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**THIS IS NOT AN ORDER**

**DATE AMENDMENT ISSUED: 01/16/2024**

**RFP TITLE:**

**2024-0200-0100**

**Core Telecommunication Services**

**AMENDMENT 3**

**NOTE: it is the proposer's responsibility to review and accept all amendments to this solicitation. Please closely review the changes noted in this amendment.**

**Change 1:** This amendment serves to extend the **RFP deadline date for Receipt of Proposals** in section 1.03 to **January 30th, 2024, 2:00 PM AKST** and updates the RFP schedule in section 1.11.

**Change 2:** This amendment serves to **revise the Cost Proposal for Lot 1** and updates this section in its entirety.

**Change 3:** This amendment serves to remove the time schedule language for the evaluation criteria section under the **Main RFP, pg. 52, Evaluation questions** for "Understanding the Project" and "Methodology Used for the Project" and **removes the language under section 4.15 Understanding of The Project #4, and 4.16 Methodology Used for the Project #3.**

**This amendment serves to include and make part of the following questions and answers received.**

1. Question Amendment 2, Question 11, The current contractor has several employees who work in the AKNow ticketing system that do not have a CJIS. Will those employees need CJIS clearance to access AKNow?

Answer: AKN does not require CJIS background checks. The personnel that has access to the SOA equipment is required to have clearance.

2. Amendment 2, Question 31 The RFP shows 308 different access circuits, but does not mention the bandwidth needed for these circuits. In order to provide an accurate solution, we need to know more about those circuits: what is the bandwidth amount per access circuit, what is the address/location of each access circuit, and which circuits require Carrier Diversity specifically.

Answer: The State had no intention to set restrictions on the bandwidth needed at any of the locations. We are looking to our carrier to provide available bandwidth for these locations.

3. Amendment 2, Question 38, When is the required time?

Answer: At the time of the awarding of the contract.

4. Amendment 2, Question 38, When is the required time?

Answer: At the time of the awarding of the contract.

5. Amendment 2, Question 40, With the anticipated increase in total number of submitted tickets and calls, how many more are expected? And of that increase, how many are expected to come into the internal help desk vs the SOA service center?

Answer: Total increased number of submitted tickets is estimated at around 3500. Of these, the majority will come into our system via the portal and will not go through the vendor. The number of phone calls per month is expected to remain under 1500 but will most likely be less than 1000 per month.

6. Amendment 2, Question 44, When is the required time?

Answer: At the time of the awarding of the contract.

7. Amendment 2, Question 52, What type of support will be needed after hours? (i.e. ticket creation and routing or completion of tasks that would be done by in house service desk during regular hours).

Answer: After hours support will be for ticket creation and routing. Tickets will be created for tasks that will be completed by departmental help desk during regular hours.

8. Amendment 2, Question 53, Is the estimated 15-20 calls per day a total amount or per department? Does OIT anticipate the call volume to increase for the State of Alaska Service Center?

Answer: The number per departments will depend on the size of the department. Right now the estimate is for the departments that are already using the service. I would estimate 35 - 50 calls per day once we have all the departments onboarded.

9. Main RFP, pg 21, Data Network Services A, does redundant circuits refer to carrier redundant circuits?

Answer: No

10. Main RFP, pg 24, Transition Management, After award of the RFP, when is the Transition Plan due?

Answer: On the effective date of the contract, or shortly thereafter, the contractor will assume responsibility for, and begin providing all current services, maintaining all current systems, and meeting current service levels experienced by the State. It is understood this is a large migration and planning/movement of services may take some time - but it is expected that the award winner will begin the process/plan as quickly as possible.

11. Main RFP, pg 24, Change Management, What is the current volume of changes processed by the state Change Advisory Board, on an annual basis, monthly basis, weekly basis?

Answer: Clarification is needed for the question.

12. Main RFP, pg 24, Change Management, Is there only one State's Change Advisory Board for all departments?

Answer: The Executive Branch has a single Change Advisory Board, the other branches of the State of Alaska may choose to leverage this contract therefore may have a different processes/procedures.

13. Main RFP, pg 24, Change Management, Is there an expectation that the volume of changes will increase with the award of this RFP.

Answer: Clarification is needed for the question.

14. Main RFP, pg 24, Change Management, Is there flexibility based on work type, volume or impact to conduct change outside of the Wednesday 4 AM - 6 AM and Sunday 7 AM – 9 AM work window as allowed by the States Change Advisory Board?

Answer: Yes - with approval.

