technology Center (NITC) in Kansas City.” Table 4-1, Item 11 in Performance Standards requires a Disaster Recovery Plan

Question/Comment 19: Could the Government please be more specific as to backup/restore services requirements as to what is required on this contract versus other

contracts for COOP services and infrastructure. Are we to procure and bid a site for backup/restore purposes? Must this site be outside the DC area blast zone? Are we correct in assuming that we are to provide all COOP services for backup and restores, and, full disaster recovery testing and capability for the all locations supported on this contract, including the major hub sites indicated? Are we to exclusively use only the Kansas City COOP site for disaster recovery? Also, should the Disaster Recovery Plan mentioned in PWS, Table 4-1, Item 11, be specified in PWS, Section 6, Deliverables and reporting? If this Disaster Recovery Plan (to include processes, plans, documentation, schedules, platform definitions, operating instructions, transition instructions), already exists when will it be provided? Would semi-annual updates be required for this Disaster recovery Plan? Please clarify.

A106. The contractor is responsible to make sure that backups are completed and any problems related to backups are fixed.

107. Reference: PWS, page 4, Section 3.2.b states: “The contractor shall use the agency’s project management software to track projects and tasks.”

Question/Comment 20: Please provide the name and version number of the agency software we must use to track projects and tasks.

A107. Microsoft Project 2003 going to 2007.

108. Reference: PWS, Section 6, Deliverables and Reporting, contains deliverable requirements for Configuration Management Plan, Inventory Report, Network Diagrams, Security Plans, and Standard Operating Procedures

Question/Comment 21: What Configuration Management Plans currently exist and will these be provided by the Government? What configuration management software is used? Will the government provide an initial version of the current Security and other operating plans/SOPs? Will the Government also provide the current inventory report and network diagrams. What software is currently used for the Inventory system and will this be provided? What software is used to maintain the network diagrams? What are the current Change Control Board Processes and what is the current meeting/approvals schedule? What is the last date that a configuration audit was conducted? And the date of the last approved Configuration Management Plan? What is the current Security Incident Management process and Plan and when will they be made available?

A108. We are implementing ITSM/Centennial for inventory. All documentation will be turned over after the award. The last configuration audit and approved configuration plan was done during C&A plan in 2007.

109. Reference: PWS, page 4, Section 3.3.e states: “The contractor shall provide administration and management of the email system.”

Question/Comment: Please identify details of the devices and platforms and the inventory number of each device, location, software version, and traffic volumes of the users for each of the email systems used, i.e. Lotus Notes/Domino; Outlook/Exchange; OWA; and, Blackberry.

A109. There are 8 Exchange servers with 1300 users.

110. Reference: PWS, page 3, Section 3.3.f states: “The contractor shall provide administration and management of all wireless devices.”

Question/Comment: Are there any other wireless devices in use other than Blackberry? If so, please identify specific device and model numbers, software requirements and versions and number of users and locations and number of devices on inventory

A110. Only Blackberry.

111. Reference: PWS, Page 3, Section 3.3.i states: “The contractor shall provide administration and management of Windows SharePoint Services farm.”

Question/Comment: What Version of SharePoint is being using and what set of services is currently being used.

A111. WSS 3.0 upgrading to MOSS 2007.

112. Reference: PWS, page 3, Section 3.3.n states: “The contractor shall provide administration and management of IDS and vulnerability scans.”

Question/Comment : What type of IDS software and appliances are currently in use? What is the current Security Monitoring requirement and process?

A112. The IDS is from Cisco but not operational.

113. Reference: PWS, page 6, Section 3.5.d states: “The contractor shall manage the helpdesk software including maintaining the Knowledge Base...”

Question/Comment: What are the HelpDesk and Knowledge Base tools currently in use?

A113. Footprints is being replaced by ITSM.

114. Reference: PWS, page 18, Section 6 – Reference Deliverable EVMS.

Question: Is the government currently using the USDA WorkLenz solution for their EVMS reporting, and if not what is being used?

A114. Yes.

115. Reference: PWS, page 3, Section 3.1.k, which states: “The contractor shall maintain an adequate stock and supplies and spare equipment to ensure timely response to emergency repairs.”

Question/Comment: We assume that we will not price any supplies, equipment or spare parts or any other materials for our initial bid pricing and we also assume that the Government will procure all hardware, software, tools and materials for this contract. Is this correct? If not, please clarify what, if any, materials we will need to price for our initial bid.

A115. Yes.

116. Reference: PWS , Appendix B

Question/Comment: What are the ongoing and planned architectural upgrades and improvement projects either underway or to be done within calendar year 2009?

A116. Headquarters desktop refresh, Computer facility relocation and Hubsite relocation.

117. Will the contractor be responsible for supplying Blackberries or cell phones to the staff as part of the ODCs?

A117. The Government may provide Blackberries to certain Key Personnel on a limited basis. Cell phones will not be listed under ODC's.

