

**SOURCE SELECTION STATEMENT FOR THE
ROBOTICS, VEHICLE, AND GRAPHICS
SIMULATION SERVICES CONTRACT
AT JOHNSON SPACE CENTER**

On February 27, 2014, I, along with other key officials of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's (NASA's) Johnson Space Center (JSC) met with the members of the Source Evaluation Board (SEB) appointed to evaluate proposals for the Robotics, Vehicle, and Graphics Simulations Services (RVGSS) Contract Solicitation, NNJ13470997R. The RVGSS solicitation is reserved as a total small business set-aside under the authority of Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) 6.203(a) and has been assigned the North American Industry Classification System code 541511, Custom Computer Programming Services, with a Small Business Administration-designated small business size standard of \$25.5 million in average gross sales over a 3-year period.

The RVGSS will be awarded as a single award Indefinite-Delivery / Indefinite-Quantity (IDIQ) type procurement. Authorization to perform work under the RVGSS contract will be through the issuance of Cost-Plus-Fixed-Fee (CPFF) and Firm-Fixed-Price (FFP) task orders. The 30-day phase-in effort will be FFP. The basic period of performance for this acquisition is 3 years, from July 1, 2014, through June 30, 2017. There are two 1-year options. The IDIQ guaranteed minimum to be ordered under RVGSS base contract value is \$100,000.00 and the potential contract value is not to exceed \$49.7 million. This acquisition combines the government's needs currently addressed in the Robotics and Graphics Simulation Services (RGSS) contract, NNJ09HB89Z, and the simulation services and flight software/avionics support supplied under the Engineering Services for Rendezvous and Proximity Operations contract, NNJ12HB20C.

This procurement provides the NASA/JSC Engineering Directorate with software development services that will support the Johnson Space Center and its external customers in developing software systems and simulation tools for the International Space Station Program, the Multi-Purpose Crew Vehicle Program, the Advanced Exploration System Program, and other programs and projects. The scope of the RVGSS effort is to provide simulation model development, integration, verification, validation, analysis, documentation, maintenance, and troubleshooting support of Trick-based non-real-time (NRT) and real-time (RT) human-in-the-loop (HITL) simulations including on-orbit robotic manipulator systems, advanced future robotic systems, Software, Robotics, and Simulation Division (SRSD)-based robotic projects, guidance, navigation, and control (GN&C) of space-based vehicles for all flight phases including rendezvous, proximity operations, and docking, On-Board Computer Systems (OBCS) simulations and emulation of Flight Software (FSW) systems, and astronomical object surface interaction of space-based vehicles. The primary purpose of these simulations is to address engineering analysis, operations, and training requirements. Another objective of this contract is to provide development and support services for avionics and embedded FSW systems.

Background

On April 12, 2013, a Request for Information (RFI)/Sources Sought Synopsis was posted to the NASA Acquisition Internet Service (NAIS). Five teams responded with capabilities statements; this information was used to determine that a total small business set-aside was appropriate for this acquisition. An Industry Day Synopsis was posted on June 6, 2013, to announce that a virtual Industry Day would be held on June 19, 2013, with one-on-one sessions to follow on June 19, 2013, and June 20, 2013. Twenty companies responded to the industry day announcement. Six one-on-one sessions were held in-person or on the telephone. These companies, excluding any companies that chose to remain anonymous, were added to the Interested Parties List, which was posted to NAIS with Modification 1 to the RFI/Sources Sought Synopsis on July 10, 2013. Modification 1 to the Industry Day Synopsis, containing questions and answers from Industry Day, was posted to NAIS on July 18, 2013.

On August 20, 2013, a pre-solicitation synopsis with a technical library and draft versions of Section C (Statement of Work), Data Requirements Documents (DRDs), Standard Labor Categories (SLCs), Section L (Instructions, Conditions, and Notices to Offerors), and Section M (Evaluation Factors for Award) was posted to NAIS. Questions and answers regarding the information releases in the pre-solicitation synopsis were posted via Modification 1 on September 20, 2013. Modification 2, posted on September 26, 2013, was issued to make the public aware that the full Request for Proposals (RFP) had been posted, replacing all draft documents released on August 20, 2013. Modification 2 also addressed that a Pre-Proposal Conference and Technology Demonstration would be held on October 10, 2013, that questions regarding the solicitation were due by October 16, 2013, and that proposals were due by 1:30 p.m. on November 1, 2013. Amendment 1 to the solicitation was posted on September 30, 2013, to replace a mislabeled document in the RFP.

The Government shutdown from October 1, 2013, to October 16, 2013, left the members of the Source Evaluation Board unable to answer any questions regarding the solicitation or conduct the Pre-Proposal Conference and Technology Demonstration as scheduled. Because of this, Modification 3 to the pre-solicitation synopsis was posted on October 29, 2013. This modification extended the due date of proposals to November 22, 2013, and included responses to questions received in response to the RFP (Questions & Answers Posting 2), Pre-Proposal Conference charts, Amendment 2 of the RFP, and an announcement that the Pre-Proposal Conference and Technology Demonstration would be held on October 30, 2013. Amendment 2 of the RFP included the addition of Attachment J-14 (Government Property Management Plan), changed all dates in the RFP to accommodate the new Pre-Proposal Conference date, question due date, proposal due date, and performance dates, updated Attachment J-01 (Data Requirements List (DRL)), and increased the past performance page limitation.

