STATE OF ALASKA
Department of Administration
Division of Shared Services
Statewide Contracting

STATEWIDE PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS SERVICES

RFP 2019-0200-4221

Amendment #3

May 15, 2019

This amendment is being issued to answer questions submitted by potential offerors and to provide additional important information. In addition to adhering to any changes made to the RFP by this amendment, offerors must use Submittal Form A – Offeror Information to acknowledge this amendment.

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Questions submitted by potential offerors and answers from the state:

(Note: the question numbering reflects a continuation from RFP Amendment #1)

Question 2: Is the State of Alaska's goal to explore ways to improve delivery of video, audio and EAS services to Alaska Public Broadcast facilities across rural Alaska?

Answer: The state's goal is always to improve the purchase and delivery of good and services across the state. For the services being sought by this RFP, the state is highly satisfied with the current services as indicated in Section 2.02(a) of the RFP and experiencing the existing challenges indicated in Section 2.03 of the RFP.

Question 3: Would you consider extending the implementation date of an alternative delivery method?

Answer: The RFP does not set any implementation dates, rather the state is looking for offerors to detail their implementation/transition plan in Submittal Form B – Service Approach and Management Plan, Part 2 – Transition Plan.

Offerors should be aware the state does not know how long the current service can be extended and offer the fastest transition possible regardless of the delivery method.

Question 4: What conditions would prompt the State of Alaska to issue a follow-on RFP during the option years?

Answer: Generally, the state does not resolicit during the term of a contract unless it's in the state's best interest e.g. the contractor is performing poorly or technology or market conditions change drastically.

Question 5: Section 1.12, Alternate Proposals- Can you clarify the statement; "proposals offering something different than what is asked for will be rejected" when Section 2.02(b) allows for alternative service solutions?

Answer: Section 1.12 specifies that offerors may only submit one proposal for evaluation, and is standard RFP language intended to convey that a proposal would be non-responsive if it contains a material deviation from what the RFP is requesting. Section 2.02(b) specifically allows offerors to propose alternate models for delivery of services. An offeror will not be deemed non-responsive for proposing accordingly.

Question 6: Can you please provide a network diagram that illustrates how video, radio and EAS is delivered from source to distribution to reception?

Answer: Please see the RFP attachment titled ARCS Multiplex Suite.

Question 7: Can you please define the format of delivery of the signal?

Answer: MPEG-II, DVB, ATSC 1.0.

Question 8: How many simultaneous video services are multiplexed and uplinked via KUAC? What are they?

Answer: Four standard definition video streams, with accompanying audio, plus eleven additional audio pairs.

Question 9: Are there any plans to change the number of video services provided?

Answer: Not at this time, however, offerors may present value-add items in Submittal Form D with the knowledge they should not disrupt the number and quality of the current services (both audio and video).

Question 10: Does back up transponder mean an alternate transport in the event of a failure of the primary system?

Answer: Backup transponder refers to capacity on the same spacecraft to accommodate replication of services with minimal changes required at remote sites.

Question 11: Can you provide interface information to the modulator from the satellite receiver?

Answer: Two methods are being used. In most cases the interface is internal to the DRP-2000 receiver. In 16 other cases, there is an ASI feed from the receiver to a GatesAir transmitter with its own modulator.

Question 12: How should non-recurring and installation costs be addressed in the cost sheet?

Answer: These costs do not have to be addressed in the cost sheet because they are borne by the local communities as indicated in the answers to questions 17 and 19. Occasionally these costs may be borne by the state through capital funded projects. This may be offered as a value-add in Submittal Form D.

Question 13: What is meant by Transponder Capacity A and Transponder Capacity B in the cost sheet?

Answer: The state is looking for the total yearly costs for providing Transponder Capacity A and B (described in Section 2.01 of the RFP) in accordance with the offeror's offered service/solution.

Question 14: Who owns the edge equipment: demodulator & receiver and transmitter?

Answer: The State of Alaska.

Question 15: Can the state provide a list of equipment makes and models?

Answer: All sites use the EMCEE DRP-2000 as their DVB receiver; it is equipped with ATSC modulator built in. The modulator can be configured on channel, but standard setup uses an inverted 44 MHz carrier which is up-converted in the amplifier chassis. Transmitters are mostly EMCEE units with a few

GatesAir. The GatesAir units have their own internal modulator but are fed by the ASI output of the DRP2000 receiver.

Question 16: Can the state provide a diagram of the network and typical site configuration?

Answer: Typical site includes a 4.5+ M TVRW satellite dish antenna, satellite receiver, transmitter, and small tower holding TV broadcast antenna.

Question 17: If replacement equipment needs to be installed (due to failure or upgrade), who pays for it?

Answer: Typically the local community maintains and pays for the remote equipment. It may also be accomplished through state capital funded projects. This may be offered as a value-add item in Submittal Form D.

