

NASA Balloon Operations Contract (NBOC)

Response to Industry Questions on DRFP

11/12/13

1. The DRFP requirement for full cost build-up on all material cost for flights/campaigns on operations creates a strong disadvantage to non-incumbents. Could you provide “plug numbers” for these items so that non-incumbents could compete on a more level playing field?

NASA’s Response: The Government has provided non-proposed costs for core requirements in Section B of the solicitation along with revising the cost exhibits accordingly.

2. With what frequency is the contractor required to travel to Wallops?

NASA’s Response: The Contractor is required to travel to Wallops Flight Facility (WFF) at least twice annually to provide the Quarterly Report; Statement of Work (SOW) Section 3.1.10: Reviews has been revised accordingly. The Government will travel to Columbia Scientific Balloon Facility (CSBF) at least twice annually for the Quarterly Report. Other review requirements may necessitate travel to WFF or other NASA facilities. The SOW has been revised accordingly.

NASA Training requirements (SOW Section 3.1.7 Training and Certification) with regard to operations or technical courses may require travel to WFF or other NASA facilities (i.e., Ordnance Handler Certification, Operations Safety Supervisor, Cryogenic Safety, etc.). Travel for training will depend upon the offeror’s proposed approach to meet the training requirements.

3. Is there a contractor presence at Wallops for this program?

NASA’s Response: Yes. SOW, Section 3.3.4 WFF Balloon Engineering Support, has been updated accordingly.

4. Is the contractor responsible for facilities/equipment at Sweden, Antarctica, Australia, New Zealand, Ft. Sumner, etc.?

NASA’s Response: The Contractor shall be responsible for operation and maintenance of all Government Furnished Equipment (GFE) identified in the Real Property Manual (Request for Proposal (RFP), Attachment R) and NASA Property (RFP, Attachment B) and any GFE acquisitions henceforth. Equipment location is identified in the aforementioned documents. The Contractor shall be responsible for operating equipment germane to balloon operations at any location as specified in any relevant agreements/contracts, etc.

For sites other than Fort Sumner, Australia, and Palestine, the host range will be responsible for providing facilities and equipment and maintenance, thereof, as specified in the relevant agreement/contract, etc.

5. Are incumbent employees participants in a pension plan? If so is there any expectation that the successor contractor would be required to provide a defined benefit program?

NASA's Response: Yes, the current employees are under the New Mexico State University's pension plan. In accordance with L.10 and L.14 (3) Subfactor B, each offeror shall propose a total compensation plan. In accordance with M.4 (1) Subfactor B, the Government will evaluate an offeror's total compensation plan. It is up to offerors to determine the best approach to ensuring fair and reasonable compensation without impacting the ability to meet the requirements of the contract.

6. Will the Government provide a representative program staffing model?

NASA's Response: The Government will not be providing a representative program staffing model. The Government will be providing position descriptions for the technical labor categories currently used under the existing contract along with historical data relative to incurred direct labor hours. In addition, clause I.157 52.222-42 STATEMENT OF EQUIVALENT RATES FOR FEDERAL HIRES (MAY 1989) identifies the classes of service employees expected to be employed under the contract.

7. Will the Government provide a set of Standard Labor Categories and associated position descriptions for all current employees of the incumbent?

NASA's Response: See response to #6.

8. Will the Government consider providing a set value for travel, materials, and ODCs?

NASA's Response: See the answer to #1 and #2.

9. Can NASA provide a list of subcontractors currently providing services and materials to CSBF under the current contract with NMSU PSL?

NASA's Response: The Government will not provide a list of subcontractors under the existing contract. Subcontractor agreements are part of an offeror's approach to meeting the SOW requirements.

10. Costing direct and indirect costs, specifically indirect rates may vary considerably based on contract volume. Will the Government provide a Government Pricing Model or other data that defines the nominal annual program volume so that bidders can realistically size and cost overhead pools?

NASA's Response: The Government will not be providing a Government Pricing Model. The Government believes the revised SOW, the historical data for direct labor hours, and the non-proposed costs, will provide offerors the information necessary to develop estimated costs in response to this solicitation.

11. In section L.15(2)(v) page 90, the DRFP states that *"The Offeror shall show the total number of staff proposed for each position, how many are available from within the company, how many personnel will be obtained from the incumbent, and how many personnel will be newly hired."* Non-incumbent Offerors do not know the current incumbent workforce quantities for particular labor categories and therefore are unable to state how many will be hired from the incumbent workforce. Would the Government consider removing the requirement to specify the specific quantity of *"incumbent workforce personnel to be hired"* from the RFP, or provide this data to all Offerors?

NASA's Response: No changes will be made to L.15 based on this question. The position descriptions for the technical labor categories used under the current contract, along with an offeror's approach based upon reasonable assumptions will allow offerors to provide the required information.

12. What is the expected release date of the final RFP?

NASA's Response: November 18, 2013

13. How much time will Offerors be given to prepare a response once the final RFP is released?

NASA's Response: Currently, based upon an 11/18 release date, offerors will have 56 Calendar Days to develop and submit an offer.

14. Will NASA provide the annual / semiannual or quarterly reports submitted by CSBF under contract NAS5-03003, including individual after-operations / balloon flight summary documents?

NASA's Response: The Government will provide relevant documentation and reporting requirements during FY12 in the e-Library for this solicitation.

15. Will NASA provide additional information about current aircraft lease arrangements in support of CSBF?

NASA's Response: The Government will not be providing aircraft lease information. An offeror needs to develop an approach that will meet SOW Section 3.2.8 Aviation/Aircraft Support requirements.

16. Will NASA provide more details about the scope and expected staffing and budget for BPO engineering development and staff at WFF?

NASA's Response: The Government will not be providing additional details for staffing at WFF. An offeror needs to develop an approach that will meet SOW Section 3.3.4 WFF Balloon Engineering Support.

17. What formal or informal agreements does NASA/CSBF have with:

- Raven Aerostar for developing and providing balloons?
- NSF for support in Antarctica?
- Lockeed Martin for Antarctic operations? any cost sharing?
- Third parties for international aircraft support operations?

NASA's Response: The Government will provide representative examples of government agency and foreign government documentation. The Government handles agreements with foreign governments and government agencies. The offeror is expected to initiate and formalize non-governmental agreements as necessary to fulfill the requirements of the NBOC. Agreement requirements are specified in SOW Section 3.1.13

18. Would NASA consider providing balloons from Raven Aerostar as sole sourced GFE, outside of NBOC?

NASA's Response: The Government will not provide balloons as GFE for this contract since an offeror has the ability to contact the balloon manufacturer directly to determine an approach to meet the SOW requirements.

19. What agreements does NASA have in place for providing helium (He) to Palestine and Ft. Sumner? What agreements does NASA have in place for supplying He in the Antarctic?

NASA's Response: The NBOC Contractor may purchase Helium at US Government pricing through an existing NASA purchase agreement. Upon contract award, the Contracting Officer will issue the Contractor an authorization letter to purchase Helium under this contract. The

NASA agreement has been provided on the e-Library. Some Helium procurements may require the contractor to purchase outside of US Government pricing.

20. More generally, can NASA provide a copy of all related 3rd party agreements NASA holds that have relevance to CSBF, regardless of expiration date?

NASA's Response: See the answer to #17.

21. What relationship is expected between the contractor and NSF, the owner of many of the building onsite at Palestine? Is any reporting or accountability to NSF required? Are there any operating/lease agreements that could be added to the library?

NASA's Response: There is no ongoing/current relationship between the NBOC Contractor and NSF with regard to historical NSF facilities located at CSBF. There are currently no reporting requirements, lease agreements, etc. at the CSBF that require interface with NSF.

22. Does NASA have a site improvement plan describing anticipated/planned maintenance or upgrades at either Palestine or Ft. Sumner?

NASA's Response: The current Contract deliverables Construction of Facilities Plan and Engineering Plan have been posted to the e-Library. Funding of projects or procurements is limited and subject to annual review by the Government.

