

JUSTIFICATION AND APPROVAL  
FOR AN EXCEPTION TO FAIR OPPORTUNITY

1. Contracting Activity: Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)  
Office of Acquisition Operations  
Technology Acquisition Center  
260 Industrial Way West  
Eatontown, New Jersey 07724
2. Description of Action: The proposed action is for a firm-fixed-price (FFP) Task Order (TO), issued under the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Solutions for Enterprise-Wide Procurement (SEWP) IV Government Wide Acquisition Contract (GWAC) for the procurement of 25,000 Attachmate Reflection software licenses and software maintenance for 250,000 licenses currently owned by VA, with options to procure an additional 20,000 Attachmate Reflection software licenses and maintenance for 85,000 licenses in the base period and in the three option periods. The initial purchase of the licenses comes with a 12-month maintenance plan. The period of performance for this effort shall consist of one 12-month base period with three 12-month option periods.
3. Description of Supplies or Services: The Attachmate Reflection software provides connections to applications on International Business Machines (IBM), Hewlett-Packard (HP), UNiplexed Information and Computing System (UNIX) and Unisys systems from any web browser or Windows desktop. The Attachmate Reflection software will cover the full spectrum of host access needed in one package. The software allows VA users to standardize the terminal emulator, personal computer, server, and software on a single Windows platform. This software also provides users connections to text-based and graphical applications and safely transfers the files. Desktop sessions can be suspended and resumed, or transferred to another workstation when using Attachmate Reflection software. The Attachmate Reflection software functionality includes strengthened host security and improved user productivity. In addition to providing the latest encryption and authentication technologies, Attachmate Reflection software offers enhanced support for Public Key Infrastructure (PKI). The Attachmate Reflection software includes a crypto module validated against the Federal Information Processing Standard (FIPS) Publication 140-2, which is a U.S. Government computer security standard used to accredit cryptographic modules. This integrated solution will allow secure access for mission critical applications on various systems utilized by VA. These software licenses will provide VA with a standard terminal emulator across the enterprise. Additionally, software maintenance agreements are required to ensure the Attachmate Reflection software remains operational.
4. Statutory Authority: The statutory authority permitting this exception to fair opportunity is Section 41 U.S.C. 4106(c) as implemented by Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) Subpart 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. Use of Authority Cited Above: Based on the market research, as described in paragraph eight of this document, it was determined that limited competition is viable for this brand name item and service. In September 2007, VA chose Attachmate Reflection software as an enterprise solution to protect "Data in transit" for the Host Integration and Emulation Program. This software allows patient medical records and personal identity information to be protected against theft. Additionally, this software also protects Veterans' data by using strong FIPS 140-2 encryption that secures data transmission, and prevents VA data from being transmitted in clear-text, both inside and outside VA. Attachmate Reflection is currently installed on over 335,000 desktops in VA. The VA enterprise is diverse and varies region by region and Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN) by VISN and within the various functional areas. Due to this, the VA enterprise includes many different protocols, host systems and applications including VistA, VistA Mail, Integrated Funds Distribution Control Point Activity Accounting & Procurement, Contractor Performance Assessment Reporting System, and UNIX and Unisys systems. These applications run under host systems from HP, IBM and Honeywell/Bull requiring many different protocols with multiple operating systems including Open Virtual Memory System (VMS), OS390, Windows, Windows 7, Linux and others. Only Attachmate Reflection software can run on all of these applications and meet all of VA's requirements. In addition, end to end encryption is required while supporting the VA smart card and PKI initiative in response to Homeland Security Presidential Directive-12 (HSPD-12). Some sites require Secure Shell (SSH) protocol for file transfer while other sites require Secure Socket Layer (SSL). Additionally, some sites also need a Windows application while others need a web client product. Attachmate Reflection is the only emulation and file transfer software that meets all of these requirements. Attachmate Reflection achieves this by providing a modern three tier security architecture that allows for the vast amount of data in motion to be encrypted and tunneled through either SSH or SSL protocol with either desktop or web clients. Furthermore, Attachmate Reflection is the only brand name software that is deployed on both VA and Mental Health System (MHS) enterprise desktops. Data interoperability between MHS and VA systems is greatly enhanced due to their common desktop which will enable seamless transfer of various Electronic Health Records. Only Attachmate Reflection software can ensure complete interoperability between the MHS and VA systems. Attachmate Reflection has many security options that allow VA departments flexibility to implement their systems. Attachmate Reflection is the only software that gives VA a complete end-to-end security solution that is FIPS 140-2 certified, JITC certified, and supports the many diverse environments that exist at VA. Additionally, only Attachmate resellers can provide the specific maintenance support services by having direct access to this source code, which VA does not own. Any source must have access to this proprietary source code in order to provide the aforementioned maintenance support.

6. Efforts to Obtain Competition: Market research was conducted, details of which are in the market research section of this document. Although the Government is limiting competition as a result of specifying a brand name, there are several authorized

resellers on NASA SEWP IV GWAC. Competition for this requirement among these vendors is anticipated. Additionally, the Request for Quote (RFQ) will be submitted to all four NASA SEWP IV GWAC contract groups in order to fully notify all interested parties. Furthermore, in accordance with FAR 5.301 and 16.505(b)(2)(D)(1)(i), this action will be synopsized at award on the Federal Business Opportunities Page (FBO) and the justification will be made publicly available.

7. Actions to Increase Competition: In order to remove or overcome barriers to competition in the future, the program office will continue to conduct market research on this software application and maintenance to determine if other solutions can be considered for future procurements.

8. Market Research: In January 2012, VA Enterprise Infrastructure Engineering conducted market research to determine if there were viable products from other manufacturers besides Attachmate to meet VA's requirements. Competitors such as SSH Tectia, Clinet/ConnectSecure, PowerTerm, InterConnect, Rational Host on Demand, and SecureCRT were analyzed. Based on this analysis, the Government's technical experts have determined that none of these other software solutions offered can meet all of VA's requirements to include operating on all of the applications VA utilizes and meet all of VA's functional and interoperability requirements as detailed in paragraph five of this document. Some of the software solutions that were evaluated offer a partial solution, for example: emulation only, Windows based only, SSH only or SSL only. However, none of these other products meet all of VA's critical requirements. Specifically, SSH Tectia Clinet/ConnectSecure did not meet VA's requirements for web-based or JITC-certified client connectivity. In addition to those requirements, PowerTerm InterConnect was not able to meet needs for smart card support. None of the computing products, including SecureCRT, were able to demonstrate or be verified as having JITC certification. Additionally, these other items do not have the aforementioned FIPS 140-2 and JITC certification. Based on this market research, the Government's technical experts determined that only Attachmate Reflection software can meet all of VA's requirements.

A Request for Information (RFI) was issued in January 2012 to all NASA SEWP IV GWAC contract holders. One response was received from Merlin International (Veteran-Owned Small Business). A search was performed on the NASA SEWP Product Verification Tool which yielded two additional vendors who offer this software and maintenance, Sword and Shield (Small Business) and ImmixGroup (Large Business). Therefore, limited competition is expected for this proposed action.

9. Other Facts: N/A