The Pre-Proposal Conference and RVGSS Technology Demonstration occurred on October 30, 2013. Modification 4 was posted November 5, 2013, to NAIS. This modification updated and replaced, in its entirety, Questions & Answers Posting 1. Modification 5 was posted on November 12, 2013, and included Questions & Answers Posting 3.

Proposals were due on November 22, 2013, by 1:30 p.m. The RFP divided the proposals into 5 volumes: Volume I – Mission Suitability Factor, Volume II – Past Performance Factor, Volume III – Cost and Price Factor, Volume IV – Model Contract, and Volume 5 – Other Proposal Requirements. All volumes were due by 1:30 p.m., November 22, 2013. Past Performance was optionally due by 1:30 p.m., November 15, 2013, but was not officially due until November 22.

Evaluation Procedures

In accordance with provision M.4 of the RFP, Evaluation Factors for Award,

“The Government will award a contract resulting from this solicitation to the responsible offeror whose proposal represents the best value to the Government. This procurement shall be conducted utilizing a combination of mission suitability, past performance, and cost/price evaluation factors. The lowest price proposals may not necessarily receive an award; likewise, the highest technically rated proposals may not necessarily receive an award.”

The order of evaluation for proposals was determined by random draw.

In accordance with provision M.5 of the RFP, each proposal received a mission suitability score based on the following subfactors and associated numerical weights:

Technical Approach	500 points
Management Approach	450 points
Safety and Health Approach	50 points
TOTAL	1000 points

For mission suitability, the SEB developed a consensus listing of strengths, weaknesses, and deficiencies for each of the four Mission Suitability sub-factors (Technical Approach, Management Approach, and Safety and Health). The SEB completed this assessment for an individual sub-factor before proceeding to the next sub-factor. The following definitions were used for findings:

Finding	Definitions
Significant Strength	Some aspect of the proposal that greatly enhances the potential for successful contract performance
Strength	Some aspect of the proposal that will have some positive impact on the successful performance of the contract

Weakness	A flaw in the proposal that increases the risk of unsuccessful contract performance
Significant Weakness	A flaw that appreciably increases the risk of unsuccessful contract performance
Deficiency	A material failure of a proposal to meet a Government requirement, or a combination of significant weaknesses in a proposal that increases the risk of unsuccessful contract performance to an unacceptable level

The mission suitability subfactors were evaluated and assigned an adjectival rating using the following scale:

Adjectival Rating	Definitions	Percentile Range
Excellent	A comprehensive and thorough proposal of exceptional merit with one or more significant strengths. No deficiency or significant weakness exists.	91-100
Very Good	A proposal having no deficiency and which demonstrates overall competence. One or more significant strengths have been found, and strengths outbalance any weaknesses that exist.	71-90
Good	A proposal having no deficiency and which shows a reasonably sound response. There may be strengths or weaknesses, or both. As a whole, weaknesses not offset by strengths do not significantly detract from the Offeror's response.	51-70
Fair	A proposal having no deficiency and which has one or more weaknesses. Weaknesses outbalance any strengths.	31-50
Poor	A proposal that has one or more deficiencies or significant weaknesses that demonstrate a lack of overall competence or would require a major proposal revision to correct.	0-30

Past Performance was also evaluated and was based on information provided by the offeror in its narrative, past performance questionnaires, communications with listed references, and any other information obtained independently by the SEB. All past performance information was evaluated with respect to recency, relevancy, quality, and safety. In accordance with Section M.5, Past Performance was rated using the following level of confidence ratings: Very High Level of Confidence, High Level of Confidence, Moderate Level of Confidence, Low Level of Confidence, Very Low Level of Confidence, and Neutral/Unknown Confidence.

Under the Cost/Price factor, the Government performed cost/price analysis to ensure that the proposed prices are fair and reasonable. A cost analysis was performed to include a cost realism analysis in accordance with FAR Part 15 and NFS Part 1815. As part of the cost realism analysis, the Government assessed the offeror's proposed direct labor rates, indirect rates, and resources based on the offeror's selected approach and developed a probable cost estimate for the RFP Sample Task Orders (STOs). The evaluation of the cost factors resulted in a probable cost, which may differ from the proposed cost, and reflects the Government's best estimate of the cost that is most likely to result from the offeror's proposal.

In accordance with Section M.4, "Mission Suitability and Past Performance, when combined, are significantly more important than Cost/Price. Mission Suitability is more important than Past Performance. Past Performance is more important than Cost/Price."

Proposals were received from the following companies:

LZ Technology, Inc. (LZT)
1110 NASA Parkway, Suite 650
Houston, TX 77058

MacLean Engineering and Applied Technologies, LLC DBA METECS (METECS)
1030 Hercules Ave.
Houston, TX 77058

All proposals were received on time in accordance with the RFP. Both proposals were determined to be acceptable in accordance with FAR Part 15 and NFS Part 1815 as well as the criteria stated in the RFP. The order of evaluation was METECS first, followed by LZT.

The results of the initial evaluation were presented to the Source Selection Authority (SSA) at the Competitive Range/Award without Discussions Meeting on February 27, 2014. The results from this meeting are summarized below.

