

**SELECTION STATEMENT
FOR
WALLOPS SAFETY OFFICE CONTRACT
RFP-NNG10299022R**

On August 7, 2012, I, along with senior officials from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Goddard Space Flight Center's (GSFC) Wallops Flight Facility (WFF), met with members of the Integrated Evaluation Team (IET) to hear their findings based on the evaluation of proposals for the Wallops Safety Office Contract (WSOC).

PROCUREMENT DESCRIPTION

The WSOC requirement was issued as small business set-aside procurement. The purpose of the WSOC is to provide Range Safety and Institutional Safety supplemental support services for WFF and the WFF Research Range.

Institutional Safety Support services provided under WSOC ensure compliance with NASA and Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) standards related to the operations and construction of new or modified facilities and complex systems. Institutional safety support services include, but are not limited to, Fire Protection, Industrial Hygiene, Pressure Systems, Explosives, Facilities, Lifting Devices, Electrical, Hazardous Materials, Emergency Preparedness, Mishap Reporting, Confined Spaces, and Ergonomics. The successful WSOC contractor will also provide range safety support services to four customer sets including NASA, other Federal agencies, commercial entities and academia. The WSOC contractor will directly support the following entities: the NASA Sounding Rockets Program Office, the NASA Balloon Program Office, the WFF Research Range, and the WFF Aircraft Office.

EVALUATION PROCEDURES

The Request for Proposal (RFP) defined the evaluation factors as Mission Suitability, Cost and Past Performance. The RFP specified the relative order of importance of the evaluation factors as follows:

"The Cost Factor is significantly less important than the combined importance of the Mission Suitability Factor and the Past Performance Factor. As individual factors, the Cost Factor is less important than the Mission Suitability Factor but more important than the Past Performance Factor."

The RFP established that only the Mission Suitability Factor would be point scored in the evaluation process. The Mission Suitability Factor consisted of the following three subfactors with assigned points as indicated:

SUBFACTOR		POINTS
A	Technical Approach and Understanding the Requirements	500
B	Program Management	400
C	Safety and Health Plan	100
TOTAL		1000

Prior to the issuance of the RFP, evaluation criteria and the numerical scoring system for Mission Suitability, as delineated above, were developed. In explaining the detailed evaluation procedures, the RFP described the evaluation factor and subfactors, provided the Mission Suitability numerical scoring scheme, and specified the criteria to be used in the evaluation.

Regarding the Cost Factor, the RFP stated that the cost evaluation would be conducted in accordance with FAR 15.305(a)(1) and NFS 1815.305(a)(1)(B) and (C). Offerors were referred to FAR 2.101(b) for a definition of “cost realism” and to FAR 15.404-1(d) for a discussion of “cost realism analysis” and “probable cost”. The proposed costs of the activities of the Representative Task Order (RTO) and the rates proposed in Attachment C, Direct Labor Rates, Indirect Rates and Fixed Fee Matrices, would be assessed to determine reasonableness and cost realism. The evaluation was conducted in accordance with FAR 15.305(a)(1) and NFS 1815.305(A)(1)(B) and (C).

For the Past Performance Factor, the RFP stated the past performance evaluation would be conducted in accordance with FAR Part 15. Each Offeror’s contract references (including significant subcontractor(s) defined as any proposed subcontractor that is estimated to meet/exceed an average annual cost/fee of \$500K), would be evaluated to determine initial relevance and subsequently the degree of relevance based on size, content, and/or complexity. In evaluating Past Performance, the IET relied on telephone and written responses received on recent Past Performance questionnaires, the government-wide Past Performance Information Retrieval System (PPIRS) database, in addition to the narrative on relevant past/current contracts provided by the Offerors. The Past Performance Factor was not point scored, but was assigned an adjectival rating of “Very High Level of Confidence”, “High Level of Confidence”, “Moderate Level of Confidence”, “Low Level of Confidence”, “Very Low Level of Confidence”, or “Neutral”.

EVALUATION PROCESS

The IET included a team of technical and business members and consultants from appropriate disciplines to assist in proposal evaluation. The WFF Safety Office, with assistance from the Wallops Procurement Office, developed a set of detailed criteria for evaluation and incorporated it into the RFP. NASA issued the RFP on May 31, 2011. One RFP Amendment was issued on June 27, 2011.

The following companies submitted initial proposals by the July 6, 2011 due date:

ACTA, Inc. (ACTA)
APT Research, Inc. (APT)
Bastion Technologies, Inc. (Bastion)
Millennium Engineering and Integration Company (MEI)

The IET presented its initial findings to the SSA on May 16, 2012. At this meeting, the Contracting Officer recommended that a competitive range be established and discussions be held. With the SSA's concurrence, the Contracting Officer established a competitive range that included three of the most highly rated Offerors: ACTA, Bastion and MEI.

Amendment 2, issued on June 19, 2012, solicited Requests for Final Proposal Revisions (FPRs) from each of the Offerors. Timely FPRs were received by all three Offerors on July 6, 2012.