118. Are there any requirements for a vehicle to be used to move equipment between the three locations in the DC area as part of the ODCs? On Page 11, line 9, Help Desk, of the PWS there is a metric that indicates Caller Wait Time. What tool is currently being used to track this metric?

A118. Equipment may have to be moved between DC locations. It is up to the Contractor how the equipment will be transferred. The new tool will be ITSM.

119. In Section 9.2 of the PWS, is it the consideration of the government, in the event the incumbent is not awarded the contract, to have the current contractor transition with the previous contractor over a 6-month period?

A119. No. The contractor will be allowed one month to transition.

120. In Section 3.8, items b and c of the PWS, could the government please clearly identify the types of HVAC and electrical systems to include make, model, and date of initial purchase, which the contractor must monitor and repair? Can you provide historical data pertaining to the management/maintenance of these facilities? Is the HVAC responsibilities also required at the three strategic locations: Tokyo, Buenos Aires, and Kansas City?

A120. See Question 33.

121. Can the technician working on the power, humidity controls, HVAC, environmental controls and power distribution be a subcontractor? If so, would we show it as an ODC cost? Will that individual require secret clearance?

A121. Yes they can be a subcontractor and do not need clearances. No, the subcontractor would not be listed under ODC.

122. Is there an ERP system in place? If so, what is it and does the contract require interfacing with it?

A122. Enterprise Resource Planning is not in place.

123. Section 1.3 of the PWS states, "The contractor shall provide all personnel, tools, materials, supervision and other items necessary to perform these tasks." Can the government clarify as to what tools & materials, and other items the government would expect? Is the government requesting the contractor to provide any necessary tool at the costs to the contractor? Can the government provide a list of tools they are providing (i.e. helpdesk system, inventory tracking system)?

A123. See question 80.

124. Section 3.3, Network Service and Operations, item K, of the PWS refers to performing backups. Is this done internally within FAS, or through the NITC resource?

A124. Internal to FAS.

125. In Section 3.6, Asset/Inventory Management, of the PWS, does the government currently use a software application to track inventory? If so, what is the tool?

A125. No.

126. Do we need to include replacement costs for equipment listed in Appendix B in our ODCs?

A126. No, ODC's should be listed at \$80,000.00

127. What tool does the government currently use to measure its performance metrics?

A127. Microsoft's SCCM and SCOM.

128. The RFP states that an EVMS is required. Since this is a T&M Services-type contract, can you provide some details as to what levels, areas, deliverables, and/or milestones that you would want to be included in the EVMS that would be associated with measuring specific costs and schedules?

A128. After the award and the government will determine what EVMS will be needed.

129. Is there a Network performance tool?

A129. Microsoft's SCCM and SCOM and Ciscoworks.

130. Can you provide a list of tools that are GFE?

A130. The Government expects the Contractor to provide standard tools used by the industry.

131. What management tools are existent within the NOC environment?

A131. Ciscoworks and Solarwinds.

132. Will FAS provide user licenses to contractor personnel for the Help Desk tracking System at no charge to the contractor?

A132. Yes.

133. Will a 'management portal' of some kind be required in order to provide USDA management with visibility into projects and performance metrics?

A133. Yes.

134. Will any contractors be staffed OCONUS or will ALL contractors be staffed CONUS with travel OCONUS? Please clarify.

A134. All contractors are in the Washington complex.

135. Regarding the CMMi assessment and ISO 9000:2001 Certification; are bidders required to be certified or can the bidder's processes and procedures be aligned with the before mentioned assessments and certifications? Please clarify. If assessment and

certification is required, can the bidding team possess these designations (collectively) or does the prime have to assessed CMMi and certified ISO 9000:2001?

A135. Team is acceptable.

136. RFP Section7a. (Volume 1) Section 4– Resumes, page 4: Do the Key Personnel for whom we provide resumes with our proposal need to be current employees of our team?

A136. No.

137. RFP Section7a. (Volume 1) Section 4 – Resumes, page 4 and PWS Section 10, page 20: Do we need to provide signed Letters of Commitment with the resumes? If so, can they be excluded from the page count restriction?

A137. Yes, contractors should provide Letters of Commitment with resumes. The Letters of Commitment will not count towards the page restriction.

138. RFP Section7a. (Volume 1) Section 4 – Resumes, page 4 and PWS Section 10, page 20: Does the Telecommunications Team Leader require a Certified Information Systems Security Professional certification? This certification seems to be more appropriate for the COMSEC Team Leader.

A138. Yes, the Telecommunications Team Leader does require a Certified Information Systems Security Professional certification.

139. RFP Section7a. (Volume 1) Section 4 – Resumes, page 4 and PWS Section 10, page 20: Does the Helpdesk Support Team Leader require Microsoft Certified Systems Engineer certification? This certification, though helpful, seems unduly restrictive for this position.