23. Does NASA anticipate a task under this contract for construction of facilities in New Zealand? The SOW shows a planned site in New Zealand; will NASA provide relevant site planning information for this, and any other planned or potential site?

NASA's Response: NASA does not have plans to construct or modify facilities at this time. Lease of existing facilities is anticipated for the initial campaign. The Offeror will be expected to arrange for lease of existing facilities under non-proposed costs. Currently there is no relevant site planning information.

24. Is DRFP H.20 intended to apply to the entirety of the contract, or only to Construction of Facilities? If it applies to the entirety of the contract, please provide clarification on the commission percentages in H.20 (b) and (c). H.20 (d) states that Contractor or Subcontract shall not be allowed overhead or commission on the overhead, profit, and/or commission received by subcontractors. Could you please provide an explanation regarding (1) whether the table represents that the total of Contractor overhead (including all indirects) and profits plus commission cannot exceed the 10% noted in TBP, (2) whether (c) is meant to convey that the Contractor may not apply markup of any kind (including recovery of procurement costs through a subcontractor or procurement rate,) to subcontractor costs at the fifth tier; and (3) why

overhead and commission cannot be allowed on the overhead, profit and commission received by subcontractors? It is noted that the Contractors will not, in every case, be entitled to a breakdown of costs that would allow them to isolate subcontractor's direct costs only.

NASA's Response: In accordance with RFP J.1, Attachment Q, this clause only applies to IDIQ FFP Construction. Offerors need to complete the fill-ins (i.e., delete TBP) and fill-in. The offeror should fill-in Commission percentage for the 1st 2 rows and Overhead and Profit percentages for the last row in the table. Paragraph (b) of the clause defines overhead and commission when this clause is applicable. Paragraph (c) means that a Contractor can apply no more than the percentage filled-in (not-to-exceed 10%) for commission on work performed by other than its own forces, regardless of the number of subcontractor tiers. Paragraph (d) is in accordance with the NASA FAR Supplement.

25. RFP H.20 – Equitable Adjustments – Does this clause apply to non-profit fee? Is there any portion of this contract for which a non-profit may NOT apply fee? How is H.20 (c) “not more than four percentages ...” intended to be applied? Does this limit overhead on subcontracts to 4%?

NASA's Response: This clause would apply to a non-profit. Paragraph (c) refers to the 4 areas in the table where offerors can propose percentages not-to-exceed 10 percent.

26. I. 105 “Liquidated Damages – Construction”. The title is actually Liquidated Damages - Supplies, Services, for Research and Development (Sept 2000) for use in FFP only. The correct clause should be FAR 52.211-12. What amount is the Government including in the blank and what is basis for its calculation as related to potential Government losses?

NASA's Response: Clause I.105 has been updated to cite FAR 52.211-12. This clause applies to IDIQ FFP Construction and since construction requirements are unknown at this time, the clause will not cite a specific dollar value. If construction work is needed under the contract, it will be issued via a Task Order (TO) under IDIQ and the TO will cite the liquidated damages associated with that work.

27. There are no example reports listed in the tech library as called out in the SOW, and listed in B.2 of the DRFP. Subsequently there are no examples of the over-arching NASA documents/guidelines that dictate report writing structures. Will these be included prior to the final RFP release?

NASA's Response: NASA does not identify a specific format or structure unless in such cases where an official form is required for submittal. The SOW establishes the minimum

requirements for each deliverable specified therein. The Contractor is responsible for structure. NASA may request format or content modifications based on submitted deliverable.

28. Will NASA provide access to the following documents referenced in 820-PG-7120.0.1 “Management of the Balloon Program”, 800-PG-7120.1.1, Project Plans, NASA Balloon Program Columbia Scientific Balloon Facility Balloon (CSBF) Ground Safety Plan, NASA Balloon Program, Columbia Scientific Balloon Facility Payload Safety Process, Columbia Scientific Balloon Facility Safety and Health Plan.

NASA’s Response: The Government has uploaded 800-PG-7120.1.1 to the e-library. The 820-PG-7120.0.1 is currently in the revision process and will be uploaded upon approval. The CSBF Ground Safety Plan and payload safety process are not relevant to current processes/practices. The governing NASA Safety documents have been uploaded to the e-library. The CSBF Safety and Health Plan is expected to be drafted by the offeror.

29. Will NASA provide access to the NASA Balloon Reliability and Quality Assurance/Quality Control Manual (as referenced in the past RFP NAS5-60747) or successor document?

NASA’s Response: No, the offeror is expected to draft a Quality Manual that conforms to the NBOC SOW requirements.

30. Will NASA provide site manuals and standard operating practice/procedures for
Alice Springs, Australia
Esrange, Sweden
Antarctic Operations
New Zealand Operations

NASA’s Response: The Government does not produce site manuals for specific sites. Refer to the CSBF User Handbook (OF-600-10-H). Esrange provides a site manual publicly. The NBOC Contractor will operate in accordance with NASA policies and/or Host site policies, whichever is more stringent.

31. Will NASA provide a summary of all international agreements that affect CSBF operations?

NASA’s Response: See the answer to #17.

32. Will NASA provide a summary of CSBF and WFF software that is in use (and hence must be maintained) for balloon operations?

NASA’s Response: The Government has revised the SOW accordingly.

33. Please complete RFP Section E.3 Government Contract QA Functions.

NASA's Response: After review it has been determined that E-3 in the RFP will be removed and replaced with Reserved.

34. Please provide the Wage Determination Tables applicable to Ft. Sumner, DeBaca County, NM.

NASA's Response: Wage Determination for DeBaca County will be included in the solicitation.

35. Please provide Mods 1-81 to the contract on the eLibrary site (currently a placeholder only)

NASA's Response: Since 99% of the requested Modifications are for funding only, we have determined that it would be no benefit to post Mods 1-81. The eLibrary will be revised accordingly.

36. Please provide Award Fee Letter for the current contract rating Period October 1, 2012 – March 31, 2013.

NASA's Response: The Government has posted the Award Fee letters for periods 1 – 19. We believe the information currently posted on the eLibrary is representative of what information would be contained in the requested document. The Government will not be posting the award fee letter for the period requested.

37. Have any Task Orders been revised since April, 2010? Please provide any Task Order Revisions issued since 2010.

NASA's Response: No. Task order(s) have been revised to extend the Period of Performance of the task order, but no new Task Orders have been issued.

38. B.9 Could you please clarify the maximum for the 5 year effort. There appears to be conflicting totals in B.9 and F.5

NASA's Response: The total maximum IDIQ value for the full 5-year effort if all options are exercised is \$67M. Clause B.9 (a) has been corrected to clarify that the \$25M IDIQ maximum is applicable for only the base period of performance. Clause F.5 identifies the IDIQ maximum value for each option period.

39. G.17 (e) Is NASA Form 1619 due semi-annually or annually? The Table in B.2 states semi-annually but the clause states annually.

NASA's Response: NASA Form 1619, in accordance with the clause, should be submitted annually. Clause B.2, Item 20 has been corrected to identify that it is an Annual submission.

40. H.7 (j) and L.9 (3) References the Safety and Health Plan list of hazardous operations and a list of major operations planned or required which may be deemed hazardous by the Contractor. Could you provide more definitive information regarding "hazardous operations" in the Technical Library to ensure that Contractor is aware of any potential hazardous operations?

NASA's Response: Potentially hazardous operations, articles, and substances are referenced in the following documents: NASA Procedural Requirements (NPR) 8715.3, Section 3.8 defines hazardous operations; NPR 1800.1 provides a list of Hazardous and Potentially Hazardous Substances and Articles; WFF Range Safety Manual 2002 Revision C identifies potentially hazardous operations; and the 2012 Antarctica Campaign Ground Safety Plan provides hazardous operations specific to the particular payload.