Assessment

Following the presentation by the SEB Chairperson, Contracting Officer, and Cost/Price Analyst, and my vigorous questioning of the SEB, I fully considered the findings the SEB presented to me. I commended the SEB on their comprehensive and detailed evaluation of the two proposals. Following the discussion I made a comparative assessment of the proposals based upon the evaluation factors in the Solicitation.

In making my selection decision, I reviewed the relative importance of all evaluation factors. I considered the factors and found true discriminators between the proposals, especially in the highest rated factor, Mission Suitability. The RFP delineated three evaluation factors – Mission Suitability, Past Performance and Cost/Price. Mission Suitability and Past Performance, when combined, are significantly more important than Cost/Price. Mission Suitability is more important than Past Performance. Past Performance is more important than Cost/Price.

In accordance with the evaluation procedures described above, I made the determination to not establish a Competitive Range. The RFP advised offerors that the Government intended to evaluate proposals and award a contract without discussions with offerors and that the offeror's initial proposal should contain the offeror's best terms. As the SSA, I reviewed and confirmed the validity of the associated Significant Strengths, Strengths, Weaknesses, and Significant Weaknesses of the proposals. I reviewed and analyzed the SEB recommendations regarding the levels of confidence for Past Performance evaluations and I concur with the proffered recommendations. I considered the probable cost analysis presented by the SEB and confirmed that the findings were fair and reasonable and supported by the record. I determined, with the concurrence of the Contracting Officer, and for the reasons detailed in this source selection statement, that it was not necessary to deviate from the RFP's stated position with regard to award on initial proposals. It was not reasonable to expect LZT, even with the benefit of rigorous discussion of its proposal's various Significant Weaknesses and Weaknesses in the most important evaluation factor, Mission Suitability, to close the substantial gap between its proposal and METECS' proposal. In addition, the significant difference in the past performance evaluations for the two proposals indicates that discussions could not reasonably be expected to result in changes that would drive the ultimate award decision. Furthermore, it is in the best interest of the Government to award without discussions as there is no advantage or value obtained from entering discussions with a competitive range of one. As discussed further below, the proposal presented by METECS offers substantial value to the Government and any weaknesses are corrected after contract award, during the phase-in period.

In initially comparing the two proposals, I observed that METECS received an "Excellent" from the SEB for the Technical Approach subfactor under Mission Suitability. The SEB found that METECS presented a "Good" Management Approach and a "Very Good" Safety and Health approach under the Mission Suitability factor. The SEB evaluated LZT as "Fair" under the Technical Approach subfactor, "Good" under the Management Approach subfactor, and "Excellent" in Safety and Health. I first performed an analysis of the Significant Strengths, Strengths, Weaknesses, and Significant Weaknesses of METECS and LZT separately, to see if I weighted those differently from the evaluation of the SEB. I did not take any exceptions with the findings of the SEB.

METECS

Within the Mission Suitability area, I first analyzed the ratings given to METECS for its Technical Approach. I observed that the SEB evaluated METECS' Technical Approach as "Excellent," (the highest adjectival rating possible), receiving two Significant Strengths, four Strengths, and one Weakness. I found the overall Technical Approach proposed by METECS was of exceptional merit in that it demonstrates the ability to deliver higher-fidelity simulations through the use of proposed innovative approaches in parallel processing architecture, surface interaction simulation modeling, and contact dynamics. In addition, METECS demonstrated exceptional merit through a technically advanced Sample Task Order 3 approach that simulates surface interaction with astronomical objects. I was also impressed with how METECS's proposal offered efficiencies that would save both time and money. The use of the proposed parallel processing architecture dramatically reduces the computational time associated with

complex modeling. The use of the proposed approach to contact dynamics reduces the labor traditionally required for intensive modeling. The proposed operational implementation of the Robotic On-Board Trainer generates cost efficiencies and streamlines use of International Space Station crew time on orbit. Furthermore, the proposed innovative Continuous Integration solution significantly decreases the integration and testing costs of developing simulation software through automated testing across the entire scope of the RVGSS contract.

While I concur with the SEB that the METECS proposal garnered a weakness for failing to provide sufficient detail relating to the travel costs associated with Sample Task Order 5, I am not concerned that this represents an insurmountable risk to contract performance. The travel proposed for this Sample Task Order was not unreasonable; it simply lacked the specific details required by the RFP. In practice, the risk associated with this weakness can be addressed during the negotiation of each individual task order. During actual contract performance, each Task Order will be negotiated and any travel costs will need to be supported with the required detail before the Task Order is issued. Therefore, while this issue is appropriately classified as a weakness, I am not overly concerned that it represents an unavoidable risk to successful contract performance.

Next, under Mission Suitability, I noted that the SEB evaluated METECS's Management Approach as "Good". In particular I noted that METECS received one Significant Strength, one Strength, one Significant Weakness, and one Weakness.

First, METECS received a Significant Strength for its Key Personnel Approach, specifically for identification of the critically complex areas of the statement of work and assignment of highly-qualified functional experts as key personnel to each of these areas. These measures instill confidence in the continuity of successful contract performance by requiring coordination between the Government and the contractor prior to the diversion of identified key personnel. I was also impressed with METECS' ability to identify the skills critical to performance of the highly complex requirements under RVGSS and METECS' proposal to retain 100% of the incumbent workforce identified as having those critical skills within the technical disciplines necessary to meet the requirements of the Sample Task Orders. I believe these measures increase the potential for successful performance of this contract.