15. Main RFP, pg 24, Change Management, Are there any changes forecasted to impact the current change volume in the next 6 Months, 1 Year, 3 Years? (i.e. Projected or planned increases in project level work).

Answer: Clarification is needed for the question.

16. Main RFP, pg 26, Disaster Recovery, What is the expected yearly estimated hourly engagement in assisting the states execution of DR planning, exercising and development of joint disaster recovery operations.

Answer: For planning there is not an expected engagement to be 10 hours a year.

17. Main RFP, pg 33, Identify and Eliminate Unused Voice and Data Lines, how does the vendor determine when a voice or data line is unused?

Answer: By monitoring the management of the circuits. It is expected that if there is a change of technology at a customer location I.E. - Migration to virtual faxing the carrier should work at the removal of the analog lines/hardware that is no longer needed at the site - it should not be expected that the SOA creates a ticket to remove the services. Customer Move VoIP moves it is not expected that the SOA create a ticket to cancel the services that were relocated - it will be the responsibility of the awarded carrier, in this case Voice services, to make the necessary changes.

18. Main RFP, pg 33, Provide Redundant Voice Connectivity Services for Critical State Telecommunications, Does redundant circuits refer to carrier redundant circuits?

Answer: No

19. Main RFP, pg 35, Provide Internet Point of Presence (PoP), Does redundant pathing refer to carrier redundant circuits?

Answer: The PoPs need to have physically redundant pathing into the SOA datacenters.

20. Lot 1, Where on the revised Lot 1 Cost Proposal form should respondents provide the "analog monthly flat fee" for items such as POTS lines? This was formerly item 1A of Section 1 – Base Proposal on the original Cost Proposal Form.

Answer: An updated cost proposal has been posted along with this Amendment #3.

21. Can the State further define what services and activities are to be included under the revised Lot 1 Cost Proposal for item 1c of Section 1 – Base Proposal for "Managed Audio-conference Service?"

Answer: Page 15 - Section AUDIO TELECONFERENCE BRIDGE SYSTEM provides an overview of what is expected Page 21 - Under Main Service components - Audio Conferencing Services - Support of audio conferences for large events requiring support/moderation.

22. Main RFP, pg 52, Evaluation questions for "Understanding the Project" and "Methodology Used for the Project" both reference a time schedule. What is the time schedule?

Answer: The evaluation information regarding time schedule will be removed as it's not required.

## 23. Questions on Hardware/Software/Equipment Support:

The State of Alaska makes 3 requirements clear in the RFP:

1. The State will decide which products the vendor can or cannot use/purchase. ("Retained Authorities" item D, Technology Retooling Approval, page 22 of the RFP.)
2. In several places in the RFP, the State requires the vendor to keep technology hardware and software upgraded and updated and is "...responsible for maintaining hardware and software. at the manufacturer's current levels and releases" ("Technology Refresh" on page 24. See also, "Maintain the VoIP/IPT Environment" on page 34, and "Manage Data Network Services Performance and Operations" on page 35 for other examples of this phrasing.)
3. The State has not provided a full accounting of all the hardware the vendor is expected to manage/support/upgrade, and whether the devices are currently supported by their manufacturers. (PBX systems, routers, and other network hardware the vendor is expected to maintain.) Taking these three requirements at face value, the vendor is being asked to commit to buying an unspecified amount of unknown hardware and software that may currently be EOL/EOS, anywhere in the state of Alaska, to bring any out-of-spec existing systems into compliance, and potentially purchase whatever replacement products the State dictates, regardless of the price. This is not something a responsive and responsible vendor can agree to with only the information provided. In addition, the State has shown an inclination for Cisco products, and has special pricing from Cisco that simply isn't available to other vendors. Requiring the vendor to purchase replacement products at a higher price point than the State pays, does not make good business sense. Therefore, does the State agree to purchasing and owning replacement hardware or software for any unsupported EOL/EOS products in their network? The vendor can assume responsibility for management of the devices under the terms of this RFP but cannot agree to assuming the unknown cost of purchasing all of the necessary hardware and software to bring the State's technology systems into compliance with the RFP's requirements.

Answer: Redirecting the question to page 19 of the RFP:

SEC. 3.01 GOAL AND EXPECTATIONS The State is actively seeking a qualified contractor to manage the operations and maintenance of all State, executive branch, and co-op partner agency telephone and data services.