41. L.15.2(b) – Respectfully request to remove the requirement "The direct labor and indirect rates are "not to exceed" bid rates". The volatility of government contracting and health care costs makes a rate cap unrealistic. DCAA sets our rates based upon variables outside of our control. A cap to rates also implies a cap to fringe benefits, potentially placing an unfair burden upon employees if health care costs rise.

NASA's Response: L.15.2(b) will not be revised. For IDIQ contracts, direct labor rates, indirect rates, and fixed fee need to be identified in order to price out any task orders issue during the life of the contract. Clause J.1, Attachment F is required for IDIQ contracts.

42. As the Contractor may have to deliver hardware under some of the task orders, would the Government consider the addition of FAR 52.246-23 and FAR 52.246-24 regarding limitations of liability?

NASA's Response: It has been determined that the Government does not take title to equipment purchased; therefore, these two clauses will not be added to the RFP.

43. In the final RFP, FAR 52.236-4 must be completed, with esp. attention to test borings for leakage of fuel, site conditions, etc. Can the Government provide a preliminary completion of this clause at this time, for the benefit of potential bidders?

NASA's Response: This clause applies to fixed-price construction. Since there are no current requirements for construction, no fill-ins can be provided in the clause. If a fixed-price construction task order is issued, the fill-ins to the clause would be included in the task order.

44. SOW 3.1.10 – Please specify the location and expected number of contractor staff participants at the meetings and reviews listed. Will the Government provide this meeting information to offerors regarding meetings under the existing contract for the last 3 years?

NASA's Response: SOW section 3.1.10 has been revised. The Government believes the revisions address this question.

45. SOW 3.1.11 Contractors may need records in much greater detail than the Real Property Manual provides. Contractor requests records of all failures of electrical system, fuel storage system, last check of water towers, fire suppression system, environmental test chambers and equipment.

NASA's Response: Information is not available at this time nor will the Government provide such information.

46. B.3, Do the "to be proposed" numbers apply to the base period only or the entire contract?

NASA's Response: B.3 applies to the base period of performance which is identified in clause F.4.

47. B4 (a), Is the TBD period of performance related to the base and option years or to some other time period that NASA will identify?

NASA's Response: This will be filled in at time of award by the Government. This period of performance relates to the availability of funds at time of contract award, i.e., an allotment period.

48. B.9 (a), NASA identifies the minimum supplies and services funding as well as the maximum amount for the five-year period of performance. Do these numbers relate to the core program, IDIQ, or both?

NASA's Response: See the answer to #38.

49. B.9 (e), Does the maximum adjustment of 20% apply to the \$25 million discussed in B.9(a)? If not, to what figure does it apply?

NASA's Response: The 20% applies to the maximum IDIQ ceiling for each period; mathematically, it could be no more than 20% of the cumulative maximum value if all options are exercised.

50. F.5, The CSBF and Fort Sumner locations function as Government-owned, contractor-operated facilities. Recommend the personal identification card procedures should not apply to the contractor-operated locations in Palestine and Fort Sumner.

NASA's Response: SOW section 3.1.11 has been revised to require that personnel working at Palestine and Fort Sumner that don't require a NASA/GSFC PIV card shall be able to meet the requirements to obtain a NASA/GSFC PIV card.

51. L.13(5), M.4(1), The instructions state that the Mission Suitability Volume should parallel Section M. This subparagraph and others in Section L and M contain references to the general Statement of Work and also to four specific Statement of Work paragraphs. Is NASA expecting a standalone response to the entire Statement of Work in the Mission Suitability Volume or just responses to these four specific sections?

NASA's Response: NASA expects a response to the specific SOW sections identified in Section L.

52. L.14, Subfactor B, Major balloon operations required by this contract requires uniquely skilled and experienced personnel. To reduce NASA risk, cost, and safety issues, we recommend insertion of a requirement for key personnel resumes as follows:

“Resumes for all key members of the program team supporting this contract will be submitted with the proposal. These resumes shall be a maximum of two pages and shall include the person's title, work function under this contract, past experience in similar balloon operations, and any awards, recommendations, or commendations relevant to balloon operations. The number of resumes is unlimited and there are no page limitations.”

Recommend RFP Section L.13 be amended requiring Key Personnel resumes, citing location for resumes and no page limitation. Recommend RFP Section M.4 1 be amended to cite evaluation of Key Personnel resumes, as an evaluation subfactor.

NASA's Response: The Government will not request resumes in response to this solicitation.

53. L.15 (1), NASA states that the cost proposal should be prepared in a manner consistent with your current accounting system. Does this give the contractor flexibility to supply our own cost templates to roll up to NASA's general categories instead of using the NASA templates?

NASA's Response: No. The Government requires the excel spreadsheets, i.e., cost exhibits in this solicitation, to be completed and submitted by offerors.

54. L.15 (2), Will rate breakdowns and analysis be required for offeror having Government-approved fringe and indirect rates? If so, why?

NASA's Response: Yes, they are required in order to allow the Government to verify that the rates proposed are approved rates.

55. L.16, Contractors may have past experience which is very germane to the NBOC solicitation but not meet the minimum annual average cost of \$10 M. We recommend that NASA reduce the annual average amount from \$10 M to \$5 M.

NASA's Response: L.17 is the solicitation provision addressing the Past Performance Volume. It has been modified to state that a significant subcontractor is defined as any proposed subcontractor that is estimated to meet/exceed an average cost/fee of \$4M.

56. SOW, Page 4, Should the manning of the Operations Control Center be scheduled in the baseline assumptions for LDB and ULDB flights?

NASA's Response: Yes, refer to SOW Section 3.2.7.k.

57. SOW, Page 4, Recommend that NASA provide the length of each of the 17 campaigns so that appropriate costing can be accomplished.

NASA's Response: The following timeframes may be used as a basis for costing onsite establishment/de-establishment of campaigns:

Antarctica: October 15 – February 1
New Zealand: February 1 – April 1
Australia: March 1 – May 1
Spring Fort Sumner: April 1 – June 5
Sweden: May 1 – July 15
Palestine: June 1 – July 1
Fall Fort Sumner: Aug 1 – October 15

58. SOW, Page 5, Table 2, Does NASA desire purchase of hand launch and pathfinder balloons to be proposed under this contract?

NASA's Response: The Government requires purchases of all manifested missions and balloons for weather-related studies to be proposed under the contract. The NBOC SOW Section 2.0 scope has been revised for clarity.

59. Attachment E, Exhibits, NASA costing formats provide for separating overhead reporting for labor but not for ODCs. Recommend that NASA provide overhead categories for both labor and ODCs in all applicable exhibits.

NASA's Response: In accordance with L.16 Cost Volume and on each cost exhibit, "offerors may adjust elements of cost to be consistent with your current accounting system."

60. Attachment F, Certain categories of employees are required to receive overtime premium (by Federal law) if exceeding their normal work schedule. Recommend that the tables in Attachment F include regular and overtime rate columns.

NASA's Response: Attachment F has been updated to include columns for overtime rates.

61. SF33 indicates a proposal validity period of 300 days. How is this to be recognized in preparing cost estimates by contract years with regard to application of escalation percentages?

NASA's Response: Offerors are instructed to base their proposal on a Contract start date of October 1, 2014. The proposal validity date is different than the contract start date.

62. Section L.13 is used twice for L.13 Proposal Preparation - General Instructions, and L.13 Offer Volume.

NASA's Response: Section L has been corrected.

63. Section L.15 Cost Volume asks for a detailed cost data (26 exhibits) on the Core Requirements that only an incumbent can provide accurately without significant additional data. We suggest the cost volume be changed to a Government cost model with position descriptions, labor hours, plug numbers for material, subcontracts, ODCs, etc.

NASA's Response: See the answers to #1 and #6.

