



Ministry
of Defence



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FAO:
Potential Providers for UK MoD requirement:

714195450
MHC Block 2 Procurement of Unmanned Underwater
Vehicles (UUVs), Associated Equipment and Support

Mine Hunting Capability
Defence Equipment & Support
Spruce 3C, NH1
MOD Abbey Wood
Bristol BS34 8JH



24-Oct-25

Our Reference: 714195450 UK

Dear Potential Provider,

**714195450 - MHC BLOCK 2 PROCUREMENT OF UNMANNED UNDERWATER VEHICLES (UUVS), ASSOCIATED EQUIPMENT AND SUPPORT – UK 4 TENDER NOTICE
SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**

Conditions of Participation

1. You are hereby invited to submit your request to participate in the competitive procurement process for the above-named requirement, which is being conducted via the Competitive Flexible procedure in accordance with the Procurement Act 2023.
2. The request to participate must be registered by completing and submitting a response to the Procurement Specific Questionnaire (PSQ) for your organisation in accordance with the attached PSQ Guidance Document, via the Defence Sourcing Portal (DSP). The PSQ can be accessed following registration on the DSP via the link below, or via the published DSP Opportunity Notice. The PSQ Guidance Document is also available to download from the attachments area within the PSQ on the DSP.

[MHC Block 2 UUV - PSQ](#)

3. The closing date for the submission of PSQ responses is **12:00pm on 21/11/2025**.
4. Potential Providers that do not submit a PSQ response, or submit a response after the stated PSQ closing date/time will not be assessed or considered for further participation in this procurement process.
5. Additional information about how the MHC Block 2 UUV procurement process will run, and how Tenderers will be down-selected and assessed, is attached at Annex A.
6. A summary of the requirement is attached at Annex B, and is intended to inform your organisation's decision to participate in this procurement process.

Directed Subcontractor

7. Potential Providers should note that in the event a contract is awarded following the conclusion of this procurement process, they will be obligated to enter into a subcontract with SeeByte Ltd (Company No SC194014), for the provision of the installation of SeeByte's software onto the UUVs before delivery.

8. The Authority requests that Potential Providers do not initiate contact with SeeByte Ltd in relation to this requirement until they have been down-selected following the PSQ to participate in the Tender stage.

Refinement of Award Criteria

9. In accordance with Section 24 of the Procurement Act 2023, The Authority reserves its right to amend the stated tender assessment and award criteria during this procurement process.

Provision for the Procurement of Additional or Repeat Goods, Services or Works

10. In accordance with Section 41 and Schedule 5 paragraph 8 of the Procurement Act 2023, The Authority intends to rely on the above-named direct award justification for the future procurement of similar goods and/or services within the applicable period of five years.

Conflicts of Interest

11. In accordance with its obligations under the Section 83 of the Procurement Act 2023, The Authority confirms that a conflicts assessment has been completed in relation to this procurement process.

Yours faithfully,

Aaron White

DES Commercial-893
Commercial Officer - Mine Hunting Capability Team
DE&S Maritime - Maritime Autonomous Systems, SALMO & Boats

ANNEX A

MHC Block 2 Procurement of Unmanned Underwater Vehicles (UUVs), Associated Equipment and Support - Procurement Process Overview

The Competitive Flexible Procedure, introduced under the Procurement Act 2023 regulations, provides contracting authorities with the ability to develop bespoke procurement processes which are tailored to provide the best outcomes, and are suited to the goals of each specific requirement.

This procurement process will be comprised of the following stages:

1. PSQ Stage (this stage)

This is the entry stage to this procurement process. Potential Providers are assessed on their technical and economic capacity to fulfil the requirement.

Potential Providers register their interest in participating to The Authority by completing and submitting a response to the PSQ via the DSP. Following the PSQ closing date, The Authority will assess all PSQ responses against the stated assessment criteria (the conditions of participation). The Authority will down-select the four¹ Potential Providers with the highest scores to qualify for participation. These down-selected Potential Providers will subsequently become Tenderers, and will be invited to proceed to the next stage of the process and submit a tender for the requirement.

It is anticipated that the PSQ down-selection and subsequent communication of the outcome to all Potential Providers will take place in December 2025.

2. Tender Stage

Following the conclusion of the PSQ stage, The Authority will issue the full tender pack for this requirement to all Tenderers. The tender pack will contain the full details of how the remainder of the procurement process will be assessed including tender assessment questions and associated scoring criteria, details for how In-Water Confidence Assessments (IWCAs) are to be conducted and the process for The Authority's negotiation with the Preferred Bidder(s).

