

**Cisco Business Critical Enterprise Service Agreement (CBCESA)
Request for Proposal (RFP) 36C10B19R0043
Questions and Answers
September 3, 2019**

Note: The answers provided below are for informational purposes, to assist potential offerors in preparing proposals, and such answers do not themselves constitute an amendment to the RFP. Where questions and answers necessitated such an amendment, such changes have been or will be incorporated into a formal amendment to the RFP. To the extent that any answers provided below conflict in any way with the RFP and any Amendments, the final RFP takes precedence.

#	Reference	Question	Answer
1.	PWS Paragraph 5.1.3.2; CLIN 0001AD; CLIN 0001AE	Cisco provides TAC response times for internal metrics only, which help us improve customer satisfaction and provide our customers a target timeframe objective. They are not considered a Service Level Agreement. Therefore, Cisco cannot agree to the SLA references as stated in the draft or the financial impacts listed, since this is a Firm Fixed Price contract.	Cisco provides several examples of SLAs they support for these services. Below are two examples. VA's requirement is that even as a pass through to a partner we expect a level of service with compatible metrics and credits for not meeting these requirements. https://www.cisco.com/c/dam/en_us/about/doing_business/legal/service_descriptions/docs/cisco-technical-service-advantage.pdf ; https://www.cisco.com/c/dam/en_us/about/doing_business/legal/service_descriptions/docs/Cisco_Business_Critical_Services_General_Terms.pdf
2.	PWS Paragraph 5.1.4.5; CLIN 0001AK	Can the VA specify how often these ad-hoc tiger team meetings are to take place? Is VA expecting a full-time person from a contractor's perspective to ensure participation and to lead these teams? Please define more clearly using SMART goals - Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Reasonable, Timely .	These ad-hoc/tiger teams are intended to support the need for ad-hoc meetings, briefings and task specific tiger teams to meet unique or special operational requirements under this contract. The number and types of meeting will be driven by the specific needs to be met for the topic/requirement. Generally, the Government anticipate these to exist for topic focused efforts that require supplemental Contractor support to the VA. At this time, VA does not expect a full-time person as it is estimated that there will be between 5-10 of these meetings in a PoP.
3.	PWS paragraph 5.3; CLIN 00003	Unfortunately, the Cisco ESA and Flex plan do not provide coverage for Managed CSR 1000V routers and licenses. These licenses are handled on an a la carte basis. Cisco is requesting the VA remove this reference in the PWS, section 5.3.1.	This is a critical VA operational support requirement and will remain in the PWS as they fall well within overall concepts of what the CBCESA is expected to provide. While the underlying CSR 1000V host hardware is required to be covered by SNTC as defined in this PWS this software support service provides the required operational licensing and software to support functions of the device.
4.	PWS paragraph 5.5.5; CLIN 0005AB	Currently, this information is provided quarterly. This requirement seems to request this information be provided monthly. Is this what VA intended?	These are not the same as other Design Strategies listed in this PWS. This requires the Contractor to: Deliver Cisco's support on ad hoc design consultations (estimated at one per quarter) when environmental

