

**Q&As #1 to
Request for Proposals (RFP)
Statewide Public Safety Wireless Communications System
RFP #060B9800036
August 28, 2008**

Ladies/Gentlemen:

The Department of Information Technology received the following questions by e-mail for the above referenced RFP, and are answered below for all Offerors:

1. Section 4.4.5, Page 99 - The RFP states: "The Offeror shall address each major task in the Technical Proposal and describe how its services will meet the requirements as described in the RFP. If the State is seeking Offeror's agreement to a requirement, the Offeror shall state agreement or disagreement.".

We would suggest that each response to a paragraph also be preceded by a Statement of Compliance (Comply, Non Comply, Clarification) to clearly demonstrate the level of compliance by vendors and aid in evaluation.

Answer: The State prefers that Offerors state their agreement or disagreement to a requirement. Where appropriate, Offerors should explain their agreement or disagreement.

2. Section 4.4.2, Page 98, Section 4.4.2 states: "....The paragraphs in these RFP sections are numbered for ease of reference. In addition to the instructions below, the Offeror's Technical Proposals shall be organized and numbered in the same order as this RFP. This proposal organization will allow State officials and the Evaluation Committee to "map" Offeror's responses directly to RFP requirements by paragraph number." Is it the States desire to have the Technical response exactly numbered as the RFP paragraphs (e.g. 4.4.1 Transmittal Letter) or to maintain the exact order in which the sections are requested?

Answer: The State wants an organized proposal so the evaluation team can easily determine 1) if the Offerors are providing what the State requires in the RFP and 2) how well they are providing what is required in the RFP. There was no requirement for "exactly numbered" or "exact order" in the RFP. The requirement was "organized and numbered in the same order as this RFP."

3. Section 4.4.5, Page 99, Section 4.4.5 states: "... The following subsections explain where additional information shall be in the Technical Proposal beyond what is might be an Offeror's normal response to a RFP Section 3 requirement.

Is it the States desire to integrate this information (RFP paragraphs 4.4.5.1 - 4.4.5.16) within the Section 3 responses or placed in separately tabbed sections within the Technical volume.

Answer: Offerors shall provide their proposal as described in Section 4 of the RFP. In their proposal, they should reference their response back to the specific Section 3 section/s delineated in Section 4. If the Offeror submits additional information, the Offeror can integrate this information (RFP paragraphs 4.4.5.1 - 4.4.5.16) within the Section 3 responses or place it in separately tabbed sections within the Technical

Proposal. However, the Offeror must clearly indicate the location of the additional information.

4. Section 1.8, Page 13: What is the last date for submittal of questions to the State concerning this RFP?

Answer: There is no cutoff date for the submission of questions. However, there is a three month timeframe between issue of this RFP (July 9, 2008) and proposal due date (October 8, 2008). This should be adequate time to develop questions well before the proposal due date. In the case of questions submitted close to the proposal due date, the State will determine if it has time to provide an adequate response to the question.

5. Section 1.17, Page 14: Does the State require that proposed solutions, main and alternate, comply with the requirement to comply with Project 25 Ph 2 standards within 4 years of initial NTP?

Answer: Yes.

How will potential alternate proposals be evaluated by the State? How will the Evaluation Criteria in Section 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3 be used for scoring of the alternative? How will the structure and tabulations stipulated in Attachment F – Pricing Sheets and the instructions presented in Attachment F – Price Proposal Forms and Instructions be applied to both an LMR alternative and a non-LMR alternative?

Answer: The technical and financial evaluation criteria used for alternate proposals will be the same as that used for standard proposals (see Addendum #4, item #1).

6. Section 1.18, Page 15: The RFP states that the MBE content is 12%. Will the prime bidder receive 100% MBE credit for all of the MBE firms that are hired by its subcontractors also?

Answer: The prime contractor will not receive any credit for MBE firms that are hired by its subcontractors. The prime contractor will receive MBE credit for the MBE subcontractors with whom it (the prime) has a contract to do work on this project.