METECS did receive a Significant Weakness for its plan to allow the METECS Program Manager and Primary Contract Specialist to work directly with the NASA Contracting Officer's Representative and Task Order Monitor to specify and understand Task Order technical and staffing requirements. This expressed method of communication may circumvent the required interface with the NASA Contracting Officer and could present problems with the proper authorization for contract work. However, my concerns are mitigated because any successful Offeror would be required to submit its Management Approach for post-award approval (during the phase-in period), allowing the Government to establish the appropriate lines of communication and subsequent work authorization prior to the commencement of any contract work. I anticipate that the clarification and correction of this inappropriate communication plan will be straightforwardly correctable. It is reasonable for me to rely on NASA's trained acquisition workforce to rectify this proposed approach during the routine post-award approval process to ensure that the contractor's submittal of this Type 1 Data Requirements Document

(DRD) meets the Task Ordering contractual requirements (requiring written approval by the NASA Office of Primary Responsibility) before implementation. While METECS' expressed misunderstanding of Government communication requirements represents a Significant Weakness in this proposal, the gravity of this misunderstanding is not proportional to its remedy. While the proposal may reflect a flawed understanding of an important premise of Government contract administration, the issue is simply remedied by a post-award discussion that articulates the roles and responsibilities of NASA's Contracting Officer, Contracting Officer's Representative, and Task Order Monitors. METECS will make the required modifications to the Management Plan, as such changes will be required to obtain the necessary approval to begin contract performance. Furthermore, in reviewing this misunderstanding's impact on the overall Management Approach in the proposal, I conclude that the required changes may be integrated into the contract without impacting the proposal's overall approach and efficiencies. The functional change itself is nominal as it merely requires METECS to obtain clarification and understanding of Task Order requirements from the individual properly authorized to provide such direction.

While I concur with the SEB's classification as a weakness regarding the Total Compensation Plan (TCP), I also find that the issue related to the major subcontractor's failure to submit a written TCP is easily correctible and an oversight that did not have a significant impact on the SEB's ability to properly evaluate the METECS proposal. Though the major subcontractor did not provide the written TCP narrative per the DRD-03 requirement, they did provide most of the elements required by the solicitation in their TCP worksheet. The subcontractor's submission contained the Total Compensation Templates that provided cost information relevant to the Total Compensation Plan. In addition, the cost volume narrative mentioned most of the elements required for the major subcontractor's wages, escalation rates, and fringe benefits. However, a greater level of detail will be required before DRD-03 can be finalized and approved. Based upon the detail provided within the proposal, I have determined that the proposed compensation is reasonable. Further details regarding compensation will be provided after contract award. I find that the lack of detail in the proposal does not represent an insurmountable risk to this evaluation process, the expected cost, or to successful contract performance.

Finally, under Mission Suitability, I noted that the SEB evaluated METECS' Safety and Health Approach as "Very Good". In particular I noted that METECS received one Significant Strength and two Weaknesses. I was impressed with the detailed "Commitments and Deliverables" matrix in the METECS proposal and believe it will increase the potential that the contract will be performed in a safe manner. While the METECS proposal did not fully describe the methods for communicating with employees in response to emergencies, and did not follow JSC's current Risk Assessment Code, I do not feel these issues are significant risks to successful contract performance because this information is contained in a Type I DRD document, and therefore requires written approval by NASA. The Safety and Health Plan must be approved by the Government before it is incorporated into the contract. The contract phase-in period provides the Government with the opportunity to raise these concerns to the contractor and allows the contractor to make the minor corrections required to bring this plan into full compliance with Government expectations.

Overall, my review confirms that the SEB appropriately evaluated the METECS' proposal. I concur with the SEB's evaluation of METECS' proposal as "Excellent" for the Technical Approach subfactor under Mission Suitability. I likewise confirm and concur with the SEB evaluation that METECS presented a "Good" Management Approach and a "Very Good" Safety and Health approach under the Mission Suitability factor.

LZT

I noted the SEB rated LZT considerably lower than METECS in the more highly valued Mission Suitability subfactor of Technical Approach. LZT received no Significant Strengths, one Strength, three Weaknesses, and a Significant Weakness in this subfactor.

For LZT's single Strength in the Technical Approach, I agreed with the SEB that LZT's proposal included a unique approach of combining the development and maintenance of related graphics product lines. Sharing development, maintenance, and support personnel across these product lines increases the probability that the Government will realize cost efficiencies.

On the other hand, LZT received three Weaknesses and a Significant Weakness under the Technical Approach subfactor. The Significant Weakness was based on LZT's inability to adequately demonstrate an appropriate understanding of the technical requirements of Sample Task Order 1, specifically those for subtask 1.1, next generation MBDyn, subtask 1.2, Visiting Vehicle simulation prototype, and subtask 2.3, TS21 Integrated Core Dynamics Engine. The resources proposed to perform Sample Task Order 1 are not supported with adequate rationale to demonstrate LZT's understanding of the complexity of the work. While LZT provides Impacts of Innovation, the rationale provided does not justify LZT's reduced Full Time Equivalents as a result of the implementation of these proposed innovations. The combined impacts place the Government at significant technical risk that requirements will not be met due to a lack of understanding of the scope of Sample Task Order 1 requirements.