64. Section L.14, Subfactor A: The second paragraph tells the Offeror to address SOW section 3.3.3 Reliability and Quality Assurance Engineering Support, and says, "The Offeror shall explain the approach to ensuring quality services and products throughout the duration of the contract." The last paragraph in this section tells the Offeror to "...submit a written Quality Assurance Approach that shall identify the Offeror's approach to ensuring quality services and

products throughout the duration of the contract.” These two paragraphs of instructions seem largely redundant. Will the government please clarify the difference?

NASA’s Response: The Government seeks to ensure that the offeror provide within the proposal a “Quality Assurance Approach.” For clarity, L.14 Subfactor A has been revised.

65. Section L.15 Cost Volume asks for a detailed cost data (26 exhibits) on the Core Requirements. Will technical and cost data on existing materials, subcontracts, and ODCs be provided in the bidders library? If the data will be provided, when will it be available?

NASA’s Response: See the answer to #1.

66. Section L.14 Mission Suitability, Sub Factor B Management Approach requires a complete staffing plan. Is this within the 130 pages for the Mission Suitability Section?

NASA’s Response: Yes.

67. Section I.165 requires an ANSI 748 compliant Earned Value Management System (EVMS) that is costly to implement, and operate. What is driving the need for this level of EVMS? Has the current contract been modified to include this requirement?

NASA’s Response: The Earned Value Management System requirement has been removed from the RFP.

68. Please provide clarification as to the criteria used for defining significant subcontractors. Section L.13(a)(2) on page 75 defines major subcontractors as "any subcontract expected to exceed 15% of the proposed contract value", whereas significant subcontracts are defined in Section L.15 on page 86 as "a subcontractor expected to exceed 15% of proposed Core Requirements value, defined as basic period of performance and all option periods".

NASA’s Response: Significant Subcontractors are correctly defined according to Section L.15.

69. Section B.2 on page 3 includes Item 19 NASA Form 1489 and Item 20 NASA Form 1619. These forms are required under 1852.245-93, and they are part of Item 5 Contractor Acquired Reports. For completeness, we suggest adding NASA Form 1325, which is also required under 1852.245-93 on a semi-annual basis.

NASA’s Response: Added deliverable 39 to B requiring Form 1324 (not 1325) to be submitted semi-annually.

70. Documents 155958-DRAFT-001-005 and 155958-DRAFT-001-006 appear to be identical.

NASA's Response: The redundant document has been removed.

71. Section G.22 and G.23 point to the same attachments but should be separate lists for Government Furnished Property versus Installation Accountable Government Property. Please clarify.

NASA's Response: Section G22 and G23 have been revised accordingly.

72. Reference Section L.14 (3) Subfactor A, Scenario #2. The Government is requesting that "the [offeror's] response shall address all activities associated with the campaign as well as address competing support requirements during the Antarctic Campaign (October – January)". The bidders library does not include any past Campaign Plans as alluded to in other posted documents. Please provide the actual (approved) Antarctica and Ft Sumner Campaign Plans from the current contract so our Technical Understanding response meets a minimum level of compliance to Management of the Balloon Program Procedure 820-PG-7120.0.1.

NASA's Response: The Government will provide campaign documentation from FY12 for the Offeror's consideration.

73. Reference L.14 (3) Subfactor B, Phase-In Plan. The Government is requesting a phase-in plan "sufficient to ensure continuity and a smooth transition with the incumbent contractor during the 60-day phase-in period. The phase-in plan shall clearly demonstrate an ability to assume full contract responsibility on the effective date of the contract". The bidders library does not include a current list of vendors nor purchasing agreements nor subcontracts that would enable an offeror to meet the spirit and intent of the aforementioned phase-in requirement.

Please provide the list of current CSBF vendors, open purchase ordering agreements, and subcontractors to enable construction of a phase-in plan and enables offeror to provide assumption of full contract responsibility.

NASA's Response: The phase-on SOW has been updated and included in the solicitation. We will not be providing a list of vendors, open purchase orders, and subcontractors. The selected offeror will work with the incumbent to implement a successful phase-in.[

74. The Proposal Content and Page Limitations Table (Section L.13 (b) (1)) seems to have some discrepancies in the Past Performance Volume section. Deviations and Exceptions are in both (b) and (c). Termination is mentioned twice in (b). Finally, Small Business Subcontracting Plan History is missing in (b).

NASA's Response: L.13 has been revised accordingly.

75. Section L.16 (a) paragraph two says "For the purposes of the Past Performance Volume, a proposed significant subcontractor is defined as any proposed subcontractor that is estimated to meet/exceed an average annual cost/fee of \$10M." Based on past experience with services RFPs, we request this requirement be changed to \$1M.

NASA's Response: This provision has been revised to state an average annual cost/fee of \$4M.

76. Section M.5 paragraph four says "The total FFP Phase-In price will be presented to the Source Selection Authority as well as any costs issues or risks associated with the cost proposal." Please clarify if the proposed and probable Core Requirement Contract Costs of potential offerors will be presented to the SSA.

NASA's Response: The total FFP Phase-In price and the proposed and probable Core Requirements costs will be presented to the Source Selection Authority, as well as any cost risk associated with the proposal.

77. The near future in the NASA Balloon Operations Contract includes mid-latitude flights from New Zealand. We suggest the RFP request and evaluate proposal content to address the challenges of mid-latitude flights from New Zealand.

NASA's Response: The Government believes that should the offeror sufficiently describe their approach to management and coordination requirements in response to Scenario's 1 and 2, the Government will be able to ascertain the offeror's adequacy, efficiency, and effectiveness.

78. We have innovations and efficiencies that, with NASA approval, could be implemented during the course of contract performance. We suggest the RFP request and evaluate proposal content for proposed innovations and efficiencies in implementing the core requirements.

NASA's Response: The government believes the offeror's innovations and efficiencies will be made evident throughout the proposal based on their approach and cost exhibits.

79. Section L.15 requires a detailed bottoms-up cost estimate with 26 exhibits. To understand future mission requirements, we request the most recent Annual NASA Candidate Flight Plan, completed flight request packages with requirements from the PIs, and BPO developed Formulation or Project Plans for the FY15 and beyond be added to the bidders library.

NASA's Response: The Government will provide FY12 documentation for the Offeror's consideration. As of this writing, there are no documented plans developed for FY15 and beyond.

80. Section L.15 requires a detailed flight hardware and electronics cost. Survival rate and possible reuse of electronics and mechanical flight hardware is a key parameter to develop a reasonable cost. We request the BPO provide historical data on flight equipment survival in the bidders library.

NASA's Response: See answer to #1.

81. Reference Section B.9: The maximum amount (for all 5 years and all options) of \$25,000,000 seems low and inconsistent with other areas of the DRFP. Will the government please confirm this amount as the total maximum expected value of all goods and services to be ordered over the five year period?

NASA's Response: Clause B.9 has been corrected to state the IDIQ maximum is \$25,000,000 for the period of performance; which is 2 years. Clause F.5 states the increases to the maximum IDIQ value for each option period of performance.

82. Section L.14, Subfactor B requires that Offerors provide "written position qualifications for the specific labor categories envisioned for this requirement." Also, position qualifications are to be proposed in Attachment F to the contract. Do position qualifications need to be duplicated in the Mission Suitability Volume or may the proposed Attachment F be referenced from the Mission Suitability Volume?

NASA's Response: The Cost Volume of the solicitation has been revised to recognize that position qualifications will be provided under the Mission Suitability Volume and will not be duplicated in the Cost Volume.

83. Is the bidder's library complete? If not, what additional information does the government anticipate adding, and when will it be added?

NASA's Response: The e-Library is not complete. The Government will provide all additional documentation by release date of Final RFP.

84. Section L.13 (b) (1): The 20-page limit for the Basis of Estimates seems unduly restrictive given the volume of price data that has been requested, i.e. labor, materials, and ODCs for nineteen different WBS elements of the core requirement over the potential five-year period of

performance. Will the government consider increasing the page limit for Basis of Estimates to 40 pages?

