

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS
SOLICITATION NO. AG-3151-S-08-0005
UNIFIED EXPORT SYSTEM

Question 1: In section C.1.9 Performance Standards of the RFP (Solicitation No.AG-3151-S-08-0005), the positive/negative performance structures stipulated for each of the five phases are subjective. May vendors recommend criteria for the Performance Plan?

Response: Yes.

Question 2: What are the page limits for each Volume?

Response: Thirty pages for each volume, excluding charts and diagrams which may account for no more than 10 additional pages, for a total page count not to exceed 40 pages, per Volume, with Times Roman, 10pt as the font.

Question 3: What automated testing tools in USDA currently using?

Response: There is no FAS standard automated testing tool.

Question 4: What is the current reporting system used in UES system?

Response: The legacy UES does have a reporting system. The existing reports are written as Active Server Pages calling T-SQL stored procedures.

Question 5: Are the “Visual Basic Executables” referenced on Section C.1.4 (pg 2) Windows applications (Win Forms) or are they COM/ActiveX components containing business logic?

Response: Neither. This is a Visual Basic 6 windows application that uses ODBC to access a Sybase adaptive server enterprise 12.5 database.

Question 6: Is the “SharePoint Server (future)” identified on Figure 1: Conceptual Diagram (pg 5) in the lower-right intended to be part of this solution? Same question for the “Glam” server?

Response: The vendor can propose whether Share Point will be used to fulfill any of the requirements. SharePoint itself is not a requirement.

Question 7: Do the contractors or the Government provide the Network Administrators and the Database Administrators?

Response: The Government provides the network and database administrators.

Question 8: Will USDA be using the pre-developed screens shown in the background documents?

Response: The vendor will supply the prototype. The screens are considered samples so the vendor is not locked into using them, but they are a good example of the screens needed.

Question 9: Will there be security requirements for contractor staff?

Response: Yes, HSPD-12.

Question 10: Section C.1.5 Invoicing Guidelines (pg 37) references Section 6.2. There appears to be no Section 6.2. Which section should be referenced here?

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- Response:** Invoicing Guidelines have now been revised as Section C.1.15.
- Question 11:** Section C.1.6. (2). (pg 6) - Compliance with Federal Requirements: The Section tells us to comply with all relevant Federal and USDA government requirements and guidelines stipulated in Section 5 (Constraints) of the document. We found no Section 5. Is Section C.16. (pg 39) the section we are to refer to?
- Response:** Yes. See Section C.1.16.
- Question 12:** Section C.1.7. Desired Outcomes, Required Services and Performance Standards (pg 9) refers to sub-section 4.1 and sub-section 4.2, but we could not find these sections. Is FIGURE 2 (pg 10) sub-section 4.1?
- Response:** Yes
- Question 13:** Is FIGURE 3 (pg 16) sub-section 4.2 as well as Table 4.2 as referenced in Section C.1.9 (pg 15)?
- Response:** Yes
- Question 14:** Section C.1.12 references Section 4. However, there is no Section 4. Which section should be referenced?
- Response:** FIGURE 3: Table / FAS UES Upgrade Performance Matrix
- Question 15 :** Part I - The Schedule Section H.1 AGAR 452.237-74 Key Personnel (pg 58) Does this need to be included in the proposal submission? If so, in which part of the proposal should this be included?
- Response:** The proposal should include a staffing plan. Key Personnel should be included in the Staffing Plan.
- Question 16:** Section K - Representations, Certifications, and Other Statements of Offerors (pg 77). Which part of the proposal should this be included?
- Response:** Cost Proposal
- Question 17:** Sections L.9, L.10 (pg 91) and M.2 (pg 96) reference the SOW. There is not a section specifically titled SOW. Should we consider Section C.1.6 – Program Objectives the SOW?
- Response:** Yes
- Question 18:** Section L.10 (pg 91) references L.5 (pg 90) as the section the offeror should reference for the technical outline. Section L.5 does not provide an outline. Is there a specific outline we should follow for the Technical Section?
- Response:** The technical proposal should be organized like the Section C.1.6 Program Objectives section.
- Question 19:** Section L.2 General (pg 89) - ...the Government intends to award without discussions with Offerors. Does this mean the Government will not down select and require oral presentations?

