

**National Security Emergency Preparedness Program**  
**RPF #: PR-HQ-07-13764**

**Question 1:**

RFP Page B-1, Section B-1 first paragraph 14,885 direct labor hours (8 FTEs equivalents) and synopsis disclosed estimated contract value of \$9.2 Million, and RFP page H-8, Section H.6 Increased Quantity 2045 labor hours in 409 hour increments (1.10 FTEs) per year.

- ◆ Please clarify if the estimated direct labor hours excludes SOW requirements for full headquarters crisis management team for extended operational periods under emergency conditions/operations (SOW Sub-tasks 5.1, 10.1, 10.2 and Task 11.4 requirements); and

**EPA Response:**

**The full headquarters crisis team, if activated, would require additional hours above and beyond the estimated hours for normal operating conditions.**

- ◆ If extended hours are not in the estimated direct labor hours, provide clarification if these are to be included in the increased quantity estimates; and if so can these increased quantity estimates apply to different labor categories or only to the PM, and/or

**EPA Response:**

**The additional labor hours referenced in Section H clause, entitled H.6 OPTION FOR INCREASED QUANTITY--COST-TYPE CONTRACT shall be used in the event the direct labor hours specified in Section B clause entitled, B.1 LEVEL OF EFFORT--COST REIMBURSEMENT TERM CONTRACT, are exhausted during the Base Period of contract performance. These hours can be utilized by personnel in any labor category.**

If these hours are not in the increased quantity estimates, please provide clarification of how the offeror should include these requirements in its Labor-Mix Matrix and price proposal to cover the requirements for extended operational periods under emergency conditions/operations?.

**EPA Response:**

**In the event extended operational periods are necessary and the base period labor hours of 14,885 are exhausted, the Government may make a determination based on the circumstance and increase the contract labor in accordance with Section H clause entitled H.6 OPTION FOR INCREASED QUANTITY--COST-TYPE CONTRACT.**

RFP SOW Page 1-12 Task 11, and Sub-Task 11.1 Please also clarify the non-emergency hours of EOC operations is it 7:00am to 6:00pm or 7:00am to 5:30pm.

**EPA Response:**

**For proposal preparation purposes, please note the normal non-emergency business hours of operation for the EOC are 7:00am - 6:00pm. However, depending on the threat condition level of the Nation and any other compelling mission needs, the EOC day time hours may be adjusted accordingly.**

**Question 2:**

RFP Page G-6 Government Furnished Property, Attachment 6, GFP List, and Attachment 5, Table 1, paragraph (c) where it states that “performance will be at EPA’s facility in Washington, D.C.”; and Attachment 1, SOW Page 1-7 Sub-Task 5.1 “requires deployment to a TBD site within 12 hours of the activation notification to provide technical support”. The Attachment 6 GFP list does not include any of the specific details of the offeror’s access to these government facilities and what resources typical for on-government site performance will be provided available for use by the offeror. For example for SOW Task 5, 10 and 11 what are the resources, information, associated systems and equipment to be maintained and managed by the offeror and the assumed performance location in the event of a national emergency”? Can the government provide further clarification of what resources are to be provided to the project staff in performing the SOW tasks at the government facility both inside and outside of SCIF environments? We respectfully suggest the Attachment 6 list be broken down by Government Furnished: a) Information, b) Facilities, and c) Equipment. Please also clarify whether contactor staff located on government site will have access to or use of on-site clerical staff or if this staff is to be provided by the offeror.

**EPA Response:**

**The Government will provide access to the following to the contractor on-site:**

- 1. Cubicle space (approximately 8' by 10') with file drawers**
- 2. Government furnished computer**
- 3. Access to EPA email and Local Area Network (LAN) servers**
- 4. Telephone with voicemail**
- 5. General office supplies (staplers, tape dispenser, pen, paper, folders)**

**The government also provides access to our internal information systems via Government furnished IT equipment located in the Government provided facility. The internal systems the contractor will be responsible for maintaining under this are the communication security equipment (STE III and legacy STU II) and respective KOV-14 Fortezza Pluc PC Card and/or STU key. In addition, the contractor will not have access to on-site clerical staff and this type of staff shall be provided by the offeror.**

**Question 3:**

RFP SOW Page 1-8, Sub-Task 7.4. Please clarify that the “improvements” are related to the EOF.

