

JUSTIFICATION AND APPROVAL  
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, NJ 07724
2. Description of Action: The proposed action is for a firm-fixed-priced delivery order issued under the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Solutions for Enterprise-Wide Procurement (SEWP) V Government-Wide Acquisition Contract (GWAC).
3. Description of the Supplies or Services: The Office of Information and Technology, Service Delivery and Engineering, Enterprise Operations, Quantico Information Technology Center (QITC) and Culpeper Information and Technology Center (CITC) requires an upgrade to its security surveillance system. The proposed action is for the acquisition of Cisco Unified Computing Systems (UCS) C-220 Servers (QTY 2) with Cisco Physical Access Manager (PAM) software, required licenses, 12-months of hardware maintenance and software support, Axis surveillance cameras (QTY 12), and installation/configuration of the equipment. The period of performance includes delivery and installation of required hardware within 150 days after contract award, followed by 12-months of hardware and software maintenance. The total estimated value of the proposed action is \$ [REDACTED].
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: Based on the market research, as described in section 8 of this document, it's been determined that limited competition is available. The current QITC and CITC infrastructure is based on Cisco equipment and software. In order to upgrade its existing security surveillance system, VA requires servers with associated software, and security cameras that are compatible with the existing infrastructure. The Cisco UCS servers and Axis security cameras are the only security surveillance products that are compatible with the existing infrastructure. The current Cisco network at QITC and CITC is proprietary and communicates through proprietary source code. No other manufacturer's servers are fully interoperable and compatible with the Cisco's proprietary source code. Use of any other manufacturer's servers and software could result in severe interoperability and compatibility issues, which would have a damaging effect on the existing Cisco network. Specifically, the UCS PAM software that currently manages all existing UCS servers at QITC and CITC would become inoperative, effectively ceasing network communication, including security surveillance. Similarly, only Cisco can provide the software support and hardware maintenance due to the proprietary nature of the products. No other source can provide

the software support or hardware maintenance without the Cisco proprietary source code, as it would not be able to develop software patches, upgrades, and security fixes. Furthermore, the installation services require extensive knowledge of Cisco hardware and operating system to install and configure the servers and cameras to verify interoperability and compatibility with the existing infrastructure.

In addition to servers, security cameras are needed to complete the upgrade of VA's security surveillance system. Only Axis security cameras are compatible with the Cisco software and meet all of VA's security requirements. Specifically, VA requires security cameras that are certified by Cisco to provide redundancy in its software and communication to the Cisco UCS servers that will house the surveillance software. Axis security cameras are the only security cameras qualified to provide redundancy and proper communication to the servers and surveillance software, and required features and functionality. The communication from the cameras to the server and surveillance software needs to be low in bandwidth consumption on the network and provide dual streaming of video feeds. No other manufacturer's security camera provides the compatibility, integration and functionality required.

Cisco and Axis products are the only products available that provide a solution that meets all of VA's needs and is compatible with the existing infrastructure at QITC and CITC. The procurement of any other manufacturer's products would create interoperability issues within the existing network. Any break in communication within QITC and CITC is unacceptable. Maintaining an operational network is critical to the operations and security of QITC and CITC facilities. Having a single integrator provide, install, and integrate the equipment is the only way to ensure the configuration interdependencies are properly addressed and that VA has a single source for resolution if any conflicts or interoperability issues arise. A single vendor that can provide all of the equipment required, guarantee installation, ensure integration of the equipment and complete operability of the system is critical to the overall success of the security surveillance upgrade.

6. Efforts to Obtain Competition: Market research was conducted intermittently from October 2015 to January 2016, details of which are in the market research section of this document. This effort did not yield any additional sources that could meet the Government's technical requirements. It was determined, however, that limited competition is viable among resellers. This Justification and Approval will be provided with the solicitation. Further, in accordance with FAR 5.301 and 16.505(b)(2)(ii)(D), the award notice for this action will be synopsisized and this justification will be made publically available on the Federal Business Opportunities website within 14 days of award.

7. Actions to Increase Competition: In order to remove or overcome barriers to competition in future acquisitions for this requirement, the agency will continue to perform market research to ascertain if there are changes in the marketplace that would enable future actions to be competed.

8. Market Research: Market research was conducted by VA technical experts intermittently from October 2015 to January 2016 by reviewing similar server hardware products, to include those provided by IBM, Panasonic, and Dell. Market research was

conducted by a review of industry websites, discussions with third party contractors, and analysis of server and security surveillance hardware and software product offerings, and assessing technical compatibility with the existing QITC and CITC infrastructure. It was determined that only the Cisco servers are compatible with the current infrastructure at QITC and CITC. Also, it was determined that only Cisco software, PAM with integrated use of Cisco Video Surveillance manager, supports the Axis cameras to provide advanced video analytics features including face and license plate recognition and redundancy.

Additional market research was conducted using the NASA SEWP V Provider Look-up tool to identify contract holders offering the required Cisco servers, software/licenses and Axis cameras. This search identified over 20 NASA SEWP V GWAC.

9. Other Facts: None.

Date \_\_\_\_\_

11. Fair and Reasonable Cost Determination: I hereby determine that the anticipated price to the Government for this contract action will be fair and reasonable based on the fact that contracts awarded on NASA SEWP V GWAC have already been determined to be fair and reasonable and more competitive pricing may result from competition. Finally, the successful quote will be compared to the Independent Government Cost Estimate.

Date [REDACTED]

Procuring Contracting Officer Signature 

12. Procuring Contracting Officer Certification: I certify that this justification is accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief. As this contract action does not exceed \$700,000.00, the certification below required by FAR 16.505(b)(2)(ii)(C)(1) serves as approval.

Date [REDACTED]

Procuring Contracting Officer Signature: \_\_\_\_\_