NASA's Response: The 20 page total limit for BOE has been revised to 2 pages PER BOE at the lowest BOE level for prime contractor and each individual significant subcontract separately. So a BOE shall be provided from the prime contractor and each individual significant subcontract for the lowest WBS levels listed below:

WBS Level 3 – Technical, Business Management & Facilities Support (Exhibit 2A)

WBS Level 4 – Flight Operations & Engineering NOT Directly Related to an Individual Campaign (Exhibit 2C)

WBS Level 5 – Each Individual Campaign (Exhibit 2E) (Note an Exhibit 2E and a BOE shall be submitted for EACH of the 18 individual campaigns contract years 1-5)

85. Section L.15 requires a detailed bottoms-up cost estimate with 26 exhibits. We request the government Helium procurement contract information including provision for delivery at all the balloon launch sites be added to the bidders library.

NASA's Response: The Government will provide the relevant NASA contract for Helium and post it to the e-library.

86. SOW Section 3.3.4 WFF Balloon Engineering Support requires "Developing and conducting tests at the WFF balloon materials laboratory." What is the division of labor and cost between the NBOC and other contractual mechanisms (e.g. WESC) when the tests are conducted?

NASA's Response: Historically the Balloon Research and Development Laboratory is managed by the BPO and operated by non-NBOC technicians. Tests are directed by the BPO Lab Manager with input from NBOC WFF Engineering Support, as necessary. Tests are conducted by the technicians. There are however infrequent tests that may necessitate NBOC engineering support due to complexity or engineering requirements. The NBOC SOW has been modified for clarification.

87. Section L.13 Proposal Preparation – General Instructions, Section (a) Proposal Format and Organization, paragraph (1) requires electronic versions of the text in Volumes I – IV be submitted in MS Word. However, paragraph (4) states "Two electronic copies of the Offeror's proposal, designating one as "back-up," shall be submitted (in addition to the hardcopies specified above) in Microsoft Word and Excel (Windows XP) or Portable Document Format (version 8.0 or greater)." Should electronic versions be submitted in Word/Excel or as a .pdf?

NASA's Response: In accordance with the RFP, Cost exhibits shall use Microsoft Excel 2003 and shall contain all formulas." Offerors have a choice of converting Microsoft Word documents to pdf or not.

88. Section L.13 Proposal Preparation – General Instructions, Section (a) Proposal Format and Organization, paragraph (1) requires 1 hard copy of the Cost Volume for DCAA. Section L.15 Cost Volume instructions (page 86) state, "Offerors, including proposed significant subcontractors, shall submit one separately packaged copy of their cost proposal marked for their cognizant DCAA auditing." However, Section L.13 Proposal Preparation – General Instructions, Section (a) Proposal Format and Organization, paragraph (2) states, "Offerors, and proposed major subcontractors (as defined as any subcontract expected to exceed 15% of the proposed contract value shall forward two (2) copies of their Cost Proposal, marked "NNG13436908R/NASA Proposal Evaluation Material", to their cognizant Defense Contract Auditing Administration (DCAA) office." Will the offeror submit 1 or 2 copies of their Cost Proposal to DCAA?

NASA's Response: Section L .13 has been revised for clarity.

89. Section L15. 2. (r): Bidding the ground support equipment (GSE) in Exhibit 15 requires intimate knowledge of the existing GSE design, limited life items, and current state of wear as well as the anticipated mission requirements over the potential five year period of performance. Will the government be providing such information in the Bidders' Library? Alternatively, will the government consider providing a plug numbers for the anticipated direct costs of GSE?

NASA's Response: See answer to #1.

90. Reference Enclosure 1 NASA NBOC Scenario #1: Is the scenario 1 payload assumed to be the first to show up for the fall campaign?

NASA's Response: The offeror should refer to the Government's response to #57 as it provides campaign timeframe.

91. Reference Enclosure 1 NASA NBOC Scenario #1: Is manning the down-range tracking station required for this mission?

NASA's Response: The Government expects the offeror to be able to determine mission suitability requirements based on the provided assumptions and produce an appropriate response.

Alternatively, will LOS to the tracking aircraft satisfy this requirement?

NASA's Response: The Government expects the Offeror to be able to determine mission suitability requirements based on the provided assumptions and produce an appropriate response.

If down range tracking station is required, how many people are required to support it?

NASA's Response: The Government expects the offeror to be able to determine mission suitability requirements based on the provided assumptions and produce an appropriate response.

Are they part of the recovery crew when the flight terminates?

NASA's Response: The Government expects the offeror to be able to determine mission suitability requirements based on the provided assumptions and produce an appropriate response.

92. Reference Enclosure 1 NASA NBOC Scenario #1: Will the down range tracking station be required by any of the other four missions?

NASA's Response: The offeror may make its own assumptions. The Scenario does not require the offeror to address any of the "at least 4 other missions."

93. Reference Enclosure 1 NASA NBOC Scenario #1: Do they intend on manning the Operations Control Center back at CSBF to validate the OTH capability to qualify the payload for the follow on Antarctic flight?

NASA's Response: The Government expects the Offeror to be able to determine mission suitability requirements based on the provided assumptions and produce an appropriate response.

94. Reference Enclosure 1 NASA NBOC Scenario #2: Does NSF cover all the transportation costs (both sea and air)? Including personnel?

NASA's Response: Costing of the Scenarios is not required. However the transportation, logistics, and coordination activities for sea shipments between Port Hueneme, CA and Christchurch, NZ, and sea/air shipments between Christchurch, NZ and McMurdo Station, Antarctica, including any support activities on station and at the Long Duration Balloon facility are covered through the NASA-NSF agreement.

95. Reference Enclosure 1 NASA NBOC Scenario #2: Are CSBF support staff sent to the ice for the duration, or can they be cycled in and out?

NASA's Response: The Government expects the offeror to be able to determine mission suitability requirements based on the provided assumptions and produce an appropriate response.

96. Reference Enclosure 1 NASA NBOC Scenario #2: Some missions may require more than one trip by recovery aircraft to move them off the ice. How is this handled? What provisions must be made for removal of payloads the following year(s)?

NASA's Response: The NASA-NSF Balloon Implementation Management Plan establishes the guidelines for recovery aircraft. Typically NSF provides additional aircraft sorties and if needed recovery resources the following year, as agreed upon between NSF and NASA. The Offeror is expected to coordinate with the Antarctic Support Contract (ASC) contractor (Lockheed Martin) and communicate those requirements to NASA. NASA will handle NSF coordination and agreements for follow-on or additional support.

97. Reference Enclosure 1 NASA NBOC Scenario #2: Provided NSF pays for part of the logistics in getting equipment to the ice. How and when does NSF take over the costs of transport? Same applies to special equipment for arctic regions clothing, training etc..

NASA's Response: See the answer to #94. The Offeror may choose to augment specialized arctic and other gear that is not provided by the NSF.

98. Reference Enclosure 1 NASA NBOC Scenario #2: What is required in terms of obtaining permission from other countries when recovering from their territories on the continent?

NASA's Response: Refer to SOW Section 3.1.13, Agreements. Termination and/or Overflight Agreements with foreign entities, including Government entities, are handled by NASA. The offeror is expected to communicate all known mission support requirements to NASA.

99. Reference Enclosure 1 NASA NBOC Scenario #2: Are machine shop and other fabrication facilities provided by NSF for CSBF and science support efforts, or are there facilities at McMurdo that need to be maintained by the contractor?

NASA's Response: The NBOC maintains limited fabrication capabilities at the Long Duration Balloon remote site. Additional support through labor or facilities at McMurdo Station shall be coordinated with the ASC contractor.

100. Reference Enclosure 1 NASA NBOC Scenario #2: Does the TDRSS omni antenna provide LOS coverage for the entire rotation of the balloon flight, or is a down range tracking station required?