**EPA Response:**

**The contractor will serve as a liaison for overseeing Information Technology or Facility improvements (such as computer hardware upgrades, light bulb replacement, thermostat issues, etc). This is to ensure EPA maintains National Security Information integrity by having those with the appropriate clearances in the EPA secure facility space, while those without appropriate clearances are performing tasks that do not require those clearances. This is standard protocol in the classified business of Government.**

**Question 4:**

RFP SOW Page 1-8 Sub-Task 7.7. Please confirm that this subtask is a duplicate of Sub-Task 7.5 and that the offeror will not be required to respond to this sub-task

**EPA Response:**

**This is an oversight and the offeror will not be asked to respond to this sub-task.**

**Question 5:**

RFP SOW Page 1-7, Sub-Task 5.1 will there be requirements for training/certifications (OSHA HAZWOPER, ICS 400 etc).

**EPA Responses:**

**At this time, the Continuity Program does not require OSHA or ICS courses. However, it does require recertification of COMSEC authority from NSA. There are occasional Continuity Policy/Program courses offered for support contractors that the contractor would be tasked to attend when determined to be in the best interest of the Government.**

**Question 6:**

Amendment 1 – Section L Proposal Instructions – General - Written & Oral Instructions. The outline of Written Technical and Oral Instructions - the Technical Proposal 150 page limit and the 50 slides / 5 hour oral presentation schedule appears similar and almost double of size and proposal effort required under the Full & Open OEM RFP #PRHQ-08-10150 that was recently awarded. We estimate the total proposal costs to be slightly over \$120K and a very significant investment for a very small business. Recognizing that this is also an 8(a) small business set-aside, (under \$6.5M size standard); and that there is a material difference in the estimated contract level of efforts between the two RFPs - would the government consider reducing the size of this Technical Proposal by 50%, and the scope and length of orals for the Sample Task and Management Approach.

**EPA Response:**

**The page and Power Point slide limitations as stated in the Section L clause entitled, Technical Proposal Instructions, is specific to this requirement and no others. Offerors written technical proposal and Power Point Slides shall adhere to the following instructions as specified in the RFP:**

“(2)Length - The maximum length of the technical proposals shall be limited to 75 double-sided typewritten pages (i.e. 75 single sheets of paper for a maximum of 150 sides) on 8 ½ x 11” paper, using no less than 10 point character size and no less than an average of 3/4” all around for margins.

“The following items are *excluded* from the above stated page limitation: letters of transmittal, cover page, table-of-contents, dividers, labor-mix matrices, briefing charts, and **Microsoft Power Point** slides (maximum 50 slides) to be used in the oral presentation. Resumes and Past Performance references are not excluded from the above stated page limitation. Foldout pages are considered as the total number of 8-1/2 by 11 inch pages or fractions thereof that they fit. Offerors are strongly urged to be as succinct, clear and concise as possible in writing the proposal and adhering to the recommended page limitation. Should an offeror fail to adhere to the page and **Power Point slide** limitations cited above, any pages or slides in exceeding the page limitation will not be considered for review or evaluation by EPA.”