A139. Yes.

140. PWS Section 15 – Earned Value Management (EVM), page 26: In the event that the Contractor proposes to use a system that has not been determined to be in compliance with the requirements of paragraph (a) of this provision, when and how should the Contractor submit the comprehensive plan for compliance with the EVMS guidelines?

A140. After the award and the government will determine what EVMS will be needed.

141. PWS, Section 3.7 Item h – the contractor shall be responsible for maintaining a fully current security patching level for all FAS devices at all times.

Does FAS currently use any configuration control tools to manage the software/patch release? How do you currently manage software/patch releases and versions?

A141. FAS uses WSUS for software patching.

142. PWS, Section 3.5 In order to provide appropriate staff, can you provide:

- a. Historical data on percentage of Tier 1 calls and Tier 2 calls?
- b. Availability reports for main servers and infrastructure for the past year?

A142. See question 162.

143. PWS, Section 10.1 Key Personnel - Comment: Email Services Team Lead specifies Exchange Certification and/or Lotus Notes Administration Certification.

What is Domino currently used for? We understand that Exchange/Outlook is the FAS email system. What level of support is required for Lotus Notes?

A143. FAS is now currently off of lotus notes.

144. PWS Section 3.3 Network Services and 3.5 Helpdesk Services

Comment: sometime Tier 2 calls will have to be escalated to Third-parties representing Tier 3. Performance of these organizations will be outside the authority of the contractor.

Are there internal operating level agreements (OLAs) in place among the different divisions?

A144. No, all within FAS.

145. PWS Section 3.7 Security Support

What Anti-virus system is being used at FAS?

A145. Symantec antivirus and Forefront.

146. Page 4 Section 3.3 k) The contractor shall perform all backup and restore functions for entire network. The contractor shall protect data through the use of data backup and redundancy techniques and arranging for off-site storage of backup data.

Does this requirement include portions of the network that support overseas offices? How is the back up for other 90 FAS offices currently handled?

A146. Automated Daily Backups.

147. Page 6 section 3.5 h) The contractor shall be responsible for performing site transfers of IT equipment and components assigned by government representatives. These IT equipment and components shall be similar to those described in Appendix B. The sites where equipment and components shall be transferred to and/or from in the Washington D.C. area is described in section 1.2.

Who is currently responsible for shipping equipment overseas? Is this a contractor responsibility? Does FAS provide the necessary documentation and support for costs related to duty of the country where the equipment is shipped? Can you please provide a clarification on how this requirement is currently managed by the incumbent and FAS?

A147. The Government ships the equipment overseas. The contractor only prepares the equipment. The Contractor is responsible for equipment transfer within the Washington complex.

148. Section 3.9 Hardware Maintenance. The contractor shall provide advanced technical support to perform warranty repair, preventive maintenance and equipment repair (for equipment out of warranty status) services.

A) What is the level of effort required historically to provide this service? Is it expected to increase as equipment ages?

B) Are there service agreements currently in place?

A148. a) Most computer equipment is under warranty. The Government allocates money to the contractor to purchase parts to be installed by the contractor.

b) There are service level agreements in place for certain equipment.

149. 3.10 Foreign Installations c) The contractor shall provide the overseas offices with a baseline backup and instructions to be stored in a safe place for use in the event of a massive failure.

A) How is this requirement currently fulfilled today?

B) Do the remote users have access to a shared drive where they can back up information?

C) How and at what frequency are backups scheduled for remote offices?

A149. A) Automated Daily Backups

B) No

C) Daily backups are performed

150. QASP – Appendix A Category B – Infrastructure Network defines availability requirements for PWS sections 3.3, 3.4, and 3.8

Is this performance applicable also to the other 90 FAS locations? If yes, how is this requirement fulfilled for remote sites?

A150. No. This only applies to Washington.

151. PWS Section 13

A) Can you provide historical data regarding travel overseas requirements, including the travel frequency per month or quarter? The most visited locations? And the average length for each trip (# of days)?

B) Who is responsible to determine the needs to initiate a travel request based on a service call from the remote location? Can you please clarify the way this work is currently handled by FAS?

C) Is it required to have a stationary FTE helpdesk person in each of the hubs? How this support is currently performed at those sites?

D) The Pricing Instruction Section requires the vendor to “also provide a listing of all anticipated other direct costs (ODC’s), travel costs and G&A rates on travel”. This pricing estimate is very difficult to elaborate especially because of the domestic and international travel and gives the incumbent an unfair competitive advantage. Could you please provide historical data for the past 2 years of total costs incurred for travel? Can you also comment on the new contract expectation for travel, meaning do you foresee an increase, stable or decrease in activity?

A151. See question 158.

152. PWS, Section 11 – Hours of Operation. Normal hours of operation are defined as M-F between 6:30am and 6:30pm, eastern standard time

How does this affect support for overseas locations that need to call the help desk during their normal operations, which may fall outside of 6:30am – 6:30pm s

A152. Overseas after-hours support is on an on-call basis.

