

Vendor Questions- Round # 2

1. **Q:** The Financial workbook's "Tab C Prop Opt Personnel" does not specify labor category. Leaving it up to each bidder to identify CATS+ Labor Categories will create disparity on the financial evaluation. If vendor A selects a labor category with LESS qualification criteria than vendor B, they will most likely have a lower rate. But if vendor B was better at selecting the labor category the State requires for the role, they are now at a disadvantage in the financial evaluation and there does not appear to be a mechanism in the procurement to weigh the selected labor category against the State's needs. Thus, being better at selecting the appropriate labor category, as in the case of vendor B, results in an unfavorable financial evaluation.

For example, since there is no business analyst labor category in CATS + the vendors must select from several possible labor categories that vary significantly in qualification criteria. If vendor B understands a more experienced resource is needed (i.e. Medicaid, claims processing experience, etc.) and chooses a labor category with higher qualification requirements than vendor A, vendor B will have a higher rate than vendor A even though vendor B did the better projection of what is needed. Thus, vendor A will have the more favorable cost but the wrong labor category. This will create an unfair advantage on a critical piece of the evaluation criteria (financial proposal). It will also result in a lower level of service to the Department, since the vendor will use less experienced and/or less qualified resources to fill the Department's needs.

Another example is the Organizational Change Manager role. It will be easy to select the wrong labor category for this role. One vendor may view this as a project manager labor category, while another identifies it as a subject matter expert. When you consider the role description prefers Prosci change management familiarity, this is a very specific element to that role. There is not a clear mapping to the CATS+ labor categories and the Department will likely get a variety of interpretations from the vendors.

Will the Department consider one of the following:

- a. Identifying labor categories for each role
- b. Exclude "Tab C Prop Opt Personnel" from the evaluated price

A: The Department (MDH) listed its goals for each position in Appendix 6. It is up to each Offeror to select an appropriate labor category to meet those needs. The Department is not restricting that selection and believes that the Offeror is more appropriate to determine how to best fit the needs stated. The Department requires all Offerors to include in their technical proposal the rationale used in selecting each labor category. This staffing structure must meet both the software development and operations and maintenance needs of the LTSS Maryland system. The Offeror will be evaluated based on these selections and its knowledge and understanding of supporting the design, development, implementation, operations, and maintenance of a large-scale program.

2. **Q:** Other than the source code, what else will the State provide for requirement 2.3.3.5 Production Data Center? For example, there is no cost line item in the Financials for the start-up of the Production Data Center. How will the cost of the hardware and software be reimbursed?

A: The Department (MDH) will not pay the cost of equipment required to stand up the Production Data Center via this contract. The expectation is that Offerors or their subcontractors will have an existing Data Center that can be leveraged for the purposes of this contract. Any labor hours required to implement the LTSS code into the Data Center will be paid at the agreed upon rates for each labor category.

All rates must be fully loaded and include all costs related to the completion of each responsibility, task, or duty.

Please note this contract is to provide *technical oversight* over the LTSS Software Development and Operations and Maintenance (O&M) contractors. The selected contractor of this TORFP will be overseeing the current Operations and Maintenance (O&M) contractor and working to provide proof of concept, testing, troubleshooting, coordination, and any other necessary application development, operations or infrastructure related tasks.

3. **Q:** If the answer to the prior question is that there is no additional State resources (i.e. hardware or software), will the State add a line item in the financial proposal for the Production Data Center start-up?

A: There will be no line item added in the financial proposal for Production Data Center start-up.

4. **Q:** For Optional Resources, how does the State intend to evaluate the technical capabilities of the proposed optional resources? There does not appear to be a corresponding technical requirement for the State to assess for them.

A: The Offeror should identify labor categories within the technical proposal to show understanding of each function and how they apply to the LTSS Program, its operations and maintenance, and its ongoing software development. These labor categories are used to identify contractually available resources, build the financial structure (rates and total available award) of the contract and make these resources available through ongoing task orders throughout the duration of the contract.

When the Department (MDH) decides to implement these resources, the Offeror will need to provide candidates for evaluation at that time. Candidates must meet minimum requirements set forth in the chosen labor category as well as meet the needs of the Department (MDH).