NASA's Response: LOS coverage is nominally provided from the LDB facility following launch and within the viewable radius from the balloon to the ground station. TDRSS provides OTH coverage. With regard to the downrange station, the Government expects the offeror to be able to determine mission suitability requirements based on the provided assumptions and produce an appropriate response.

101. Reference Enclosure 1 NASA NBOC Scenario #2, Mission 2: There appears to be a contradiction in the minimum and comprehensive requirements. The minimum is 4mb +/- 1mb for 6 days which should mean between the float remains between 3-5mb. The comprehensive requirement is 3mb +/- 1mb for 12 days which requires a float that remains between 2-4 mb. This means a flight @ 2-3 mb would meet the comprehensive altitude requirements, but not the minimum. Please confirm the requirements.

NASA's Response: The Government has adjusted the minimum altitude requirement to 4mb +2/- 1mb for clarity.

102. Reference Enclosure 1 NASA NBOC Scenario #2, Mission 3: In "comprehensive requirements" there seems to be a typo "16 days at 5mb +/- mb". What is the tolerance?

NASA's Response: The Government has updated Scenario #2, Mission 3 comprehensive success to: 5mb +/-1mb.

103. Reference Enclosure 1 NASA NBOC Scenario #2, Mission 4: Is the LOS requirement still in place when the planned mission departs the continent?

NASA's Response: The Offeror shall assume the LOS telemetry minimum requirement is within the viewable radius originating from the LDB facility following launch. The Scenario #2 Description has been modified for clarity.

104. In order to accurately assess the total staff and effort to be transitioned during Phase-In, will the government please provide the anticipated type and amount of IDIQ work expected to be transferred at contract start?

NASA's Response: The Government anticipates the offeror to assume continuance of the following IDIQ tasks: Low Density Supersonic Decelerator and the Super Pressure Balloon team.

105. In order to accurately assess the total staff and effort to be transitioned during Phase-In, will the government please provide the planned FY 2014 flight schedule?

NASA's Response: The Approved FY2014 Flight Manifest will be posted to the e-library by November 30, 2013.

106. Section L.15 requires a detailed flight hardware and electronics cost. Survival rate and possible reuse of electronics and mechanical flight hardware is a key parameter to develop a reasonable cost. We request the BPO provide historical data on flight equipment survival in the bidders library.

NASA's Response: See the answer to #1.

107. Section B.2 on page 3 includes Item 20 NASA Form 1619. We suggest changing the Item 20 schedule from Semi-Annually to Annual.

NASA's Response: B.2, item 20 schedule has been changed to Annually.

108. ODCs are categorized into broad areas (subcontracts, balloons, helium isopaks, expendable gases, aviation/aircraft, freight, travel, etc.). Some of these broad categories involve expenditures from a few thousand dollars up to millions of dollars. NASA may want to consider revising the list of ODCs to reflect necessary contract expenditures (e.g., automotive supplies, vehicle fuel, and aviation fuel).

NASA's Response: See answer to #1.

109. The columns identified include Vendor, Quantity Required, and Unit Prices. NASA may want to consider eliminating these columns as the list of vendors for parts, systems, and equipment could be substantial in size.

NASA's Response: See the answer to #1. Cost Exhibits have been updated.

110. NASA may want to consider eliminating columns Part Number, Quantity Required, and Unit Price for the same rationale mentioned in Question/Comment 2.

NASA's Response: See the answers to #1 and #109.

111. NASA may want to consider elimination the Vendor column for the same rationale mentioned in Question/Comment 2.

NASA's Response: See the answers to #1 and #109.

112. In the Industry Day Slides, the government lists "Super Pressure Balloon Support" including analysts and developmental tests as a subject area for "Anticipated IDIQ Tasks". However, in SOW Table 2 titled Baseline Balloon Procurement Model, super pressure balloons are listed. Are these balloons purchased as part of the Core contract? If so, will the government provide a technical specification for these balloons?

NASA's Response: Balloon procurement is expected under Core. A sample Super Pressure Balloon SOW has been uploaded to the e-library.

113. Please provide the Fort Sumner Hangar Lease Contract. It is needed to understand the facilities costs in Fort Sumner.

NASA's Response: See answer to #1.

114. Please provide RFP Attachments B-Part 1 in an editable format, so it can be sorted and organized to better understand the extent of the NASA property.

NASA's Response: Attachment B-Part 1 has been uploaded in Excel format.

115. SOW Table 1 titled Baseline Mission Model shows a New Zealand launch in Q2 FY15. Will this be the first launch from New Zealand? What will be the status of the New Zealand launch site and infrastructure before the launch? What assumptions should be made to bound the costs of using the New Zealand launch site?

NASA's Response: The FY15 New Zealand Campaign will be the first ULDB launch campaign from New Zealand. See the answers to #1 and #23.

116. RFP Attachment P titled DRD-WBS Template EVM-OCFO indicates that a Draft WBS is required with the proposal (Block 6.0 INITIAL SUBMISSION) but is not included in Section L. What is required in the proposal?

NASA's Response: The Earned Value Management System requirement has been removed from the RFP.

117. Given the number of balloons and the amount of HE required, the balloon and HE procurement could meet the criteria for "Significant Subcontractors" defined in the cost volume. Since these procurements are sole source or controlled by an existing government contract, there is little value in requiring additional cost documentation in the proposal. We suggest they be excluded from the "Significant Subcontractor" definition.

NASA's Response: We believe there is value in looking at Significant Subcontractor information even if it is based upon a sole source.

118. RFP Attachment P titled DRD IMS Template EVM-OCFO indicates that a preliminary schedule is required with the proposal (Block 6.0 INITIAL SUBMISSION) but is not included in Section L. What is required in the proposal?

NASA's Response: The Earned Value Management System requirement has been removed from the RFP.

119. RFP Attachment P titled DRD EVM Plan Template EVM-OCFO indicates that an initial submission is per NFS 1852.234-2 or its Alternate I. NFS 1852.234-2 is not clear when the initial EVM Plan is due. Section L does not indicate the need for a EVM Plan. Is an EVM Plan due with the proposal?

NASA's Response: The Earned Value Management System requirement has been removed from the RFP.

120. Communications questions: What type of phone system is used at Fort Sumner and Palestine? What are the requirements for data bandwidth in and out of each facility? Is there an interface of the phone switch to the Land Mobile Radio System (LMRS)? Does the CSBF maintain a FCC license to use VHF radios for direct aircraft and FAA communication?

NASA's Response: The phone system currently in use is commercial. The Government will not provide specific bandwidth requirements. There is no interface to the LMRS. CSBF solely maintains National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) licenses for domestic telemetry as provided by NASA.

121. SOW Section 3.1.11 includes GSA vehicles: How many GSA/leased vehicles are expected in the 2015 - 2020 timeframe? Is there a phased replacement plan? Where is the closest GSA motor vehicle service center to the CSBF in Palestine?

NASA's Response: The offeror is expected to determine the type and amount of GSA leased vehicles needed to meet the SOW requirements. The vehicle replacement schedule will be in accordance with GSA requirements based on vehicle year, mileage, and other factors. The offeror is expected to determine GSA service center proximity based upon CSBF operating location.

122. In section 3.2.8 "Aviation / Aircraft Support" of the SOW (pages 19 and 20, part a) define the mission requirements for normal CONUS operations. At the end of this section (top of page

20 of the SOW), a different set of Canadian termination/recovery operations mission requirements are provided stating "...*all minimum requirements listed above* are required *in addition* to the following requirements..." (Italics added for emphasis).

The statements "all minimum requirements listed above" and "in addition" can be read in a manner that presents conflicting sets of range requirements (are these additive requirements, requirements to be additionally superimposed, or requirements that replace/supersede the CONUS requirements?) It is possible to read the "in addition" Canadian requirements in three different ways, with three different range requirements.