Following the issue of tender documentation, The Authority will facilitate a Tenderers Conference, where aspects of the requirement can be explained and initial clarification questions from Tenderers may be posed.

Tender responses will be assessed via the Most Advantageous Tender (MAT) methodology, utilising the award criteria of Best Technically Affordable Tender.

Tender responses will be assessed initially against their commercial compliance with stated instructions and submission guidelines, before an assessment that the prices quoted are within the stated maximum prices that will be included within the tender pack. The commercial compliance and pricing elements will be scored on a pass/fail basis, and responses that score a 'fail' in either or both of these areas will result in the Tenderer's response being deemed non-compliant and excluded from both further assessment and the overall procurement process.

After the initial assessment, compliant tender responses will be further assessed against a range of technical and project management-related criteria. The assessment of the tender

¹ As stated within the terms of the attached PSQ guidance document, in the event that two Potential Providers are assigned the same score and achieve fourth place in the down-selection, both of these entities will be invited to participate in the next stage of the procurement process, resulting in a total of five Tenderers.

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responses will be supplemented by the IWCA's conducted by each Tenderer with representatives present from The Authority.

Further information on the IWCA's can be found below.

Upon the conclusion of tender assessments, Tenderers will be notified of their scores in accordance with the requirements of the Procurement Act 2023, and their tenders will be held in abeyance until the completion of the Negotiation Stage set out below.

It is anticipated that tender packs will be issued to Tenderers during January/February 2026.

IWCA's

Tender responses which are deemed compliant following the initial commercial and pricing assessments will proceed to conduct the IWCA at an agreed date/time with Authority representatives present.

The IWCA serves as a mechanism for Tenderers to demonstrate and validate their proposed solutions through demonstrations, recorded tests, and supporting data, supplementing The Authority's assessment of their tender response. The Authority may also pose clarifying questions to address uncertainties identified in the Tenderer's response. The IWCA is not scored separately, nor does it involve a pass/fail judgement.

Approximately 20% of the overall tender score may be influenced by the IWCA. This includes scoring of secondary technical requirements, where written evidence will be supported by IWCA data and observations, and scoring of the Tenderer's ability to deliver to schedule. In the latter, the IWCA will provide evidence of the maturity, robustness, and deliverability of the proposed solution in meeting The Authority's requirements. As such the evidence will complement the tender response and the approach taken with assessment will be consistent with the scoring guidance issued with the tender pack.

3. Negotiation Stage

The Tenderer that achieves the highest scoring tender response will be selected as the Preferred Bidder, and will be invited to negotiate with The Authority on selected terms of the proposed contract. The specific terms that are permitted for negotiation will be detailed within the tender pack. In the event that an agreement on acceptable terms between The Authority and the Preferred Bidder cannot be reached within a reasonable timescale, The Authority will select the Tenderer that achieves the second-highest scoring tender response as the Preferred Bidder, and will enter into negotiations with that Tenderer. This process will continue as stated above until either an acceptable agreement between The Authority and a Preferred Bidder is reached, or no agreement is reached. In the event that an agreement is not reached The Authority reserves the right not to award a contract, and to cease the competitive procurement process.

4. Contract Award

Upon the conclusion of negotiations and subject to the agreement of acceptable contract terms between The Authority and the Preferred Bidder, The Authority will publish a UK 6 Contract Award Notice to notify industry that it intends to award the contract to the Preferred Bidder following the end of the 8 working day standstill period, followed by a UK 7 Contract Details Notice following contract award, which will mark the conclusion of the procurement process.

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Potential Providers should note that the anticipated timescales stated above are indicative, and The Authority reserves its right to amend these during the course of the procurement process.

ANNEX B

MHC Block 2 Procurement of Unmanned Underwater Vehicles (UUVs), Associated Equipment and Support – Summary of Requirement**1. INTRODUCTION**

This Annex B summarises The Authority's requirement for the procurement of eight (8) systems of Unmanned Underwater Vehicles (UUVs) (sufficient to meet the capability requirement but with an indicative requirement for 24 vehicles in total) with an expected contract award of Summer 2026. The aim is to provide Industry with an indicative summary of the requirement, to inform each Potential Provider's decision to participate in the MHC Block 2 UUV competitive procurement activity.