153. Performance Work Statements (PWS), Page 3 of 41, section 3.1 General Requirements, a) states, "The contractor shall perform configuration management, planning and capacity analysis on all areas of responsibilities."

A) Does the USDA FAS currently have a configuration management system in place?

B) If so, what is it?

A153. No.

154. PWS, Page 3 of 41, section 3.1 General Requirements g) states, "The contractor shall use the FAS Helpdesk System as the automated procedure for recording, tracking and resolving all issues."

Is this system Remedy? If not what help desk system is the FAS USDA currently using?

A154. Footprints is being replaced by ITSM.

155. PWS, Page 4 of 41, section 3.2 Program and Project Management, c) states, "The contractor shall ensure completions of deliverables, track milestones and adherence to timeliness across projects and institute necessary workflow alterations."

What project management software is currently used to track project milestones and timelines?

A155. Microsoft Project 2003 going to 2007

156. PWS, Page 5 of 41, section 3.5 Helpdesk Services, a) states, "The contractor shall implement helpdesk management support based on best practices utilizing the ITIL model."

Are ITIL standards currently developed and in place?

A156. No.

157. PWS, Page 8 of 41, section 3.11 System Documentation and Operating Procedures states, " The contractor shall use industry best practices (e.g. ITIL) to compile, maintain current, and make accessible to FAS ITD staff a repository of all specifications, manuals, drawings, repair standards, parts lists, inventories, CM documentation, contractor-developed software programs, capacity/usage data, and service request tracking system documentation to properly maintain, supply, support and upgrade the infrastructure."

A) Have these documents been developed?

B) If so, is the contractor responsible for their maintenance?

C) If they do not exist, will the incoming contractor be responsible for their development?

A157. No we expect the contractor to develop them.

158. PWS Page 4 of 41, Paragraph 3.3. Network Services and Operations

A) Will the contract require any permanent personnel at the hubs and/or National Information Technology Center (NITC)?

B) If so, how many, and what labor categories?

C) Is travel required to the hubs and/or NITC?

D) What is the average number of trips per year to each hub and to NITC?

E) What is the average duration of trips to each hub and to NITC?

F) What is the average number of contractor personnel and their labor categories for trips to each hub and to NITC?

A158. A) No; B) N/A; C) – Yes; D) – 2; E) 1-3 days; F) 1-2, 1 to 3 labor categories dependent on work to be done.

159. PWS Page 7 of 41, Paragraph 3.8 Facility Maintenance

Will the Government please provide facility information to help the offeror determine level of effort, such as size of facility, type and age of HVAC and power systems, etc?

A159. See Question 33.

161. Historically, how many Helpdesk tickets are generated per month?

A161. 1200 per month

162. How many of the Helpdesk tickets are forwarded to each of the referenced functional areas?

A162. Varies, but out of 1200 avg. monthly tickets, 1/3 are escalated.

163. In the RFP document (21039\_RFP.PDF), on Page 7, under “C. Organizational Experience”, one of the sub-factors is “the contractor’s validated process and procedures ensure high quality performance”, with some examples of certifications listed (like ITIL, ISO 9000, SEI CMM etc.). Can the government clarify the following:

Is it a requirement for the 8a Prime Contractor to have one or all of the certifications mentioned?

A163. Certifications may be held by members of the team.

164. The RFP states on page 5, “the Past Performance Inquiry (Attachment #002) will be completed by three (3) separate customers.”

This is the only reference to a number of customers/contracts in Section 5. Will the Government please clarify whether this means 3 separate past performance contracts descriptions or 3 separate individuals per contract? The instruction is not clear as to whether bidders can use and include past performance information and references from subcontractors. May we use a subcontractor past performance example?

A164. 3 separate past performance contracts descriptions. If the contractor cannot provide 3 past performance references they may use subcontractor past performance. Subcontractor past performance can be submitted in addition to the 3 prime past performance.

165. The RFP states on page 5, “the Past Performance Inquiry (Attachment #002) will be completed by three (3) separate customers.”

Will the Government accept more than three (3) Past Performance references?

A165. Yes, the Government will accept more than 3.

166. The RFP states “The COTR and or CO on RFPs will call the references listed in proposal on larger type acquisitions, the CO should coordinate this effort with the references – NOT the vendor:”

Will the Government please clarify this language? Is this a larger type acquisition?

A166. The COTR and CO may contact past performance references listed in the Contractor’s proposal.

167. To better facilitate completion of this form, will the Government provide it in Microsoft Word format?

A167. Yes, the Government will provide the document in Microsoft Word.

168. Which is the correct RFP # 1406-04-09-RP-21039 or 1406-04-08-RP-21039 as indicated on the PWS?

A168. The correct RFP number is 1406-04-09-RP-21039.