			changes, new facilities, or changes in OIT strategies dictate a particular network redesign. There is no monthly requirement listed in this section.
5.	PWS paragraph 5.5.6.; CLIN 0005AC	This report is recommended for removal. There has been no VA sponsor identified to gather the current VA change management processes for all 4 technologies listed in order to perform a baseline analysis.	This report will remain a VA requirement. VA will ensure appropriate resources are allocated to support this task.
6.	PWS paragraph 5.5.7; CLIN 0005AD	Cisco cannot meet a deliverable for PSIRTS of 24 hours. Based on the complexity of the PSIRTS, a minimum of 72 hours and/or best effort can be provided.	VA is not requesting a full report on all PSIRTS generated by Cisco. VA requires initial notification within one business day after Cisco has publicly released any Critical or High PSIRTS that can impact equipment or systems currently in operation by the VA. This serves as an initial notice of the potential issue only and not a solution unless one is available at the time of publication. The wording in this section of the PWS will be updated to better reflect this requirement.
7.	PWS paragraph 5.5.8; CLIN 0005AE	Can the VA clarify how many test cycles they are requesting per year under this CLIN. The current contract only includes one 8-week test cycle per year.	VA estimates approximately 10-15 lab test cycles per PoP.
8.	PWS paragraph 5.5.9.2; CLIN 0005AL	This CLIN is currently fulfilled via QBR updates. VA agreed to change this back in April 2018 via email. Stability Audit removal explanation: Quarterly report as appendix to QBR package (Summary and raw data reports). Document adhoc request as they come up. This information will be included as part of the Hardware/Software/Best Practices Quarterly reports for all Technologies presented at QBR	That was correct under the current contract. The VA requirement is that this update/realignment meeting will now be provided as an independent report under the CBCESA. There are no QBRs in the proposed CBCESA.
9.	PWS paragraph 5.5.10; CLIN 0005AM	The quantity for this CLIN should read "4". Can the VA update to "4 Each"?	See RFP CLIN 0005AM. Will change from 1 LO to 4 Each
10.	PWS paragraph 5.5.11.1; CLIN 0005AP	The quantity for this CLIN should read "1". The PWS description reads 1 ADR per PoP. Quantity should read 1 LO. There is no quarterly requirement.	See RFP CLIN 0005AP. Updating to 1 LO as unit/
11.	PWS paragraph 5.5.13.1; CLIN 0005AV	Need to clarify the requirement for one ADR per site type. The site types below are listed in the PWS. Does this translate to 5 total ADR reports? If so, the quantity needs to be changed to 5 EA. 1. One Enterprise WAN 2. One Enterprise Data Center 3. Two Regional Data Centers	There is one per site type, so the full quantity is 5. See revised RFP/CLINs X005AV.

		4. Two Hospital Data Centers 5. Four Field Sites (Outpatient Clinics)	
12.	PWS paragraph 5.5.13.2; CLIN 0005AX	This CLIN is currently fulfilled via QBR updates. The VA agreed to change this back in April 2018 via email. Stability Audit removal explanation: Quarterly report as appendix to QBR package (Summary and raw data reports). Document adhoc request as they come up. This information will be included as part of the Hardware/Software/Best Practices Quarterly reports for all Technologies presented at QBR	That was correct under the current contract. The VA requirement is that this update/realignment meeting will now be provided as an independent report under the CBCESA. There are no QBRs in the proposed CBCESA.
13.	PWS paragraph 5.5.15.2; CLIN 0005BA	The quantity for this CLIN should read "1". PWS requires 1 stability audit per PoP. Can the VA update to "1 Each"?	CLIN changed to one (1) each PoP.
14.	PWS paragraph 5.5.16; CLIN 0005BB	The quantity for this CLIN should read "4". PWS requires 4 strategy roadmap reports per PoP. Can the VA update to "4 Each"?	CLIN changed to four (4) each PoP.
15.	PWS paragraph 5.5.19.5; CLIN 0005BF	Cisco is not clear on this requirement. VA owns and is responsible for operating the DNA appliances. Cisco can provide knowledge transfers as it relates to this appliance but does not manage or maintain it.	This is a VA requirement and will remain as defined in the PWS. VA requires that the Contractor provide, maintain, and support a limited set of Cisco's management and support applications known as Cisco DNA Appliance(s) up to a maximum of 20 instances and the associated DNA Center Dashboard. The DNA systems are in testing and development and will require additional support to include; technical, configuration, reporting, operational requirements and shall coordinate all updates on these appliances with the COR and designated DNA PM Manager. This will include all required testing elements as defined by VA. This support shall continue during the full PoP or until VA determines a final status of DNA use in the VA environment.
16.	PWS paragraph 5.5.20.1; CLIN 0005BH – 0005BP	The prior contract had these documents listed as "AS Needed". Can the VA considered lumping CLIN 0005BH-BP into one CLIN and change the requirement to "As Needed".	Will change to as needed. Quantities defined in the PWS are only estimated for Contractor planning purposes.
17.	PWS paragraph 5.5.20.2; CLIN 0005BQ	Regarding VA statement- An online tool shall be provided allowing VA to manage and track 24x7, CLCs owned, assigned and redeemed for each user. Please note- we are not aware of a tool that can meet this requirement. It may be something the partner can provide but not something Cisco can provide.	The tool that meets the requirement is the Learning Credits Management Tool. Please reference the Learning Credits Management Tool https://learningcredit.cloudapps.cisco.com/GET/lrncrd/jsp/index.jsp