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Response: The Government reserves the right to make an award without further discussion, based upon the quality of submissions.

Question 20: Section L.9 (b) General Instructions for the Preparation of Proposal (pg 91) - Please clarify if the Statement of Compliance refers to the cover letter of the proposal or is it a separate document? If so, where should it be placed in the proposal?

Response: Offerors may provide the Statement of Compliance within the cover letter, or as a separate document. It should be clearly discernible as part of the submission.

Question 21: Section L.9 (b) General Instructions for the Preparation of Proposal (pg 91) - This section states that an original proposal and 2 copies are required for submission. Standard Form 33 states that 7 copies are required. Please clarify how many copies of the proposal are required.

Response: Seven (7) copies of the proposals are to be submitted, plus 3 electronic copies (CDs).

Question 22: Will the government require electronic as well as hard copies of the proposal?

Response: See response to Question 21..

Question 23: Past Performance Questionnaire (pg 129) - There is no rating scale provided with the questionnaire. Can the government provide a rating scale? (i.e. 1 = Excellent, 10 = Poor or 1 = Poor, 10 = Excellent)

Response: The following ratings will be used to assess the contractor's past performance. A revised Past Performance Questionnaire has been provided.

Rating	Description
Blue/Excellent (E)	The contractor's performance meets all contractual requirements, and exceeds many of them. The contractor may have had a few minor problems for which it took corrective actions that effectively resolved the problem.
Green/Good (G)	The contractor's performance meets contractual requirements. The contractor had some minor problems for which the corrective actions taken satisfactorily resolved the problem.
Yellow/Marginal (M)	The contractor's performance does not meet some contractual requirements. The contractor encountered serious problems for which the corrective actions were only marginally effective.
Red/Unacceptable (U)	The contractor's performance does not meet most contractual requirements and recovery was not in a timely manner. The contractor had serious problem(s) for which its corrective actions were ineffective.
White/Not Applicable (N/A)	Unable to provide a score. Performance in this area was not applicable to the project assessed.

Question 24: Section C.1.16, (e) under Constraints and Supporting Documents, lists the "USDA Web Style Guide version 2.0" and an associated link. There is a problem with the URL: www.afm.ars.usda.gov/ppweb/pdf/USDA_Web_StyleGuide_v2.pdf. When clicking the URL, we are getting the error message: "Oops! The AFM Site has been recently modified...The page or the file that you're looking for is temporarily

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unavailable or the page may no longer exist. Sorry for the inconvenience.” Please provide the correct URL for the USDA Web Style Guide Version 2.0.

- Response:** This document is now available as a separate attachment on the USDA FSA web page.
- Question 25:** Section C.1.8. Table-4.1. Figure 2: Table/Milestone-based Desired Outcomes and Required Services Deliverables, under Phase-1, Column C ‘Acceptability Standards’, bullet item 2, states “The tasks duration should not be longer than two weeks”. Please clarify ‘the tasks’ and specify what "should not be longer than two weeks".
- Response:** The granularity of the work breakdown structure should be to the level where the tasks, which are the required steps to produce the deliverables, are small enough that they can finish in under a two week period. FAS recognized that some tasks, such as progress reporting, will be ongoing.
- Question 26:** Section C.1.18.c.14, indicated that the Senior Technical Lead/Architecture should have Microsoft certification. This individual will be the design and development architect for the system, therefore broad experience in software engineering, application development, and SQL qualifications are more relevant for the senior architect than the Microsoft certification requirement specified here. Will the government remove the requirement for Microsoft certification? If not, will the Government accept certification/s from other companies such as Sun, IBM, Oracle, Sybase, etc.?
- Response:** FAS considers Microsoft certification a good credential for the UES upgrade effort. FAS may not consider other certifications as relevant.
- Question 27:** Section C.1.18.f stated that a relevant certification credential from Microsoft is required. If the Lead .NET Software Developer has the necessary experience and is pursuing the relevant Microsoft certification will this be acceptable? Can additional experience be substituted for the relevant Microsoft certification?
- Response:** It is possible that FAS will find relevant experience acceptable but FAS is looking for the certification because FAS recognizes a certification process as an independent verification of the experience.
- Question 28:** At the end of Section C.1.18 on page 40 entitled Key Personnel there are three paragraph: numbered 4 - Duration of Performance, 5 - Location of Performance, and 6 - Government Furnished Property. Do these items belong in a section other than Key Personnel?
- Response:** No
- Question 29:** Section L.11, and L.12, made reference to Sections B of the RFP, however Section B is not included with the RFP. Please provide section B.
- Response:** Section B has been provided.
- Question 30:** Section I, included FAR clause “52.219-27 Notice of Total Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business Set-Aside. (MAY 2004)”. Since the procurement is an 8(a) set-aside, can you please remove or clarify this FAR clause?
- Response:** The clause is not applicable to this requirement. It is information only.
- Question 31:** Section I, included FAR clause “52.219-8 Utilization of Small Business Concerns. (MAY 2004)”. In its evaluation, will the Government rate management and staffing

