

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FROM THE 13-14 JUNE 2012 TSIS CONFERENCE

- 1) I have heard an acquisition leader say “award without discussion is nirvana” Please provide your thoughts, Do you agree? Risk associated with award without discussions?

(Answer :) Especially with procurements valued in excess of \$100 M, DOD strongly encourages discussions. However for this process to prove effective there must be something of significance to discuss. Otherwise we would run the risk of misleading our industry partners for the sake of merely complying with DOD desires. If, in fact, an awardable proposal exists after evaluation of initial offers, the source selection authority may select a successful proposal based upon initial offers.

- 2) Any thoughts on NAWCTSD joining in with PEOSTRI and briefings updates at the Procurement Acquisition Lead Time (PELT) meetings?

(Answer :) Conversations have occurred with the PEOSTRI principal assistant responsible for contracting to understand their process for potential portability and tailoring to NAWCTSD. As a result the NAWCTSD Executive Leadership Team is in the process of optimizing a course of action that we believe will best suit the information needs and desires of our Navy suppliers.

- 3) You stated that you want to communicate with industry but most don't to avoid perception of unfair advantage. How do we fix this? Stating you want to communicate but industry does not see it.
4) Communications with industry. Great idea! However the program managers, contract specialists and engineers do not adhere to the party line.

(Answer :) We will emphasize that you need to inform us when met with any resistance to communicate. Furthermore, it is recommended you do so immediately so we may investigate so as to determine whether there is a legitimate reason why you are being met with resistance or whether we need to reinforce to particular IPT members the benefits of early and often exchanges with industry.

- 5) When proposals are submitted they must be received by you by a certain date and time. This means that is the proposal is due on a Monday at 2pm, for example, we must FedEx it Thursday before so if FedEx loses it or it is delayed we can fly down over the weekend and hand deliver a backup on Monday AM. This has actually happened to us. Can the “system” be changed to allow is to show a FedEx receipt that it was sent on time to be delivered on time, assuming no extraordinary problems with FedEx?

(Answer :) FAR 52.215-1 "Instructions to Offerors-Competitive Acquisition" asserts the following....

- (3) Submission, modification, revision, and withdrawal of proposals.

(i) Offerors are responsible for submitting proposals, and any modifications or revisions, so as to reach the Government office designated in the solicitation by the time specified in the solicitation. If no time is specified in the solicitation, the time for receipt is 4:30 p.m., local time, for the designated Government office on the date that proposal or revision is due.

(ii)(A) Any proposal, modification, or revision received at the Government office designated in the solicitation after the exact time specified for receipt of offers is "late" and will not be considered unless it is received before award is made, the Contracting Officer determines that accepting the late offer would not unduly delay the acquisition; and-

(1) If it was transmitted through an electronic commerce method authorized by the solicitation, it was received at the initial point of entry to the Government infrastructure not later than 5:00 p.m. one working day prior to the date specified for receipt of proposals; or

(2) There is acceptable evidence to establish that it was received at the Government installation designated for receipt of offers and was under the Government's control prior to the time set for receipt of offers; or

(3) It is the only proposal received.

(B) However, a late modification of an otherwise successful proposal that makes its terms more favorable to the Government, will be considered at any time it is received and may be accepted.

(iii) Acceptable evidence to establish the time of receipt at the Government installation includes the time/date stamp of that installation on the proposal wrapper, other documentary evidence of receipt maintained by the installation, or oral testimony or statements of Government personnel.

(iv) If an emergency or unanticipated event interrupts normal Government processes so that proposals cannot be received at the office designated for receipt of proposals by the exact time specified in the solicitation, and urgent Government requirements preclude amendment of the solicitation, the time specified for receipt of proposals will be deemed to be extended to the same time of day specified in the solicitation on the first work day on which normal Government processes resume..

6) Can you provide any information on the training and simulation opportunities coming up related to the F-35 program?

(Answer :) While the NAVY is an integral part of the F-35 team, specific programmatic information should be provided directly from the JSF JPO.

7) Regarding CACT program –

a. Is there an issue with Navy buying instruction?

(Answer :) No. However, the IPT must work within existing guidance and policy instructions.

b. How is the funding structured?

(Answer :) OMN dollars (yearly appropriation) will be used to procurement services as needed to meet to CNATRA training requirements (similar to the existing TC-12 program).

c. Are there any related GAO issues?

(Answer :) No – We are not “buying” nor taking delivery of the simulators funded with OMN. In addition, the T-44C is a derivative of a commercial aircraft and the past GAO issues with the paying for “availability for devices that are underutilized” is not an issue when buying actual classes.