7. Section 1.18, Page 23: To ensure a clear understanding of the State's intent, would the State provide additional explanation on each of the three possible deployment options, during the Pre-Proposal Conference?

- Why is option #3 required given the costs for option #1 and option #2 will be provided? Isn't option #3 the delta between #1 and #2?
- The level of coverage in a given region is determined by not only the sites within that region but also the spill over from adjacent regions. In light of this, while developing option #3, should bidders assume that all prior regions will be been deployed as Public Service?

Answer: Option #2 permits the State to directly deploy a public safety network. There is no requirement in the RFP to first deploy a public service network. Deployment of Option #2 should logically be less than the combination of Option # 1 and Option # 3 since there will not be multiple mobilizations to install equipment,

optimize the system, test, etc. Vendors should not assume that adjacent regions will have ANY sites deployed – each region should standalone for coverage determination (e.g., the State may choose to implement Option 1 in Region 1 and then Option 3 in Region 1 prior to deploying any other regions).

8. Section 3.1.4, 2nd para., Page 25: The RFP states that the “system architecture must allow for multiple band operations or overlay systems where desired by user agencies to accommodate unique coverage requirements within certain geographic areas, or during migration periods.” The RFP later goes on to state that multiple band operation or overlay systems cannot be used as an approach to providing the system coverage...” It is our understanding correct that the State will not accept hybrid networks (i.e. multi-band or multi technology designs) as solutions for meeting statewide coverage requirements?

Answer: That is correct. Multiple band systems are not desired and cannot be used to meet the State’s standard proposal requirements.

9. Section 3.2.11.1, 5th para, Page 35: The RFP states that the system shall be capable of supporting applications that transmit and receive various forms of data content, including but not limited to Video (e.g. from streaming to full motion). This type of application would not function properly in a low speed data environment, which appears to be in contradiction to Sections 3.2.8.13 and 3.2.11.7. Section 3.2.8.13 states that “The system must provide low-speed wireless data access and service to users.” and Section 3.2.11.7 states that “The system subscriber units shall provide an interface to allow the interconnection to other private or public high speed wireless data networks”. Is the support of streaming video applications specifically for use with other private or public high speed wireless data networks?

Answer: The State desires to have video available over the statewide enterprise. Since the 700 MHz rules are still evolving the State does not wish to preclude the inclusion of video in the system. Vendors that cannot meet this requirement in the current environment can take exception or provide clarification comments in their response.

10. Section 3.2.1.12, Page 36: Please clarify that each console listed in “Appendix 6, Dispatch Point Location and Console Capacity” is the quantity of new consoles required.

Answer: No. Quantities in the RFP are for informational purposes only.

11. Section 3.4, Page 67: To ensure that vendors based their proposals on a common site development scope and ensure an “apples to apples” comparison, would the State provide a common set of requirement that bidders should use in developing their site development quotes?

Some specific topics that should be addressed are:

1. Is additional space required for the expansion of the existing compound to accommodate a new shelter/fuel tank (if required)?
2. Is site access adequate for the transportation of heavy equipment to the site? Are any improvements required to support concrete trucks, drill rigs, shelter delivery, and crane access?

3. Would there be any requirements for excessive grading, fill or retaining walls?
4. Is any clearing required?
5. Is additional temporary space available for the staging of construction equipment during the construction of new site facilities (tower, shelter, generator, fuel tank etc.)?
6. Does each site have adequate utility service for a new shelter and tower within 100' of the site location?

Answer: For the purposes of this RFP, assume new site development would be on a level 200' x 200' area, light ground cover (no clearing of trees over 4" diameter), favorable soil composition for tower construction and within 1000 ft of existing utility service. Access by heavy equipment would require minimal access improvements. The Task Order process for site development would address any site specific details that would need consideration. See Addendum #4, item # 6.

12. Section 3.3.7, Attachment F, Page 58:

The RFP states that the contractor must provide radios from at least three different manufacturers. This approach will result in the State purchasing third party radios at an additional mark-up over buying those radios directly from the manufacturer.