**It is at the offerors discretion to determine how many pages their written technical proposal will consist of and how many Power Point slides they will use during the oral presentation. Offerors may not exceed the limitations specified above. The Government will not consider reducing the size of the technical proposal nor the scope and length of the oral presentation.**

**Question 7:**

**Amendment 1, Page 10, Corporate Experience. Please clarify what is meant by Item 6 Affiliation between offeror and client. When the client is the government, could this case then be responded as “Not Applicable”?**

**EPA Response:**

**In reference to the statement, “Affiliation between offeror and client”, the Government would like offerors to discuss the nature of their relationship with their past and/or current clients (i.e. if they were a prime or subcontractor, any unique relationships with the client, etc).**

**Question 8:**

**Amendment 1, Page 8, “F. Organizational Conflict of Interest Plan”. Please confirm that this plan should be included as an exhibit in the Cost Proposal. There are no Section L or M Instructions or Evaluation criteria provided for this Sub-Factor. If this is a sub-factor in the Technical Proposal, please clarify if it is included or excluded from the page count limitation for this Volume.**

**EPA Response:**

Please refer to Section L clauses entitled

- **L.6 ORGANIZATIONAL CONFLICT OF INTEREST NOTIFICATION (EPAAR 1552.209-70)**
- **L.16 CONFLICT OF INTEREST PLAN (LOCAL LC-09-04)**

As well as, Section M clauses entitled

- **M.4 EVALUATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST PLAN (LOCAL LRT-09-07)**
- **M.5 MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR EPA CONTRACTOR'S CONFLICT OF INTEREST PLANS (LOCAL LRT-09-08) (DEC 2001)**

**These clauses were a part of the original RFP issued May 19, 2008.**

**Question 9:**

**RFP Page B-3, Section B-4 Other Direct Costs and Attachment 5, Page 5-4 paragraph (b). The Attachment 5 Cost Proposal instructions requires that the offeror “use the travel and ODC plug figures provided in chart below” Table 1 of Attachment 5, and the B-4 Table do not include plug in figures for ODCs. Please provide the Attachment 5 Table 1 and B-4 Table plug in figures for ODCs to be used for evaluation purposes.**

**EPA Response:**

**The Government has provided plug figures for Travel only in the Section B.4 clause and the Table 1 found in Attachment 5. Offerors shall propose estimates for all Miscellaneous ODCs based on what they determine necessary to satisfy the requirements as identified in the SOW. The Government will not provide plug figures for Miscellaneous ODCs.**

**Question 10:**

**Cost Proposal – Cover Page. Instructions for items to be included in the cover page of the cost volume. Please clarify that the total cost number to be presented on the cover page is the total cost and fee for the entire period of performance. Confirm that what the Government wants is one number that includes the entire cost and fee for the basic level of effort, travel, ODCs and the optional expanded quantities.**

**EPA Response:**

**Yes. The total cost number to be presented on the cover page is the total cost and fee for the entire contract period of performance. Offerors shall provide one cumulative dollar figure that includes the entire cost and fee of the basic level of effort, ODCs, and the optional periods of performance.**

**Question 11:**

**Attachment 5, Page 5-6 of 8 in the last sentence of paragraph (d) will the Government confirm that the total hours to be proposed by the offeror should be the same whether they price higher management and/or clerical staff as a direct charge or if these should be added to the total hours presented in Table 2, Page 5-6.**

**EPA Response:**

**The total hours to be proposed by offerors should be the same as presented in Table 2 of Attachment 5 regardless of the labor category.**

**Question 12:**

**Submittal of Past Performance Questionnaires**

**In the proposal instructions and Section L.8 of the RFP, offerors are instructed to send client authorization letters and past performance questionnaires to at least three current or past clients. According to the instructions provided in the sample client authorization letter and the questionnaire (RFP Attachments 3 and 4), our clients are to complete the questionnaire and send it directly to EPA. Please clarify whether these completed questionnaires are due back to EPA by the same time as the proposal due date (June 19, 2008).**

**EPA Response:**

**The completed past performance questionnaire must be submitted to the Government and are due on or before the proposal due date.**

**Question 13:**

**Electronic Proposal Submission**

**We have three questions regarding the submittal of electronic copies of our proposal. Both the original technical proposal instructions (Section L.9) and Amendment 1 (Page 6 of 18) state that “all written submissions (technical & cost proposals, plans, etc.” should be submitted both electronically via e-mail and postal mail.” In addition, the cost proposal instructions (RFP Attachment 5) also direct offerors to “submit their price/cost proposals on compact disk (CDs) for use in Microsoft Excel.”**

- 1. If we are required to e-mail the cost proposal, is it still necessary to provide the cost proposal files on a disk?**

**EPA Response:**

**Yes. Offerors are required to submit their cost proposals via e-mail and provide a compact disc with files for use in Microsoft Excel (i.e. cost tables).**

2. To provide a more secure alternative than e-mail, is it acceptable to provide the entire technical and cost proposal files on CDs that are submitted with the original and five hard copies?

