Additional questions received 11/15/2016

1. What is the minimum acceptable version / release level of the following components of the target re-platform environment?

Windows Server	2012R2	**We utilize the State of Alaska's Active Directory installation run on a mix of Windows 2008R2 and Windows 2012 servers.**
SQL Server	2014SP2	
C#	6.0	
Active Directory	N/A	
ASP.Net	4.6	
ASP.Net MVC	5	
ASP.Net CORE	1.0	
VB.Net	14	

2. Will the proponent be required to establish the Production / Development and Unit test / User Acceptance Test / Training / Failover environments to mirror the current landscape?

   ANSWER: YES

3. What SCM (Source Code Management) application will be required / used in the target re-platform environment?

   ANSWER: Probably SVN but open to suggestions.

4. With C# as the required .Net language; is a solution which retains the Natural surface syntax (and thereby requires ongoing Natural maintenance programming and DML (Data Manipulation Language) skills) and connects to a SQL Server database via a proprietary middleware an acceptable solution?

   ANSWER: No.

5. If the answer is yes to the above question would such a solution satisfy the stated objective in Section 4 (4.02 (3)) - Skilled Development Resources are Limited – of reducing the dependency of the state on limited resources?

   ANSWER: N/A

6. Does the state have a C# / SQL Server Programming and/or Application Architecture Standards manuals?

ANSWER: The Alaska Department of Revenue utilizes Microsoft 'Best Practices' as the architectural standards for C#/SQL Server programming. These 'Best Practices' are published by Microsoft in the latest 'White Papers' on these subjects.

7. What is the approximate size and skill level of the current AMS (Application Maintenance and Support) staff i.e. number of DBAs, Natural Programmers (junior/intermediate/senior), Analysts?

    ANSWER: Four (4) Natural Programmers, including one (1) ADABAS DBA. Two (2) web developers plus one (1) Departmental Senior SQL DBA

8. In the handoff to re-platform environment: What is the approximate size and skill level of the AMS (Application Maintenance and Support) staff i.e. number of DBAs, C# Programmers (junior/intermediate/senior), Analysts dedicated to the NSTAR application?

    ANSWER: One (1) Departmental Senior SQL DBA, 4 analyst/programmers and 2 web developers will receive training in .Net technologies.

9. Will the state consider long-term outsourcing of the application AMS?

    ANSWER: No.

10. Will the state consider a cloud based solution? If yes must the cloud data center be physical located in Alaska?

    ANSWER: No.

11. What is the extent of the use of Predict rules in the NSTAR application?

    ANSWER: Minimum.

12. What is the extent of the use of CONSTRUCT – specifically is NSTAR considered / actively maintained as a CONSTRUCT application?

    ANSWER: NSTAR does not use Natural Construct

13. What is the current release level of the Predict and CONSTRUCT products?

    ANSWER: N/A

14. Will the Natural source and ADABAS schema be made available in electronic format to proponents? This information is considered essential to the evaluation and development of a robust technical and cost proposal for automated conversion.

ANSWER: As far as we know, schemas cannot be automatically generated from ADABAS fines, and if there is such a utility program, we have not used. See attached sample natural program.

15. What role do the MS SQL Files/Tables (referenced in Table A.27) play in the existing application?

    ANSWER: MS SQL Tables exist just for the web portions of NSTAR which is not part of the re-platforming effort.

16. Please clarify the responses to A.9 and B.7 with respect to the .Net language preferences as C#. In particular please advise if there is a State mandated requirement in support of this criteria that precludes other modern technologies currently deployed in the state or user department systems?

    ASWER: C# is preferred but not required. .NET and MS SQL are required per RFP section 6.08 Evaluation Criteria;
    "The Department standard DBMS is MS SQL. The Department programming environment standard is .NET. The department hosting standard is Windows servers on the department owned virtualization environment. Any proposal that does not result in the DBMS being MS SQL, the programming environment .NET and the hosting environment being the department's shared Windows environment will be deemed not responsive and will not be evaluated."

17. The mandatory requirement for C# was not specified in the RFI for this project – only the need for "modern technologies". Did this requirement arise as a result of review of responses to the RFI from a particular vendor?

    ANSWER: No, .NET and MS SQL have been the department standard since approximately 2004. The re-platforming of the NSTAR system is the first opportunity to bring the CSSD division in line with Department Standards. There was nothing in the review of the responses to the RFI to deviate from the Department Standard.

18. In its review of RFI responses did the state meet with or obtain detailed briefings with any particular vendor or vendors?

    ANSWER: No

19. Does CSSD currently have systems deployed in production on other modern technologies such as Java, an RDBMS such as Oracle? Is yes please supply details.

ANSWER: Yes, there are several Java based web products that CSSD has developed (Employer Portal, KIDS Calc, etc.) These are not in compliance with the Department Standard. The Departmental standard is MS SQL and .Net programming. No deviation from this standard will be considered.

20. The restriction on Alternate Proposals in paragraph 1.11 is very restrictive and potentially anti-competitive. Can this be relaxed to allow up to 3 proposals or alternatively 3 options within a proposal?

    ANSWER: No.

21. What is the current capacity and configuration of the zOS mainframe?

    ANSWER: Not Relevant. No mainframe solution will be considered.

22. Is this mainframe dedicated to the NSTAR application?

    ANSWER: No. Several other state agencies are mainframe based.

23. Is the contractor who prepared the GAP analysis and other planning documents you have provided prohibited from bidding on this RFP?

    ANSWER: Yes.

24. Is the list of registered potential proponents available to support potential teaming arrangements to provide a more technical appropriate and cost effective solution – particularly with respect to Alaska based firms?

    ANSWER: A list of interested parties that identified themselves at the pre-proposal meeting will be provided.

25. 2.08 Prior Experience – request this be re-worded as follows: "…with one or more successful conversions of an Adabas/Natural mainframe based system to alternative modern technologies such as the .Net, Java, EGL or similar languages and a modern RDBMS such as SQLServer,, Oracle, DB2(LUW), Postgress or similar relational databases."

    ANSWER: No wording change required. "The Department standard DBMS is MS SQL. The Department programming environment standard is .NET. The department hosting standard is Windows servers on the department owned virtualization environment. Any proposal that does not result in the DBMS being MS SQL, the programming environment .NET and the hosting environment being the department's shared Windows environment will be deemed not responsive and will not be evaluated."

26. Will the Cost Proposals be evaluated on the basis of Total Cost of Ownership ("TCO") over some reasonable period post production deployment (5 years for example) and thus the cost proposal should include any software or hardware maintenance fees during that post production period? Or will the evaluation strictly consider the migration project cost? If the latter what is the basis for exclusion of a TCO criteria and the exclusion of potentially significant future costs to the state from the evaluation?

    ANSWER: Migration Cost Proposal only.