Question 18: What is the status of the digital TV transition?

a) Is there a schedule for the remaining analog locations to be converted?
b) Is there a list of current locations that are Digital or Analog?
c) What is the output format at each location? ASI or SDI? Bitrate?

Answer:

a) Conversion is ongoing; effect is immediate with no further analog support being offered.
b) For purposes of this project all sites are considered digital moving forward. Attached with the RFP is a list of sites deployed so far (attachment titled DTV Deployed List). To clarify, the state is not requiring the successful contractor to perform DTV conversions, however, this may be offered as a value-add item in Submittal Form D.
c) Assuming the "output" means the local broadcast, that is ATSC 1.0 digital TV standard. All channels are currently standard definition (480i). At ARCS DTV sites the handoff between satellite receiver and TV transmitter is handled internal to the DRP-2000 receiver, except in GartesAir installations (see Question/Answer 15). DVB encoding for video, and AC3 and/or MPEG audio, is performed prior to satellite uplink at the encoding suite inside KUAC TV MCR. ARCS transmitters use static PSIP for channel identification. Closed Captioning is inside the video for all channels.

Question 19: How are the endpoints serviced?

a) How often?
b) Are there any communities currently experiencing outages?
    i. Does the state have local support for troubleshooting?
    ii. Who fixes outages? Community or state?
    iii. How long is the typical outage?
c) When is the last time dishes were realigned?
d) Are any of the dishes motorized?
e) Do any of the dishes need to be replaced?
    i. Who is responsible for that?

Answer: a) As needed with no routine scheduled maintenance.

b) Yes.
   i. Not from state personnel. All routine and ongoing troubleshooting is locally provided by local support organizations or individuals, coordinated through Alaska Public Broadcasting, Inc. (APBI). Occasional major fixes or upgrades are realized as part of larger state capital projects. This may be offered as a value-add item in Submittal Form D.
   ii. Typically APBI fixes system-wide outages, locals do the remote systems.
   iii. There is no typical outage as they vary widely.
c) Depends on the site; no system wide initiatives have addressed this, so it happens only as a result of troubleshooting. The ability of a dish to be manipulated is heavily dependent on site conditions such as proximity to salt sea air, etc.
d) No.
e) Yes.
   i. As part of ongoing state capital funded efforts, the state. Outside of that, local communities. This may be offered as a value-add in Submittal Form D.

Question 20: Are the communities receiving any other services on the same satellite?

Answer: See Section 2.01 of the RFP for other services which are part of this project. Beyond that other services on this satellite are unknown and outside the scope.

Question 21: Please explain how the EAS is being delivered today.

Answer: All state and national level emergency alerts which are captured by the ARCS encoder/decoder at the head end are carried on the audio channel of the main ARCS channel, overriding program audio.

Question 22: You list 250 fixed C-band earth stations operating **independently** of the vendor. What does independently mean?

Answer: Downlink earth stations are not owned and operated by the current vendor.

Changes to the RFP

Section 2.02(b) Opportunities

This section is **deleted** and **replaced** with the following:

(a) OPPORTUNITIES

Due to the changing nature of satellite technology and availability of services, several opportunities may exist which include alternative models for delivery of these services. Contractors may have solutions which offer a range of service tiers from simply providing satellite bandwidth (requiring/allowing users to uplink their own carriers), to replication of the current model, to other alternatives that provide appropriate encoding and modulating functions and/or services. Proposals may by necessity include service on a satellite other than the one currently in use or alternative connections for service delivery. Such proposals would need to consider:

- Any necessary head end requirements such as the cost to the offeror for building and operating an uplink facility.

- Far end requirements and solutions such as satellite dish antenna alignment, receiver modification/replacement, etc. These requirements should be addressed in the RFP Submittal Forms as appropriate.

Sections 3.05, 4.07 and 5.04 of the RFP, and Submittal Form E – Mandatory Requirements

Have been **deleted**, and Backup transponder space on Submittal Form E has been moved to Submittal Form E – Contractual Requirements. Submittal Form lettering has been updated on the forms and in the RFP along with the RFP Section numbering.

Submittal Form G – Cost Proposal

Clarification: "Other" in the Uplink and/or Other Service column refers to the cost for delivery methods other than satellite/uplink, e.g. broadband.

Removal: "Other" in the Other, Including Transport, Space, and Power column was intended to capture the cost for items such as remote equipment or dish replacement/upgrade that are borne by communities or as state capital projects. As such, "Other" has been **deleted** from this column.

Addition: A tab titled Value-Add has been added to Submittal Form G – Cost Proposal. Offerors must provide the total cost for each value-added item/idea being proposed. If only able to provide an estimated cost for a value-add, indicate "Yes" in the Estimate column. The Details column should be used to describe the costs e.g. per month, per year, one-time cost, etc. Rows may be added as necessary.

Note: These costs will not be evaluated or provided to the evaluation committee (PEC) but will be discussed during the Clarification Period along with the value-add ideas themselves.

End of Amendment #3