In lieu of requiring bidders to provide pricing for third party radios, would the State allow bidders to certify that their radio networks are compliant with the Project 25 open architecture and require bidders provide specific system references that demonstrate radios from multiple manufacturers in actual use on their deployed systems?

In addition, with the upcoming release of the NIST and SAFECOM endorsed Project 25 Compliance Assessment Program (CAP), each vendor's equipment can be independently certified to be Project 25 compliant and interoperable with other manufacturers radios..

The following link provides additional information about the CAP program:

<http://www.safecomprogram.gov/SAFECOM/currentprojects/project25cap/>

Finally, as a vehicle for procuring third party interoperable radios, the State can use the existing PO RFP process under the state's existing radio contract ("**Mobile Radio Equipment Communication Consoles; Install, Repair and Maintenance Services**"). This contract provides the State with the pricing discounts from each radio manufacturer without any additional mark up.

Answer: Certifying compliance of third party subscriber radios with the P-25 Phase 2 standard does not meet the requirements of this RFP.

13. Section 3.6, 1st para., Page 86: The RFP states: "During the warranty period that the Contractor shall provide for replacement equipment at no cost to the State. During subsequent maintenance periods the Contractor may use the State's inventory of spare equipment or a Contractor maintained depot."

Will the State allow the contractor to use the State's spare inventory to meet the 8 hr repair time, as long as the contractor replaces any used spares during the warranty period?

Answer: Yes, the State would allow a contractor to use the State’s spare inventory of parts to meet the 8 hour repair time as long as the contractor replaced any spares used during the warranty period . The contractor will immediately order any replacement parts to replenish the state’s inventory. Any new part drawn from inventory will be replaced with a new part.

14. Section 3.6.1, 1st para, Page 87: The RFP states, “Any services supplied, systems, equipment, designs, or work found to be defective within the time specified in Table 7-1, *Minimum Warranty Period per Equipment Class*, shall be repaired, remedied, or replaced, by the Contractor, free of all charges including, without limitation, transportation.”

Table 7-1 referenced in this section appears to be missing. Will the State make Table 7-1 available?

Answer: The reference to Table 7-1 should not be in the RFP and the reference to Table 7-1 will be deleted (see Addendum #4, item #2). The warranty period is as specified in Section 3.6.1, Para. #2.

15. Section 3.6.4, Page 90: In order for vendors to provide a training plan and price quote that meets the State of Maryland’s needs, the size and quantity of each class session needs to be defined. How many students need to be trained for each training category below?

- Total Number of System Management staff -
- Total Number of System Maintenance Technicians –

Please quantify the number of students to be trained for each region.

- Region 1 -
 - Console Supervisors
 - Console Operators
 - Subscriber Train the Trainer
- Region 1A -
 - Console Supervisors
 - Console Operators
 - Subscriber Train the Trainer
- Region 2 -
 - Console Supervisors
 - Console Operators
 - Subscriber Train the Trainer
- Region 3 -
 - Console Supervisors
 - Console Operators
 - Subscriber Train the Trainer
- Region 4 -
 - Console Supervisors
 - Console Operators

- Subscriber Train the Trainer

Answer: A new attachment, Attachment F1A - Training Pricing Sheet, provides the estimated number of people to train by type per region. Quantities of individuals listed on the Training Pricing Sheet are for evaluation purposes only. See Addendum 4, items #3 & #4.

16. Section 4.3, Paragraph 3, Page 98: The RFP states that "All pages of both proposal volumes shall be consecutively numbered from beginning (Page 1) to end (Page "x")." Would the State accept proposal that were numbered consecutively by section (e.g. Page 1-1 to Page 1-x, Page 2-1 to Page 2-x, etc.) in lieu of numbering consecutively from beginning to end?

Answer: The State will accept a proposal that was numbered consecutively by section (e.g. Page 1-1 to Page 1-x, Page 2-1 to Page 2-x, etc.). The State would prefer that all pages of both proposal volumes be consecutively numbered from beginning (Page 1) to end (Page "x") as stated in the RFP. In either case, the State expects a Table of Contents to be provided (Section 4.4.3).