18.	PWS paragraph 5.5.20.5; CLIN 0005BS	Cisco Modeling Lab is considered a product and not offered under the service agreement. Cisco would not be able to meet this requirement under this agreement and it would need to be ordered and managed separately.	This is a critical operational requirement for VA operations and training. There will be future interconnections between the CML and Cisco Hosted Labs. VA is NOT requesting instances of this product or for management of the assets. VA has provided in the PWS a list of currently owned CML assets and the Contractor will only provide annual term license subscription support and technical support for all VA CML licenses during the base and all option periods.
19.	PWS paragraph 5.5.21.3; CLIN 0005BU	Cisco recommends the quantity for this CLIN be changed to 4 EA.	CLIN X00BU changed to 4 each.
20.	PWS paragraph 5.6.2; CLIN 0006 and 0006AA	Cisco currently has ISO/IEC 27001:2013 certification for data protection but not SOC. Can the VA advise if that is sufficient?	ISO/IEC 27001:2013 is sufficient for general data protection purposes. However, SOC 2 reporting will still be required for Cisco Webex, Webex Teams. This requirement will be updated in the PWS to reflect this.
21.	General	Is this a new task?	No.
22.	PWS paragraph 5.2.1	Metrics for TAC Case Response and Restoration of Service are not at the control of the Contractor.	The contractor will be required to adhere to the SLAs for appropriate accountability for critical services.
23.	PWS paragraph 5.2.2	Will there be a DD-254 or equivalent to document required security clearances?	No, there is a process defined in the PWS 6.2. that defines how contractor staff shall be cleared for VA network access. The Classified Network Services-High Touch Technical Services (CNS-HTTS) is a service and does not require the Contractor to obtain a specific security clearance but provides expedited issue resolution with enhanced data protection for VA assets.
24.	PWS paragraph 5.2.3.1	How can we price undefined Upgrades – These should be cost +.	This is a firm fixed contract, VA is limited to elevating no more than 10% of its current install base to this mission critical support.
25.	PWS paragraph 5.3	How are we to provide the same level of service for services that are provided by Cisco and withdrawn?	The Contractor shall engage Cisco to ensure that the service level is at a minimum equal to the current services.
26.	PWS paragraph 5.4.1	Are all of these services currently in-place or will some of them need to be deployed? Are the deployed services all at the latest current software revision levels or will upgrades be required?	No, the Cisco Collaboration Flex Enterprise Services are not currently in use. Once deployed, VA shall be provided and utilize any upgrade for the currently in use products and applications.
27.	PWS paragraph 5.4.3	What annual growth rates are expected that will impact future costs?	Cisco Collaboration Flex Knowledge Workers (KW) bands are set to reflect pricing for 20% growth.
28.	PWS paragraph 5.5.20.2 – 5.5.20.2-4	The Cisco training and services access can be provided through the contractor but since it will be a pass-through cost it should be identified as an ODC (other dependent cost) that is not included in the pricing proposal.	The only training services that have additional costs are the Cisco Learning Credits that are above the initial base PoP allocation of 5,125 credits. VA will via the CO and COR/TPM request the additional CLCs in lots of 2,000 and shall be invoiced for them at that time. All other learning requirements are Not Separately Priced.

