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Planning

Multi-level, Mass Fatalities Body Storage capability

Home Office

F01: Prior information notice

Prior information only

Notice identifier: 2023/S 000-036795

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-04259d

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Section I: Contracting authority

I.1) Name and addresses

Home Office

London

Email

CollaborativeProcurement@homeoffice.gov.uk

Country

United Kingdom

Region code

UK - United Kingdom

Internet address(es)

Main address

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/home-office>

I.3) Communication

Additional information can be obtained from the above-mentioned address

I.4) Type of the contracting authority

Ministry or any other national or federal authority

I.5) Main activity

Public order and safety

Section II: Object

II.1) Scope of the procurement

II.1.1) Title

Multi-level, Mass Fatalities Body Storage capability

II.1.2) Main CPV code

- 33940000 - Cadaver transport and storage equipment and supplies

II.1.3) Type of contract

Supplies

II.1.4) Short description

After an initial request for information activity the Authority seek to further determine market potential and consider market views for a multi-level, Mass Fatalities Body Storage capability with a view to ensure such views are considered for any potential procurement that the Authorities may wish to launch.

The current position is that in the event of an incident resulting in a large number of fatalities that could overwhelm the usual body storage capacity of the relevant local authority, they may call upon the body storage capacity of neighbouring authorities under existing mutual aid arrangements.

In addition, the authority may also draw upon the Home Office-provided 'mass fatalities' capability. At present these are steel ISO body storage units, provided on a regional basis across the country (covering the nine regions of England, plus Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales) with specified local authorities being responsible for the oversight of these units within their region. There are approximately 45 such units, with each region or devolved administration being allocated between 3 or 4 units each. With a body storage capacity of 16 persons per unit (expandable to 20), this equates to a total body storage capacity of approximately 600 persons in England (expandable to 720). In the devolved administrations, the body storage capacity is 64 person (expandable to 80). Thus, although the mass fatalities body storage capability is intended to be available nationally, it is regionally delivered. Hence it is termed 'Regional Emergency Mortuary

Arrangements' (REMA).

However, as the body storage units are now over ten years old, with some units no longer functional and others needing repair, the mass fatalities capability is currently patchy across the country – with some regions having access to a largely functional and fit-for-purpose capability, and other regions discounting the REMA capability altogether and having to make their own alternative arrangements. This is clearly unsatisfactory. Consequently, Home Office are looking to replace the current REMA capability with a bold new alternative.

II.1.5) Estimated total value

Value excluding VAT: £1,000,000

II.1.6) Information about lots

This contract is divided into lots: No

II.2) Description

II.2.2) Additional CPV code(s)

- 33941000 - Cadaver storage racks

II.2.3) Place of performance

NUTS codes

- UK - United Kingdom

II.2.4) Description of the procurement

The New Capability:

We will seek to move away from procurement of assets. moving to the procurement of call-off contract with the supplier holding the stock and deploying if called upon. Although it should be noted that the incidents that would require a deployment are unlikely to occur, there would be a requirement to exercise part (not a full response) of the capability (likely once every two years) in England. This will be procured for England, although there is possibility that the devolved administration may join our procurement depending on commercial feasibility and cost.

Soft Shell:

We wish to have a number of 'soft shell' portable temporary body storage. Although these units do not usually have a 'freeze' capability, they have other advantages: they are more easily transportable, flexible and can be mobilised to a location very swiftly within 24 hours of being called upon. These may be erected within a building or deployed to an incident to support first responders and ideally durable however some cover may be required in colder periods. except perhaps during warmer periods provided that satisfactory exterior protection was made available. We would require the 'soft shell' temporary mortuary to have capacity for approximately 100 persons, including some bariatric.

Hard Shell:

Our second tier of the body storage capability would be similar to the existing ISO container body storage units ("hard shell"). These are robust units which can be stored outside and delivered to an agreed upon site, likely based towards existing infrastructure (I.e. near to existing mortuaries). This would ultimately be decided by local planners.

The 'hard shell' aspects should be sufficient to hold up to 150 persons, including bariatric fatalities. we would specify that the units should be able both to chill and freeze bodies, and be supported by relevant auxiliary equipment if required (I.e. ramps, generators, temperature alarms etc.) We would expect this aspect to be delivered no more than three days after being called upon to a location in England.

Temporary Building:

Finally, in addition to 'soft shell' and 'hard shell' units described above, the third tier of our 3 tier body storage capability relates to temporary conversion of a space within an existing building or an alternative building/ structure that could be housed outside similar to Nightingale hospitals during the Covid-19 pandemic ('temporary building') and assisted by the use of low temperature chillers. Like 'hard shell' this type of body storage should have the capability to freeze as well as to chill since it is feasible that long-term

body storage could be required. This capability should have capacity for approximately 450 persons, including some bariatric. We would expect delivery times to be no-more than five days.

In addition, to these core requirements, we would wish to have the ability to increase the capacity requirements of this capability upwards of 450, upon request, acknowledging that suitable additional space/resources would be required in which to operate. We acknowledge that the any capacity increases may take extra time to deploy, and would warrant additional costs. We would request details of how that might best be achieved.

The supplier should ensure that any equipment is appropriately maintained and kept in good working order while in their possession so that it can be mobilised upon notice.

As this response would be critical to a national response, we would seek to manage risk with a punitive financial penalty if agreed timescales were not met. We would welcome comments on our approach to reflect what the market can offer and any externalities that we may not have considered as part of commercial engagement.

This Pre Market Engagement is purely exploratory and does not commit the Home Office to a procurement exercise.

II.2.14) Additional information

The Home Office's main objectives of this early market engagement event are to ensure:

1. Suppliers have a better understanding of what Home Office want to achieve for any future procurement activity.
2. Home Office have a better understanding about what the market might be able to deliver

II.3) Estimated date of publication of contract notice

1 March 2024

Section IV. Procedure

IV.1) Description

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

The procurement is covered by the Government Procurement Agreement: Yes

Section VI. Complementary information

VI.3) Additional information

The Home Office will be holding a virtual early market engagement event on the 17th January 2024 and invites suppliers to register their interest to attend the event. Please note attendance will be limited to two representatives per organisation. Please register for the event by emailing the following team - Collaborative Procurement CollaborativeProcurement@homeoffice.gov.uk. Suppliers are encouraged to ask questions at the event Please note the deadline for requests to participate is 5pm on 10th January 2024. Places will be limited, and invitations will be based on a first come first serve basis where we cannot guarantee that everyone who expresses an interest to attend will be invited. Once suppliers have expressed an interest in the event the previous Request for Information documentation will also be shared with them.