**EPA Response:**

**As stated in the Technical Proposal Instructions found in Section L of the RFP, offerors shall submit their technical and cost proposals via e-mail and postal mail.**

3. While the cost proposal files must be provided in Microsoft Excel format, is there a requirement for the format of the technical proposal? Can we submit the technical proposal as a pdf file, or does EPA require the technical proposal in another format, such as Microsoft Word?

**EPA Response:**

**Offerors may submit their written technical proposal in .pdf file.**

**Question 14:**

**Conflict of Interest Plan**

In the “Proposal Format” section of the revised technical proposal instructions provided in Amendment 1, the list of sections to be included in the technical proposal (on Page 8 of 18) includes “F. Organizational Conflict of Interest Plan.” However, the subsequent discussion on these required sections does not include information on the Conflict of Interest Plan, nor do the revised evaluation criteria provided in the amendment. The original RFP does include a requirement for offerors to submit a Conflict of Interest Plan with the initial offer (Section L.16). Please clarify that we are required to submit a Conflict of Interest Plan and, if so, that it should be part of the technical proposal. Since the general instructions regarding proposal length (Page 8 of Amendment 1) do not state that the Conflict of Interest Plan is excluded from the page limitation, are we therefore required to include this plan within the 150-page limit of the technical proposal?

**EPA Response:**

**Offerors are required to provide a Conflict of Interest Plan as a part of their written technical proposal submission. The Conflict of Interest Plan is NOT included in the page limitation specified in Section L clause entitled, Technical Proposal Instructions.**

**Question 15:**

The RFP states “Offerors shall submit their technical proposal separately from their cost proposal.” Does the government want the cost proposal submitted in a separate binder from the technical proposal?

**EPA Response:**

**Yes. As stated in Attachment 5 of the RFP,**

"Your cost or price proposal shall be specific, complete in every detail, and separate from your technical proposal."

**Question 16:**

**Is the "Organizational Conflict of Interest Plan" excluded from the page limitation requirement?**

**EPA Response:**

**Yes. The Conflict of Interest Plan is not included in the page limitation.**

**Question 17:**

**The Key Personnel are unable to speak on behalf of corporate management. At minimum, will representation from corporate management be allowed to sit in observe the oral presentation and participate in the question and answer portion of the presentation?**

**EPA Response:**

**As stated in the General Information section of the Oral Presentation to the Government Section III of the Technical Proposal Instructions clause, "Only five key personnel specifically identified in the written proposal will be allowed to participate in the Oral Presentations."**

**Observers to the oral presentations will not be permitted.**

**Question 18:**

**Can the Master's degree for Program Manager be substituted/waived for any amount of prior directly applicable senior experience?**

**EPA Response:**

**Yes. A Master's degree may be waived for Program Manager if prior experience can be demonstrated (for example military/civilian training in Communication Security (COMSEC) and minimum of 5 years experience in managing a Communication Security program). COMSEC is used to protect both classified and unclassified traffic passed via tactical switched systems within government agencies networks. Their use applies to voice, data, and video information processing systems and needed communications interfacing components using varied transmission media. COMSEC measures are for: Voice/Data, Analog/Digital, Manual/ Electronic Key, Classified/SBU, Wired(Land)/ Wireless(Cell).**

**Question 19:**

**Is the EPA currently using an automated notification system? If yes, is the EPA satisfied with this system?**

**EPA Response:**

**To the Contracting Officer's knowledge the office awarding this contract is not currently using an automated notification system for information related to this procurement.**