29.	PWS paragraph 5.5.20.3	No one seems to know what this is. Please explain	Here is a link to this service. Cisco Technical Knowledge Library (TKL) description. https://www.cisco.com/c/dam/en_us/training-events/learning_services/courses/docs/tkl-at-a-glance.pdf
30.	General	Installed services - until we get a better understanding of exactly what services are installed, we are stuck assuming support requirements based solely on the user base listed in 5.4.3. Please provide a list of services being utilized.	The PWS as a whole reflects the level and type of services the VA is requesting. NOTE: Services are not installed they are consumed.
31.	General	-VA has 11,107x CP-7925G. Are these being covered by SMARTnet?	Yes, they are covered for RMA hardware replacement purposes only.
32.	General	What is the VA's plan for replacing units that won't be put on extended maintenance?	VA will use the IB reporting and other reports required in the PWS to determine a strategy to replace any End of Life (EOL) devices.
33.	General	How is the VA currently covering hardware that's still deployed that's Last-Date-of-Support?	Support is limited to RMA actions until Cisco replacement stocks are depleted.
34.	General	How is the VA currently covering hardware that's past End-of-Software-Release?	Support is limited to RMA actions until replacement stocks are depleted and the last VA approved software version.
35.	General	How is the VA currently covering hardware that's End-of-Sale	Past End-of-Sale as defined by Cisco the product will remain in the IB and receive all coverage and support until end of support date is reached. The device or system will then receive RMA support until stocks are depleted.
36.	General	Is VA open to extending the life of LDOS hardware that's a logical fit?	This may be considered in performance of the contract.
37.	General	Is the VA currently using any alternative SMARTnet maintenance support on hardware?	No, all devices in the IB are covered by this proposed agreement.
38.	General	Finally, many of these devices still have resale value. Is the VA allowed to sell them once they're removed?	No, devices removed from the VA inventory are disposed of using VA standard logistics process.
39.	PWS paragraph 5.5.21.2; CLIN 1002	“The Contractor shall conduct quarterly inventory reconciliations as defined in paragraph 5.5.21.5 to monitor and manage the IB inventory database,” but the count in the table reflect 12 IB reports on a monthly delivery cadence. Need to clarify because monthly is an extremely difficult level of effort to deliver. Does this also mean the VA intends to pay monthly?	The actual CLIN is 0005BT for the Install Base Report which is delivered quarterly. CLIN 1002 is monthly invoicing for all services exclusive of Collaboration Flex.
40.	PWS paragraph 5.1.2	Typo in line 3, “The JPOM” should be the The JPMO.	See RFP.

41.	PWS paragraph 5.1.2	<p>To what level of detail is needed in the Contractor Staff Support Roster?</p> <p>Current staffing is multiple hundreds. It will be someone's full time job to make sure this roster capture's every organization change within 5 business days. This should be a quarterly offer, or no more than a monthly requirement.</p>	The Contractor Staff Support Roster shall include basic POC information to included name, e-mail, phone numbers and title/position. The only staffing listed should be Contractor staff assigned to support this effort not all Contractor staff. This requirement will remain as defined.
42.	PWS paragraph 5.1.3.1	<p>"Use of electronic deliverables and shared data portals is optional but encouraged." This contradicts previous level of security protocols. All deliverables should be Webex exchange only, unless the Gov't provides a secure portal.</p> <p>Also, no exact delivery date specified for this report.</p>	Use of electronic deliverables is encouraged but not required. The CBCESA Monthly Status Report shall be delivered the last day of the preceding month.
43.	PWS paragraph 5.1.4.3	The QSC location will be announced at least 20 business days prior to the event and will be rotated at locations throughout VA. To aid the government's planning, can we select four dates right now? Then we will negotiate the locations within each quarter. For example, kick off meeting October 10, January 28, May 5, August 4.	The dates and locations for the base year PoP will be established during the Technical Kickoff meeting.
44.	PWS paragraph 5.1.4.4	Will this replace, supplement, or be combined with the QSC? Can the Slide Deck be considered as PMR minutes? This deliverable language is different from 5.1.4.3.	This is a separate meeting and is not combined with the QSC. Slides can be attached to any meeting minutes.
45.	PWS paragraph 5.2.3	Gray Market Goods found because VA does not mandate procurement through Gold partners. We should recommend this to protect the VA.	This is a VA technical requirement independent of the status of the vendor.
46.	PWS paragraph 5.2.3	<p>VA needs to be responsible for delivering this report. Last one the VA provided was in 2015/2016.</p> <p>The word "generally" needs to be removed from line 3. Also "VA may designate an alternative means to target these to facilitate operations." Too vague and will allow the VA to leave this responsibility up to the Contractor, which we cannot honor.</p>	Yes, VA will utilize the last published mission critical list to refine these for future updates. The language is sufficient to meet VA needs at this time. Recommendations for refinement language is acceptable for future consideration.
47.	PWS paragraph 5.2.3	Unable to guarantee this "The Contractor shall make all updates to this list requested by VA within 48	This is not a request for a physical report. The Contractor is only required to process the requested update to the Mission Critical Device