169. Is there a preferred font type and size?

A169. No, there is not a preferred font type and size. It should not be smaller than font size 12.

170. RFP, Section 11 – General (Page 11). Please incorporate the following FAR provisions within the RFP as follows: 52.249-6 entitled Termination (Cost-Reimbursement); FAR 52.243-3 entitled Changes—Time-and-Materials or Labor-Hours; FAR 52.232-7 entitled Payments under Time-and-Materials and Labor-Hour Contracts; FAR 52.227-1 entitled Authorization and Consent; 52.233-1 entitled Disputes; 52.246-6 Inspection—Time-and-Material and Labor-Hour; and 52.245-1 entitled Government Property.

A170. FAR clause 52.243-3, 52.232-7, 52.227-1 (accompanied by 52.227-2), 52.233-1, 52.246.6, and 52.245-1 are all applicable to this solicitation and the contract, however 52.249.6 is only applicable for cost-reimbursement type contracts and this is a time and materials effort.

171. **Reference:** Acquisition Services Directorate letter dated November 21, 2008, Page 7, B. Personnel Qualifications, Item 2 which states: “The Government will evaluate the contractor availability to demonstrate their plan for staffing and managing the services required in the PWS.”

We assume by this requirement that the Government means the Contractor’s key personnel availability. Is this correct? If not, please clarify.

A171. Yes, that is part of the evaluation factor. The Government will also look at the personnel proposed for this requirement.

172. The RFP states, “All offerors shall certify in writing that their proposed solution falls within the scope of the referenced Performance Work Statement (PWS) requirements.”

Is it acceptable for us to include this statement in our Transmittal Letter? If not, please indicate where the statement should be included in our proposal.

A172. Yes, it is acceptable to include the statement in your Transmittal Letter.

173. Page 3/20 - Section 1 General - What is acceptable evidence of CCR database registration? Would the Government accept a screen Capture from the CCR website?

A173. The Government will accept a statement from the contractor stating CCR registration is complete and up-to-date.

174. What NAICS Code is this solicitation issued under? (Small Business Size Limitation?)

[A174. Reference the RFP letter – 541513 – Computer Facilities Management Services.](#)

175. Para 5, “RFP Due Date”, pg 2 of 20 states “Written responses to this RFP shall be submitted NLT 4:00 pm Eastern Standard Time on Monday, 22 December 2008”. Just below “Submission of RFP” states “All submissions shall be submitted to” Mike McGuire’s and Valerie Green’s email address. There does not appear to be a physical address to send a proposal. How should submissions be handled? If hard copies are required, how many copies of each volume are required?

[A175. Contractors shall submit proposals electronically. All proposals shall be sent by email to \[mike.mcguire@aqd.nbc.gov\]\(mailto:mike.mcguire@aqd.nbc.gov\) and \[Valerie.green@aqd.nbc.gov\]\(mailto:Valerie.green@aqd.nbc.gov\) . Proposals may be sent in Microsoft Word or PDF and may be submitted as a zip file.](#)

176. The Evaluation Factors for the Technical Proposal Management Approach and Technical Capabilities beginning on page 6 of the RFP do not correspond with the specifications contained in the PWS document. Please indicate where in its Technical volume the offeror should address the PWS Section 3 specifications.

[A176. The PWS shall be addressed in Section 3 of the technical proposal.](#)

177. The PWS states, “The Contractor shall confirm its ability to meet the performance metrics and demonstrate its knowledge of the performance management methodology (e.g. automated measurement and reports) to best achieve the envisioned objectives.”

There does not appear to be a corresponding section or Evaluation Factor in the FAS-IT RFP document to indicate where we should provide this information. Will the Government specify where the offeror should address this subject?

[A177. Volume 1, Section 3.](#)

178. Para 7, “Submission Requirements”, pg 3 of 20 states under “Page Limitations: The technical submission is limited in length to 30 pages, however, the last sentence in the paragraph indicates “The Government will not count the following documents toward the 25 page limit”. Which page limit is correct?

[A178. The page limit is 30 pages.](#)

179. Would the Government consider allowing Section 4 – Resumes, and Section 5 – Past Performance to be outside of this 30 page limit?

[A179. Resumes and Past Performance do not count towards the 30 page limit.](#)

180. Are resumes required for Key Personnel only?

A180. Resumes are required for Key Personnel.

181. What is the page limit for each individual/key personnel resume?

A181. Resumes should be limited to three pages. There is no restriction on the number of resumes that can be submitted.

182. Are all 5 sections in Volume 1 included in page count?

A182. No, section 1, section 4, and section 5 are not included in the page count.

183. Is an Executive Summary required? Will this be limited by the Page Limitation?

A183. An executive summary is not required but may be submitted and will count towards the page limitation.

184. Is there a page limitation on the Pricing volume?

A184. No, there is not page limit for the price proposal.