Please clarify the intention in regards to range requirements for Canada operations. A clarification could be read as follows:

For Canadian termination/recovery operations, the aircraft shall have a service ceiling of 31,000 feet or greater, all minimum requirements listed above are required, except as regards the aircraft range, the following range profile shall apply:

- i. Transit 350 nautical miles (nm) to the termination area with full mission aircrew and mission loading;
- ii. Conduct tracking/termination operations for a minimum of 90 minutes, with final 30 minutes at altitudes below 10,000 feet above mean sea level (MSL);
- iii. Transit to an initial destination airfield 100 nm distant, conduct an instrument approach to a missed approach, then to a satisfactory alternate airfield 300 nm distance for mission termination with a minimum of 60 minutes fuel reserve.

NASA's Response: The Government has provided clarification in the updated NBOC SOW.

123. In the opening paragraph of section 3.2.8 "Aviation / Aircraft Support" of the SOW (page 18), makes it clear that the intention is only for one aircraft to be deployed to Canada, however it is not clear if the backup aircraft needs to meet the range requirements specified for Canadian operations. Do both aircraft need to meet the Canadian operations range profile, or does only the primary aircraft need to meet the Canadian range profile?

NASA's Response: The Government has provided clarification in the updated NBOC SOW. Only one aircraft is required to meet Canadian operations requirements.

124. Reference SOW Table 1 "Baseline Mission Model" and RFP Exhibit 13 "Range Expenses": Please provide the ongoing intergovernmental/interagency agreement and/or contract between NASA and Australian Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO)

for the use of the Alice Springs Launch Station so that we can understand the NBOC offeror's cost scope.

NASA's Response: See the answer to #17.

125. Reference SOW Table 1 "Baseline Mission Model" and RFP Exhibit 13 "Range Expenses": Please provide the ongoing intergovernmental/interagency agreement and/or contract between NASA and ESA for the use of the ESRANGE launch site so that we can understand the NBOC offeror's cost scope.

NASA's Response: See the answer to #17.

126. Reference SOW Table 1 "Baseline Mission Model" and RFP Exhibit 13 "Range Expenses": Please provide the ongoing intergovernmental/interagency agreement and/or contract between NASA and NSF for the NASA Balloon Infrastructure at McMurdo and for the use of the McMurdo launch site so that we can understand the NBOC offeror's cost scope.

NASA's Response: See the answer to #17.

127. Reference SOW Table 1 "Baseline Mission Model" and RFP Exhibit 13 "Range Expenses": Please provide the anticipated intergovernmental/interagency agreement and/or contract between NASA and any New Zealand agencies for the use of the Wanaka launch site so that we can understand the NBOC offeror's cost scope.

NASA's Response: See the answers to #17, #23, and #115.

128. Reference SOW 3.2.8.b.iv: Please provide the technical specifications of the portable aircraft telemetry station, in particular, the signal interfaces, power interfaces, and Size, Weight, Power and Cooling (SWaP-C) requirements. This information is fundamental to addressing the aircraft support requirements.

NASA's Response: The Government will not provide technical specifications nor is it needed to address the RFP. The Offeror shall assume that the current GFE Seat Pack complies with Federal Aviation Regulations and NASA policies and falls under NPR 7900.3 sections 2.4.2.3 – 2.4.2.5. As the name implies, the seat pack occupies the space of one seat and attaches via standard aircraft seat mounting hardware.

129. Reference SOW 3.2.8.b.v: We suggest the SOW state the fundamental requirement of the portable telemetry station to receive balloon flight telemetry and command flight terminations

rather than specify the number and type of additional antennas to be installed on an aircraft, since there are a number of methods to send/receive S, L, UHF and VHF signals from aircraft.

NASA's Response: The GFE seat pack has a fixed configuration in accordance with the NBOC SOW. The GFE Seat Pack shall meet the fundamental mission support requirements of SOW Section 3.2.8. The offeror shall assume that the current Seat Pack meets the aforementioned requirements.

130. Reference Exhibit 1 "Expendable gasses" and KSC contract NNK09290805R: With the BLM helium reserve about to be exhausted this year, will the KSC helium contract that supplied unrefined Helium from BLM continue to be the purchase vehicle for CSBF helium usage? Is NASA contemplating relaxing the requirement to use the KSC contract and permitting NBOC offerors the option to price helium from sources other than those on the KSC contract?

NASA's Response: Congress extended the helium reserve bill. The NASA Helium contract is available on the e-library. The Offeror has the option to procure helium from sources outside the Government contract to meet operational needs.

131. Section L.14, Subfactor A - Technical Approach and Understanding the Requirements includes a paragraph on optimum skill mix and staffing. We suggest moving this paragraph into Subfactor B with the staffing plan to group similar topics.

NASA's Response: The solicitation remains unchanged based on the question above.

132. Section M.4 Mission Suitability Evaluation Factor has a weights and scoring section that allocates points per subfactor. Given that this procurement is about managing the CSBF workforce who has the requisite technical knowledge, we believe the subfactor A and B scores should be reversed to emphasize management, and provide a fairer playing field for the competition.

NASA's Response: The Government believes the points attributed to each subfactor will result in a fair evaluation for Mission Suitability.

133. Reference RFP Enclosure 1 - Scenarios: In the Antarctica scenario, the third paragraph of the Scenario Description says "For the purpose of this scenario a total of 5 flights have been scheduled by NSF." The rest of the scenario only mentions four flights. Is this an error, or part of the scenario. If there is a fifth flight, more information is required.

NASA's Response: The allocation and scheduling of flights refer to NSF "recovery" flights. The Scenario has been updated for clarification.

134. Draft RFP Contract J.1 indicates the need for a New Technology Reporting Plan with the proposal but Section L does not include the requirement. What is required?

NASA's Response: The plan will be required to be submitted and become part of the awarded contract. The plan is not a part of the proposal evaluation. This is the offeror's proposed reporting plan in accordance with the New Technology clause.

135. Reference Attachment B Part 4 - Flight Hardware: Does the Support Instrumentation Package (SIP) include TDRSS transponders or are the TDRSS Transponders shown on the list separately the only ones available?

NASA's Response: The SIP's listed do not include the TDRSS Transceiver or Transponder. Each SIP requires integration of the TDRSS Transponders/Transceivers.

136. Reference Attachment B Part 4 - Flight Hardware: Does the Support Instrumentation Package (SIP) include all antennas and RF cables?

NASA's Response: Yes, excluding backups.

137. Reference Attachment B Part 4 - Flight Hardware: Are the "Spare Stacks" listed in the LDB Electronic Hardware inventory SIP Housekeeping Stacks or Science Stacks?

NASA's Response: The "Spare Stacks" can be configured to be either Housekeeping or Science depending on the mission requirements.

138. Please provide CSBF Frequency Plan by launch location.

NASA's Response: There is no formal CSBF Frequency Plan available. The NASA allocated frequencies, which may be considered for all launch locations have been uploaded to the e-library.

139. Reference Attachment A - SOW: Per the SOW Table 1 titled Baseline Mission Model, how many of the LDB missions use TDRSS HGA? Or if specific missions are unknown how many are typically used per year?

NASA's Response: Specific mission requirements dictate use of the HGA. Typically anywhere from 1 to 3 missions will require HGA in a given LDB campaign.

140. Reference Attachment B Part 4 - Flight Hardware: Does the Consolidated Instrumentation Package (CIP) include LOS transceivers, RF cables and antennas

NASA's Response: The CIP does include transmitters, receivers, command interfaces, and data instrumentation functions along with cabling and antennas.

141. Reference Attachment B Part 4 - Flight Hardware: Does the UTP/RFU include the UHF flight termination receiver(s) and antennas?

NASA's Response: Yes.

142. Please provide block diagram of the Support Instrumentation Package (SIP) and Consolidated Instrumentation Package (CIP) to confirm capabilities and facilitate cost estimates.

NASA's Response: Available information on the SIP and the CIP are available on the e-library under "Enclosure 7: LDB Support Overview" and "CIP Interface User Handbook," respectively.