17. Section 5.2, Page 105: For the purposes of scoring are the technical topics (a thru i) weighted? For the purposes of scoring are the Project Management topics (a thru j) weighted? If so, can the weighted values be shared with vendors prior to the proposal submission?

Answer: As stated in Section 5.2, the four criteria, Offeror Technical Response to RFP Requirements, Project Organization, Project Management Plan and Assumptions, and Corporate Experience and Capabilities are listed in descending order of importance. The sub factors under criteria #1 and criteria #3 are focus areas for evaluation because of their crucial impact on project success and therefore shall be integral to an Offeror's response. All of these sub factors will be given equal consideration when evaluating criteria #1 and criteria #3.

18. Attachment F, Price Sheets, F2- Site Development:

- *"Tower & foundation, 0-100 ft*
- *Tower & foundation 101-200 ft*
- *Tower, tower lighting & foundation 201-300 ft*
- *Tower, tower lighting & foundation 301-400 ft*
- *Tower, tower lighting & foundation 401-500 ft"*

The pricing for the ranges of tower height outlined above might vary significantly from the lower height to the upper height. For these line items, what specific tower height does the State desire the Offerors to use for the purposes of supplying the pricing?

Answer: Pricing for evaluation purposes should be based on the following heights within each range: 100', 180', 250', 330', 450'. Actual tower heights will be determined on an individual Task Order basis.

19. Attachment F, Price Sheets, F2- Site Development: “*Other Equipment/Expenses Per Site*”

What standard scope does the State require Offerors to include under this line item?

Also, does the State require Offerors to include in their pricing the following services:

- Construction Drawings
- Site Survey
- FCC permits (NEPA, SHPO, THPO etc.)
- Zoning permits
- As built drawings

Answer: Pricing should include costs for Construction Drawings and As-built drawings. Zoning permits are not required on State property. Costs for site surveys and FCC permits should not be included.

20. Section 3.4.4.1, Item # 3, Page 74: “*Clearing and grading of an approximant 100 x100 ft. grassy area and installing temporary storm-water management.*”

Is the requirement for a 100’x100’ compound limited to new tower sites or does it apply to existing tower sites as well?

Answer: The 100’ x 100’ compound applies to newly developed sites and is typical of state constructed sites.

21. Section 3.4.2.2.2, Item # 4, Page 68: “*Spacing between tower legs shall not exceed 31 ft.*”

450’ towers with loading specified in Appendix 11 would be difficult and/or expensive to design for the leg spacing specified. Could the State consider relaxing this requirement?

Answer: Yes, leg spacing can be specified during the Task Order process for Site Development. Section 3.4.2.2.2, Item #4 can be disregarded. See Addendum #4, item #7.

22. Section 3.4.3.1, Item # 1, Page 69: “*Concrete Construction – The wall outer finish will be natural stone aggregate finish with an earth tone.*”

Does the State require the shelter structure to be made of solid concrete construction?

Answer: The state specification allows waffle type concrete construction, but the outer finish must be as specified in the RFP.

23. Sections 3.2.13.5; 3.4.4.1, Item # 8, Pages 38 &75: “*Sites developed by the contractor shall provide emergency backup power from generators and uninterruptible power supplies to allow full operation without commercial power for an indefinite period, with refueling or maintenance required no more frequently than every 96 hours during emergency run times.*”

“*The contractor shall provide a new and unused, purchased and not leased, above ground 1,000-gallon fuel tank filled to rated capacity (liquid propane only).*”

Could the State define which one of the two specifications above the Offerors should use in designing the fuel system.

Answer: The specifications are not exclusive. The state desires propane backup generators as specified in 3.4.3.1 item 33 b). For evaluation purposes, the vendor must provide pricing for a 1000 gallon propane tank. Should this be insufficient to

comply with the 96 hour run time requirement, then additional fuel tanks will be purchased. Calculations supporting the electrical load must be supplied.

24. Section 3.4.3.1, Item # 33(d), Page 73:

“This partition wall shall have a one hour fire rating (from the inside out and outside in).”

Does the State desire the outer walls of the shelter to be fire rated?