Please note for the Additional non-Key Personnel Resources (Appendix 5; (Financial Proposal Tab C Proposed Optional Personnel) that the labor categories, not-to-exceed rate for each labor category, and not-to-exceed award amount are fixed based on the proposal and final award. These are the only limitations for future related task orders. The financial proposal has *projected* hours for evaluation purposes only and these are not limitations for future task orders as long as the labor category selected is met, and the rate and award total are not exceeded.

5. **Q:** Regarding section 5.4.2.H(4), does that required response pertain to the item #3 above it?

A: Section 5.4.2.H(4) requests a letter of authorization that the submitted proposal is authorized by the represented organization.

6. **Q:** Regarding sections 2.2.4, 2.2.5 and 2.2.6, they reference Appendix 7; however, since there is no Appendix 7 can we assume the reference is to Appendix 6?

A: Correct. These sections should reference Appendix 6. LTSS System Technical Infrastructure Design. A correction will be issued.

7. **Q:** The price sheet isn't capturing the requirements for section 2.3.2.25. Will the State update the pricing sheet to allow us to provide pricing to meet the requirements under "maintain a production datacenter and technology lab within 30 miles radius?"

A: See answers to question #2 and question #3

8. **Q:** Is the equipment that is currently listed in the data center owned by the State or the incumbent contractor?

A: The equipment for the current Data Center (2.3.2.25) is owned by the incumbent contractor. The State only owns the code.

9. **Q:** In the pricing form it does not outline a place for the data center hosting costs, or equipment costs, is it to be assumed that these costs should be included in the labor costs clins outlined?

A: See answers to question #2 and question #3

10. **Q:** The contractor responsibilities in the TO listed do not list Infrastructure management tasks nor the pricing sheet has a medium to capture datacenter/lab requirement. Pls clarify.

The tasks included are:

- Project Management Services
- Business Analyst Services
- Software Development and Implementation Support Services
- Testing and Quality Assurance Services
- Training Services

- Tier 2 Help Desk Services

A: The requirements for this contract are not to manage system infrastructure. This contract is to provide technical oversight over the LTSS Software Development and Operations and Maintenance (O&M) contractors. The purpose of the production Data Center is to serve as part of a technical lab, providing a staging area for evaluation of proposed solutions from the Software Development and Operations and Maintenance (O&M) contractors, providing a mechanism for developing proofs of concept, and to provide source code escrow as releases are deployed into the LTSS system. The Production Data Center will not support any data from the LTSS system and will have no requirements for uptime. This Data Center is a tool for the Contractor to use while completing their oversight and evaluation duties.

11. **Q: Do you already have System Administrators responsible for managing operating systems and platform– VMWare, Linux, Windows or what operating systems do you have running on VMWare platform?**

A: Appendix 6. LTSS System Technical Infrastructure Design is intended as reference material for Offerors. Managing operating systems and platforms, including those listed in this question, are under the responsibility of the Operations and Maintenance (O&M) contractor. There is an existing System Administrator under the Operations and Maintenance (O&M) contract. We have Windows and Linux, Netapp on tap for storage, Cisco iOS, and ESXi 6.7-U1.

12. **Q: Is the System Application support resource expected to support just the infrastructure (VMWare, Linux, Windows) or just software/Application code?**

A: The focus of the System Application Support resource is primarily intended to be on the software application and code. However, the Department (MDH) is not prescriptive in this use, and it is expected that all resources may need to assist with oversight on all aspects of the LTSS program. The awarded Contractor must understand how best to use its resources to provide oversight of both the software application and the technical infrastructure.

