

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 to be issued under the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Solutions for Enterprise-Wide Procurement (SEWP) V Government-Wide Acquisition Contract (GWAC) for brand name Avaya products to include the Avaya Aura Solution and communication manager server; 6,787 software licenses and support services to include installation; configuration; programming; and testing to expand and connect contact center capabilities to the Health Eligibility Center (HEC) in Atlanta Georgia from the solution supporting the Veterans Crisis Line located at the, VA Medical Center (VAMC) in Canandaigua, NY.
  
3. Description of Supplies or Services: VA Office of Information and Technology (OI&T), Enterprise Program Management Office (EPMO) requires brand name Avaya hardware, software and support services to include installation, configuration, programming, and testing to expand and connect contact center capabilities to the HEC from the solution supporting the Veterans Crisis Line located at the Canandaigua VAMC. These locations are complementary call center sites and must be equipped with a telecommunications system that is designed to support a single unified platform. VA requires a single unified telecommunications platform for work force management, call recording and reporting as well as the ability to allow call agents in both locations to have skill sets that will allow them to take calls for multiple skill groups from anywhere within the organizational footprint, which includes agents located in Canandaigua and Atlanta. Integration between the two sites allows each site to be able to support and take calls for the other in the event of catastrophic failure or natural disaster. This can only be accomplished by utilizing a single unified telecommunications platform. Delivery of hardware and software, installation, configuration, programming, and testing are to be completed within 45 days of award and all hardware shall include a 12-month warranty period.
  
4. Statutory Authority: The statutory authority permitting an exception to fair opportunity is Section 41 U.S.C. 4106(c)(2) as implemented by 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 justification, VA has determined that limited competition is viable among authorized resellers of brand name Avaya hardware, software and

support services to include installation, configuration, programming, and testing. VA currently utilizes Avaya's Enterprise Contact Center solution as the telecommunications platform for the Veterans Crisis Line located at the Canandaigua VAMC. As the solution required for the HEC is an extension of the Veteran Crisis Line the solution must integrate with the current contact call center solution as a single unified telecommunications platform for work force management, call recording and reporting as well as the ability to allow agents in either location to apply the required skill set based on the type of crisis call received. The Avaya infrastructure located at the Canandaigua VAMC allows other sites utilizing Avaya brand name items to integrate allowing for a single platform. As the hardware and software that make up this Avaya infrastructure are based on Avaya proprietary source code only Avaya hardware and software will integrate and connect with the current contact center solution. Any other brand solution would require utilization of its own proprietary infrastructure that would not permit the integration of the two sites and would not allow for the required single unified telecommunications platform solution. Additionally, in order to provide the required installation, configuration, programming and testing services access to Avaya's proprietary source code is required. Failure to acquire hardware, software and support services to include installation, configuration, programming, testing that integrates with the existing Avaya solution at the Canandaigua VAMC would cause delays in processing Veteran calls attempting to access these contact centers for crisis services and potentially reach VA personnel without the skills and expertise to properly address the type of crisis the Veteran is experiencing.

6. Efforts to Obtain Competition: Market research was conducted, details of which are in section 8 of this justification. It was determined that limited competition is viable among authorized resellers. In accordance with FAR 5.301 and 16.505(b)(2)(ii)(D), notice of award for this action will be synopsisized and this justification will be made publicly available within 14 days of award on the Federal Business Opportunities Page. In accordance with FAR 16.505(a)(4)(iii)(A), this justification will be posted with the request for quotation (RFQ) on NASA SEWP.

7. Actions to Increase Competition: The Government will continue to conduct market research to ascertain if there are changes in the marketplace that would enable future actions to be competed. Specifically, OIT will continue to monitor market trends, new/emerging products, looking for compatible and more advanced technologies to meet VA needs.

8. Market Research: The Government's technical experts conducted market research in July 2016 by reviewing similar name hardware and software to ascertain if these items could meet or be modified to meet VA's requirements. Specifically, the technical experts conducted extensive web-based research on websites for other Voice and Enterprise Contact Center platforms from NEC Corporation and Technology For Business Corporation. While these vendors' solutions provide general capabilities to provide call center support; neither can access the proprietary technical data and provide interoperability and compatibility with the existing Avaya platform in Canandaigua, NY as described in section 5 above.

Additionally, market research was conducted in August 2016 utilizing the NASA SEWP V GWAC Provider Look-up tool to ascertain the extent of limited competition among resellers. The results of the search found that there are numerous resellers of Avaya products that could possibly meet VA's needs, including 17 Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Businesses. Therefore, limited competition is anticipated.

9. Other Facts: None.