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Planning

Channel Operations Land Based ISR and Common Operating Picture

Home Office

UK2: Preliminary market engagement notice - Procurement Act 2023 - [view information about notice types](#)

Notice identifier: 2025/S 000-038665

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-054f8c ([view related notices](#))

Published 9 July 2025, 3:12pm

Scope

Reference

18374

Description

Channel Operations leads the overall response to clandestine entry to the UK. It is tasked with ending the viability of the small boats route as a means of entering the UK and preventing other forms of high-risk clandestine entry.

The land based ISR and common operating picture is required as part of a wider Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) package to support decision making and the tasking and coordination of operational assets; and to reliably and

autonomously detect, track, and identify small boats at range, fusing this with data generated by existing platforms, and presenting it to end-users.

The overarching requirement is to provide enhanced tactical domain awareness in the area of operations to autonomously support decision making and the tasking and coordination of operational assets. This requirement will need to be delivered via a managed service that provides the domain awareness via a connection to HO owned TAK (Team Awareness Kit) server, this will provide a common operating picture that is made available to key decision-makers and operational first responders.

This domain awareness will need to be provided through a web API and common operating picture and command interface that can also connect to HO owned TAK (Team Awareness Kit) server.

The service is to provide autonomous domain awareness in the area of interest (AOI), the waters of the Dover Strait from Ramsgate to Hastings, to include UK TTW out to 12 NM, to Channel Operations. Suppliers will be responsible for owning, siting, installing, securing, and operating any hardware in the UK. This includes any commercial arrangements to utilise land to accommodate physical infrastructure.

Most security and situational awareness systems used for maritime border security, such as coastal radar, cameras, or patrol vessels, simply collect data from their sensors and feed it 'raw' to an operator who assesses the situation and directs the system accordingly. Monitoring and interpreting large volumes of data requires high communications bandwidth and places a high cognitive burden on the operator, potentially leading to missed threats or delayed responses.

The overarching requirement is to provide enhanced tactical domain awareness in the area of interest by making use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) enhanced data fusion and autonomous sensor management to support decision making and the tasking and coordination of operational assets. The autonomous data fusion node must be supported by a network of advanced sensors with AI at the edge (edge nodes), combined with intelligent fusion and sensor management.

The current operational tempo assumes a requirement for 24/7/365 service availability. Suppliers will need to ensure the system is supported with sufficient personnel and process to resolve any issues promptly.

The Supplier solution must:

Be fully operational within six months from contract award. An interim operational capability with additional functionality added incrementally may be acceptable where necessary, provided the interim capability provides a minimum viable product to be agreed with the Home Office.

Information on the web interface will need to be generated by a network of existing and additional sensors capable of reliably and autonomously detecting, tracking, and identifying small boats at range, fusing this with data generated by existing platforms, and presenting it to end-users and to the TAK server.

Allow sensors to autonomously detect, locate, classify and respond to various situations, creating a cohesive and interoperable system. By using fusion nodes to facilitate real-time decision-making, this system will enhance situational awareness and operational flexibility.

The fused information and sensor feeds should be capable of feeding into the Home Office common operating picture within the command and control (C2) facility, and interface with wider HO operational situational awareness services as required.

For the purposes of this procurement, a migrant vessel is defined as:

A soft-hulled, single- or multi-chamber inflatable boat with a rigid or semi-rigid floor, typically 8 metres in length, 3 metres in width, and approximately 1.25 metres in height above the waterline. These vessels are often overloaded with 40-60 individuals, lack Automatic Identification System (AIS) transponders, and are piloted by unskilled individuals attempting to cross the English Channel. Due to their low profile and construction, they present a very low radar cross-section, making them difficult to detect using conventional maritime surveillance systems. Embarkations typically occur at all hours, day, and night, with wave heights 1 m or less.

