

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 award 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 brand name Strem Fax Virtual Communications Server and Software Maintenance.

3. Description of the Supplies or Services: The proposed action is for brand name Strem Fax Virtual Communications Server and Software Maintenance in support of Office of Information and Technology, Information Technology Operations and Service. Specifically, VA requires Strem Fax licensing, installation, training and technical support for Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN) 9, five major medical centers, Memphis, Nashville, Lexington, Louisville and Mount Home. Strem Fax is integrated with the brandname Xerox DocuShare document management system and provides a secured streamline flow and management of documentation and fax communications. The Contractor shall deliver: (4) Strem 24 Port Digital Media Gateway Device – Dual span, (3) 24 Port Digital Communications Server Software Production Licenses, (1) 48 Port Digital Communications Server Software Production Licenses, (4) Strem Document Conversion Software, (5) Strem VOIP 24 Port Communications Software Production Licenses, (4) Strem Secure File Transfer Server Software with FIPS Libraries, (4) Strem Text to Speech Server Software Licenses, (5) Strem On-Site User Training Services per Day, (4) Strem On-Site Installation and Administrator Training, (10) Strem Technical Services per Day, (4) Strem Platinum 24 Plus Production System Assurance – (24x7 Support Coverage), (1) Strem Platinum Plus 48 Port Production System Assurance – (24x7 Support), (5) 24 Port Strem Digital Media Gateway Device - Dual Span Annual Support, (5) Strem Secure File Transfer Server Software with FIPS Libraries with annual support, (12) Project Management Services Per Day. The option periods will provide continued hardware and software maintenance across all sites for all hardware and software as follows; (4) Strem Platinum Plus Production System Assurance - 24 Port (24x7 Support Coverage) – Lexington, Mountain Home, Louisville, and Memphis, (1) Strem Platinum Plus Production System Assurance – 48 Port (24x7 Support Coverage) Tennessee Valley only, (5) 24 Port Strem Digital Media Gateway Device - Dual Span Annual Support - All sites, (5) Strem Secure File Transfer Server Software with FIPS Libraries Annual Support – All sites. The period of performance shall be 12 months plus two, 12-month option periods for maintenance and support.

4. Statutory Authority: The statutory authority permitting this 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 document, it was determined that limited competition is available among Cleo Communications’ resellers. The Cleo Stroom Fax solution was implemented at VAMC Memphis to provide substantial improvements in automating mission-critical workflows through secure desktop faxing. Cleo Stroom only works with DocuShare through the use of proprietary software developed by SRC Solutions Inc. The two technologies collectively are required to deliver secure desktop faxing and document management. Cleo Stroom’s proprietary software, Versalex (VL) Trader, is software used for transferring files via secure protocols and resides on both Stroom Fax Server and DocuShare servers. Only Cleo Communications or an reseller has access to the proprietary code required to keep the system operational. Only Cleo Communications or resellers have the ability to facilitate the transmission of files through secure file transfer protocol. This secure file transfer provides the security assurance of HIPPA and all VA Security Standards (FIPS 140-2). Both technologies from Cleo Stroom and SRC Solutions collectively are required to meet specialized needs for the five medical facilities (Memphis, Lexington, Louisville, Mountain Home, and Nashville).

Stroom provides the secure mechanism for which data can be transferred digitally to the medical facilities healthcare teams’ desktops and nurses’ stations. The integrated solution for Stroom fax and document management requires dedicated servers, appliances and interfacing software that securely transfer files with collaborative capabilities of sharing information from the secure fax device and associated software to the secure document management software. Cleo Stroom Communications works in tandem with SRC Solutions, Inc. to automate the document management process of faxes that are exchanged over the network. The two technologies are intricately linked to provide a total integrated solution for secure fax communications. The impact of unlinking the two technologies would require new software development, considerable time and testing; as well as, an unpredictable expense. New software development occurs in phases to allow for design, development, testing, and deployment, testing, and so on until the product is complete.

The market research has shown no other viable vendor can meet all the technical requirements, security requirements and capacity for service delivery. Along with these technical requirements the necessary technical support (24x7 telephone/remote support), and project management expertise provided by Cleo Stroom, no other vendor has shown a provided service. This acquisition is an expanded purchase of software and equipment for the individual sites that are supported by Memphis. It also critical that these sites have the same technologies as Memphis so that they are able to communicate with Memphis so that Memphis is able to provide continued network support for secure desktop faxing. It is also critical that the other medical facilities named in this acquisition have the same technologies as Memphis and are fully compatible and interoperable. Memphis will remain the network administrator, serve as the hub, and deliver the software (DocuShare, SRC. Conveyor) which brings the total

solution of integrated software required for secure desktop faxing document management, and workflow processing. The combined solution of SRC Solutions and DocuShare increases the reliability of secure patient information transfer, secure information retrieval and secure information storage.

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 can meet the Government's requirements. It was determined however, that limited competition is viable among resellers for the aforementioned brand name EMC software licenses and maintenance. In accordance with FAR 5.301 and 16.505(b)(2)(ii)(D), this action will be synopsisized at award on the Federal Business Opportunities Page and the justification will be made publicly available. In addition, this Justification for an Exception to Fair Opportunity will be made publicly 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 Government will continue to perform market research to determine if there are any products and/or source providers available that will enable future requirements to be competed.

8. Market Research: Market research was conducted in June and July 2017. The Government technical experts reviewed the following similar software products: MyFax Service, eFax Service, and, Trust Fax. These companies are unable to meet the VA's requirements due to the proprietary restraints as indicated in Section 5. None of these companies are able to integrate with brand name Xerox DocuShare or have access to the proprietary software, VL Trade which is used for transferring files via secure protocols and resides on both Stroom Fax Server and DocuShare servers.

A Request for Information (RFI) was posted to NASA SEWP and the FBO on July 24, 2017 to see if there were capable vendors of meeting the Government's requirements of Stroom Fax Virtual Communications Server and Software Maintenance and/or replacing Stroom Fax and DocuShare functionalities. The RFI closed on July 31, 2017 and no responses were received regarding equivalent products. No responses were received from NASA SEWP Contract holders and only one response was received from FBO for the three brand names. It was determined that additional market research was required and the brand name requirements would be separated into two procurements.

Additional market research in August 2011 was conducted by posting an RFI on NASA SEWP for just Cleo Stroom products and services. Three responses were received which demonstrated capabilities that meet the Government's requirements. It was determined that there are several resellers of the required brand name Cleo Stroom products that hold current GWACs, therefore, limited competition is anticipated.

9. Other Facts: None.