

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, NJ 07724
2. Description of Action: This proposed action is for a Firm Fixed-Price Delivery Order (DO) issued under a National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Solutions for Enterprise-Wide Procurement (SEWP) IV Government-Wide Acquisition Contract (GWAC) for brand name Vocera Hands-Free Wireless Communication Call System. Installation and training services are also required. The System is required to be installed at the West Roxbury VA Medical Center (VAMC) in West Roxbury, MA, part of the Boston Healthcare System. Delivery of the equipment shall be 30 days after receipt of order. The period of performance for the installation and training services is six months upon notification by the technical point of contact at the West Roxbury VAMC that the site is ready for installation.
3. Description of the Supplies or Services: VA requires an expansion to an existing Vocera system currently in use at the West Roxbury VAMC. The Vocera system will provide a reliable mobile hands-free communication system for VAMC clinicians. This procurement will include a survey of the existing Vocera system and Boston Healthcare System's network infrastructure as well as Vocera-specific network implementation services, hardware, software, and licenses to utilize the proprietary voice recognition application, installation, training, and warranty and maintenance support services to ensure that the Vocera system remains fully operational. This acquisition will include hands-free Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP) enabled communication badges for use by clinicians and will expand use of the Vocera Hands-Free Wireless Communication Call System throughout the West Roxbury VA MC. The total estimated value of this proposed action is [REDACTED]
4. Statutory Authority: The statutory authority permitting an exception to fair opportunity is Section 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 or highly specialized."
5. Rationale Supporting Use of Authority Cited Above: This is a brand name justification in support of FAR 11.105, Items Peculiar to One Manufacturer. Based on market research, as described in paragraph 8 below, it has been determined that limited competition is viable among authorized resellers for this brand name item and services. The aforementioned Vocera System is the only system that can meet Boston Healthcare System's requirement for expansion of the nurse call system at the West Roxbury campus and provide the requisite interoperability and compatibility with the existing Vocera system. The existing Vocera system is being expanded to service the

entire West Roxbury campus; as such, the same Vocera system must be installed throughout the entire campus so that critical communication sessions among clinicians are active within the same network infrastructure. Use of a non-Vocera communication system will introduce a disparity between communication devices and unnecessary risk that could negatively impact critical communication sessions between clinicians. For instance, when one nurse uses a Vocera badge's voice recognition feature to make an urgent call to another hospital employee who is using a Non-Vocera communication device, he/she will not be in the Vocera database so the call will not be established and valuable time will be wasted in attempting to reconcile the call.

Ultimately, if a brand name other than Vocera was used, the different systems would not be able to communicate with each other. Each brand uses different proprietary software which renders communication between different brand name communication call systems impossible. Use of any other brand would also require additional, extensive training of employees who already possess the requisite technical knowledge of the existing Vocera system, resulting in extensive delays in provision of clinical services and duplication of cost.

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 authorized resellers for this brand name item and services. In accordance with FAR 5.301 and 16.505(b)(2), this action will be synopsisized at award on the Federal Business Opportunities Page (FBO) and the justification will be made publicly available.

7. Actions to Increase Competition: The Government will continue to conduct market research to ascertain if there are changes in the marketplace that would enable future actions to be competed.

8. Market Research: In March of 2013, the Government's technical experts conducted market research by reviewing other similar software, specifically Ascom, Cisco, and Nextel. Based on the Government's technical experts' review of these companies other brand name items, it was determined that none of the other brand name items are able to work as an integrated solution with the existing Vocera system. The other brand name items require integration of multiple, distinct products and interfaces. Since the clinical call system at the West Roxbury campus must communicate with the proposed expanded system, a brand name Vocera system is required for existing clinical call system interoperability and compatibility. Based on this market research, it was determined that the Vocera system is the only brand name system that can meet all of the Government's requirements. Additional market research was conducting by utilizing the Manufacturer Lookup Tool on the NASA SEWP IV website on February 27, 2013. This search resulted in three resellers of Vocera Communications' products including Alvarez & Associates (Group B Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business(SDVOB) Value Added Reseller (VAR)), GC Micro (Group C Small Business VAR), and Sword and Shield (Group C Small Business VAR). Market research was

also conducted on the General Services Administration (GSA) Federal Supply Schedules, specifically Schedule 70 (General Purpose Information Technology, Equipment, Software, and Services), by searching GSA Advantage, the online shopping and ordering system for supplies and services for the required Vocera system hardware and software. Search results indicated only one reseller of the required Vocera system hardware and software.

9. Other Facts: None.