13. **Q: What specifically will the Senior and Junior Network support resource be responsible for as far as Cisco UCS platform? Will they be responsible for the Cisco UCS FI (Fiber interconnect) and the enclave networking to be supported via UCS central? In order words, will the State's network team bring the network drops to the FI (fiber interconnect) and the TO contractor Network resource be responsible for designing and maintaining the network layout within UCS central? Will the State's core network team design, configure the network and subnet/vlan layout in UCS central?**

A: Appendix 6. LTSS System Technical Infrastructure Design is intended as reference material for Offerors. Managing operating systems and platforms, including those listed in this question, are under the responsibility of the Operations and Maintenance (O&M) contractor. The Senior and Junior Network Support will be responsible for oversight and

engagement with the Operations and Maintenance (O&M) contractor as they implement and maintain system infrastructure, including the Cisco UCS platform. Although the Technical Oversight will not be directly responsible for the design and implementation of networks, they must have an understanding of how design and implementation occurs in order to provide adequate oversight of the O&M contractor's execution of technical infrastructure.

14. **Q:** How is storage resource managed? Are system resources managed centrally via Cisco UCS central? If so, do they use service profile (SP) for server provisioning?

A: We use service profile. We have a netapp cluster running netapp 9.3 to manage storage resources on the ESXi servers. No storage is managed via UCS Manager with the exception of iSCSI which is mounted on UCS Manager.

15. **Q:** Will the TO contractor resources be responsible to provision servers via UCS central?

A: No.

16. **Q:** Will The TO contractor resources have access to UCS central? Will UCS central be the primary tool to access and administer system resources?

A: We currently use UCS Manager to access physical system resources such as the blade servers. We use VMWareESXi to configure the virtual machines.

The Technical Oversight Contractor may be granted access to UCS Manager at the Department's (MDH) discretion

17. **Q:** What version of UCS central is being used today?

A: We currently use UCS Manager version 4.0.2F, not UCS Central.

18. **Q:** What version of VMWare esx/esxi and vsphere or vcenter is in production?

A: We are currently running ESXi 6.7-U1 and Vcenter.

19. **Q:** Will this new location host the Production and Technical Lab or just a Technical Lab?

A: The purpose of the Production Data Center is to serve alongside the technical lab, providing a staging area for evaluation of proposed solutions from the Operations and Maintenance (O&M) and Software Development contractors, providing a mechanism for developing proof of concepts, and to provide source code escrow as releases are deployed into the LTSS system. The Production Data Center will not support any data from the LTSS system. This Data Center is a tool for the Contractor to use while completing their oversight and evaluation duties.

20. **Q:** Does the Technical LAB need to be the same size and scope as the Production environment?

A: No, the Technical Lab does not need to be the same size as the production environment. In order to make the best use of the technical lab, its components should mirror the configurations and technology for the production system. It can be a scaled-down replication to be used as a staging area for assessing proposed implementations.

21. **Q:** Why a 30 miles radius for the data center location?

A: The Offeror must be able to demonstrate findings to the Department (MDH) and all relevant contractors. The distance requirement ensures there is reasonable access to the site so the Contractor can demonstrate findings to other contractors and the Department (MDH) as needed. The purpose of the production Data Center is to serve as part of a technical lab, providing a staging area for evaluation of proposed solutions from the Operations and Maintenance (O&M) and Software Development contractors, providing a mechanism for developing proofs of concept, and to provide source code escrow as releases are deployed into the LTSS system.

22. **Q:** Does MDH already have a prefer WAN carrier they will like to use for the new data center location?

A: This is already provided through the Operations and Maintenance (O&M) contract.

23. **Q:** Will there be regular data replication between the Technical Lab and Production or the Disaster recovery site?

A: There is regular replication of data between the Live LTSS system and the Disaster Recovery site. This lies within the responsibilities of the Operations and Maintenance (O&M) contractor and not within the scope of this contract.

There will be a cadence for the Technical Oversight Contractor to replicate the system code in the Production Data Center, which will align with the monthly LTSS releases.

24. **Q:** Will there be a need for office for MDH personnel? If yes, how often?

A: Department (MDH) personnel will not need office space at the Contractor location. However, there will be a regular cadence of meetings between the Department (MDH), this contractor, the Software Development contractor, and the Operations and Maintenance (O&M) contractors. These meetings may take place at any location agreed on between the attendees. The majority of meetings with the Department (MDH) will be hosted at 201 W Preston. St., Baltimore, MD 21201.

Please note that office space/ cubicles may be made available at the Department's (MDH) Baltimore office (201 W Preston St) for this contract to ensure integration with program and business staff. Depending on the task order and project, daily attendance at this location may be required.

