

JUSTIFICATION AND APPROVAL
FOR AN EXCEPTION TO FAIR OPPORTUNITY

1. Contracting Activity: Department of Veterans Affairs
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) Delivery Order (DO) issued under the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Solution for Enterprise-Wide Procurement (SEWP) IV Government Wide Acquisition Contract (GWAC) for the procurement of 250 brand name Symantec Protection Suite Enterprise Edition 4.0 software product licenses in support of the Veterans Benefits Management System (VBMS).
3. Description of Supplies or Services: The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) requires the Symantec Protection Suite Enterprise Edition 4.0 licenses to support the VBMS production environment. The VBMS Corporate System is a mission critical application, which is sponsored by Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) and supports the following business lines: Compensation, Pension and Fiduciary Services. The system is maintained by the Office of Information & Technology (OIT). Symantec Protection Suite Enterprise Edition is powered with Symantec Insight. Procurement of the suite licenses shall include one year of maintenance and three option years to include access to upgrades related to scan, analysis and reporting engines. The total estimated value of the proposed action inclusive of options is [REDACTED]
4. Statutory Authority: The statutory authority permitting other than full and open competition is 41 U.S.C. 4106(c) as implemented by the 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 of highly specialized."
5. Rationale Supporting Use of Authority Cited Above:
VBMS requires Symantec Protection Suite and support to keep the system operational and to protect VBMS's networks against cyber-attacks. VBMS is currently working on a project in collaboration with the Department of Defense (DoD). The current collaboration project requires the procurement of Symantec Antivirus software. The current project architecture is configured using the Symantec product and was tested over 2 years ago prior to the production system going live.

Symantec is the only known and tested software product that successfully meets the architectural and application requirements for the program. Testing of another product cannot be performed in a live production environment. To test another product, VA would have to bring the current environment down, which is

unacceptable to VA as it would delay the processing of Veterans benefits. If VA introduced untested software into the system, it could cause unexpected problems with the application thus delaying processing of Veterans benefits.

Although there are numerous antivirus software tools that exist on the market, in order to maintain application development and production continuity, Symantec must be used, as it is the only software that has been configured and used in the production system. Most importantly, it is the only software that has been tested to provide the level of protection and service for the size, diversity and volume (terabytes) of data being processed by DoD on a daily basis.

For the VBMS application to utilize other security tools, such as McAfee Host Based Security Suite, it would be necessary to conduct detailed configuration audits of every software build to identify conflicts between the Security Suite automated global policies and the required host connectivity associated with that build. These audits may need to identify specific Web Services Description Languages (WSDLs), Firewall Policies, and Port Settings that impact both the VBMS Application and the VBMS Infrastructure. This would be an increase in the amount of configuration and change management currently being performed by VA. Introducing another product would require a reconfiguration of the system. This would cause a coverage gap as the live production environment would be without the security service during the reconfiguration. VBMS would be unable to effectively monitor its systems during the gap. This would increase the risk to VA to an unacceptable level as it would cause a delay or complete halt of Veterans' claims processing.

6. Efforts to Obtain Competition: Market research was conducted, details of which are in the market research section of this document. Based on this research, it was determined that limited competition is anticipated for the brand name item. In accordance with FAR 5.301 and 16.505(b)(2), this action will be synopsized on the Federal Business Opportunities Page upon award and the justification will be made publicly available.

7. Actions to Increase Competition: Although the Government is limiting competition as a result of specifying a brand name, there are authorized resellers of these products on the NASA SEWP IV contract. Competition for this requirement among these vendors is anticipated. Furthermore, in order to remove barrier to competition for future acquisitions, the agency will work with the program office to perform additional market research to consider alternate software solutions.

8. Market Research:


Between Aug, 2012 and October 2012 the technical team attempted to install McAfee Host Based Security Suite and conducted integration testing. The McAfee Antivirus Software could not establish effective communication with the VA Enterprise McAfee Policy Orchestrator (ePO) servers. This created management and performance issues with the McAfee Host Based Security Suite, and the

integration test resulted in disabling the product thus indicting the inoperability of the McAfee Host Based Security Suite with the projects system architecture. As the Security Suite is not compatible with VA's system, it is not a valid alternative to the Symantec Protection Suite Enterprise Edition 4.0 licenses

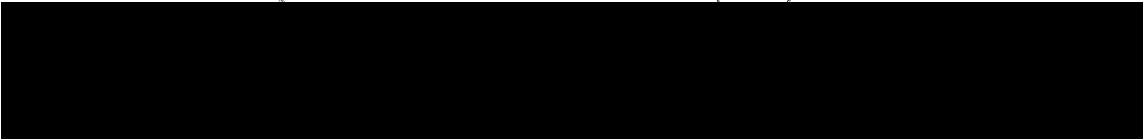
Further Market Research was conducted on January 14, 2012 utilizing the NASA SEWP IV Product Verification and Manufacturer Lookup tool and it was determined that there are thirty-seven (37) vendors offering Symantec software maintenance product lines. As a result, the research determined there is adequate competition among the resellers. Per the terms of the NASA SEWP IV contract, requirements for brand name specific equipment should be solicited to all five contract groups (A, B, C, D and E) in order to fully notify all interested parties. However, since there is adequate competition among Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Businesses, quotes will only be accepted from Groups B.

9. Other Facts: N/A

10. Technical and Requirements Certification: I certify that the supporting data under my cognizance, which are included in this justification, are accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief.



11. Fair and Reasonable Cost Determination: I hereby determine that the anticipated price to the Government for this contract action will be fair and reasonable. Prices under the NASA SEWP IV contracts have already been determined to be fair and reasonable. In addition, further price competition is anticipated amongst the vendors on NASA SEWP. The successful quote will also be compared to the independent Government cost estimate.



12. Procuring Contracting Officer Certification: I certify that this justification is accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief. As this contract action does not exceed \$650,000, the certification below required by FAR 16.505(b)(2)(ii)(C)(1) serves as approval.