Answer: Yes. We require 1-hour fire rating for both interior and exterior walls.

25. Section 3.4.3.1, Item # 25, & Section 3.4.2.2.2, Item # 2, Page 72:

“Supplied materials, including, but not limited to, equipment shelter, fuel tank and tower, shall be new, unused and shall meet the latest design and fabrication standards of the Electronics Industry Association (EIA).”

“The tower shall be required to meet or exceed the latest EIA 222-F standards for this type of tower concurrent with ½- inch of radial ice.”

EIA 222-F standard was replaced in 2006 with EIA-222-G standard. Which standard should the Offerors design the towers to?

Answer: Vendors should design towers to TIA/EIA 222-G. See Addendum #4, item #8.

26. Appendix 2, Page 5: The RFP shows a PDF map of areas defined as 24 dB Building loss areas.

Will the State provide a GIS shape file of the 24dB Building Loss areas to facilitate coverage modeling? Providing this file will ensure that all bidders model the 24 dB coverage area boundaries exactly the same.

Answer: The State will consider providing these GIS shape files. They are not available at this time.

27. Appendix 14, Sec 5.2, Page 51: This Appendix shows a final statewide design of 346 sites for channel planning and coverage. Chart 33 shows coverage from this site configuration that only shows 69% Portable in-building coverage.

What dB level of in building coverage was this RF coverage prediction run with?

Answer: The vendor is responsible to provide a system design that meets the coverage and reliability requirements described in the RFP. The coverage predictions provided in Appendix 14 are not part of the system design requirements and are provided for informational purposes only as illustrative of CHANNEL PLANNING.

28. Appendix 16, Sec 8.11, Page 39: Coverage Testing Simulated Building Test Grid Testing and Analysis

To provide a statistically repeatable testing methodology and eliminate uncontrollable variables, would the State agree with a simulated 12dB building test that does the following:

- 1) uses a mobile radio with the output tuned to the output of a portable (3 Watts)
- 2) uses a calibrated attenuator to simulate the building and body loss;

3) accounts for the difference between the test mobile antenna and the portable antenna?

Answer: No. The method identified in the RFP is repeatable, uses the required portable radio and does not require additional equipment, test procedures, calibration, etc. Attempting to replicate in-building coverage with an antenna installed on a vehicle is not acceptable.

29. Appendix 10: Appendix 10 provided by State lists Public Service and public safety sites. Are vendors to use all of the sites listed as Public Service to arrive at the Public Service coverage percentages?

What sites are available to use for the Public Safety design?

Is it the State's intent to only use sites on the Appendix 10 list for the State design?

Answer: The vendor should design the system to meet Public Safety requirements. The Public Service design would use those sites identified for the Public Safety design that currently exist.

30. Section 3.1.4, Page 25: The RFP Appendix 16 Section 8 requires 95% of test tiles to pass. The RFP section 3.1.4 makes reference to 97% reliability across 95% of area. The RFP Appendix 16 Section 8.5 make reference to 95% contour reliability.

These three sections have different coverage requirements.

What coverage requirement does the State want to take precedence?

If the State does requires 97% reliability across 95% of the area, does this set the CATP pass criteria at 92% of the service area?

Answer: No. 95% of the test tiles in an area must pass the coverage test for the area to pass.

31. Section 4.4.5.13, Page 101: RFP section 4.4.5.13 - Coverage Maps:

Requires that "all maps shall be of the same size and use a scale of one inch equals six miles to allow performance comparison between areas."

Is Maryland asking for individual maps of each county, each region and the entire state?

If so, would the State allow bidders to provide maps on a different scale and paper size for each category to maximize coverage detail?

Answer: A single scale should be used for all county maps (1"=1 mile or 1:100,000). A single scale should be used for all region maps (1"=2 miles or 1:125,000). A single scale (1"=4 miles or 1:250,000) should be used for the state map. The purpose of these maps is to illustrate coverage, not necessarily limited to political borders. All drawings should fit on E size paper. See Addendum #4, item #9.