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of a team comprised entirely of small business subcontractors higher than that having a team comprised of large business subcontractors?

- Response:** This clause is not applicable to this requirement. It is for information only.
- Question 32:** Anticipating the answer to the questions and availability of the Web Style Guide might generate additional questions. Will the Government accept additional questions after releasing the Q&A?
- Response:** Additional questions can be asked at the upcoming Preproposal Conference.
- Question 33:** The RFP and documentation appended to this solicitation indicate that this is a re-competition of an existing contract. Is the incumbent eligible to bid on this solicitation?
- Response:** There is no incumbent at this time.
- Question 34:** Has the performance of the incumbent been satisfactory in all respects?
- Response:** There is no incumbent at this time.
- Question 35:** What is the total estimated level of effort for this contract?
- Response:** Vendors need to propose the level of effort required to fulfill the requirements within the expected timeframe.
- Question 36:** What is the total estimated level of effort for each task?
- Response:** Vendors need to propose the level of effort required to fulfill the requirements within the expected timeframe.
- Question 37:** What are the estimated levels of effort for each labor category for each task?
- Response:** Vendors need to propose the level of effort required to fulfill the requirements within the expected timeframe.
- Question 38:** Page 6, Section C.1.6, (2) Compliance with Federal Requirements indicates the UES Upgrade must comply with all relevant Federal and USDA government requirements and guidelines, including Enterprise Architecture, security, privacy, disaster recovery, and others. Q: May the contractor please review documentation regarding the USDA Enterprise Architecture and Federal and USDA government requirements not provided in the Constraints and supporting documents section (p.39)?
- Response:** In the case of FAS, the enterprise architecture has Microsoft operating systems on the desktops and servers and .NET at the preferred development environment, Microsoft IIS as the web server and Microsoft SQL Server database as the preferred back end.
- Question 39:** Page 6, Section C.1.6, (5) Guiding Principles indicates the proposed enhancements to the current UES. Please specify the database(s) size, total number of tables, total records, etc. to enable us to size the effort.
- Response:** There are 588 tables and 1726 stored procedures in the legacy database. Many of these are not relevant to the current effort. Some of the stored procedures supported are now obsolete front end interfaces and old reports and will not need to be migrated. Older

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tables remain in the system to store legacy data. The relevant tables are listed at the end of the UES Upgrade Requirements Document.

Question 40: Page 8, Section C.1.6 (7) Effective Project Management f) states “Sufficient rights for FAS in technical data, both software and hardware, such that FAS can maintain and modify the system using its personnel and third-party contractors.” Please clarify this requirement in relation to effective project management.

Response: The project is organized so that it easily moves into steady state after the development effort concludes.

Question 41: Page 33, Section C.11 Proposed Tool for Tracking Software Defects. Q: Please specify whether the government prefers a specific software defect tracking tool due to compatibility with standards or compatibility with the government QA tools.

Response: FAS does not have a preferred defect tracking tool.

Question 43: Since the supporting documents, as specified on Page 38 Section C.1.17 of the Solicitation Performance Work Statement were released on or after April 10th 2008, will the government extend the due date for proposal submission?

