

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 task order to be issued under the National Aeronautics Space Administration (NASA) Solutions for Enterprise Wide Procurement (SEWP) V Governmentwide Acquisition Contract (GWAC) for iTRACS corporation (iTRACS) software licenses with annual maintenance.
3. Description of the Supplies or Services: VA Office of Information and Technology (OI&T) requires the purchase of additional iTRACS software licenses, and software maintenance to support the VA National Datacenter Program (NDCP). The NDCP operates an enterprise-wide VA datacenter and supports VA's critical enterprise applications. iTRACS software licenses are being utilized as an enterprise application that allows users to analyze physical infrastructure and asset connectivity to monitor the overall status of the VA network. Additional licenses are required to expand existing VA Data Center Infrastructure Management (DCIM) capabilities and services to additional computing environments, allowing consistent monitoring of datacenter environmental conditions, management of network connectivity, management of IT assets, physical placement of assets, and datacenter capacity planning NDCP to multiple enterprise data centers. The DCIM is comprised of only iTRACS software, which will allow additional enterprise facilities to utilize the enterprise-standard DCIM tool thereby providing more comprehensive management visibility to OI&T leadership for appropriate decision-making. This also allows users to model proposed changes, created scheduled work orders, and review "what if" scenarios without impacting the live data center. VA needs to acquire additional software licenses to ensure the continued operational success for System Health Monitoring, Application Health Monitoring, Network Monitoring, Security Monitoring, Event Management, Dashboard, Reporting and integration with existing VA notification systems and Help Desk Systems. The Contractor shall provide an unlimited number of iTRACS perpetual software licenses for use throughout the 3-year period. This unlimited licensing agreement (ULA) manner provides significant flexibility to VA to provide the required software to all of its enterprise data centers (in excess of 350 facilities). VA can focus resources on deployments without establishing a set program of licenses for a given time period, where only estimated numbers of licenses at any given location are available. Unbundling from time-based deployments allows the VA to manage more effectively available staffing, travel budgets, and the enterprise standardized primary and disaster recovery systems, at lower performance risk. In addition, the ULA model promotes maximal deployment penetration and provides the Government with incentive to deploy as aggressively as possible to support Moves, Adds, and Changes (MAC) in data center environments. This unlimited licensing will provide VA the ability to support NDCP

expansions for critical VA applications in support of Veterans which must be interoperable with the current DCIM functionality. The Contractor shall also provide software maintenance during the 3-year period. The effort also includes two 12-month option periods to maintain the actual number of deployed licenses after the 3-year base period. VA OI&T requires option periods to ensure continuity of service between the unlimited license and final determination of the actual number of deployed licenses after the 3-year period. The number of actual licenses deployed shall fluctuate and would be fully determined until the end of the third year of the ULA. VA anticipates using these licenses for a minimum of five years. The software maintenance shall include software upgrades/updates, documentation updates, and help desk support via telephone and e-mail. Help desk support shall be for user support such as support using the products, negotiating protocols (e.g. Simple Network Management Protocol), or troubleshooting issues related to the software, and shall be available during regular business hours, specifically, 7AM to 7PM Eastern Time. The total estimated price for this proposed action, including options, is

4. Statutory Authority: The statutory authority permitting this exception to fair opportunity is 41 U.S.C. 4106(c)(2) as implemented by the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) Paragraph 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 has been determined that limited competition for iTRACS software and maintenance is available among authorized resellers for these products. Due to the proprietary nature of the software code in the existing DCIM infrastructure, which is based on only existing iTRACS software deployments consisting of approximately seven enterprise data centers and 500 single license tracked, only iTRACS software will meet VA's requirements due to compatibility and interoperability constraints with the proprietary software. Only iTRACS software can communicate with the existing DCIM infrastructure for the purposes of analyzing physical infrastructure and asset connectivity to monitor the overall status of the VA network. As this is an expansion of current licensing, VA requires compatible/interoperable software in order to expand DCIM capabilities and services as required. Only iTRACS or an authorized reseller can provide the required licenses to expand the current DCIM infrastructure. No other license is compatible with or interoperable with the existing iTRACS proprietary database structures, protocols, and software application programming interfaces. Additionally, only iTRACS and authorized resellers of iTRACS products can provide iTRACS software maintenance. Only iTRACS or an authorized reseller can provide the necessary software upgrades/updates, documentation, and help desk support because of the propriety source code required to develop and implement software updates. No other source is capable of providing the required software maintenance for the iTRACS software. It is imperative that iTRACS is procured as it represent the core of comprehensive datacenter management solutions that have been approved and extended from existing VA OI&T infrastructure management capabilities, mature programs, rich historical knowledge-bases and experience at NDCP regional

data centers. Failure to procure these licenses and associated maintenance would result in continuance of ineffective monitoring of datacenter environmental conditions, management of network connectivity, management of IT assets, physical placement of assets, and datacenter capacity planning. As such, VA NDCP would have insufficient monitoring of the health of computer rooms supporting critical System Health Monitoring, Application Health Monitoring, Network Monitoring, Security Monitoring, Event Management, Dashboard, and Reporting. These systems support VA operations and Veterans Health systems such as Veterans Information Systems and Technology Architecture (Vista). Furthermore, if the required iTRACS are not procured, the existing VA OI&T infrastructure cannot be expanded. Based on the above, only iTRACS brand name software can meet the Government's requirements.

6. Efforts to Obtain Competition: Market research was conducted, details of which are in section 8 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 authorized resellers for brand name iTRACS software licenses software licenses, maintenance, and technical support. In accordance with FAR 16.505(a)(4)(iii)(A)(2), this justification will be provided with the solicitation to all interested NASA SEWP V GWAC holders. In accordance with FAR 5.301 and FAR 16.505(b)(2)(ii)(D), notice of award of the resulting order will be synopsisized and this justification will be made publicly available within 14 days after award on the Federal Business Opportunity website.

7. Actions to Increase Competition: In order to remove or overcome barriers to competition in future acquisitions of this requirement, the Government's technical experts will continue to perform market research to determine if there are any products available that will enable competition. The Government continues to monitor market trends and changes in requirements that could facilitate a more competitive environment. As the solution reaches its projected end of life in 2027, the Government will conduct market research of this solution with a new solution that will be defined so that there will be the opportunity for expansion, interchangeability, and interoperability between and among competitor data integration and management solution providers.

8. Market Research: Market research, consisting of internet searches for information about tracking solutions that can automate monitoring, inventory, and management tools suitable for the DCIM, was conducted in January 2017. Other solutions were reviewed from companies such as Nlyte and Net Zoom DC. The results of the market research confirmed that only iTRACS or an authorized reseller has the capability of providing tracking solutions that are compatible and interoperable with the existing DCIM. Additional market research was conducted in March 2017 by utilizing the NASA SEWP V GWAC Provider Look-up Tool to determine whether the brand name iTRACS software licenses and technical support is available from resellers. It was determined that there are several resellers of brand name iTRACS software licenses and technical support that hold current NASA SEWP V contracts.

9. Other Facts: None