

Business Operations and Technical Services (BOATS)

Question Set 5 and Revisions to Question Set 4

NNA08223261R-ACD

May 19, 2009

Q1. **Part A.** First, Section L, subfactor 1, paragraph 1d, asks offerors to provide a total compensation plan "for all personnel proposed," and to include "salary ranges and fringe benefits proposed for employees." However, the draft solicitation doesn't provide any metrics about incumbent employees, upon which offerors can develop such a compensation plan. It seems that only the incumbent contractor currently has the capability to provide such details. Can you provide additional information about the governments expectations of approximate staffing levels for each of the functional areas specified in the SOW and are the responders expected to write compensation plans based upon the pro-forma staffing provided for costing purposes?

A1. A staffing matrix will be provided with the final RFP.

Q2. Contract metrics and Performance Requirement Statements will play a major role in strategy for contract quality management as we consider the expenditure of personnel resources and material assets for any goal other than the creation of value for the end customer during our proposal staffing exercise. If we don't have a basis for keeping the staffing balanced, quality and costs suffer. The language used in Sections L and M against which prospective contractors will be evaluated uses language such as "Process, Effectiveness, Suitability" that are all action/results/performance related and more to the point are all associated with quality. Please re-evaluate asking for effectiveness of processes and procedures when there do not appear to be target metrics in the solicitation to meet. At this point our discussion will be reduced to our approach to analyzing and performing the TO, rather than managing it for completion against specified standards. (In other words, not just as fast as we can but efficiently and as fast and cost effective as the government requires).

A2. The metric is to complete the CTO requirement. The contract task orders will be performance-based with specific outcomes and/or deliverables.

Q3. Similarly, in Section L, subfactor 1, paragraph 1b, your solicitation asks offerors to describe our plans for "accommodating short-term increases in the workload including provision for short notice, rapid (within 10 calendar days) recruiting of experienced and qualified personnel." Section M, paragraph M.2(c)(1)(e) also specifies that proposals will be evaluated to determine offeror completeness in estimating "the number of incumbent contractor employees the offeror expects to hire." Unless the government provides some details about the numbers and qualifications of incumbent contract staff and government performance expectations, offerors do not have sufficient information upon which to provide meaningful comment--especially for positions that require security clearances or specialized educational or vocational experience. In addition to information about expected staffing levels, can you provide additional information about any positions where the government requires specialized skills or qualifications?

A3. Skill mix and functional requirements will be provided with the final RFP.

Q4. Section L Solicitation Update adds page limitations for the Technical Proposal. Before receiving the page limitation, we had begun to prepare narrative responses based upon preliminary guidelines in Section L. Our writing team instructs me that to provide the level of detail necessary to describe approach and effectiveness and efficiency required in your instructions will cause even the most adept writer to easily exceed the 100 page limit authorized.

A4. The final solicitation will clarify that the samples/portfolios for Photo/Video/Multimedia are not included in the 100 pages.

Q5. Neither Section L, subfactor 2, nor the Statement of Work includes a Performance Requirements Summary upon which offerors can structure an Operations Plan. What performance expectations/requirements does the government have upon which offerors can develop meaningful proposals to "enhance workflow, increase productivity, enhance communications, improve quality, and reduce cost"?

A5. Offerors are to base their proposal response to fulfilling the requirements of the statement of work. See answer to Q2 above.

Q6. In developing project management strategies, our team has individuals who are new to the "Venture," but highly qualified for the contract functions. We consider this a reasonable approach to "Qualifying the team, similar to the manner in which Joint Ventures are made stronger by joining companies into one entity. Please comment.

A6. Joint Ventures and other teaming arrangements are at the discretion of the proposing entity. Information required for these arrangements is in the Proposal Preparation provisions (General and Specific).

Q7. DRAFT Section L.2(a). Does the Technical Approach "Operation Plan" require specific proposal write ups for each of the fifteen (15) individual SOW functional areas (4.1 thru 4.15)?

A7. All requirements of the statement of work must be addressed.

Q8. DRAFT Section L.4. Is the font used in headers/footers restricted to or excluded from the "not smaller than Arial 12 point type" requirement?

A8. No, there are no guidelines or specifications for font in the header or footer.

Q9. DRAFT Section L.4. Does the requirement for "at least one inch margins on all sides" apply to the evaluated proposal content only — e.g., may headers and footers be positioned outside the one-inch page margin?

A9. Yes

Q10. Draft Section L.5. Safety and Health Plan, is there any hazardous materials related to this contract?

A10. Hazardous materials include office machine toners and photo lab chemicals.