In addition, the LZT proposal review resulted in the assessment of a Weakness for failing to adequately demonstrate an understanding of the NExSyS EDGE Enhancements subtask technical requirements for Sample Task Order 4. The LZT proposal does not address the required artificial rock imagery capabilities for asteroid and planetary exploration, which results in an increased risk to the successful performance of contract requirements to simulate astronomical surface obstacles in support of future advanced exploration studies. LZT's proposal was also assessed a Weakness for failing to adequately demonstrate an understanding of the Multi-Purpose Crew Vehicle subtask technical requirements for Sample Task Order 5. The LZT proposal failed to appropriately demonstrate the operation and analysis required of system integration testing. Therefore, there is an elevated technical risk to the successful performance of Multi-Purpose Crew Vehicle support. Furthermore, the LZT proposal does not adequately demonstrate an understanding of the Core Flight Software subtask technical requirements for Sample Task Order 5. The LZT proposal provides a technical approach built upon the foundation of a target-specific system, which is not required by Sample Task Order 5, and which does not directly address the development of CFS product line releases as required in the RFP. This proposed solution does not address the CFS product line elements called out in the Sample

Task Order 5 subtask requirements and, therefore, increases the risk to successful contract performance.

Overall, these numerous oversights and omissions within the proposal caused me to believe that LZT does not have a comprehensive understanding of the RVGSS scope of work. The proposal did not adequately demonstrate an understanding of the technical requirements of Sample Task Orders 1, 4 and 5. Therefore, I feel this proposal presents an elevated technical risk to the successful performance of contract requirements.

Next, I looked at the Management Approach subfactor to Mission Suitability for LZT. I noted that LZT received no Significant Strengths, one Strength, and two Weaknesses.

First, I agreed with the SEB that the LZT proposal presents a comprehensive and detailed contract phase-in plan. The phase-in contract schedule demonstrates a complete plan and increases the potential for a seamless transition upon contract award. I feel this plan will benefit the Government during the initial contract start-up and increases the potential for a successful contract phase-in.

I further concurred with the SEB's assessment of the Weaknesses identified in the LZT proposal. The proposal's "Organization and NASA Reporting Relationships" chart shows direct relationships between the President of LZT and the NASA COR and NASA Division and Branch Chiefs. However, the chart does not show any reporting relationship between LZT and the NASA Contracting Officer. This does not properly reflect the appropriate interfaces for technical and contractual direction. During its presentation to me, the SEB explained that its evaluation of the LZT proposal resulted in a "Weakness," instead of a "Significant Weakness," because the LZT proposal contained other references that evidenced an understanding of proper lines of contract communication. Therefore, these conflicting statements simultaneously presented a proper and an improper understanding of contract administration requirements. With that understanding in mind, my perspective on this Weakness mirrors the viewpoint I expressed for METECS' similar "Significant Weakness." While LZT's chart detailed a misunderstanding of Government communication requirements and represents a Weakness in this proposal, the magnitude of this misunderstanding is not proportional to its remedy. I anticipate that rectifying these inappropriate lines of communication will not be difficult. I reasonably rely on NASA's trained acquisition workforce to correct this proposed approach during the routine post-award approval process. Any concerns I have are mitigated by the requirement for any successful Offeror to submit its Management Plan for post-award approval. Likewise, in reviewing this misunderstanding's impact on the overall Management Approach for this proposal, I conclude that the required changes may be integrated into the contract without impacting the proposal's overall approach and efficiencies. The functional change itself will merely bring the entire approach into alignment with the portions of the proposal that reflect appropriate lines of contract communication.

Additionally, I agreed with the SEB in their finding that LZT's management approach for addressing workload peaks and valleys inappropriately relied upon its major subcontractor's continued work on a NASA contract that is currently undergoing a re-competition. During proposal evaluation and Source Selection for RVGSS, the ultimate outcome for this follow-on

contract is undecided and LZT may be unable to fill or retain critical skills in the event that its major subcontractor is not selected as the awardee for this new contract. I concur that this is a risk to contract performance that is appropriately classified as a Weakness in the proposal.

I noted the one Significant Strength and one Weakness in LZT's Safety and Health Approach. I agreed with the SEB that LZT's Safety and Health Plan demonstrates a complete and highly effective safety and health approach. I was impressed with the detailed approach taken to integrate each element of DRD-05 into the company's "Golden Rule" safety philosophy and believe it will increase the potential that the contract will be performed in a safe manner. I also note that the incorrect Risk Assessment Code is used in the LZT proposal. However, my perspective on this Weakness aligns with the viewpoint I expressed for METECS' similar Weakness. The Health and Safety plan is a Type I DRD document and will be subject to Government approval during phase in. Therefore, I do not consider this Weakness to be an insurmountable risk to contract performance.

Mission Suitability Subfactor Comparison Analysis:

Technical Approach

Under the Technical Approach subfactor, the SEB rated METECS as "Excellent," awarding METECS two Significant Strengths, four Strengths, one Weakness, and no Significant Weaknesses. The SEB rated LZT as "Fair" under this subfactor and assigned no Significant Strengths, one Strength, three Weaknesses, and one Significant Weaknesses.

