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Award

MHC Autonomy (SeeByte Software Support)

Ministry of Defence, DE&S, Mine Hunting Capability Team

F15: Voluntary ex ante transparency notice

Notice identifier: 2021/S 000-024375

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-02e6a6

Published 30 September 2021, 10:45pm

Section I: Contracting authority/entity

I.1) Name and addresses

Ministry of Defence, DE&S, Mine Hunting Capability Team

Abbey Wood, Filton

Bristol

BS34 8JH

Contact

Garry Ogborne

Email

garry.ogborne100@mod.gov.uk

Country

United Kingdom

NUTS code

UKK11 - Bristol, City of

Internet address(es)

Main address

<https://des.mod.uk>

I.4) Type of the contracting authority

Ministry or any other national or federal authority

I.5) Main activity

Defence

Section II: Object

II.1) Scope of the procurement

II.1.1) Title

MHC Autonomy (SeeByte Software Support)

Reference number

701558388

II.1.2) Main CPV code

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

II.1.3) Type of contract

Services

II.1.4) Short description

The Mine Hunting Capability Team, part of the UK Ministry of Defence (MoD), intends to award a contract to Seebyte Limited for the support and continued development of software based upon Seebyte's suite of software.

II.1.6) Information about lots

This contract is divided into lots: No

II.1.7) Total value of the procurement (excluding VAT)

Value excluding VAT: £2,000,000

II.2) Description

II.2.3) Place of performance

NUTS codes

- UKM - Scotland

Main site or place of performance

Edinburgh

II.2.4) Description of the procurement

Support and continued development of software based upon Seebyte's suite of software.

II.2.5) Award criteria

Price

II.2.11) Information about options

Options: Yes

Description of options

Options to be included for additional years of contractual cover.

II.2.13) Information about European Union Funds

The procurement is related to a project and/or programme financed by European Union funds: No

Section IV. Procedure

IV.1) Description

IV.1.1) Type of procedure

Negotiated procedure without publication of a contract notice

- No tenders or no suitable tenders/requests to participate in response to negotiated procedure with prior publication of a contract notice
- The products involved are manufactured purely for the purpose of research, experiment, study or development
- The works, supplies or services can be provided only by a particular economic operator for the following reason:
 - absence of competition for technical reasons

Explanation:

The Mine Hunting Capability Team, part of the UK Ministry of Defence (MoD), intends to award a contract to Seebyte Limited for the support and continued development of software based upon Seebyte's suite of proprietary, privately developed software for which Seebyte Limited holds the background IP - namely: NEPTUNE, SeeTrack & CoPilot. This suite of software enables autonomy behaviours for Unmanned Vehicles to work collaboratively and effectively for the purpose of Maritime Mine Countermeasures. Through the three software products listed, the software enables features such as; Low-Level mission planning, Autonomous missions by vehicles and Mine Threat Identification and classification. The contract shall be for an initial period of 36-months, with Options to extend the contract duration by a further two 12-month periods, giving a maximum possible contract duration of 60-months. The maximum total value of the contract is not estimated to exceed £2m for the entire 60-month period.

In accordance with regulation 4 of The Defence and Security Public Contracts (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 (SI 2019/697) this procurement falls to be regulated under the provisions of the Defence and Security Public Contracts Regulations 2011 as amended (in particular by SI 2019/697 and SI 2020/1450). Prior publication of a contract notice in the Official Journal of the European Union is no longer appropriate.

It is considered that the award of the contract without prior publication of a contract notice in the UK e-notification service (in accordance with the relevant legislation) is lawful in accordance with regulation 16(1)(a)(ii) of the DSPCR 2011 (as amended) for Technical Reasons. This requirement is for the continued support and development of Seebyte's

suite of proprietary software which was privately developed by Seebyte. This software is widely used in different applications by the Royal Navy and works collectively and collaboratively to optimise the operation and effectiveness of its autonomous underwater vehicles. This requirement is a direct continuation of the same services previously procured by the MoD under the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory's Science & Technology (S&T) programme. Ensuring contractual cover to facilitate the continuing support and evolutionary development of this software is critical to maintaining the Royal Navy's existing capability. Given the history to the development of this software by Seebyte Limited for the Royal Navy there is no other reasonable alternative software in the market that would meet the MoD's continuing requirements.

For operational reasons the Royal Navy systems which incorporates the Seebyte Limited software need to be able to interoperate with similar systems used by UK Allies, all of whom use the Seebyte Limited software. Royal Navy systems with third party software would not meet these requirements and would create significant interoperability issues which would result in a degraded capability.

Only Seebyte Limited have the technical knowledge, expertise and underlying source code necessary to meet this continuing support and development requirement. This technical knowledge and expertise has been gained in part through the previous role Seebyte has undertaken in developing the software for the Royal Navy's purposes.

IV.1.8) Information about the Government Procurement Agreement (GPA)

The procurement is covered by the Government Procurement Agreement: No

Section V. Award of contract/concession

A contract/lot is awarded: Yes

V.2) Award of contract/concession

V.2.1) Date of conclusion of the contract

30 September 2021

V.2.2) Information about tenders

The contract has been awarded to a group of economic operators: No

V.2.3) Name and address of the contractor/concessionaire

Seebyte Limited

Orchard Brae House, 30 Queensferry Road

Edinburgh

EH4 2HS

Country

United Kingdom

NUTS code

- UK - United Kingdom

National registration number

SC194014

The contractor/concessionaire is an SME

Yes

V.2.4) Information on value of contract/lot/concession (excluding VAT)

Total value of the contract/lot/concession: £2,000,000

V.2.5) Information about subcontracting

The contract/lot/concession is likely to be subcontracted

Section VI. Complementary information

VI.4) Procedures for review

VI.4.1) Review body

Ministry of Defence

Bristol

Country

United Kingdom