The potential length of this contract will be 12 months with a further 12 month optional extension period, with an estimated total value of up to c£12 million if the contract is awarded for 2 years, however, the Authority is seeking to ensure that an increase or decrease in contract capability is available, should the future demand change.

The content of this PIN, including the nature of works, services and estimated value, may be subject to change.

We would also state that publication of this PIN does not guarantee launch of a formal procurement exercise.

Total value (estimated)

- £12,000,000 excluding VAT
- £14,400,000 including VAT

Above the relevant threshold

Contract dates (estimated)

- 23 June 2026 to 23 June 2027
- Possible extension to 23 June 2028
- 2 years, 1 day

Main procurement category

Services

CPV classifications

- 72310000 - Data-processing services

Contract locations

- UK - United Kingdom

Engagement

Engagement deadline

28 November 2025

Engagement process description

The Authority would like to engage with suppliers, to determine the level of interest, capacity and capability to meet the requirements.

They would also like to establish the most cost effective way to deliver the requirements, including any alternative or creative solutions.

To do this, they would like to engage with the market by inviting interested suppliers to a market engagement event, where the Authority will present their requirements. This will be followed by further market engagement which is yet to be determined, but is likely to take the form of a questionnaire to seek the views from the market. The Authority may hold individual meetings with a select number of suppliers

where the Authority would like to explore their responses in more detail. Due to time constraints the Authority may not be able to meet with all suppliers that respond to the questionnaire.

This is for information gathering purposes only and has no impact on selection or the invitation to tender stage.

It is important to note that this PIN is not a call for competition and as such potential providers will need to express an interest in any future tender opportunity once a notice is published.

It should also be noted that this PIN invites individuals and organisations to express an interest in this market engagement exercise only. It is not a pre-qualification questionnaire and is not part of any pre-qualification or selection process.

1. To express an interest in this market engagement, participants must first be registered on the Home Office e-Sourcing Portal. If you have not yet registered, this can be done online at <https://homeoffice.app.jaggaer.com/web/login.html> by following the 'Register Here' link. Please note that, to register, you must have a valid DUNS number (as provided by Dun and Bradstreet) for the organisation which you are registering and who will be entering into a contract if invited to do so.

2. Once registered on the Home Office e-Sourcing Portal, potential suppliers, who believe they are able to offer the required services, are requested to send an expression of interest to the Border Force Maritime procurement inbox BFProcurementMaritimeTeam@homeoffice.gov.uk by 9th July 2025. The subject title of

the email should read Land Based ISR and Common Operating Picture Service - Expression of Interest, and the email should confirm your organisation's name, one contact name, one e-mail address and one telephone number along with a request for the Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA) template. These contact details must be those used to register on the Home Office e-Sourcing Portal on Jaggaer.

Once the above two steps are completed, invitations to the Market Engagement Event will be made available via the portal, subject to parties signing a NDA.

The current expected time and date for the Virtual Supplier Engagement Event is 12:00 on 21st July 2025, but this is subject to change.

The Authority has determined that the likely procurement route will be via a further competition using the Crown Commercial Service Space Enabled and Geospatial Services RM6235 Dynamic Purchasing System <https://www.crowncommercial.gov.uk/agreements/RM6235> , so any potential bidders will need to be registered on this Dynamic Purchasing System when the Authority commences their tendering process, during November 2025.

Finally, we would draw attention to a similar potential procurement being undertaken by the Joint Maritime and Security Centre entitled Mobile Maritime Domain Awareness Service, also associated with detection of vessels at sea. Whilst both parties are reviewing potential synergies around procurement activities, we will pursue with the market engagement exercise as two standalone projects, which may change in future.

Participation

Particular suitability

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SME)

Contracting authority

Home Office

- Public Procurement Organisation Number: PWGC-6513-PQLZ

2 Marsham Street

London

SW1P 4DF

United Kingdom

Email: BFProcurementMaritimeTeam@homeoffice.gov.uk

Region: UKI32 - Westminster

Organisation type: Public authority - central government