I determined METECS' Technical Approach to be of great value to the Agency. I noted and agreed with the SEB's assessment. In particular, I noted that METECS' proposal includes an innovative Continuous Integration solution that stands to significantly decrease the integration and testing costs across the scope of the entire RVGSS contract. In addition, the introduction of technical methodologies currently utilized in the private sector will enhance the technical level of end products produced under task orders similar to Task Order 3. Furthermore, the use of parallel processing architecture reduces computational time while delivering higher-fidelity simulations. As previously detailed, the various Significant Strengths and Strengths clearly outweigh the relatively minor weakness related to the lack of detail on Task Order 5's proposed travel costs.

On the other hand, LZT's Technical Approach lacked a comprehensive understanding of the RVGSS scope of work. The LZT proposal failed to adequately demonstrate an understanding of Sample Task Orders 1, 4, and 5, including the NExSyS EDGE Enhancements subtask technical requirements, the Multi-Purpose Crew Vehicle subtask technical requirements, and the Core Flight Software subtask technical requirements. This proposal presents an elevated technical risk to the successful performance of contract requirements, a risk that is not offset by any Significant Strengths. While the proposed approach of combining the development and maintenance of graphics product lines is expected to generate cost efficiencies, I did not consider this Strength to adequately compensate for the technical risks presented by this proposal.

Overall, I assess METECS' proposal to provide a superior Technical Approach that will increase the potential of successful contract performance. The innovations and solutions proposed are of great value to the Government and evidence a plan to generate cost efficiencies, to utilize time- and labor-saving methods, and to deliver high-fidelity simulations to meet the Government's requirements under the RVGSS contract.

Management Approach

I note that both the METECS proposal and the LZT proposal received an Adjectival rating of "Good" in the Management Approach subfactor. The SEB assigned METECS one Significant Strength, one Strength, one Weakness, and one Significant Weakness. On the other hand, LZT earned no Significant Strengths, one Strength, two Weaknesses and no Significant Weaknesses in this area.

While the METECS proposal expressed a method of communication that may circumvent the required interface with the NASA Contracting Officer, and while the proposal failed to specifically provide the major subcontractor's written Total Compensation Plan, I have previously articulated that I believe these to be issues that are easily correctable during contract phase in. Likewise, LZT's failure to show any reporting relationship between LZT and the NASA Contracting Officer is easily identified and corrected during contract phase in. All of these matters are incorporated into documents that are subject to Government approval. Therefore, I do not feel that these issues represent insurmountable risks to successful contract performance.

LZT was also given a Weakness for relying on corporate reachback into its major subcontractor's existing contract which is due to expire shortly after award of the RVGSS contract. The proposal made no mention of corporate reachback after the major subcontractor's existing contract expires. While this weakness does present a risk to LZT's ability to meet critical skills during workload peaks, the weakness did not strongly factor into my assessment of the LZT management approach as the risk has not yet materialized and may potentially evaporate if the major subcontractor does, indeed, become the awardee of the follow-on Simulation and Software Technology II (SSTII) contract. While I consider this weakness to be a risk, the potential for this risk to dissipate prevents me from placing undue weight on this Weakness. Furthermore, this issue is incorporated into LZT's Management Approach, which is subject to Government approval post award. I believe there is a strong potential that communications between NASA and LZT during any contract phase-in would identify how LZT plans to address workload peaks and valleys if its major subcontractor does not secure the SSTII contract.

As described earlier in this Source Selection Statement, I found METECS' overall management approach to increase the potential of successful contract performance by identification of the critically complex areas of the statement of work and by assigning highly-qualified functional experts as key personnel to each of these areas. This management approach is further enhanced by the proposal's plan to retain 100% of the incumbent workforce that METECS has identified as having those critical skills within the technical disciplines necessary to meet the requirements of the Sample Task Orders.

In contrast, LZT's Strength in the Management Approach relates to its ability to efficiently execute a contract phase-in. While the smooth transition between contracts is of value to the Government, this benefit does not specifically endure during the life of the contract. This Strength is critical to ensure the contract begins without unnecessary confusion or delay, and may prepare the contractor to be at an ultimate state of readiness when receiving the first Task Orders; however, the Strength does not necessarily translate into the management and administration of the work under those Task Orders. For this reason, I find METECS' Significant Strength and Strength in its Management Approach to be more valuable to the Government than the Strength detailed in LZT's Management Approach.

Overall, for the reasons specified above, my decision does not disproportionately emphasize the Weaknesses and Significant Weakness identified in either proposals' Management Approach. While the Significant Weakness and Weaknesses reflect important issues of contract administration and performance, all are subject to some level of Government approval and potential correction during contract phase-in. I am more influenced by the value of the Strengths and Significant Strength presented in these proposals. Given that LZT's Strength relates to activities that occur only at contract start-up, and that METECS' Significant Strength and Strength may potentially benefit the Government throughout the life of the RVGSS contract, I give the METECS proposal a slight advantage over the LZT proposal in the Management Approach subfactor. Overall, the Management Approach presented by METECS provides the Government with significant value.