Response: We do not anticipate extending the response date for this requirement.

Question 44: Will the government consider extending the deadline for questions, since it has added additional supporting documents to the solicitation as recently as Friday April 10th?

Response: We do not anticipate extending the deadline for questions.

Question 45: Section L.9 (Page 90 of Solicitation Performance Work Statement) indicates that one original and 2 copies of the Technical Proposal (Part I) and Business/Management and Cost Proposal (Part II) are required. However, Standard Form 33 issued as part of the Solicitation indicates (in item 9) that one (1) original and seven (7) copies are required. Will the government clarify how many copies of Technical Proposal (Part I) and Business/Management and Cost Proposal (Part II) are required to be submitted?

Response: Seven (7) hard copies are required, plus three (3) electronic copies (CD's).

Question 46: Is there a page limitation for the Technical Proposal (Part I)?

- a. If so, what are the specific page limits for each sub-section – Technical Approach; Past Performance; Project Management Plan and Staffing Plan?
- b. If so, will appendices containing resumes, letters of commitment from contingent hires, representations and certifications, etc., count towards the limitation?

Response: FAS would like the total for the proposal to be 30 pages, not including the resumes, letters of commitment, and certifications, which should be limited to 10 additional pages, for a total page count not to exceed 40 pages, per Volume. All text should be in a 10 point font, Times Roman font.

Question 47: Is there a page limitation for the Business/Management and Cost Proposal (Part II)?

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- c. **If so, what are the specific page limits for each sub-section –Business/Management Approach and Breakdown of proposed burdened labor rates – as described on Page 92, Section L.11**

Response: See answer to Question 46.

Question 48: For the main body of the proposal response, what is the font-type and font-size requirement? (e.g., Times New Roman 10)

Response: FAS would like the font size to be 10 point, Times Roman font-type, with the requirement that this applies to all text in the proposal.

Question 49: For the figures and tables in the proposal response, what is the font-type and font-size requirement?

Response: FAS would like text in the tables to be 10 points, Times Roman, except for labels in a figure.

Question 50: Is there a minimum margin requirement for the proposal response? If so, please specify what it is. Are headers, footers, and page numbers excluded from the margin requirement?

Response: No minimum margin requirement exists.

Question 51: Is there are a requirement for minimum line spacing for the Proposal response?

Response: No minimum line spacing exists.

Question 52: Can Proposals be printed double-sided? Does the government prefer proposals that are printed on one-side of the paper?

Response: All proposals should be one-sided print.

Question 53: What are the maximum points that can be awarded for the evaluation of the Technical Proposal?

What is the maximum number of points for each of the Technical factors specified in the Solicitation: Technical Approach; Past Performance; Project Management Plan; Staffing Plan?

Response: The maximum number of points is 100: Technical Approach – 30, Project Management Plan – 20, Staffing Plan – 20, Past Performance - 30

Question 54: How many Past Performance Questionnaires (References) are required from the Offeror? How many of the Past Performance Questionnaires need to be from the Prime contractor and how many can be from the sub-contractor(s)?

Response: We would like to see at least 3.

Question 55: Section C.1.1.16 (Page 38 of Solicitation Performance Work Statement) refers to “USDA Web Style Guide Version 2.0” document available at the following link: http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/ppweb/pdf/USDA_Web_StyleGuide_v2.pdf However,

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this document does not exist. Will this document be made available by the government for review?

Response: A copy has been posted to the USDA FSA web page.

Question 56: Are there any Information Architecture or Technical Architecture guidelines that need to be followed for this system?

Response: No, but the upgraded system is expected to be compliant with FAS enterprise architecture.

Question 57: Page 5 of the Solicitation Performance Work Statement, indicates that the partial deliverables are expected to work seamlessly with the legacy system that are not upgraded. Does this mean that as new components are developed, (e.g. new screens/new databases) they must be integrated into the legacy application? Or does it mean that the legacy application must remain functional while the new system is developed?

Response: It is envisioned that the contract deliverables will evolve the legacy application into the upgraded system, that this will not be a complete scrap and rebuilding of the system. The anticipated stages are listed as tasks in the PWS.

