

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, NJ 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 Governmentwide Acquisition Contract (GWAC) for brand name Gigamon hardware and software products and associated support.
3. Description of the Supplies or Services: VA, Office of Information and Technology (OI&T), Enterprise Program Management Office (ePMO) has a requirement for the purchase of brand name Gigamon hardware and software products including 100 HC Series De-Duplication feature licenses, 14 GigaSMART HC Series Front Module 16 10G cages, 200 Multimode 850, 15 G-TAP M200 Series 1 RU chassis, and 15 G-TAP M251 Series 1/10 Gigabyte TAP modules. These products are required in support of the joint Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and VA Continuous Diagnostics and Mitigation (CDM) program. DHS has a mission to safeguard and secure cyberspace in an environment where the cyber attack threat is continuously growing and evolving. The CDM program seeks to defend Federal Information Technology (IT) networks from cyber-security threats by providing continuous monitoring sensors, diagnosis, mitigation tools, dashboards, and Continuous Monitoring as a Service (CMaaS) to strengthen the security posture of Government networks. Congress established the CDM program to provide adequate, risk-based, and cost-effective cyber-security and more efficiently allocate Federal cyber-security resources. DHS procured materials and services (including Gigamon hardware and software products) to provide the VA with capabilities and tools that identify cyber-security risks on an ongoing basis, prioritize these risks based upon potential impacts, and enable cyber-security personnel to mitigate the most significant problems first. Following completion of a survey to assess its CDM posture, VA identified four (4) pilot sites and 45 other VA locations requiring hardware and software in addition to CDM products acquired during FY16 required to continue support of the joint DHS and VA CDM program. Therefore, VA must procure items with the same Gigamon brand names that DHS provided in order to maintain functionality, interoperability and integration of the CDM system throughout VA. In order to accommodate a potential need to acquire additional quantities of the same products, as further surveys are completed, VA anticipates a need to acquire additional items via options during the period of performance including 70 HC Series De-Duplication feature licenses, 8 GigaSMART HC Series Front Module 16 10G cages, 100 Multimode 850, 8 G-TAP M200 Series 1 RU chassis, and 8 G-TAP M251 Series 1/10 Gigabyte TAP modules.

In addition to the hardware and software specified above, VA has a requirement for 12 months of support that will include Gigamon Standard-level Software Maintenance

Support in accordance with the Gigamon Standard Software Support and Maintenance Agreement. This support shall consist of unlimited email technical support for software and technical issues from 9AM to 5PM EST, response to non-critical issues within one business day, and response to critical issues within four hours. This support shall also consist of standard-level software maintenance which includes any and all manufacturer-released software updates, patches and versions. Delivery is required within 30 days of delivery order award. The period of performance for support shall be 12 months from date of hardware and software delivery.

4. Statutory Authority: The statutory authority permitting this exception to fair opportunity is 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 extensive market research, as described in section eight of this justification, it was determined that limited competition is available for the required brand name Gigamon products among authorized Gigamon resellers. The required hardware and supporting software is part of an integrated monitoring system that DHS developed utilizing Gigamon devices. The existing Gigamon devices and products located at five OI&T Infrastructure Operations data centers and four Trusted Internet Connection sites can only integrate and interoperate with other Gigamon products. Specifically, both the administrative control interface which controls the network visibility fabric and the physical device interfaces for network clustering and load balancing are proprietary and only Gigamon devices are able to integrate into the existing Gigamon infrastructure. Network visibility, port aggregation, and/or filtering hardware solutions from other vendors will not integrate with the existing Gigamon infrastructure and would require a separate infrastructure requiring duplication of costs to integrate the data and support two different proprietary cyber-security systems. In addition, only authorized resellers of Gigamon products have access to proprietary Gigamon code to provide product support. This code is required to ensure any services provided are properly configured. The primary requirement of this acquisition, outside of the technical specifications of the equipment, is the ability to maintain an integrated, seamless view of network data and network performance across the VA IT infrastructure to monitor cyber-security threats. This complete view of the network is necessary to support the VA mission since multiple incomplete "islands" of data requiring separate management and integration could result in an inability to triage and troubleshoot cyber-security threats across the entire infrastructure. This impacts VA's ability to efficiently and effectively maintain the security of its core IT systems that directly support Veterans. Only Gigamon products will meet the requirements to integrate and interoperate with the existing Gigamon-based infrastructure since the alternative is to replace all existing infrastructure with products from a new vendor in addition to replacing cyber-security equipment previously delivered to the VA by DHS with equivalent functionality.

6. Efforts to Obtain Competition: Market research was conducted, details of which are in section eight of this justification. This effort did not yield any additional sources that can meet the Government's requirements. It was determined that limited competition is viable among authorized resellers for the required brand name Gigamon hardware and supporting software products. In accordance with FAR 5.301 and 16.505(b)(2)(ii)(D), notice of award of this action will be synopsized 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 on the NASA SEWP V GWAC website to notify all interested parties.

7. Actions to Increase Competition: 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. The program office will continue to monitor the market for availability of other solutions that are compatible with VA's infrastructure, and will continually conduct test and evaluation of those tools when feasible for consideration during the next competitive procurement and or technology refresh.

8. Market Research: The Government's technical experts conducted market research from May 2016 through January 2017 by reviewing other similar hardware and software, including Network capture and monitoring products from Net Optics; Visibility, Stealth, Security (VSS) Monitoring; and Ixia (Anue). This market research is an ongoing process and is continuously being conducted through subscription services with research organizations (such as Forrester Research, Gartner Research, and Frost and Sullivan), reviews of publically available Magic Quadrant and other white papers, VA side-by-side review of multiple competing products, review of professional trade publications specific to the cyber-security processes products implement, attendance at national conferences hosted by vendors, and research of NASA SEWP GWAC holders' catalogs for alternative sources and products. The Government technical experts, based on the initial market research and continued monitoring of products and their capabilities, have determined that none of these products can meet the Government's proprietary, interoperability and compatibility requirements with the existing Gigamon infrastructure as discussed in section 5 above. VA has not identified any other provider that has compatible or interoperable products with the existing VA infrastructure to meet the Government's need.

Additional market research was conducted in January 2017 by utilizing the NASA SEWP Provider Lookup tool to determine whether the required brand name Gigamon hardware and associated software is available from NASA SEWP V GWAC holders. It was determined that there are several resellers of the brand name Gigamon products that hold current GWACs such that limited competition is anticipated.

9. Other Facts: None.