32. Appendix 16, Section 8.4, Page 30: In Appendix 16 section 8.4 second paragraph, the State requires land test tiles to extend ten miles into adjacent states. However, in the fourth paragraph in the same section region testing shall incorporate all tiles within a three-mile border of the State in the case of land. Would the State confirm that the correct requirement is to conduct land based tests out to 3 miles from the Maryland border?

Answer: Land-based tests should extend 3 miles beyond a jurisdictions service area. Water-based tests should extend 10 miles into the Atlantic Ocean. See Addendum #4, item #10.

33. Appendix 16, Section 8.4, Page 30: Has the State considered the 40dBu contour limitation when requiring coverage beyond the State borders?

Answer: The RFP is amended to require the depiction of a 40 dBu contour of sites into any adjacent state and the District of Columbia to provide evidence of compliance with the Orders¹ of the Commission as well as Region 20 Plan. See Addendum #4, item #5.

34. Section 3.2.8.9, Page 29: With respect to calculation of the Grade of Service, will the 5000 Talk Groups be defined for usage within each State Agency or can assumptions be made regarding current usage and projected growth?

Answer: Grade of Service is a total system requirement for all talk groups among all users, both State and local government. Design should be based upon a worst-case scenario where actual data is not available; i.e., all talk groups operating during the busy hour.

35. Section 3.2.8.9, Page 29: In order to accurately calculate Grade of Service, will Busy Hours be defined by each Talk Group rather than by an agency global maximum?

Answer: No. See Q&A #34 above.

36. Section 3.2.8.9, Page 29: In order to accurately calculate Grade of Service, will Geographic Areas of Operation be defined by Talk Group rather than by a composite of the agency?

Answer: No. See Q&A #34 above.

37. Appendix 14, Page 41: Paragraph 4.4.2-i indicates that in the absence of a State-to-State channel coordination agreement, certain guidelines should be applied. Have any State-to-State agreements been made since the RFP was released?

Answer: No coordination agreements have been completed relative to “state” channels²; however, the process of negotiation has been initiated. When state channels are unavailable, the State has the option of requesting spectrum from Regional Planning Committee Twenty (“Region 20”). The Region 20 Plan for 700 MHz was recently approved by the Commission³ and is included as Appendix 17 of the RFP.

38. Section 3.6, Page 86: Is it the State’s intention to require the successful vendor to provide all required centralized and field personnel, tools, test equipment, spare parts, software maintenance updates, facilities and transportation necessary to address all maintenance requirements and services specified within the contract both during warranty and any purchased maintenance periods?

Answer: Yes, the Contractor would be responsible for all of the above during the warranty period. After the warranty period, the State can purchase systems support with either “parts and labor” or “labor only” as listed on Attachment F3.

¹ *Id.*

² *See* 47 CFR §90.531(b)(5)

³ *See* DA 08-1730

39. Section 4.4.5.6, Page 100: The RFP states that the Offeror shall include a field test plan to demonstrate to the State's RFP evaluation committee a live test of features supported by subscriber units manufactured by three different manufacturers. The reference to the RFP evaluation committee implies that this is a pre-award activity. Would the State confirm that this field test will take place after contract award during system implementation?

Answer: No. The live feature test is an important evaluation criteria to verify that the proposed radios from each manufacturer work properly on the initially proposed infrastructure. The live test can be a specific demonstration or can be actual testing on an existing system (preferred method).

40. Appendix 16, Section 8.14, Page 40: The Project 25 Phase 2 over the air data rate for a 12.5 KHz channel is 12 Kbps. For a 6.25 KHz channel, this equates to data rate of 6 Kbps. The 7.2 Kbps requirement appears to be inconsistent with the Phase II standard. Is the State asking for a separate data system apart from the P25 Phase II network to meet the 7.2 Kbps error free requirement?

Answer: No. The State is not asking for a separate data system.

41. Appendix 10: There are a number of sites listed in Appendix 10 that do not have location coordinates (latitude & longitude) or addresses. Will the State provide the missing coordinates and/or street addresses not included in Appendix 10?

Answer: Yes. See Addendum #4, item #11.