Question 58: Does the old system currently have an ad hoc reporting tool (such as Microsoft SQL Server Reporting Services)?

Response: The ad-hoc reporting feature is new to the upgrade.

Question 59: Page 3 of the Solicitation Performance Work Statement indicates that all users will have “equal access to information” but the interface will need to be configured according to “user’s roles/permissions”. Can the government explain this further?

Response: The upgraded system will exist as a single project on the FAS web server but when a user logs in, the system will determine whether the user should be directed to the participant interface, the PPS interface, the Post interface or the Marketing Specialist interface.

Question 60: Can the government elaborate what is expected in the new enhancements including Collaboration tools and Others? We are unable to find details of enhancements in the supporting documents.

Response: The collaboration tools referred to are in the requirements as the “forum” and the shared calendar.

Question 61: How many canned reports are expected to be migrated from the old system in the initial implementation? How many additional canned reports are expected to be implemented during the enhancement phase?

Response: The reports are listed in the detailed requirements. For the legacy reports listed, the details are not included because they are expected to be the same as the existing report.

Question 62: It is our understanding that the new system will have to exist with the old system for some time to support the functionalities that are not upgraded/migrated to the new system. However, does FAS expect the upgraded functionality of the new system and

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equivalent function in the old system to run in parallel for some period (i.e. in pilot mode) before completely transitioning over?

Response: As far as the database goes, the production system will not run in parallel with the legacy system. Theoretically, old and new front end interfaces could run against the same database.

Question 63: Please confirm that the ad-hoc reporting integration in Phase-3 will primarily involve setting up/preparing semantic layer to support ad-hoc reports and it does not involve development of the new ad-hoc reports. Are there any ad hoc reports in the old system that may have to be implemented as canned reports in the new system?

Response: There are no existing ad-hoc reports. The expectation is that after the upgrade, users will be able to construct ad-hoc reports on data groups that are specified in the detailed requirements. A semantic layer will need to be developed to allow the users to create the reports. There will also be integration with the front end software involved, so a user of the UES system will have single sign-on between the system and the reporting tool.

Question 64: How many training sessions does the government require?

Response: That has not been determined.

Question 65: How many stakeholders and users need to be trained?

Response: Undetermined. FAS has training room facilities that can be utilized.

Question 66: Are there any existing deliverable templates (such as high level design, data migration plan, QA plan, etc.) in place that must be used for this project?

Response: No.

Question 67: Is there any deadline for the new system to be live (other than the less-than 2 years time period mentioned on Page 7 of Performance Work Statement)?

Response: Since the upgrade will be completed in stages, the early tasks are expected to be complete well within the 2 year period.

Question 68: How much time does FAS anticipate for the user acceptance testing and training? How much time does FAS anticipate needing for 'Draft' Deliverables review, prior to the scheduled Final Deliverable due date?

Response: This is the anticipated task 4 UAT process that will probably take several weeks:

- An initial kickoff meeting for all groups including demo and process explanations led by stakeholder representative with support from IT
- Sessions with 4 sub groups including detailed demo and process explanation
- Testing period with IT personnel in the training room, remote users also participating
- A follow-up CCB meeting
- Rework by Vendor
- Testing by Vendor
- Redelivery by Vendor

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FAS will try to review all deliverables within 5 days. The vendor should submit deliverables early enough to allow time for rework and still meet the originally scheduled milestone date.

Question 69: As stated on Page 5 of the Solicitation Performance Work Statement, the first phase of the UES project is to “Confirm the Requirements by conducting a full review of the Requirements documents and functions of the legacy system....” Was a contractor involved in the development of the Requirements documents? If so, what is the company? If a contractor was involved, would that contractor and its subcontractors be eligible to bid on this contract since Phase-1 of the effort would amount to them confirming and validating their own work?

Response: The requirements were originally authored by SAIC. In 2007 the requirements were validated by stakeholders and modified as necessary by FAS personnel. Task one is not really about going back to the stakeholders, it is about the vendor accepting that the requirements make sense and are complete and consistent and having the vendor bring to light any areas where the requirements need clarification.

