

JUSTIFICATION
FOR AN EXCEPTION TO FAIR OPPORTUNITY

1. Contracting Activity: Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)
Office of Acquisition Operations
Technology Acquisition Center
23 Christopher Way
Eatontown, New Jersey 07724
2. Description of Action: The proposed action is for a firm-fixed price delivery order (DO) issued under a National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Solutions for Enterprise-Wide Procurement (SEWP) V Governmentwide Acquisition Contract (GWAC).
3. Description of the Supplies or Services: VA, Office of Information and Technology has a requirement to implement the Avaya Aura Messaging (AAM) voice messaging system at the Fargo, Fort Meade, Sioux Falls, and St. Cloud VA Medical Centers (VAMC) in Region 2, Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN) 23. The AAM system will replace the Avaya Call Pilot system which is currently at the locations listed above. The new AAM system includes the AAM servers and mailbox licenses, additional CS1000 Session Initiation Protocol (SIP) ports to accommodate local SIP connectors to the AAM system, new Session Manager servers for each location, new cards for Digital Signal Processor resources, Service Support during VAMC normal business hours supplemented with an on-call process for emergencies during non-business hours, Meridian Integrated Recorded Announcer cards to accommodate recorded prompts/greeting, and installation services to include any programming required to migrate from Avaya Call Pilot system to the AAM system. The period of performance is September 28, 2015 through January 28, 2016 for delivery and installation with two, 12-month option periods for maintenance.
4. Statutory Authority: The statutory authority permitting an exception to fair opportunity is Section 41 U.S.C. 4106(c)(2) as implemented by the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) 16.505(b)(2)(i)(B), entitled "Only one awardee is capable of providing the supplies or services required at the level of quality required because the supplies or services ordered are unique or highly specialized."
5. Rationale Supporting Use of Authority Cited Above: The current Avaya Call Pilot system is 10 years old and is obsolete. Additionally, there is a risk of no available replacement parts. As a result, the VISNs would require customized replacement parts which will cause delays and service interruption while replacement parts are procured and manufactured. In addition, the new AAM system is the only voice messaging system that can meet VA's requirements as the system must integrate with the Avaya CS1000 already deployed at all VISN 23 VAMCs. Specifically, the Avaya CS1000 communications are through a source code that is based on Avaya's proprietary source code. No other voice messaging system can provide seamless and full communication

capability without the Avaya proprietary source code. The new AAM system allows VA to leverage current infrastructure components as a way to maintain system consistency, responsive customer service, and cost. Replacing the entire voice messaging system would require re-engineering the entire system network with new hardware and software, operating system, configuration programming, personnel training to support the newer technology, and recertification to ensure all security protocols are maintained in the re-architecture. To replace with a non-Avaya system, in addition to the architecture reengineering, schedule delays and service interruption risks are increased because additional equipment and personnel training will be required to retrofit the system. Implementing another voice messaging system would lead to sustained disruption of voice service to VAMCs.

6. Efforts to Obtain Competition: Market research was conducted, details of which are in the market research section of this document. This effort did not yield any additional sources, other than authorized resellers, that can meet the Government's requirements. It was determined, however, that limited competition is viable among authorized resellers for the AAM system. In accordance with FAR 5.301 and 16.505(b)(2)(ii)(D), this action will be synopsisized and the justification will be made publicly available on the Federal Business Opportunities Page within 14 days of award. The justification will also be posted to the NASA SEWP V GWAC website along with the Request for Quotation.

7. Actions to Increase Competition: The Government's technical experts will continue to work with the program office to perform additional market research so that other possible solutions can be considered for future procurements.

8. Market Research: Market research was conducted from June 2015 through July 2015. Government technical experts reviewed NEC and Siemens products. However, neither could satisfy VA requirements to integrate with the currently fielded Avaya telecommunication systems and infrastructure. Specifically, the infrastructure of VISN 23's current telecommunication systems communicates through a source code that is based on Avaya's proprietary data. No other voice messaging system can provide seamless and full communication capability without the Avaya proprietary source code. The absence of this proprietary source code would result in device inoperability. Without device interoperability, the devices would not perform their intended functions, which would cause voice network delays and issues, leading to work stoppages and an erosion of patient care jeopardizing VA's overall mission to serve Veterans.

Further market research was conducted in May 2015 by issuing a Request for Information on the NASA SEWP V GWAC website. On May 7, 2015, three responses were received. Additional market research was conducted in August 2015 by the Contract Specialist via utilizing the NASA SEWP V GWAC Provider Lookup Tool; five authorized resellers of Avaya products were identified. In addition, NASA SEWP V GWAC has a dynamic catalog where line items can be added based on customer requests; therefore, as long as the required item or service is within scope of the NASA SEWP V GWAC, items and services can be added to the catalog on a daily basis.

Based on the market research, the technical experts concluded that Avaya telecommunications hardware/services are the only commercially available hardware/services compatible with VISN 23's existing telecommunication infrastructures. Limited competition is expected on the NASA SEWP V GWAC for this proposed action.

9. Other Facts: None.