185. Pricing - Please clarify para at the bottom of page 5 under Section 2 - Price Proposal (last para that mentions labor category ceilings).

A185. The Contractor will not be allowed to have one labor category ceiling be exceeded if another labor category ceiling is under utilized, thereby keeping the entire contract year within ceiling. A contract modification must be issued to realign the labor hours for this to happen.

186. RFP, Volume 2, Section 2-Price Proposal (Page 5). The bulleted paragraph alludes that the Time and Material rates will be labor category ceilings and that the rates will be maintained for each period of performance. Please clarify what is sought with respect to the rates. Does the Government desire T&M ceiling rates that would then be negotiated? Is inflation/escalation of the rates for each option period of the contract contemplated? Please further define what is meant by "This requirement is not issued with the assumption that the vendor will only manage to the period of performance ceilings."

A186. See response to question 185.

187. Section 2 - Price Proposal, states that "Subcontractor rate information shall also be included, if applicable." Does the Government expect to see rates for each labor category for both the Prime and each subcontractor?

A187. Yes, all rates (Prime and Sub) shall be included in the Price Proposal.

188. RFP, Volume 2, Section 2-Price Proposal (Page 5). The fourth paragraph of Section 2, Price Proposal requires the vendor to provide a listing of all anticipated other direct costs and travel. The PWS is indicative that most likely there will be a broad range of materials or travel on an “as needed basis”. Therefore, it is respectfully requested that a set dollar value for each year of the contract be incorporated for ODC’s and travel in light of the potential diversity of cost elements and expenses that may be involved. Inclusion of a ceiling amount for ODC’s and travel would permit a realistic baseline and create equality and cost realism to the ODC’s and travel element of the effort.

**A188. ODC’s should be priced at \$80,000.00 and travel should be priced at \$50,000.00.**

189. RFP, Volume 2, Section 2-Price Proposal (Page 5). This section indicates that pricing shall include totals and subtotals. Is there a particular format or numbering sequence that should be used for each year of the contract?

**A189. No, the base period, option period 1, and option period 2 should clearly be identified.**

190. Reference: Acquisition Services Directorate letter dated November 21, 2008, Request for Proposal Instructions, Page 3. Section 2 Technical Assumptions, states “If technical assumptions are not noted in this volume and this section of the proposal, it will be assumed that the offerors proposal reflects no technical or price assumptions for award and agrees to comply with all of the terms and conditions set forth herein.”

Question/Comment 9: This wording reads that if there are no technical assumptions that there cannot be any Price Assumptions. There may be many Price Assumptions that are not tied to any technical assumption. Would the Government please eliminate the words “or price assumptions” from this instruction? If not, please clarify.

**A190. Please see revised RFP Letter.**

191. Can the certification costs required of the key personnel be included in our ODCs?

**A191. No, certification costs required for key personnel cannot be included in ODC’s.**

192. Is there a wage determination applicable to this contract? If not, are all positions currently considered exempt positions?

**A192. There is no wage determination for this requirement. Reference the Service Contract Act – definition of service employee. A service employee is “other than any person employed in a bona fide executive, administrative, or professional capacity”. This requirement is considered professional services.**

**<http://www.dol.gov/esa/whd/regs/statutes/serv01.pdf>**

193. The RFP states that the contract may be negotiated to firm-fixed price. Does the Government have an anticipated time frame (e.g., in the Base Period, Option Year 1, etc.) and how the negotiations would proceed (e.g., through contract mod, etc.)?

A193. The Government does not have an anticipated time frame. The Government would work with the Contractor and the change would be made through a contract modification.

194. The requirement to provide “A brief narrative about the odds of the Government or organization hiring the contractor in the future” is very unusual and requires to offeror to make a subjective judgment best left to the customer as part of the Past Performance Inquiry. Will the Government remove this requirement from the RFP?

A194. This section has been removed.

195. For the purposes of pricing, does the Government require pricing for the Base Year, Option Periods, and Award Terms or for only the Base Year and 2 Option Periods?

A195. Pricing shall be provided for the Base Period and 2 Option Periods. The awards terms will be negotiated at a later date.

196. Section 5.0.f, labeled “Contract provision.” Is blank

A196. This has been corrected, please see revised PWS.

197. **Reference: PWS, Page 9, Section 4, Performance Standards, states:** “As shown in Table 4.1, these 14 metrics belong to 8 general performance categories (Satisfaction Rating & Evaluation, Infrastructure/Networks, Operations & Maintenance, Help Desk, Reporting, Documentation & Process, Security and Inventory), and cover all Performance Requirements (Required Services) as stipulated in Section 4 and other applicable sections of the PWS”.

GE Question/Comment 6: We assume the untitled and unnumbered table on page 11 in the PWS is the referenced Table 4-1. Will the Government please number and title this Table appropriately? Please clarify.