Task 1 is “Requirements Acceptance” which is not the same as requirements validation. The requirements have undergone some modifications since they were originally written as a result of a stakeholder validation process in 2007. Task 1 is more about a vendor *accepting* the requirements and bringing to light any issues that the vendor has with them.

Question 70: For the Configuration Management function, is there an automated tool that USDA already uses or is required to be used for this project?

Response: FAS uses Microsoft Visual Source Safe for source control. It is up to the vendor to propose a complete configuration management plan for the project that goes beyond keeping track of source code. This may require other tools and processes.

Question 71: Is this a new procurement?

Response: There was a previous effort to upgrade the UES system.

Question 72: If not who is the incumbent, are they eligible to rebid, and what was the previous contract value.

Response: There is not a current incumbent

Question 73: After a quick review I had a few questions related to the EVMS compliance. While we are not certified we follow a system of managing costs/performance that is not very different to the EVMS certification. And will be willing to put ourselves on a plan to get the official certification. It is, however, very costly as you know and most 8a firms may or may not be able to afford those costs. I wanted to get some more information on this subject.

Response: The proposal should indicate how the vendor manages costs and performance.

Question 74: In reviewing the SOW for the Unified Export Strategy, Is the USDA firmly decided on SQL Server Reporting so that Crystal Reports would not be an option?

Response: The intended reporting tool is SQL Server Reporting Services.

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Question 75: Has the USDA implemented any type of formal requirements management process such as the Rational Unified Process (RUP)? And, if not, would it consider such a formal process for this project? Note that this would not add additional time or project costs to the USDA unless the USDA wanted to purchase the Rational licenses and keep the user interface tools in place to continue to manage the requirements using this structure for future upgrades or maintenance releases.

Response: The vendor is expected to propose how they intend to manage changes and clarification

Question 75: Does the contract require contractor personnel to be US Citizens in order to perform the work?

Response: No.

Question 76: Does the contract require any security clearance?

Response: Yes, HSPD-12.

Question 77: Does the contractor have to provide development environment (servers, software, testing tools etc)? If so, shall this be included in the cost proposal?

Response: No.

Question 78: Will the government provide computer hardware and software for contractor personnel to perform the work?

Response: Yes.

Question 79: Will the government provide the procurement of the hardware and software for production deployment?

Response: Yes.

Question 80: Does the government have source code for the current ASP implementation and will the source code be provided to the contractor?

Response: Yes.

Question 81: Should the contractor assume the system and database administration duty on the development and production platforms while performing software development and data migration work?

Response: No. Databases in the FAS environment can be administered by FAS database administrators.

Question 82: Is the current frontend User Interface (UI) web-enabled? Does the current system has both desktop thick client UI and asp-based web UI?

Response: A small part of the system (claims and advance approval) is a client server system written in Visual Basic 6. The rest of the legacy system is asp-based web-enabled.

Question 83: Is network / Firewall security enhancement part of this effort? Can the contractor assume that the government or an incumbent contractor already provide this support? This question relates to development and production environment security and C&A effort.

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- Response:** The FAS infrastructure is already configured for the necessary security. There are FAS contractors that maintain the network. The UES upgrade will have to run in the FAS environment. The legacy UES has undergone C & A. Changes to the C & A documents that are necessitated by the upgrade are part of the effort. Actual C & A will be completed by a third party vendor.
- Question 84:** The RFP stipulates that the contractor shall provide deliverables ahead of the final schedule. 45 days is used as an example. Can we assume that the number is arbitrary and will be adjusted for each phase? 45 days is a quite a long period for phase I, which is supposed to be only 90 days in total.
- Response:** The intent is to allow time for rework after any initial rejection of a deliverable so FAS has assurance that the final due date of a deliverable really is the final due date.
- Question 85:** Is there an inventory of applications used in the current platform? (i.e. ASP, Cold Fusion, Apache, MS IIS etc) If so can this be shared?
- Response:** The legacy UES application consists of active server page files written in visual basic script with javascript and a small application written in visual basic 6. The web server is MS IIS. The legacy database is Sybase Adaptive Server Enterprise 12.5 running on Compaq Tru64. The target database is Microsoft SQL Server 2005 running on Intel X86. The FAS staging and production servers are load balanced Poweredge Dell 2950s running IIS.
- Question 86:** Is there any existing system documentation that can be shared? (i.e. system design document, system operation procedure etc).
- Response:** When the upgrade effort starts, developers will be able to have full access to existing documentation.
- Question 87:** Is there an incumbent contractor maintaining current platform, or performed effort that resulted in the RFP? If so, is the incumbent allowed to bid the contract?
- Response:** The system is currently maintained in-house by federal employees. Firms that have been contracted to do some work on the system in the past are able to bid on the current effort if they are otherwise eligible.
- Question 88:** Since this is a fixed price contract, if there is a government caused delay (for example, non responsive for acceptance), how would additional cost be reflected in the pricing?
- Response:** The Contracting Officer's Representative will be responsible for ensuring performance. Any questions regarding a government caused delay should be addressed in a timely manner to both the COTR and the Contracting Officer, in writing for appropriate resolution.
- Question 89:** Is software development expected to be done at FAS/USDA facilities?
- Response:** Yes.
- Question 90:** Is FAS open to adopting a COTS package like share point server for upgrade and implementation of UES?

