

JUSTIFICATION AND APPROVAL
FOR AN EXCEPTION TO FAIR OPPORTUNITY

1. Contracting Activity: Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)
Office of Acquisition and Logistics
Technology Acquisition Center (TAC)
260 Industrial Way West
Eatontown, NJ 07724
2. Description of Action: The proposed action is for two (2) network CORE and DATACENTER switches with maintenance support for VA Syracuse Medical Center's new spinal cord injury unit. This action will be issued as a firm-fixed-price delivery order under the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Solutions for Enterprise-Wide Procurement (SEWP) IV Government-Wide Acquisition Contract (GWAC).
3. Description of the Supplies and/or Services: The proposed action is for the procurement of two (2) Cisco 6509E core switches for VA Syracuse Medical Center. This equipment is required to extend network service capabilities; provide data, voice, and video service to the new unit; and to establish connectivity with the existing VA Syracuse Medical Center network infrastructure. Additionally, one (1) year of maintenance support is required for this equipment to ensure it remains operational. The total estimated price of the proposed action is \$[REDACTED].
4. Authority Cited: The statutory authority permitting this exception to fair opportunity is Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) Subpart 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: Based on extensive market research, as described in Paragraph 8 below, it was determined that limited competition is viable for this brand name item. The aforementioned Cisco switches are the only equipment that can meet the requirements to occupy and expand the current VA network capabilities since the current VA network equipment runs Cisco's proprietary Internetwork Operating System. Utilizing an alternate product would require complete replacement of the currently used equipment. Only the use of Cisco switches will allow VA to upgrade and expand the capabilities of the Virtual Switching System (VSS) to current VA networks without causing network delays and possible inoperability. In addition, the procurement of an alternate product would negatively impact the ability of the Information Technology (IT) staff to provide a secure and stable network as an alternate product would use different protocols and software as well as separate diagnostic, configuration, security, access, and command procedures.

Furthermore, since 2002 all of VA's infrastructure policies, procedures, configurations, and training have been based upon the use of Cisco's equipment. The introduction of non-Cisco equipment would require the recertification of the Local Area Network (LAN) to which the equipment is connected. This would require all equipment from a source other than Cisco to go through certification and accreditation before being connected to the VA network. The equipment would have to be tested and validated, which would result in additional delivery delays. Therefore, for security and system stability, Cisco switches are required.

6. Efforts to Obtain Competition: Market research was conducted, details of which are in the market research section of this document. Competition is anticipated for the required brand name item as there are numerous authorized resellers on NASA SEWP IV GWAC. The Request For Quote (RFQ) will be submitted to all four (4) NASA SEWP IV GWAC contract groups in order to fully notify all interested parties; however, quotes will only be accepted from Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business (SDVOSB) value added resellers (VARs) and Small Business VARs, Groups B and C on the SEWP Contract vehicle, as the market research below indicates that there are at least two (2) small business vendors that can meet this type of requirement. In accordance with FAR 5.301 and 16.505(b)(2), this action will be synopsisized at award on the Federal Business Opportunities Page (FBO) and this justification will be made publicly available at time of solicitation.
7. Actions to Increase Competition: In order to remove or overcome barriers to competition in future acquisitions for this requirement, the Government will continue to conduct market research to ascertain if there are changes in the market place that would enable future actions to be competed.
8. Market Research:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

9. Other Facts:

[REDACTED]

10. Technical and Requirements Certification: I certify that the supporting data under my cognizance, which are included in this justification, are accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

11. Fair and Reasonable Cost Determination: I hereby determine that the anticipated price to the Government for this procurement will be fair and reasonable. Contracts awarded on the NASA SEWP IV GWAC have already been determined to be fair and reasonable. Finally, the successful quote will be compared to prices of similar equipment previously procured and the Independent Government Cost Estimate.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

12. Procuring Contracting Officer Certification: I certify that this justification is accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief. Since this effort exceeds \$150K, but does not exceed \$650K, this certification serves as APPROVAL.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]