		hours of a formal request.” Because of the turnaround time needed for this report. ETA should be 5 business days.	listing and update Cisco’s status in 48 hours of receipt of a VA request. The Mission Critical Device Listing is still only required on a semi-annual basis.
48.	PWS paragraph 5.2.6	Requirement of G. (Any new portals or features developed over the life of this contract.) seems to contradict SUPPORT EXCLUSIONS 5.3.2.A (a. All future Cisco acquisitions of products and services unless mutually agreed to by the Parties and incorporated into the IB.)	Section G is related to tools and software support (portals, test tools, etc.) not new products that Cisco may acquire.
49.	PWS paragraph 5.5.6	Should this be incorporated into the Quarterly Meetings, since this will overlap, or will this be a separate meeting?	No. It will remain a separate report.
50.	PWS paragraphs 5.5.9.1 & 5.5.9.2	Count of deliverable should be one, not four. Previously, there was never the VA sponsorship to begin this on a timely basis, and the count was reduced to in MOD)006.	Correct for the current contract, however the VA is committed to supporting these under the CBCESA.
51.	PWS paragraph 5.5.20.1	Count for Deliverables A-H is not sustainable. Estimated at 10 per quarter, is double the current contract and was reduced in MOD0006 to an As Needed basis.	See response to question 16 above.
52.	PWS paragraph 5.5.21.5	Is the VA giving us visibility into all other contracts containing Cisco gear? Seems so based on this statement “The Contractor may coordinate collection of all VA awarded contracts that contain Cisco systems and applications with the assigned asset manager for inclusion in the IB to facilitate capture of these at the earliest opportunity.”	The Contractor can have visibility to all VA awarded contracts that include Cisco products and applications (with redacted costs) for inventory capture only.
53.	PWS paragraph 5.5.21.5	How will Acts of God, terrorism, war, political insurgence, insurrection, riot, civil unrest, act of civil or military authority, uprising, earthquake, flood, fire or any other natural or manmade disaster outside of VA’s control be reported or defined? Otherwise we may end up in litigation to honor this statement – “Cisco software or hardware inventory which has been declared lost due to an event beyond the control of VA as described in 5.5.21.5 shall be removed from the IB inventory.”	At the time of any event, circumstances will dictate whether the event rises to those items deemed outside of VA’s control as listed in PWS paragraph 5.5.21.5.

54.	Volume III Solicitation Offer Reps and Certs. Pg. 166	Please clarify whether it is desired or acceptable to include a cover page, table of contents, list of figures and related front matter in Volume III documents (both OfrRep.pdf and SBSP.pdf) (as well as Volume I, Technical).	Any Cover Page, Table of Contents, and/or a glossary of abbreviations or acronyms will not be included in the page count of the Technical Volume. However, be advised that any and all information contained within any Table of Contents and/or glossary of abbreviations or acronyms submitted with an Offeror's proposal will not be evaluated by the Government.
55.	Volume III. Pg. 167, item 3	Please confirm that proposed terms and conditions or assumptions should be included with the Volume III response labeled OfrRep.pdf. If not, please provide instructions for where to provide this response.	Per RFP Section E.10(2)©(iii), Volume III includes any proposed terms and conditions and/or assumptions upon which the proposal is predicated. However, please be advised that any Offeror imposed terms and conditions and/or assumption which deviate from the Government's material terms and conditions established by the Solicitation may render the Offeror's proposal Unacceptable, and thus ineligible for award.
56.	PWS paragraph 5.4.2	Our suggestion is to remove CALL RECORDING and STANDARD CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP CONNECTORS (CRM) from the requirement, as these are part of CJP and not the Federal Flex Offering.	This is standard Cisco language for this product.
57.	PWS paragraph 5.4.3	<p>Please clarify the following language in the section as some of the statements are not completely accurate.</p> <p>RECOMMENDED Language: Flex Service includes on-premises licensing and software delivery via the existing VA Cisco hosted Smart Net Licensing Portal for all features inclusive of this service as an add-on element under the License Registration Portal (LRP) Tool for Flex Calling. The License Registration Portal Tool for these services shall be active and available no later than 30 business days after award. Software for telepresence devices will include TMS for license management.</p>	See RFP.
58.	PWS paragraph 5.4; CLIN 0004	There are three individual buying models for Flex: Calling, Meetings, and Contact Center. Calling is the only one of the three where the banded pricing would be applicable. Both Meetings and Contact Center would be charged on growth based on the amount of additional licenses required. (Contractor) and Cisco can provide a price per license on the Meetings and Contact Center.	Ok, note that active meeting hosts are defined as 10% of the total KW count and will grow at the same rate.