143. Reference Attachment B Part 4 - Flight Hardware: The flight hardware list does not include batteries and solar arrays. Are the batteries included in the CIP and SIP? Are there any solar arrays in inventory?

NASA's Response: Batteries and Solar Arrays are not included in the figures. They are budgeted and procured as suits the mission requirements.

144. In *Scenario #2*, the minimum and comprehensive (desired) requirements are defined as: "The science minimum requirements are at least two rotations or 15 days at 4 millibar (mb) +/- 1 mb. The comprehensive duration requirements are 40 days at 5mb". This would seem to indicate that the minimum float altitude is 3 to 5 mb (129 kft-117kft) while the desired altitude is 5 mb (117kft). Was the intent to have the minimum altitude range exceed the desired or comprehensive altitude?

NASA's Response: See the answer to #101.

145. Reference: *Section L.14 Mission Suitability Proposal Instructions, 2. Mission Suitability Proposal Format, Subfactor B – Management Approach (Including Safety and Health Plan)*
This Section requires that position qualifications be provided in the Mission Suitability Proposal and will be eventually incorporated into Attachment F, Position Qualifications Matrix of a resultant Contract. This text could potentially amount to several tens of pages. Please consider removing these documents from the page count requirement for the Mission Suitability Proposal.

NASA's Response: See the answer to #82.

146. What is the current scope of the support being provided by CSBF?

NASA's Response: CSBF is one of several organizations supporting the Low Density Supersonic Decelerator (LDSD) flight project. One LDSD launch is planned for the June time frame of 2014 and two during the June-Early August timeframe of 2015, to be launched from Pacific Missile Range Facility (PMRF), Kaua'i, Hawaii. The LDSD project is managed within the Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL). See documentation posted to the e-library (ldsd-intro-v25.pptx) for overview of current flight configuration and profile. JPL selected NASA Wallops Flight Facility (WFF) to partner with them to provide:

- Balloon launch services
- Mechanical and Electrical Engineering support, principally through the NASA WFF Advanced Engineering & Technology Development (AETD) Directorate
- Balloon Program Office (BPO) oversight for balloon launch services
- NASA WFF Project Management (PM) for all WFF centered support

NASA WFF LDSD PM also is responsible for:

- Range services coordination
- NASA Safety analyses and Safety Officer support
- NASA WFF centric support element's schedules and budgets

The NASA WFF LDSD PM reports to the NASA WFF Code 800 Sub-Orbital and Special Orbital Projects Directorate and to the JPL LDSD PM. The JPL LDSD PM is responsible for the overall scope & requirements, schedule, and budget for the LDSD project.

CSBF, working in conjunction with BPO and the broader LDSD project team, has a more limited role as compared to most Science Mission Directorate (SMD) flight projects. Whereas with SMD flights where CSBF is nominally responsible for formulation, planning, provision of all flight and ground support systems, and flight management of SMD flight projects from beginning to end as approved by BPO, for LDSD CSBF is primarily responsible for:

- Development of launch technique and systems to accommodate LDSD requirements
- Training of CSBF personnel on use of new launch technique and systems
- Working with BPO and the LDSD Project to provide review and input for development of flight operation project plans and safety plans
- Provide formal and informal updates on schedule and budget for CSBF support activities
- Presentation of status and readiness for LDSD, BPO, and/or WFF level reviews
- Provide meteorological analyses for launch and trajectory of planned LDSD launches to be conducted from PMRF
- Arrange shipping of all CSBF provided equipment to/from PMRF
- Campaign support at PMRF for balloon launch operations

Because the LDSD Project is currently in the process of defining the details of flight operations support, the following should be considered as high level plans at this time. The LDSD Project

is responsible for schedule, risks, and budget. The LDSD funding is separate from the SMD line of funding for the NASA balloon program. Any risk leans that might be considered given this level of detail should be recognized to rest for the most part at the Project level. CSBF campaign support includes:

- Arranging logistics support to/from PMRF for all CSBF personnel and CSBF provided equipment
- Arranging of billeting accommodations and per diem for CSBF personnel while at PMRF
- Provide trained launch support crew
- Provide balloon and helium
- Provide all launch ground support equipment, set up, and preparations for launch
- Attachment/handling of LDSD TV for launch preparation
- Provide all ground support equipment for CSBF telemetry command and control
- Telemetry command and control for balloon navigation, flight termination, and LDSD Test Vehicle (TV) release
- Pointing Rotator for azimuth orientation of LDSD TV prior to release
- Meteorological support for launch and flight and recommendation for launch
- Handling of balloon inflation and launch at direction of Flight Director (FD) and/or Range Safety Officer (RSO)
- Termination of flight at direction of LDSD FD and/or RSO
- Presentation of status at all campaign level reviews

147. What additional work is expected for CSBF after the current [LDSD] IDIQ task is completed in April 2014?

NASA's Response: CSBF will continue with support as annotated above that may be required in support of the LDSD project. As the 2014 will be the first launch with the goal of completing some level of testing and verification of the actual launch, flight, termination and recovery processes, there may be requirements from the LDSD Project to make some changes or accommodations heretofore unrealized. As previously stated, CSBF will support the 2014 and 2015 PMRF campaigns, which would include any necessary refurbishments, repairs, replacements, and/or modifications in order to meet LDSD requirements.

148. What are the top level requirements for the test flights in 2015?

NASA's Response: Please reference above information and posted LDSD materials.

149. Can you share any details on the proposed operations from Barking Sands?

NASA's Response: The above information and posted LDSD materials should provide a level of detail sufficient to gain understanding of goals, objectives, project rationale, required CSBF support and potential challenges. Additional pertinent information specific to Barking Sands [PMRF] is as follows:

- Based upon work completed thus far, meteorological studies show that several launch conditions should be realized for the planned campaign window. Stratospheric winds favorable to float trajectory and trade winds appear to offer sufficient opportunities for the planned flight operations to be compatible with PMRF Safety requirements.
- It is believed that the major objective for CSBF for developing a remote launch capability has been realized.
- The LDSO Project is on an aggressive schedule with a firm budget, which is highly dependent upon a seamless continuity of development, reliability and mission assurance testing and verification, and skills required for this unique set of balloon launch operations and engineering support requirements.
- PMRF Safety and Range Operations may require additional changes to planned procedures that are not yet realized.
- PMRF will provide the launch area and facilities for all LDSO flight operations.
- Launch and flight operations will be under direct management of the LDSO PM, NASA WFF PM, NASA BPO Mission Manager, and ultimately the PMRF Range Commander. Upon real-time approval, CSBF will be responsible for balloon inflation and launch. Subsequent to launch, the PMRF Range Commander and LDSO Project designated flight managers will be responsible for flight, TV release, calling for flight termination, and recovery of TV and balloon carcass planned for ocean recovery.

The accompanying LDSO project materials have been approved for public release. No other LDSO documents are available for public release at this time.

150. In the DRFP letter, the anticipated contract award date is listed as July 31, 2014 and the contract start date is listed as October 1, 2014. The mission model, shown in Table 1 in the SOW, states that Ft. Sumner flights routinely carry over into the start of the next fiscal year. The result is that the NBOC contractor may be required to provide aircraft support for Ft. Sumner flights at contract start. Based on our review of the aircraft requirements in Section 3.2.8, we estimate that the process to design, implement and certify the required antenna accommodations will take 4 months to complete. Thus, a non-incumbent offeror has to commit to lease or buy aircraft and incur modification costs prior to award in order to be ready for Ft. Sumner flights. Would the government consider specifying the contract start on a date with no immediate need for the aircraft antenna package, i.e. from November 1 to March 31?

Alternatively would the government consider adding the following statement to SOW Section 3.2.8 b. v., "These antenna accommodations are required beginning 4 months after contract start."

NASA's Response: See the answer to #128. The Government believes that NASA aircraft review process can be accommodated within the time of phase in and contract start to support ongoing operations.