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Planning

<No title>

Ministry of Defence

F16: Prior information notice for contracts in the field of defence and security

Notice identifier: 2021/S 000-007159

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-02a368

Published 7 April 2021, 10:56pm

Section I: Contracting authority/entity

I.1) Name, addresses and contact point(s)

Ministry of Defence

Spur B2, Bldg 405, MOD Corsham

Corsham

SN13 9NR

For the attention of

Struve Crystal

Email(s)

crystal.struve100@mod.gov.uk

Country

United Kingdom

Further information

Further information can be obtained from the above mentioned contact point(s)

Section II: Object

II.2) Type of contract and location of works, place of delivery or of performance

Services

II.3) Information on framework agreement

The notice involves the establishment of a framework agreement: No

II.4) Short description of nature and scope of works or nature and quantity or value of supplies or services

Background.

1 High Grade Messaging (HGM), is the ability to securely transfer critical and time sensitive information between users with a high level of assurance. The legacy HGM capability is available at all key MOD sites globally and supports a significant number of users. HGM has been in-service since approximately 1985, due to obsolescence and technical limitations, it now needs to be replaced. Military Messaging (MM) is the intended replacement capability for HGM.

Aim of the Project.

2 The Authority is intending (subject to approvals) to launch a procurement for the delivery and support of, a high integrity, non-repudiatory Military Messaging capability to be delivered in support of MOD wide Command and Control (C2) communications. The capability is expected to consist of:

a. a front-end system for the generation of formatted messages;

b. a message management system to ensure routing; message delivery and audit of messages.

3 The capability will also consist of the hardware to provide centralised storage and Support both the front-end and message management systems.

4 The capability is expected to consist of configurable COTS hardware and commercially available software, it should be able to manage a virtual messaging network and enable

rapid throughput and storage of data (majority text-only messages) for both short-term instant access and long-term archiving. This should be through a one-way archiving system that also includes a search and recall capability. The front-end messaging interface should be Windows Icons Menus and Pointers (W IMP) and enable most generic messaging and format conversion capabilities. The users will be able to draft, edit and release messages to any approved recipient in a number of Combined Communications Electronics Board (CCEB) standardised messaging formats (including but not limited to, ACP127, DOI-102S). The message management capability should be able to redirect, track and manage messages in addition to other administrative functions. The system should predominantly run over Internet Protocol (IP) but be able to support any bearer of choice (e.g. Serial). It will be required to have high availability (99.999%) with appropriate failback and back-up design to support when necessary. Both the hardware and software must be able to be integrated into Land and Maritime environments dependent on specific operational or hosting requirements. The solution will also include a deployable (mobile) ("flyaway") capability which will be required in a number of configurations. It is required to be an assured capability therefore security of the supply chain will be an important consideration. The capability shall also be 'Sovereign' in that it will allow Freedom of Action/Freedom of Manoeuvre for the UK.

5 Any resultant contract will consist of, but not be limited to equipment provision; safety management; planned obsolescence management; security accreditation documentation production; software update provision; enduring helpdesk User support; initial and subsequent ongoing training support and integration to a number of UK locations.

6 The MM capability is to initially be deployed and used alongside the existing HGM solution in order to provide assurance testing during a dual-running period. There is to be full interoperability prior to becoming the primary and sole deliverer of the MM service. Key metrics will include the ongoing provision of equipment in the event of failure and the ability to ensure no reduction in operational capability through defect or failure, as well as ongoing safety and capability.

7 The initial deployment of the fixed UK solution (specifically pertaining to the message management capability) is required to be 'live' no later than April 2023 to support the dual-running period of up to two years. The front-end system, to be supplied in a variety of formats (zero client, thick client, web client, etc), will need to be deployed no later than April 2024 in the UK fixed environment and as a global replacement solution no later than April 2025 for a number of platforms; deployment shall continue for an extended period.

8 Any supplier awarded any contract as a result of this procurement activity will be expected to have ISO 9001:2015 accreditation, or equivalent, by contract award and will also be required to demonstrate compliance with DEFSTAN 00-056. It is not possible at the outset to specify the Controlled Information under any resulting contract, however, the potential suppliers must be cognisant of the fact that it will consist of those items of ITAR Controlled Information and Government Furnished Information classified as OFFICIAL-

SENSITIVE that the Authority may need to make available in order to enable performance of work under the Contract. Due to ITAR Controlled information, any supplier awarded a contract as a result of this procurement activity must have relevant existing Technical Assistance Agreements (TAA) or have them agreed no later than any contract award date.

9 The Cyber Threat Risk Level for this requirement is Very High and therefore potential suppliers are expected to hold a Cyber Essentials Certificate, as defined in DEFSTAN 05-138 prior to award of any resultant contract. Suppliers (and supply chain) successful at PQQ stage shall be required to demonstrate cyber capability for the potential contract by completing a Supplier Assurance Questionnaire as part of their tender (more information can be found at https://supplier-cyber-protection.service.gov.uk.)

10 Due to the designated Security Grading of this Project, the majority of project documentation will be held at Secret or above, and therefore the supplier will be required to have the requisite security capability to accommodate such documentation (i.e. List X and relevant digital access). Key roles are required to be sole UK Nationals with DV security clearance and higher. If a contract is awarded, the Contractor will be required to be a UK registered company.

11 On national security grounds it would be contrary to UK interests, to comply with the requirements of DSPCR. An exemption using Regulation 7(1)(a) of the DSPCR, in conjunction with Regulation 6(3A)a has been endorsed.

12 The anticipated timeline for the launch of the procurement via a Contract Notice (CN) is the beginning of Q3 of 2021.

Market Interest Days

13. Suppliers are invited to attend a Market Interest session on one (1) of six (6) being held on the morning and afternoon of 5th, 6th and 7th May 2021 at MOD Corsham. Each session is likely to last for two (2) hours and will include a Q&A session.

14. Subject to Government COVID guidelines and the level of interest, each session will be limited to four (4) suppliers and attendance will be limited to a maximum of two (2) representatives from each supplier, each of whom must hold DV clearance.

15. Suppliers wishing to attend one of the sessions are requested to send the following details to Charlotte.Turner140@mod.gov.uk no later than mid-day 28 April 2021:

Supplier Name

Attendees Name

Security Clearance

Security Clearance Reference and Issuing Agency

Nationality

16. Requests made after 28 April 2021 will not be considered.

17. Details on exact timings and availability of refreshments will be provided nearer the time.

II.5) Common procurement vocabulary (CPV)

• 72000000 - IT services: consulting, software development, Internet and support

Section VI: Complementary information

VI.2) Additional information

The Contracting Authority intends to use an e-Tendering system in this procurement exercise, please visit www.contracts.mod.uk for full details and to register your interest in this procurement.