Safety and Health

METECS received a rating of "Very Good" in its approach to Safety and Health while LZT received a rating of "Excellent" for this subfactor. I found particular merit in METECS' detailed "Commitments and Deliverables" matrix. Likewise, I found LZT's "Golden Rule" safety philosophy to be complete and highly effective. While LZT's rating exceeded METECS for in the Safety and Health subfactor; I did not find Safety and Health to be a discriminator in my evaluation of the two proposals. Both proposals presented highly effective plans and both provided an approach demonstrating that the contract could be performed in a safe manner. I believe that the weaknesses outlined in both proposals are easily correctible during the Type I DRD approval process and could be rectified before the completion of contract phase-in. As such, the differences in evaluation ratings did not represent meaningful discriminators in my source selection decision.

Mission Suitability Summary:

When I considered the three subfactors that comprise Mission Suitability, I found that METECS was substantially better than LZT in Technical Approach, slightly stronger in Management Approach, and approximately equal in Safety and Health Approach. I agreed with the SEB's assessments of the two proposals. I noted that across the Mission Suitability Factor, METECS earned four Significant Strengths and one Significant Weakness. The METECS proposal's innovations, efficiencies, and overall Mission Suitability approach provides the Government with

significant value. On the other hand, across Mission Suitability, LZT earned just one Significant Strength and one Significant Weakness.

Past Performance

I then considered the Offerors' Past Performance. The SEB provided a detailed analysis of the past performance for both offerors and provided me with extensive notes in the evaluation worksheets. All of the contracts presented were determined to be current or recent. I weighed the relative importance of the evaluation factors, which states that Mission Suitability and Past Performance, when combined, are significantly more important than Cost/Price; Mission Suitability is more important than Past Performance; and Past Performance is more important than Cost/Price. At the outset, I noted the SEB evaluated METECS' Past Performance as having a Very High Level of Confidence (the highest rating available). LZT only earned a Moderate Level of Confidence in Past Performance.

I found METECS' experience to include a Very Relevant contract for METECS as the prime contractor, a Very Relevant contract for its major subcontractor, and a Very Relevant contract for the individual identified as Program Manager. The quality of the overall past performance was deemed excellent for METECS and for the Program Manager. The overall past performance quality for its major subcontractor was deemed to be very good.

On the other hand LZT's past performance contracts were considered, at most, Somewhat Relevant. The contract provided for the major subcontractor was considered Relevant. The past performance information obtained from the references for the listed Program Manager was deemed to be Relevant. The quality of the overall past performance was deemed excellent for LZT and for the major subcontractor. The overall past performance quality for the Program Manager was determined to be very good.

While the quality of performance was similar for both offerors, there was a strong distinction between the level of relevancy this past work represents. For the METECS proposal, the past performance showed a strong tie to the level of magnitude and complexity contemplated for the RVGSS contract. The Robotics and Graphics Simulation Services Contract's scope of work is fully encompassed within the RVGSS Statement of Work sections 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, and 3.5. This contract serves as one of the precursors to the RVGSS contract and the identified Program Manager is currently serving as the Program Manager on the Robotics and Graphics Simulation Services contract. The Engineering Services for Rendezvous and Proximity Operations Contract is also one of the current contracts encompassing components of the RVGSS Statement of Work, relating to rendezvous proximity operations and docking and flight software and avionics services (Statement of Work sections 3.2 and 3.5). The complexity and magnitude of this contract's scope is comparable to the major subcontractor's expected contribution to the proposed RVGSS effort. In addition, the individual identified as the Program Manager in METECS' proposal has served as a Subject Matter Expert and Mission Evaluation Room Extravehicular Robotics Team Lead for the Space Station Robotic Manipulator System on the Mobile Servicing System Logistics and Sustaining Engineering (MSS L&SE) contract. This role under the MSS L&SE contract was viewed as significantly more complex and of a greater magnitude than the effort required of the RVGSS Program Manager due to its combination of

project management of a Mission Evaluation Room team and the technical expertise of a complex International Space Station subsystem. Overall, this information provided me with the confidence to conclude that the METECS team's Very Relevant experience represents a great value to the Agency.

In contrast, LZT's past performance was not deemed to be as relevant. None of the proffered contracts were determined to be Very Relevant. The past performance contracts offered for consideration by the prime contractor were classified as Somewhat Relevant and Not Relevant. The effort that LZT performed under the Simulation and Software Technology Contract was determined to be very relevant only with respect to work encompassed by Statement of Work section 3.5. The work that LZT has performed as a subcontractor to Jacobs was determined to be comparable to minor elements under Statement of Work section 3.5. Overall, the past performance for LZT did not provide me with confidence that the offeror had appropriate experience as a prime contractor or that the technical work it had previously performed aligned with the full scope of the RVGSS Statement of Work.

The work that LZT's proposed major subcontractor has performed on the Simulation and Software Technology Contract addresses a scope that aligns with pieces of RVGSS Statement of Work sections 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, and 3.5. However, while the major subcontractor's past performance is very similar to the Statement of Work section 3.4 graphics simulation services requirements, the common elements for the other Statement of Work requirements are of smaller magnitude. I asked the SEB if there were additional contracts for this major subcontractor, and if the SEB had searched Government databases for such contracts. I was notified that no other contracts were referenced in the LZT Team's Past Performance Volume regarding this major subcontractor's past performance. Despite the SEB's diligent search for past performance beyond what the offeror submitted, Government databases such as the Past Performance Information Retrieval System failed to produce additional contracts that could be tied-back to the RVGSS requirements. As a result, past performance on this contract is properly classified as Relevant.