A197. Please see the attached revised PWS. The table of contents and all page numbers has been corrected.

198. Section 8 (Quality Assurance) – is the detailed plan for each ITL Service Delivery and Support area to be delivered with the proposal and, if so, is it page counted?

A198. Yes, it should be delivered with the proposal and does count towards the page count. It should be included in section 3.

199. Reference: Section 9, B and C

Question: The RFP mentions in both Section B and C that the Government's intent is to ask for the "appropriate mix and balance of education and training of team members". We are assuming that the intent was to only request this for Section B and not Section C.

A199. This has been removed from Section C. Please see revised RFP Letter.

200. Reference: Section 2, Term

Question: Should the definition of Contracting Officer's Representative be changed to Contracting Officer's Technical Representative?

A200. All references have been changed to Contracting Officer's Technical Representative.

201. **Reference:** Acquisition Services Directorate letter dated November 21, 2008, page 3, Para 7a, Section 1 states: "This section shall include a cover sheet ...include the information listed below in letters a-m."

Since this is basic pro forma information we assume that this basic cover sheet will not be page counted for this Volume. Is this correct? If not please clarify.

We also assume that the requirement of "Volume 1 submission shall include evidence of current CCR database registration would be included as item 'n' in this same cover sheet. Is this correct? If not please clarify.

A201. Yes, the cover sheet will not count towards the 30 page limit. Yes, the CCR database registration can be included on the cover sheet.

202. In Section 9, Evaluation Factors, should there be an evaluation factor for "Section 4, Resumes"?

A202. Resumes may be used to evaluate Personnel Qualifications.

203. Overtime is mentioned in the PWS/RFP. Do you want overtime priced? If yes then approximately how many hours per month are anticipated for overtime and what positions?

A203. The contractor shall provide overtime rates only.

204. PWS, Section 5-Incentives/Disincentives, Bullet “d”. The PWS states that “The contractor may earn one or more additional award term periods of contract extensions by achieving an overall rating at an “Excellent” level during the initial option periods (2nd and 3rd year following the base) or a half year additional award term by achieving a “Good” rating for each option period. Conversely the contractor can be penalized by performing at less than a “Satisfactory” level and lose either a half or full year based on the rating assigned.” In the event that the contractor has been awarded a 4th year and not a 5th year, would the government consider a 6 month award term evaluation during the first half of the 4th contract year. The purpose of this 6 month award term evaluation would be to enable a contractor that has achieved an “Excellent” rating to be awarded an additional 6 month extension of the contract.

[A204. No, the Government will not consider a 6 month award term evaluation during the first half of the 4 contract year.](#)

205. RFP, Volume 2, Section 2-Price Proposal (Page 5). The fourth paragraph states “Note G&A may only be applied to travel and shall not be applied to ODC’s. It is requested that this language be removed or alternately revised to permit the application of Material Handling. The prohibition of G&A or similar company expense(s) (Material Handling) on ODC’s is in conflict with FAR Part 31.203, entitled Indirect Costs, Paragraph (d) which states in part that “Once an appropriate base for allocating indirect costs has been accepted, the contractor shall not fragment the base by removing individual elements”. The requirement as written places 8(a) vendors in a loss situation because they will still incur the expense of G&A and/or Material Handling, but not have the ability to be reimbursed under the contract. The expense must be applied to all contracts whether or not the contractor is reimbursed to be consistent with FAR Part 30 and 31. As stated in the RFP, the competitive nature of the procurement and commercial practice(s) should be utilized as recognized by the procurement as following under the purview of FAR Part 12.

[A205. Material and Handling may be applied to ODC’s. See revised RFP.](#)

206. Section 2 - Price Proposal, states that G&A will not be applied to ODCs and will not be subject to change. Does this apply to the Prime only or does it also flow down to the subcontractors?

[A206. All contractor terms and conditions shall apply to subcontractors.](#)

207. Reference: PWS, Page 18, Section 7, Quality Control, which states: “This shall address the Performance Requirements Summary (PRS) (Attachment A) and include the responsibilities, procedures, processes, and resources needed to implement quality management.”

Question/Comment 10: It appears from our reading that the reference should be Appendix A and not Attachment A. Please confirm or clarify.

A207. Yes, it should read Appendix A. Please see revised PWS.

208. Reference: PWS, Page 18, Section 8, Quality Assurance, which states: “The Government will evaluate the contractor's performance under this contract for those tasks listed on the PRS Attachment A pursuant to the Quality Assurance Surveillance Plan (QASP).”

Question/Comment 11: It appears from our reading that the reference should be Appendix A and not Attachment A. Please confirm or clarify.

A208. Yes, it should read Appendix A. Please see revised PWS.

209. Section 2 – Price Proposal

Is there an anticipated Level of Effort (LOE)? Can the Government provide a list of desired labor categories, to include hours per category?