### SEC. 3.04 DELIVERABLES

- The contractor will be required to provide the following deliverables: The critical goals and objectives of State of Alaska Core services are:
- Provide support and operation of phone service for state employees and contractors at a reduced monetary cost and high service value.
- Provide support and operation of internet and data connectivity for state facilities at a reduced monetary cost and high service value.
- Assist the State with and facilitate the integration of emerging technologies.
- Provide an enterprise-class solution for collaboration services that maximize the State's current investments and integrate video conferencing with desktop collaboration tools that work seamlessly from handheld devices to desktops to conference rooms.

- Provide an enterprise-class solution for VoIP services to executive branch agencies compatible with the State's current investments and directions.
- Provide enterprise-class internet services.
- Provide enterprise-class connectivity to Cloud providers.
- Provide enterprise-class connectivity to state offices.
- Provide supplemental assistance to the enterprise End-user Service Desk Service to all SOA customers on an as-needed basis.
- Partner with a proactive contractor to assist in the adoption of proven non-legacy technologies that result in cost savings and, ideally, improve service delivery.
- Streamline the State's current technology environment to reduce operating costs.
- Provide the State with the option to use the successful contractor(s) for OIT-approved ad hoc project-based and time-and-materials-based "fee for service" efforts that additionally support and enhance the State of Alaska Core services in scope for this RFP.

#### 24. Questions on MS Teams-

Microsoft Teams, Teams Voice, and Office365 are all referred to individually as separate tools and together as a suite of capabilities in different places throughout the RFP. (Pages 13-15 inclusive, item Bin in the Telephony matrix on page 21, page 31, and in Sec 4.08 Demonstrations it is expected the bidder will demonstrate Teams video capability, as well.) Teams Voice is an add-on to Office365 and does not run alone separate of the MS Office365 installation. The scope of support expected for the Microsoft suite of applications that comprise Teams – and includes Teams Voice – is unclear even with the additional information provided in Amendment 2, item 26. Understanding the details and configuration of the Teams installation used by SOA (and the support necessary for each aspect of the system) will allow the vendor to accurately estimate the cost of supporting such a system. Without the following information, vendors cannot accurately bid Teams Voice support:

##### 1. Session Border Controllers.

- a. Some instances of Teams use one or more Session Border Controllers (SBC). Does the SOA MS Teams include an SBC?
- b. If so, how many, and what vendors and models?
- c. Are these hardware or software devices?
- d. Is the vendor expected to support these parts of the Teams infrastructure?
- e. Are these SBCs current or EOS/EOL, and how are they configured currently?
- f. And does their configuration impact other parts of Office365?

##### 2. Virtual Machines.

- a. MS Teams can be run within a virtual machine to support these functions. Is the SOA's Teams instance cloud-based, or on prem? Is the vendor expected to support either or both of these implementations? Is the Teams Voice plugin operating independently of Office365? If so, can you please explain how it uses the VMs?

##### 3. Teams Voice Devices.

- a. Are there specific devices used to support Teams Voice, such as phones, video conference, or other devices like handicapped adaptive devices used by SOA employees?

- b. If so, what devices, and are they currently supported? EOS? EOL?
  - c. Does the SOA intend to purchase equipment to support MS Teams or does it expect the vendor to do so?
- 4. Routing and Switching.
  - a. Does the SOA Teams Voice system require or use dedicated routing or switching infrastructure? If so, please provide scope and definition, and if they affect the other Office365 application functions.
- 5. Licensing.
  - a. Does SOA have active licenses or service bundles for MS Teams Voice? Is the SOA an MS Teams Partner or have a Service Enterprise Contract? If so, where does the bidder fit into this relationship between SOA and Microsoft?

Answer: For Clarification purposes - Provide an enterprise-class solution for VoIP services to executive branch agencies compatible with the State's current investments and directions. This is for the Teams Voice portion of the Teams Environment.

- 1. Session Border Controllers.
  - a. Yes
  - b. 3 SBC in a HA configuration (6). Due to the sensitivity of the system, the Version/manufacture/configuration will be shared with the awarded contractor.
  - c. Due to the sensitivity of the system, the Version/manufacture/configuration will be shared with the awarded contractor.
  - d. Yes
  - e. Due to the sensitivity of the system, the Version/manufacture/configuration will be shared with the awarded contractor.
  - f. No
- 2. Virtual Machines
  - a. Please see the clarification statement above and/or provide more detail.
- 3. Teams Voice Devices
  - a. Yes
  - b. Due to the sensitivity of the system, the Version/manufacture/configuration will be shared with the awarded contractor.
  - c. SOA is responsible for the procurement of the equipment.
- 4. Routing and Switching
  - a. No
- 5. Licensing
  - a. The State of Alaska manages and provides the licensing for MS Teams