25. **Q: Questions relating to Security for the Data Center:** Approximately how many MDH personnel will be require to work onsite on a regular basis?

A: See answer to question # 24, above.

26. **Q: Questions relating to Security for the Data Center:** Does MDH already have a NOC or SOC?

A: Yes, this is provided under the Operations and Maintenance (O&M) contract.

27. **Q: Questions relating to COTS Software for the Data Center:** • Microsoft Windows Server Data Center Edition • Microsoft SQL Server Standard (includes SSRS reporting services) • RavenDB Standard Plus and Enterprise editions • IBM Sterling Connect:Direct Standard Edition w/Secure + • VMware vSphere Enterprise Plus • vCloud Suite • Veeam Availability Suite v9 • Shavlik Protect • SolarWinds Network Performance Monitor • SolarWinds Application Performance Monitor • Zenoss Enterprise • Microsoft Operations Management 2016 • BlazeMeter • Splunk • Ndatalign
Are there any software in the list with pain points?

A: These specifications were identified to provide Offerors insight into the components of the production system.

Overall, the most challenging pain point for ongoing system operations is RavenDB. The Department (MDH) has faced challenges with RavenDB, primarily due to the more limited support and knowledge bases available for RavenDB. The Department is currently in the process of re-platforming the database to SQL, a process with which this Contractor will need to be heavily involved.

28. **Q: Questions relating to COTS Software for the Data Center:** What are the pain points?

A: See answer to Question #27, above.

29. **Q: Questions relating to COTS Software for the Data Center:** Will the state be open to evaluate comparable software?

A: The Department (MDH) will evaluate any proposed software to accomplish requirements identified in this TORFP with the Offeror's technical proposals.

30. **Q: Questions relating to COTS Software for the Data Center:** What type of software applications will the data center contractor be responsible for excluding operating system software?

A: The Contractor will be responsible for software used to maintain the source code escrow, and any other system monitoring tools used for troubleshooting and regular reporting to the Department (MDH). The Contractor will also be responsible for supplying any project management software required to complete ongoing duties, such as Microsoft Project and/or Microsoft Visio, among others as needed.

31. **Q: Questions relating to Computing and Virtualization for the Data Center:** Which environment should the Production and Technical Lab replicate?

A: The Production Data Center and Technical Lab should replicate the production LTSS environment.

32. **Q: Questions relating to Computing and Virtualization for the Data Center:** Page 100 states the primary location has 9 chassis with 6 blades in each chassis. However, the last paragraph described 6 chassis and 36 blades. Please verify the number of chassis and the number of blades in each chassis.

A: There are currently 6 chassis and 36 blades in the current production environment.

33. **Q: Questions relating to Computing and Virtualization for the Data Center:** Is there consideration for other hardware platform?

A: The hardware described in Appendix 6 is of the infrastructure used by the Operations and Maintenance (O&M) contractor to host the production LTSS System. The Production Data Center required in 2.3.2.25 will be a scaled-down version compared to the existing Appendix 6, but must be able to host a test LTSS system to accomplish the tasks listed in 2.3.2.25.

34. **Q: Question relating to Storage Layer for the Data Center:** What data encryption policy is desired? Data at rest, Data in Transit or both?

A: The Contractor's responsibilities will not directly require any maintenance, transfer, or access to production data, except during rare circumstances. This Contract requires maintenance of the source code only. In the circumstance where data must be shared across contractors, encryption must be maintained both in transit and at rest.

35. **Q: Question relating to Backup Infrastructure for the Data Center:** Will the backup system for the new data center be replicated or will the existing be shared to the new data center site

A: Maintenance of the Live system and Disaster Recovery are managed by the Operations and Maintenance (O&M) contractor. The production Data Center supplied by the Technical Oversight Contractor provides source code escrow and there is no additional back up required.

36. **Q: Questions relating to the LAN for the Data Center:** Does the VPN connectivity require dual factor authentication for end users?

A: This is managed by the Operations and Maintenance (O&M) Contractor.

37. **Q: Questions relating to the LAN for the Data Center:** Does O&M manage the network switches?

A: Yes