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Response: It is believed that it will take custom software to meet all the requirements. COTS may be included as part of the solution.

Question 91: Where will the upgraded UES application hosted

Response: The application will be hosted on FAS servers.

Question 92: Does FAS currently has the System, Integration, and User Acceptance Test environments setup or will it be required by the vendor to provide services and hardware and software to do this?

Response: The FAS environment includes development, staging and production. Vendors would use the existing FAS environment.

Question 93: Are marketing plans submitted by cooperators in a particular document format i.e. pdf, .doc. Is it expected that the upgraded UES will provide document management capabilities?

Response: Currently, the marketing plans exist as data that the cooperators submit online using the existing legacy UES system. A requirement of the upgrade is to allow file attachments to the online application that will need to be managed somehow (see requirements).

Question 94: Point i on page 7 indicates supporting collaboration between cooperators and FAS staff. What level of collaboration capabilities are needed and are expected in the upgraded UES system other than the ones explicitly listed in the RFP. Please elaboration on the collaboration services.

Response: The collaboration is to be provided in software via a shared calendar and an issues forum. The system shall provide forums for both FAS entities and Participants that allow them to post and communicate information. The forum and shared calendar exist in the requirements.

Question 95: What are specific tasks that need to be completed for Certification and Accreditation?

Response: A third-party vendor will complete the actual security certification. The UES upgrade vendor is expected to comply with FAS security requirements and provide updates to the existing UES security documentation to reflect the new realities of the upgraded system.

Question 96: Please elaborate more on e-authorization.

Response: This is a department of Agriculture wide initiative so there is a common login for USDA. It is implemented by COTS software, controlled at the department level. The UES upgrade should have a way to map the GUID passed to the application from eAuthentication to an authorized user of the system. There will need to be coordination with eAuth administrators from the department to protect the UES site at the time of implementation. Other FAS applications have implemented eAuthentication so the eAuth software is already installed and working on the FAS production web servers. Below is an example of the mapping strategy:

Our strategy for mapping UES's E-Authenticated users to UES application specific roles involves a two step process which involves UES users first applying for and completing E-Authentication's level-2 access registration process and then contacting the UES

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system's administrator to insert them into the UES database. Our goal is to pre-populate the UES Users table with as many users as we can, however, in those situations that the user is not in the Users table, that user would need to contact the UES systems administrator. When the UES user navigates to the UES application for the first time and passes E-Authentication's "coarse grain authentication" our initial "fine grain authentication" will extract http header information from SiteMinder's host headers that consist of (First name, Last name, GUID, and Email). This information will then be cross referenced against the Users table in the UES database. If we find a match we will update the user's record by associating the GUID with that user's record. The next time the user logs into the UES application our "fine grain authentication" will map the user to the users table by their GUID. Once this match is made the application will then create the "user's profile" by associating the user with an application specific role.

Question 97: **What is the current hardware infrastructure for UES? Does the recommended technical solution need to be compatible with current infrastructure or FAS is willing to undertake hardware refresh as part of the upgraded UES?**

Response: The upgraded UES is expected to work in the existing FAS production environment and needs to be compatible with the current FAS hardware.

