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Award

## **Royal Navy Diving Threat Exploitation Group - Integration & Support of Neptune Autonomy Software**

Ministry of Defence

F15: Voluntary ex ante transparency notice

Notice identifier: 2022/S 000-034522

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-038b1f

Published 6 December 2022, 3:20pm

### **Section I: Contracting authority/entity**

#### **I.1) Name and addresses**

Ministry of Defence

Abbey Wood, Filton

Bristol

BS34 8JH

#### **Contact**

Mr Garry Ogborne

#### **Email**

[garry.ogborne100@mod.gov.uk](mailto:garry.ogborne100@mod.gov.uk)

#### **Country**

United Kingdom

#### **Region code**

UKK12 - Bath and North East Somerset, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire

**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

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**Section II: Object**

**II.1) Scope of the procurement**

**II.1.1) Title**

Royal Navy Diving Threat Exploitation Group - Integration & Support of Neptune  
Autonomy Software

Reference number

701558388-1

**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**

Provision of Neptune software and subsequent integration into RN Diving Threat  
Exploitation Group equipment, including associated software support

**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

- UKM75 - Edinburgh, City of

Main site or place of performance

SeeByte Ltd

Orchard Brae House

30 Queensferry Road

Edinburgh

EH4 2HS

### **II.2.4) Description of the procurement**

Provision of Neptune software and subsequent integration into RN Diving Threat Exploitation Group equipment, including associated software support

### **II.2.5) Award criteria**

Price

### **II.2.11) Information about options**

Options: No

### **II.2.13) Information about European Union Funds**

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

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## Section IV. Procedure

### IV.1) Description

#### IV.1.1) Type of procedure

Negotiated procedure without 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 (MHC) Team, part of the UK Ministry of Defence (MoD), intends to place an amendment to the current Autonomy Software Integration and Support Contract (Contract Reference: 701558388) with SeeByte Limited (SeeByte) for the integration of a common autonomy software solution into the equipment of the Royal Navy (RN) Diving Threat Exploitation Group (DTXG). The integration of this common autonomy software solution will involve the provision of software, its installation into the DTXG equipment and any low-level software development required over the contract term. The term of the proposed contract amendment will be for 15 months but this period will fall within the original term of the MHC Autonomy Software Integration and Support Contract. The maximum total value of the proposed amendment will not exceed £2m for the entire 15-month period. This will increase the total value of the MHC Autonomy Software Integration and Support contract to £4m.

Currently, this DTXG equipment does not utilise a common protocol of technology and software, and subsequently cannot be integrated into the system architecture that is being developed as part of the wider MHC programme. This software solution is namely Neptune, which has been solely developed by and is only available via SeeByte. Neptune enables autonomy behaviours for Unmanned Vehicles and equipment to work collaboratively and effectively for the purpose of Maritime Mine Countermeasures and underwater intelligent surveillance and reconnaissance. The software also enables features such as: Low-Level mission planning, Autonomous missions and Mine Threat Identification and classification.

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 amendment 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 is because only SeeByte's Neptune software can meet the MoD's requirements and only SeeByte, as the original software developer, can install it into the DTXG equipment and carry out any necessary low level software development activities. To ensure the appropriate level of commonality, compatibility and supportability, it is deemed that the DTXG requirement for integration of a common autonomy software solution must be delivered via the Neptune suite of software available from SeeByte. The Neptune software is the current solution already being integrated into existing MHC platforms, and is also in use by a number of UK Allies. The requirement for interoperability with these other platforms is a critical factor in the successful integration into, and future functionality of, the DTXG equipment.

As the developer of the Neptune suite of software, only SeeByte Ltd possess the requisite access to the applicable software source code to be integrated into the DTXG equipment, and the requisite tools and technical ability to modify the software as may become necessary during the course of that integration.

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

The procurement is covered by the Government Procurement Agreement: No

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## **Section V. Award of contract/concession**

### **Contract No**

701558388

### **Title**

MHC Autonomy Software Integration & Support (To be amended to include Royal Navy DTXG requirement)

A contract/lot is awarded: Yes

## **V.2) Award of contract/concession**

### **V.2.1) Date of conclusion of the contract**

6 December 2022

### **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 Ltd

Orchard Brae House, 30 Queensferry Road

Edinburgh

EH4 2HS

Country

United Kingdom

NUTS code

- UKM75 - Edinburgh, City of

The contractor/concessionaire is an SME

No

### **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

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## Section VI. Complementary information

### VI.4) Procedures for review

#### VI.4.1) Review body

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

MHC Project Team, Ash 0B, NH3, MoD Abbey Wood, Filton

Bristol

BS34 8JH

Email

[garry.ogborne100@mod.gov.uk](mailto:garry.ogborne100@mod.gov.uk)

Country

United Kingdom