A209. It is the Contractor’s responsibility to propose the level of effort. The Government has provided the Key Personnel for this requirement.

210. Section 2 – Price Proposal

Can the Government provide information regarding the number, hours and type of Contractor personnel on the incumbent contract?

A210. No, the Government will not provide information on the incumbent contract. It is the Contractor’s responsibility to propose the level of effort.

211. Regarding Volume 2 – Section 2, Price Proposal, will the Government provide a B-Table format for the pricing?

A211. No, the Government will not provide a B-Table format.

212. The PWS states, “The Contractor shall provide a Quality Control Plan describing how the contractor will implement its quality policy. This shall address the Performance Requirements Summary (PRS) (Attachment A) and include the responsibilities, procedures, processes, and resources needed to implement quality management. The plan should also describe quality audits or reviews of other quality management activities.”

There does not appear to be a corresponding section or Evaluation Factor in the FAS-IT RFP document to indicate where we should provide this information. Will be

Government specify where the offeror should address this subject? Due to the extent of the information being requested, will the Government permit the offeror to provide this information as an Attachment that does not count against the page limit?

A212. This should be addressed in Volume 1 Section 3.

213. **Reference:** Acquisition Services Directorate letter dated November 21, 2008, Page 5, Request for Proposal Instructions, Section 2 Price proposal, 3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph states: “ A separate price summary shall be provided for the base period and each option period; Performance Work Statement, Page 19 (or 21 in Word format). Paragraph 9.1 Phase In, states:” The period between Contract Award and Contract Start will constitute the phase-in period. During the phase-in period, the Contractor shall prepare to assume full responsibility for assigned service areas in accordance with the terms and conditions of this Contract. The Contractor shall take all actions necessary for a smooth transition of the Contract operations”

**Question/Comment 4:** Where is the Price Summary for the Phase In Period to go? Typically the Phase In period is separately priced and not made a part of the contract base period and this is especially so since the first contract period does not start until after the Phase In. Also, the contractor will not assume responsibility for the contract performance until after Phase In. We request the Government provide a separately priced Phase In CLIN/period that is not a part of the base contract period. Please clarify.

A213. Section 9.1 has been removed from the PWS. There will be no phase in period.

214. PWS Section 13 Travel Procedures c) - Entitlement, page 24: Indicates that no travel, subsistence, or associated labor charges for travel time shall be charged for work performed while in travel status for less than 12 hours. Was this statement made in error? If a contractor’s travel has been approved and is traveling for a contract, the final cost objective (the contract) must be charged in accordance with the FAR. Such costs are considered allowable. Please clarify.

A214. No per diem expenses will be approved if travel is 12 hours or less.

215. Section 7 (Quality Control) – is the QCP to be delivered with the proposal and, if so, is it page counted?

A215. Yes, the Quality Control Plan will be delivered with the proposal. Yes, it will count towards the 30 page limit.

216. In the PWS a transition plan is mentioned. Is the transition plan part of the page count?

A216. The transition plan is part of the 30 page limitation.

217. Should the submission of the Technical Proposal and Financial Proposal be done in separate e-mails or in one e-mail with separate attachments?

A217. Submission may be done in one email or multiple emails. *NOTE: Due to e-mail server and pipeline limitations, please limit the size of each e-mail with attachments to 3 MB.*

218. Is there a minimum margin requirement for the pages?

A218. The minimum margin is 1 inch from the top and bottom and 1 ¼ inch from the left and right sides of the page.

219. **Reference: PWS, Page 9, Section 4, Performance Standards, states:** “To facilitate performance-based award and penalty, the Performance Requirements (Required Services) as stipulated in PWS Section C-5 and Attachment-A will be assessed pursuant to a specified set of Performance Standards (metrics) with corresponding weighted incentive/disincentive (award/penalty) mechanism.”

**Question/Comment 5:** Please clarify the use of the Term Attachment A and PWS Section C.5. We assume the government means Section 5 (not C.5) and Appendix A (not Attachment A).

A219. Yes, it means Section 5 and Appendix A. Please see revised PWS.

62. Reference: Quality Assurance Plan, Performance Standards, page 5 states: “The detailed definitions for the 154 performance are provided in a table in Appendix-A (“Performance Evaluation Matrix”). Specifically:

- Column-D of the table in Appendix-A provides the definitions of the 15 performance metrics.
- Column-C of the table shows, for each of the 14 metrics, the corresponding PWS sections numbers, for which the respective Required Services are covered by the individual metrics.
- Column-E of the table provide the specified Acceptable Quality level (AQL) which will serve as performance target values for each of the 15 metrics.

This paragraph makes reference to 154 performance are(as) in Appendix A and later makes reference to 15 performance metrics in Column D and then 14 metrics in Column C and Column E which states 15 metrics. We believe all these stated values should be 14. Is this correct? If not, please clarify.

A220. Yes, it is 14. Please see the revised QASP.