LZT did not submit past performance for its proposed Program Manager in terms of contracts, but instead provided three points-of-contact to serve as references. The references contacted were familiar with the proposed Program Manager's work as a Project Engineer, Cost Account Manager, Systems Integration Manager, Program Management Integration Specialist, and Technical Lead. These roles, when combined, are identical to the general project management duties of a Program Manager. However, in accordance with the RFP Attachment J-03, Standard Labor Categories, the Program Manager "relies on technical experience and judgment to accomplish [project management] goals." The technical relevance of the proposed Program Manager's past performance activities relate only in part to the technical elements of the RVGSS Statement of Work (limited parts of sections 3.1 and 3.5). Therefore, the past performance for the LZT proposed Program Manager is properly classified as Relevant.

As such, I view this disparity between the relevancy of the offerors' past performance as a distinguishing factor in my source selection decision. In reviewing the past performance information, I concur with the SEB evaluation that the relevancy of LZT's past performance was consistent with a Low Level of Confidence rating, but that the qualitative aspect of its proposed

major subcontractor's past performance did not justify a Low Level of Confidence rating for the overall proposal. Given the combination of LZT's past performance that was of excellent quality but limited relevance, and the proposed major subcontractor's exceptional and relevant past performance, and the information obtained on the proposed Program Manager's past performance, I have a Moderate Level of Confidence that the LZT team will successfully perform the RVGSS requirements.

Based on the METECS team's overall performance record, I concur with the SEB evaluation that there is a Very High Level of Confidence that the METECS team will successfully perform the required effort. The overall analysis gives METECS an advantage in this evaluation for award as their past performance is of exceptional merit and is very highly pertinent to this acquisition.

Cost/Price

I considered the relative importance of the evaluation factors in my assessment of Cost/Price. Mission Suitability and Past Performance, when combined, are significantly more important than Cost/Price. Mission Suitability is more important than Past Performance. Past Performance is more important than Cost/Price. The SEB performed a cost realism analysis, resulting in a probable cost that was unchanged from the proposed cost for METECS, and a probable cost that was higher than the proposed cost for LZT.

I noted that in its cost realism analysis, the SEB established that the probable prices represented what the Government realistically expects to pay to each Offeror based on each Offeror's technical and management approaches; the Government's analysis of direct labor rates, indirect rates, and proposed fee; and the development of the Independent Government Estimate. Based on the proposals, the SEB established that both Offerors intend to retain a majority of the incumbents and to pay the incumbents at the current incumbents' labor rates. Based on this fact, the SEB adjusted LZT's proposed direct labor rates to the incumbents' direct labor rates to establish a probable cost and price. For those labor categories for which there were no incumbent's rates, the SEB considered the proposed rates to be realistic based on comparison to the rates published by Salary.com. Due to the weakness with resource impacts identified in the LZT proposal, the SEB adjusted LZT's proposed Full Time Equivalents (FTEs) upward. The FTE adjustment and the direct labor rates adjustment resulted in an increase to the LZT probable price.

Finally, I noted that METECS' evaluated probable price of \$34.8 million was higher than LZT's probable price. I concur with the SEB cost/price analysis, understand the purpose of the adjustments that were made, and have determined that the probable prices of both offerors are fair and reasonable. The difference between the offerors' probable prices provides LZT with the advantage in the Cost/Price factor.

Selection Decision

I applied the RFP's stated evaluation criteria in making my final determination, including the previously-stated relative weights of the evaluation factors. My ultimate decision involved a determination of which proposal I thought represented the best value to the Government.

In particular I noted that METECS had the clear advantage in the Mission Suitability Factor as it has a significant advantage in the Technical Approach subfactor and a slight advantage in the Management Approach subfactor. The proposals for the Safety and Health subfactor did not present any meaningful discriminators in my source selection decision. In the Past Performance factor, METECS had a clear advantage over LZT as their past performance is of exceptional merit and is very highly pertinent to this acquisition. Under the Cost/Price Factor, LZT has the advantage as its Initial Probable Price is lower. However, while LZT had the advantage under the Cost/Price Factor, the relative importance of evaluation factors indicate that Mission Suitability and Past Performance, when combined, are significantly more important than Cost/Price; Mission Suitability is more important than Past Performance; and Past Performance is more important than Cost/Price. As I contemplated the tradeoff between the lower cost presented by the LZT proposal and the advantages provided in the Mission Suitability and Past Performance Factors under the METECS proposal, it was clear that the value to the Government in METECS' proposal far outweighs any of the potential cost savings provided under the LZT proposal. As articulated throughout this Source Selection Statement, the attributes of METECS' proposal represent a significant advantage in Mission Suitability and an advantage in Past Performance that merit the additional cost associated with awarding the contract to METECS.

In accordance with the RFP that states the Government will award a contract resulting from this Solicitation to the Offeror whose proposal represents the best value after utilizing a combination of Mission Suitability, Past Performance and Cost/Price, I find that METECS is the best value and select it for award of the RVGSS Contract. My selection decision is based solely on and is wholly consistent with the selection criteria and evaluation framework, including the relative importance of the evaluation factors and subfactors as explained in the Solicitation and supported by the SEB findings that I identified as relevant and material to my decision.



Delene R. Sedillo
Source Selection Authority



Date