Question 98: **Are there any page limitations to the technical proposal and/or the business/management proposal?**

Response: See response to Question 46.

Question 99: **What is the requested font type, font size for vendor responses?**

Response: The font type should be Times Roman, 10 pt font size.

Question 100: **Are there any limitations to the length or resumes for key personnel?**

Response: See response to Question 46

Question 101: **How many key personnel resumes would the government wish for vendors to include with their response?**

Response: To be determined by the Offeror.

Question 102: **Should Section K be included with the vendor response? If so, which proposal volume (Technical or Business Management) should the Section K be included in?**

Response: Section K should be included in the Cost Proposal.

Question 103: **Is this a new or follow-on requirement?**

Response: It is a new requirement that follows previous efforts that produced the requirements.

Question 104: **Is there an incumbent for this scope of services? If yes, who is the incumbent on the contract? How long has the current incumbent been under contract? Is the incumbent eligible to bid again?**

Response: There is no current incumbent.

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- Question 105:** How many Full Time Equivalents (FTE) are estimated to the contract?
- Response:** The government envisions key personnel as listed in the solicitation. Other proposed personnel are at the discretion of the vendor.
- Question 106:** How much money is allocated to this contract?
- Response:** Undetermined at this time.
- Question 107:** Can the small business issue a subcontract to a large business?
- Response:** There is no issue as long as at least 51% of the work is performed by the targeted socioeconomic group identified in the requirement, e.g., 8(a).
- Question 108:** Since this RFP is an 8(a) compete, is SAIC (the requirement producer) obligated to be a subcontractor with an 8(a) small business firm to bid this RFP?
- Response:** A large company must team with an 8(a).
- Question 109:** Is the use of the Microsoft platform final?
- Response:** Yes. The finished software must work with the FAS enterprise architecture, which is .NET with a Microsoft SQL Server back end.
- Question 110:** What are the versions of Microsoft products?
- Response:** NET Framework 2.0, Visual Studio 2005
- Question 111:** Can development occur at locations other than the USDA Reporters Building?
- Response:** Development is expected to take place at the government designated location.
- Question 112:** Are there any personnel security requirements such as HSPD 12?
- Response:** See question 9 above for the typical security requirements.
- Question 113:** Since the work location is onsite what development, configuration management, testing, and project management tools are available for the project?
- Response:** Visual Studio 2005, Visual Source safe, Microsoft project, Microsoft SQL Server 2005, Microsoft Reporting Services, SQL Server Management Studio
- Question 114:** Will all subject matter experts be available for the discovery and requirements review during phase-1?
- Response:** FAS will provide access to subject matter experts, after award.
- Question 115:** Does the contract cover the changes to legacy systems to support the MS SQL Server migration? Changes can include new business logic to support data quality issues.
- Response:** Yes.

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- Question 116:** Must the proposal follow the phases in C.1.8?
- Response:** The proposal should be the best response to the Statement of Work as provided.
- Question 117:** For tools that are at the contractor's expense but require government access how many government users are anticipated? This is needed for appropriate costing.
- Response:** 2
- Question 118:** Will these tools become part of the deliverables or will they remain with the contractor?
- Response:** Tools that are necessary for the continuing functioning and maintenance of the software will become part of the deliverables; this does not necessarily have to include the vendor's defect tracking software.
- Question 119:** What process is required for the contractor tools to be approved and installed at the work location on the government furnished equipment?
- Response:** The tools must be compatible with the FAS infrastructure.
- Question 120:** Shall all of references of Past Performance be Federal Government references?
- Response:** Past Performance references are up to the vendor. Most important would be projects with similarity in size and scope to the current effort.
- Question 121:** When is the deadline (date and time) for our references of Past Performance to send questionnaires to you? Is an email and email attached file acceptable?
- Response:** Per Amendment No. 2 to the solicitation, b) The response date for the Past Performance Questionnaire is hereby changed from April 25, 2008, and extended to May 5, 2008. This extension applies to the submission of the Past Performance Questionnaire only.