MISSION SUITABILITY EVALUATION

After re-evaluating each subfactor in accordance with the weights delineated in the RFP, the IET rated the FPRs in the following order, based on their total Mission Suitability score:

1. MEI
2. Bastion
3. ACTA

The table below provides the adjectival ratings assigned in each Mission Suitability subfactor for the three WSOC proposals.

Subfactor Adjectival Ratings			
Subfactor	Bastion	MEI	ACTA
A – Technical Approach and Understanding the Requirements	Good	Good	Good
B – Program Management	Good	Good	Good
C – Safety and Health Plan	Good	Good	Good

The substance of the IET's evaluation of Mission Suitability for the Offeror's FPR is presented below.

Bastion Technologies, Inc.

Under Subfactor A, Bastion received an adjectival rating of “Good” with no significant strengths, three strengths, no significant weaknesses, one weakness, and no deficiencies.

Bastion received its first strength for proposing capabilities that are valuable to the WFF Safety Office in the areas of safety training, OSHA Voluntary Protection Program certification, and expertise in pressure systems/vessels services.

Bastion received a second strength for promoting communications within the Bastion organization as well as with their NASA counterparts for process improvements. Bastion proposed discussions and meetings which create opportunities for process improvements.

Bastion received a third strength for a strong quality management system.

Bastion received a weakness for proposing work that was either not included in the requirements of the RTO, or not referred to as part of the Reference Library associated with the RFP. This additional proposed work would result in inefficiencies and added cost.

Under Subfactor B, Bastion, received an adjectival rating of “Good” with no significant strengths, three strengths, no significant weaknesses, no weaknesses, and no deficiencies.

Bastion received its first strength for effective program management tools which are integral to their management processes.

Bastion received a second strength for employment practices which would increase the likelihood of hiring the best candidates, ensure long term employee retention, and promote the effective and efficient use of personnel.

Bastion received a third strength for identifying a highly qualified candidate for the key personnel role of Program Manager.

Under Subfactor C, Bastion received an adjectival rating of “Good” with no significant strengths, one strength, no significant weaknesses, no weaknesses, and no deficiencies.

Bastion’s received a strength for its Safety and Health Plan, which included provisions for pro-active protection of employees over and above the requirements of NPR 8715.3.

Millennium Engineering and Integration Company

Under Subfactor A, MEI received an adjectival rating of “Good” with no significant strengths, two strengths, no significant weaknesses, no weaknesses, and no deficiencies.

MEI received its first strength for a strong quality management system and multiple certifications.

MEI received a second strength for proposing techniques for enhancing SOW and RTO activities. MEI uses an effective peer review process where Senior and Junior analysts are coupled. In addition, MEI not only provided thorough descriptions of their standard work processes for each SOW, but it proposed effective risk mitigation strategies.

Under Subfactor B, MEI received an adjectival rating of “Good” with no significant strengths, four strengths, no significant weaknesses, one weakness, and no deficiencies.

MEI received its first strength for effective program management tools which are integral to their management processes. MEI proposed the utilization of multiple commercial systems and products which could be customized to meet the needs of NSOC.

MEI received a second strength for its robust and rapid approach to surge support.

MEI received a third strength for identifying a highly qualified candidate for the key personnel role of Program Manager.

MEI received a fourth strength for employment practices which would not only increase the likelihood of hiring the best candidates, but would ensure long term employee retention.

MEI received a weakness for proposing a Staffing Plan that was inconsistent with their proposed approach to executing the RTO.

Under Subfactor C, MEI received an adjectival rating of “Good” with no significant strengths, one strength, no significant weaknesses, no weaknesses, and no deficiencies.

MEI received a strength for its proposed Safety and Health Plan, which included provisions for pro-active protection of employees over and above the requirements of NPR 8715.3.

ACTA, Inc.

Under Subfactor A, ACTA received an adjectival rating of “Good” with no significant strengths, one strength, no significant weaknesses, no weaknesses, and no deficiencies.

ACTA received one strength for its proposed use of a technical software toolset that complements the capability of current WFF tools.

Under Subfactor B, ACTA, Inc. received an adjectival rating of “Good” with no significant strengths, two strengths, no significant weaknesses, no weaknesses, and no deficiencies.

ACTA received its first strength for its effective surge support plan.

ACTA received a second strength for its approach for using contract performance measures and other tools to ensure customer satisfaction.

Under Subfactor C, ACTA, Inc. received an adjectival rating of “Good” with no significant strengths, no strengths, no significant weaknesses, no weaknesses, and no deficiencies.

COST EVALUATION

The offerors’ proposed costs of the Activities of the Representative Task Order (RTO) and the rates proposed in Attachment C, Direct Labor Rates, Indirect Rates, and Fixed Fee Matrices were assessed to determine reasonableness and cost realism. The evaluation was conducted in accordance with FAR 15.305(a)(1) and NFS 1815.305(a)(1)(B) and (C). The cost realism analysis was the basis of the determination of the probable cost for each offeror to perform the effort. FAR 2.101(b) refers to the definition of “cost realism” and FAR 15.404-1(d) refers to a discussion of “cost realism analysis” and “probable cost”.