Q11. Draft Section L.5. Can you provide a Sample Safety and Health Plan?

A11. A sample safety and health plan will not be provided.

Q12. Draft Section L.5. Many sections of APG 1700.1 (Safety and Health Plan) refer to Performance Evaluation Profile (PEP) as a safety performance criteria. Where is the PEP?

A12. The Performance Evaluation Profile is a survey and is not required for this solicitation. Sections of the APG will be posted with the final solicitation.

Q13. DRAFT Section L.6(b)5. Should the external labels for the L.7.1(1)f electronic submissions follow the guidelines specified in L.6(b)5?

A13. Yes. External labels for L.7.1(1)f electronic submissions follow the format specified in L.6(b)5. (1) the name of the offeror, (2) the RFP number, (3) the format and software versions used, and (4) a list of the files contained on the disk.

Q14. Draft Section L.7(1) b. In the Video/Multimedia sample project section there are follow on questions to each sample project listed. In the Photographic Services sample project section there is not. Are follow on questions going to be provided for the Photographic Services sample project section?

A14. This area is being revised for the final solicitation.

Q15. DRAFT Section L.7.I(1)f. This question applies to the requested electronic format (HDCAM, tape, Blu-ray, DVD, CD) for sample submissions for: Scientific and Technical Photographer (f(1)a) and Video/Multimedia Services [f(2)a, f.(2)b, f(2)c, f(2)d]. The table in L.6.b.1 requires submission of 1 electronic copy of the proposal, with the required documents for Photographic/Video Multimedia Services included in L.7.1.(1)f. Please clarify that you require 1 CD-ROM containing Volume 1, with 1 additional electronic submission per f(1)a and f(2)a-d response. In other words, are you expecting 1 CD-ROM containing Volume 1 PLUS additional CDs/DVDs/media in response to the applicable sections in L.7.I(1)f?

A15. Mission suitability, past performance, and cost/price volumes shall be submitted separately from the photo and video content. Scientific and Technical Photographer requirement f(1)a and Video/Multimedia Services requirement f(2)a-d shall be submitted separately from the proposal's component volumes and each other.

Q16. DRAFT Section L.7.I.1.f(2)a. For the Multimedia Specialist work samples, is there a required submission format (DVD, CD-ROM, url, etc.)? The submission format is not listed at the end of the paragraph, as it listed for L.7.I.f(2)b, c, and d. Also is a slate/cover page required with each submission on (DVD, CD-ROM, url, etc.) showing company information, contract number etc.?

A16. Submission can be on a DVD, CD, or a link to a website. A slate/cover page is not required.

Q17. Draft Section L.7.II. Past Performance Proposal (Volume II). The first paragraph, third sentence states, “The Past Performance Proposal must include a list of not more than two (2) relevant government or industry contracts...” Is it correct that the government wants a detailed description of each contract addressing the topics in subparagraph L.7.II.A, not just a list?

A17. The offeror shall provide a listing, then further information on these contracts as described in the Past Performance area in Section L. The requirement for relevant contracts has been increased from two (2) to three (3).

Q18. Draft Section L.7.II. Past Performance Proposal (Volume II), PRIME AND MAJOR SUBCONTRACTOR PAST CONTRACTS (PAGE L-19). Are the contracts to be listed in the table only the two contracts to be discussed in paragraph L.7.II.A, or can additional contracts be included to demonstrate depth of experience in the functional categories?

A18. You are not limited to the contracts required in L.7.II.

Q19. Draft Section L.7.II.B Past Performance Questionnaires. Is it correct that questionnaires are to be sent for just the two relevant contracts for the offeror and major subcontractor(s) described in paragraph L.7.II.A?

A19. Questionnaires for the offeror and major subcontractor(s) are to be sent for the three (see A17 above) referenced contracts.

Q20. Draft Section L.7.II.B.(1). The first sentence ends with, “... and for each reference identified in paragraphs 2 and 3 below.” There is no paragraph 3 below. Please clarify. Draft Section L.7.II.B.(2). The end of the paragraph references L.7 (b). There is no paragraph L.7 (b). Please clarify.

A20. This will be clarified in the final solicitation.

Q21. Draft Section L.7.III. Cost/Price Proposal (Volume III). The third paragraph, first sentence asks for “fully burdened hourly rates”. Does this include fee?

A21. Fully burdened hourly rates include fee.

Q22. In Section L.4: Please clarify whether Section L.7(1)f is included in the page limitation for Volume I.

A22. All page limitations are included in the Proposal Page Limitation Provision.