The proposed requirements outlined within this annex are indicative, but subject to change. The final specification and performance capabilities required will be issued as part of any resultant tender documentation to those Potential Providers which are down-selected and subsequently invited to tender following the PSQ down-selection process.

2. DELIVERABLES

Each system must include:

- UUVs - sufficient to meet the capability requirement as detailed below
- A launch and recovery system (LARS) for integration with an 11m Uncrewed Surface Vessel (USV, ARCIMS variant)
- Above water communications (between USV and surfaced vehicles)
- Underwater acoustic communications (for all UUVs, host USVs (as part of LARS scope) and a transportable solution per system)
- TEU/ISO Containers
- Sensors (to meet the core mine-hunting mission)

The support package will have a 3 year initial duration commencing from the delivery of the first system (after FAT/SAT testing). Subsequent equipment sets will be included within this support period as per the table below.

Support shall be provided in relation to the required Readiness Levels of the equipment delivered (please see the support envelope below for more detail)

In addition to the above core support package, an optional support package for all systems may be required for a further 2 years (in 1 year increments), via the exercising of the relevant contractual options.

The following table (Table 1) summarises the indicative required delivery dates for the systems that will be delivered by the winning Tenderer, to the specification stated.

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Description	Quantity	Date	Output
UUV System - as outlined above	8 Systems	First system delivered to The Authority by Contract Award (CA) + 27 months Second system delivered to The Authority by CA + 31 months Third system delivered to The Authority by CA + 36 months Fourth system delivered to The Authority by CA + 38 months All deliveries are expected to be completed by CA + 48 months	Physical Equipment Delivery

Table 1 – Deliverables

Delivery locations will be determined under the subsequent tendering exercise or such time as to be determined by The Authority. This exercise will also set out wider deliverables expected, and their format, under any resultant contract.

4. SYSTEM SPECIFICATION

Noting that extensive work has already been undertaken in Block 1 on developing and proving the MHC concept and equipment specifications, this is a requirement for a production system that can meet an exacting mine hunting requirement. The expectation is of a mature vehicle, with a proven sensor and a robust LARS. Preliminary market engagement and extensive trials and demonstrations have established that a range of systems can meet the specification sought. PSQ responses should therefore be clear on Potential Provider's credentials in delivering at this level.

To enable wide visibility of this PSQ, the requirement has been heavily summarised. Key features are:

- a) The system shall be operable from a Block 2 MHC Remote Command Centre (RCC) and supplier-provided laptops, with vehicles interchangeable across mission systems.
- b) It must support mission planning and post-mission analysis using SeeByte's SeeTrack software
- c) The vehicles should achieve required coverage, depth (to a minimum of 200m), navigation accuracy, and mission duration of up to 24 hours.
- d) The system shall include SONAR with high-resolution imaging, onboard processing, and no mutual interference.
- e) The system must integrate a Launch and Recovery System (LARS) for remote & manual deployment via USV or beach/slipway trailer. The LARS must integrate with an 11m USV

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(ARCIMS variant). It shall function in challenging sea states, a wide range of temperatures, and high salinity, with corrosion resistance for long-term use.

- f) Mission data must be quickly downloadable, compatible with SeeTrack PMA, and time-synchronised for accuracy.
- g) The system must operate SeeByte Neptune Autonomy software, support collaborative behaviours, and transmit ATR metadata.
- h) Portability requirements include compatibility with ISO containers, efficient transport, and air transportability.
- i) Communications shall include COTS underwater acoustic modems, above-water IP network comms, a pathway to achieve a secure PHORCYS implementation.

5. SUPPORT ENVELOPE

An important focus for Potential Providers to consider is the Support envelope that the equipment will need to operate within. Key highlights include:

- a) Each Unmanned Underwater Vehicle (UUV) shall achieve a minimum of 80% Operational Availability (Ao) during a Mission Cycle.
- b) When not on deployment, each UUV shall be maintained at the required Readiness State (R):
 - i. Operational UUVs at R0-R2 – 0 – 5 days
 - ii. Availability Pack UUVs at R6-R8 – 30 – 90 days
- c) To meet the required Availability Profile, all system components—including connections, interfaces, and sensors will need to exhibit:
 - i. High Mean Time Between Failure (MTBF), and/or
 - ii. Short Mean Time to Repair (MTTR)
- d) Maintenance tasks should be designed to be feasible during deployment, conducted by Royal Navy personnel, ensuring the system can deliver the required Mission Cycle and deployment objectives without mission failure.