In conducting its assessment, the IET evaluated the mission suitability volume, basis of estimate, and cost exhibits to assess each offeror’s approach in addressing each task and subtask in the RTO activities and pertinent SOW elements. Where the offeror did not adequately address the requirements, the IET adjusted direct labor hours upward. Where the offeror proposed excessive, unnecessary, or less-than-valuable effort above and beyond the requirements, the IET adjusted direct labor hours downward. Where the offeror selected a labor category that required skills or experience that are inadequate for the proposed work, the IET transferred the appropriate number of hours to another labor category with higher skill or experience requirements. Where the offeror selected a labor category that required skills or experience that were excessive for the proposed work, the IET transferred the appropriate number of hours to another labor category with lesser skill or experience requirements.

In their FPRs, all three offerors provided revised cost proposals. MEI was evaluated as offering the lowest proposed and probable cost, while Bastion offered the highest proposed and probable cost. ACTA’s probable cost was approximately 10% higher than MEI and Bastion’s probable cost was approximately 20% higher than MEI. Per the solicitation, the total Phase-In price and proposed and probable RTO costs were presented as part of the cost evaluation.

PAST PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

In evaluating Past Performance, the IET gave all Offerors an overall rating of "Very High Level of Confidence." All Offerors demonstrated significantly relevant experience in content, complexity and size, and received very high performance ratings from their customers.

DECISION

In addition to the presentation materials, I carefully reviewed the IET's detailed cost report. I also reviewed the evaluation criteria, which stated that the Cost Factor is significantly less important than the combined importance of the Mission Suitability Factor and the Past Performance Factor. As individual Factors, the Cost Factor is less important than the Mission Suitability Factor but more important than the Past Performance Factor.

Regarding the Mission Suitability evaluation, I noted that MEI had the highest Mission Suitability score, but by a relatively slight margin over both Bastion and ACTA, respectively. I closely examined the findings associated with all three Offerors. Regarding the IET's overall evaluation assessment, I agreed with the IET's assignment of Strengths and Weaknesses to each of the proposals based on the relative benefit and value of the various proposal features. I noted that each Offeror's proposal received an overall adjectival rating of "Good" for Subfactors A (Technical Approach and Understanding the Requirements), B (Program Management) and C (Safety and Health Plan).

Following a close review of the findings assigned to all three Offerors, I was particularly impressed with two strength findings assigned to MEI's proposal under Subfactor A and B. Specifically, MEI's proposed junior/senior peer review and mentoring approach under Subfactor A was strong in my view because it not only contributes to a process flow as a form of risk mitigation to ensure that safety analyses are accurate and comprehensive, but also because the junior analysts gain mentoring experience. In addition, though ACTA and MEI both proposed strong surge support approaches under Subfactor B, MEI's proposal had a slight advantage in this area resulting from its unique and rapid approach to providing surge support.

Based on a careful review of the remaining technical findings assigned to all three Offerors under Subfactors A, B and C, I found, like the IET, that the proposals were all strong, and offered technical benefits to the Government. Though Bastion and MEI each received one individual weakness finding in Subfactors A and B, respectively, I considered these weaknesses to be minor and they did not significantly detract from either Offeror's proposal. Ultimately, given the two strength findings assigned to MEI under Subfactor A and B that I discussed above, I find that the MEI proposal offers a slight technical advantage over the technical proposals offered by ACTA and Bastion.

Regarding the Past Performance evaluation, I noted that all Offerors received a "Very High Level of Confidence" rating for their significantly relevant experience and very

high level of performance in the past; therefore, the Past Performance factor provided no meaningful discriminator in my selection decision.

Regarding the cost evaluation, the IET found the MEI proposal to be lower than either the Bastion or ACTA proposal in both proposed and probable costs. The IET made upward probable cost adjustments to MEI, minor upward adjustments to ACTA, and downward adjustments to Bastion, but these cost realism adjustments did not have a significant impact on the relative cost advantage held by MEI. I find the cost difference between MEI and the other two Offerors to be a meaningful discriminator in my selection.

In summary, MEI possesses a slight technical advantage over Bastion and ACTA in Mission Suitability, the most important Factor. This advantage is derived primarily from the two strength findings assigned to MEI's proposal under Subfactors A and B as I described above, in addition to their other Strength findings. With respect to Cost, the second most important Factor, MEI offered the lowest overall proposed and probable cost (including phase-in price as part of the overall cost evaluation), while Bastion offered the highest total proposed and probable cost. With respect to Past Performance, the least important Factor, all Offerors received a "Very High Level of Confidence" rating, and I found no meaningful differences between their ratings that would serve as a discriminator.

In conclusion, based on my review of Mission Suitability, Past Performance, and Cost, I have selected MEI for the award of the WSOC; MEI's slight technical advantage, coupled with its lowest overall total evaluated cost and "Very High" past performance rating, represents the best value to the Government.



William A. Wrobel
Source Selection Authority

20 AUGUST 2012
Date