Q23. In Section L.7.1.f(1)(b)(i) and (ii), Sample Projects 1 and 2: Will there be questions associated with these sample projects or is the Government seeking our technical approach to the projects?

A23. This area is being revised for the final solicitation.

Q24. L-2 L.4 (b) Will Times New Roman 12 be acceptable?

A24. Any font that is not smaller than Arial 12 is acceptable.

Q25. L-2 L.4 (b) Is any information allowed in the top and bottom margins? Typically we provide company name, agency and RFP identification, page numbers, and non-disclosure legend.

A25. Section L.6 (b)(4) describes the requirement.

Q26. L-3 L.5 Is there an approved Safety and Health Plan in place? Will the government make it available?

A26. The Safety and Health Plan is prepared by each offeror responding to the solicitation requirements and based on company procedures. The incumbent's Safety and Health Plan will not be provided.

Q27. L-6 L.6 (c) (2) Where in Vol. I should the risk analysis discussion be placed? See L-4 I.6 (b) (1), and L-6/7 L.7 I. There is no subfactor identified for risk. L-7 L.7 I (2) indicates that risk factors and issues may be discussed throughout the proposal, but L.6 (c) (2) appears to call for one discussion that identifies risk areas and mitigations.

A27. There is no separate subfactor for risk as the offeror is to include risk analysis and approaches to minimize the impact of those risks throughout the proposal wherever risk analysis is applicable. This area is being revised for the final solicitation.

Q28. L.7 I (1) f Photographic/Video/Multimedia represents only 1 of the 15 major SOW elements (SOW 4.1 – 4.15) and yet all of the sample tasks appear to address activities associated with this one element of the SOW. Will the final RFP include sample tasks for some or all of the 14 other SOW elements? If, not how would a bidder's evaluation be affected if nothing were submitted for this section of the Mission Suitability Volume?

A28. There will not be sample tasks for other areas of the SOW. A proposal that does not include all required areas may be considered non-responsive.

Q29. L.7 II A 4 Is this entire section only for award fee or incentive fee contracts? The bulleted instructions appear to apply to any contract, as does the chart on page 19.

A29. The Past Performance section is being revised for the final solicitation.

Q30. The submission of samples of those positions photographic imagery, multimedia specialists, videographer, producer/director, video editor & the sample projects as described in Section L, pages L-11 – L-14, can they be combined into a single CD/DVD if they fit or do we submit a single CD/DVD for each group of examples per job position? If a single collective CD/DVD is allowed will you require a user interface for navigation of said examples? If individual CD/DVD's are submitted how do you want them labeled?

A30. Photo and video content shall be submitted separately. A single CD/DVD for each group of examples per job position is not required. A user interface is not required. CD/DVD's submitted can be labeled with company information.

Q31. Do all of the Photographic Services' examples need to be in both RAW & jpeg formats? If so, is the RAW format you're requesting the digital camera's RAW format or the manipulation applications' native format?

A31. RAW is preferred, but JPEG will meet the requirement. The RAW format is the digital camera's RAW format or the digital negative.

Q32. Are you going to provide the Wage Determinations for the video positions or their equivalents?

A32. Wage determination 2005-2062 will be provided with the final solicitation.

Q33. Section L.4 Proposal Page Limitations provides a reference for Page Limit for the Photographic/Video/Multimedia services. Are the write-ups for the 3 sample projects included in the total page limit for Volume? Also, do you want the multimedia disks submitted in a separate box with appropriate labels?

A33. This area is being revised for the final solicitation. However, the multimedia disks with appropriate labels don't have to be submitted in a separate box.

Q34. Is this an IDIQ contract, does the Government foresee issuing CPFF and/or T&M TOs in addition to FFP?

A34. The contract resulting from this solicitation will be a single award IDIQ contract. There will be no CPFF on this contract; however, there may be T&M task orders for required ODCs, Travel, and Training.

Q35. Since this is a solution-driven requirement, will there be a sample task to price for the initial award?

A35. The solicitation will not include sample tasks other than the sample projects for Photographic/Video/Multimedia services. The revised Volume III information will include a Government Pricing Model to be used for evaluation purposes and is not intended to represent a binding requirement.

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**Question Set 4 answers to Questions 51 and 52 are revised to read as follows:**

Q51. Draft SOW paragraph 4.5.2. How many libraries will receive support from the BOATS contract and what types of libraries will receive this support?

A51. There are currently three libraries: technical, life sciences, and law library.

Q52. Draft SOW paragraph 4.5.2. Which libraries require personnel with security clearances?

A52. Security clearances are required for the technical library.

