

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 the issuance of a firm-fixed price delivery order under the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Solutions for Enterprise-Wide Procurement (SEWP) V Government-wide Acquisition Contract (GWAC) for the procurement of one (1) upgraded Tenable Network Security Center software license, maintenance, and support.
3. Description of the Supplies or Services: VA, Office of Information and Technology, has a requirement to upgrade the software license, maintenance, and support for one (1) Tenable Security Center to Tenable's Security Center Continuous View – On Premise – Unlimited Hosts. This upgrade from Security Center to Security Center Continuous View with annual maintenance will support vulnerability security scanning for the VA National Security Operations Center (NSOC) Compliance Scanning Service (CSS). Tenable Network Security Center software licenses perform discovery, configuration auditing, asset profiling, sensitive data discovery, and vulnerability analysis of VA's environment and provide an assessment of the agency's Information Technology (IT) security state. This capability allows VA NSOC CSS to effectively carry out its network vulnerability scanning. The period of performance for this procurement will be 12 months from the date of award.
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 market research, as described in section 8 of this justification, it was determined that limited competition is available among resellers for the required one (1) Tenable software license upgrade, maintenance, and support. VA requires an upgraded brand name license and maintenance support compatible with the to-be-upgraded-console as well as functionality and interoperability with the other existing five consoles. Specifically, due to the privately owned and proprietary nature of the Tenable infrastructure in place, no other brand name licenses can meet VA's interoperability and compatibility requirements to communicate with the existing Tenable consoles and software. Also Tenable's Network Security Center software is a proprietary software product; therefore, no other software maintenance provider has the proprietary code to perform the necessary support services. In addition, all software components, including vulnerability scanners and databases, must communicate seamlessly with Tenable's Nessus scanner, and infrastructure already deployed; this especially applies to any software

updates or fixes. Tenable owns the proprietary intellectual property rights to the existing Security Center software and it is not available or supported by third parties; as a result, only Tenable and its resellers can provide the support for this product.

If any other brand name was utilized to repair the currently fielded Tenable items, it would not work within the current Tenable items. Also, access to Tenable proprietary source code is required to complete firmware updates that are programmed on the hardware which are included in the maintenance requirement to ensure the hardware is functioning to its maximum capabilities and properly configured. Tenable and its resellers have access to this source code have the ability to meet all of VA's interoperability and compatibility requirements. Failure to maintain the Tenable Security software would weaken VA's IT security posture and put the VA at an unnecessary security risk.

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 that could meet the Government's requirements. Although the Government is limiting competition as a result of specifying Tenable brand name software license, maintenance, and support, multiple resellers of Tenable brand name software licenses, maintenance, and support are available on the NASA SEWP V GWAC. 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 the justification will be made publicly available. Additionally, in accordance with FAR 16.505(a)(4)(iii)(A) this justification will be submitted to all applicable NASA SEWP V GWAC holders along with the Request for Quotation in order to fully 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 fully competed.

8. Market Research: The Government's technical experts conducted market research in February 2017 to ascertain the ability of any other source other than a Tenable authorized reseller to provide the aforementioned upgraded software license, maintenance, and support to a privately owned and proprietarily licensed product. The research included reviews of products and services from Solar winds, Barracuda, and GFI LanGuard. Based on the market research conducted, the Government's technical experts determined that the alternatives could not provide an upgrade as it is to the proprietary/scanning environments/infrastructures and if a piecemeal replacement was attempted it would create incompatibility and interoperability issues, system malfunctions and require down time and siphoning of resources to customize, fix, manipulate and reprogram software code of systems that are not designed to work together. Such problems and efforts would severely impact enterprise security and critical business operations.

Additionally, market research was conducted in April 2017 by utilizing the NASA SEWP V Provider Lookup Tool to determine whether the required brand name Tenable software maintenance and technical support was available from NASA SEWP V GWAC

holders. The results of the search found numerous resellers that could possibly meet VA's needs. Of the identified resellers, 11 are verified Service Disabled Veteran Owned Small Businesses. Therefore, limited competition is anticipated.

9. Other Facts: None