8) What are the plans regarding the F-18 SAMT acquisition?

(Answer :) The FA-18 SAMT Upgrade is planned to be a TSC III Small Business Set Aside.

9) Is AH12 FTD Lot 4 trainer strategy to procure through TSC III or Open?

(Answer :) When we create plans, we want maximum effective competition. This is a key element in the planning of our multiple award MACs. However, for this specific program, the Lot 3 prime is BHTI. If we restrict Lot 4 to TSC III awardees, the existing prime would not be able to compete for this specific follow-on contract. We could choose to use TSC III after replies from the specific Sources Sought Notice are received and evaluated.

10) Why is MCAT TSC Lot 1 (LB) by using Sources Sought Notice process first?

(Answer :) TSIS information is based on preliminary planning prior to the detailed procurement planning and strategy approvals. Given MCAT is a new requirement valued at approximately \$80M, the programmatic risk may be too high for set aside. From a process viewpoint, a sources sought will be issued for this program and if two or more small business express interest then the risks and benefits of using different TSC Lots will be decided. Final procurement strategy decisions are based on requirements, risk assessments, and market research to arrive at the most advantage plan to the Government.

11) Why is the Emerging Technology opportunity restricted to 8A offerors?

(Answer :) The initial pilot with an 8A is for a small in-house NAWCTSD effort to examine methodologies on how we provide training to our workforce. We will be looking to open up the acquisition strategy in FY13 as additional requirements come in.

12) Regarding Intelligent Tutor, would you describe the linkage between this NAWCTSD project and the ongoing ONR & DARPA ITS related programs?

(Answer :) Our Engineering group is working on an Information Technology Digital Tutor (IT/DT) project for the Center for Information Dominance. NAWCTSD is the Command responsible for transitioning the multi-million dollar DARPA project from an R&D effort into a production-ready Course of Instruction (COI).

In addition, we have many linkages between ONR ITS programs and NAWCTSD for example, we are partnered with ONR to conduct and/or manage ITS-related research, at all levels over the past 15 years. One of the cornerstone ITS projects BEETLE II, is a collaborative project between NAWCTSD researchers and computational linguists at the University of Edinburgh. Additionally, one of the major ONR Future Naval Capability Enabling Capabilities, an intelligent, adaptive training system for submarine piloting teams, is being developed at NAWCTSD.

13) Why isn't the Intelligent Tutor procurement under NTPS? Industry invests many dollars to win MAC awards and this would be a large task order that would increase the value of the MAC to the awardees.

(Answer :) Not sure what is meant by "NTPS", but if the question is "Why isn't this procurement under one of the Multiple Award Contracts?", the answer is that the requirements for this acquisition are yet to be defined/refined and this initial procurement will be under the Research and Development umbrella.

14) I noticed that there was not any Hubzone set aside listed. Is this requirement already satisfied and therefore not pursued?

15) Are the department's goals for small business being applied so as to keep risk of performance issues as low as appropriate for the war fighter program?

16) It seems recent emphasis on small business goals could outweigh technical feasibility to satisfy requirements. What is your thought on this statement and your approach to assessing small business technical feasibility?

(Answer :) Reference is made to FAR Part 19, DFARS Part 219 and NMCARS Part 5219.

17) What programs and opportunities you have in Latin America (Peace keeping)?

(Answer :) Uruguay – GPOI- ~ \$1.5M. A couple of other countries are being worked with Southcom and DSCA.

18) Is the government considering using a TSC III delivery order to meet MRTS requirements – vice a standalone IQC? Who is the incumbent contractor?

(Answer :) We considered using TSC III, but most MRTS requirements are small software simulations that are integrally related to each other, and would not lend themselves to being competed each time we receive a new requirement. Because each requirement is related, we believe a single award IDIQ is the best approach. The incumbent is Kaegan (under the Seaport contract) with JHT as a subcontractor. JHT also provides the space for a government lab.

19) Can a large business be involved in an STTR prior to Phase 3?

(Answer :) The small business must perform a minimum of 40 percent of the work and the research institution a minimum of 30 percent of the work in both Phase I and Phase II (Reference: <http://www.acq.osd.mil/osbp/sbir/sb/eligibility.shtml>). This potentially leaves 30% that could be performed by a large business. There are no limits or minimums on the performers in Phase 3.

A very useful fact sheet on both the SBIR & STTR programs can be found at this URL:
http://www.acq.osd.mil/osbp/sbir/sb/resources/SBIR_Fact_Sheet_Small_Business.pdf

20) What is the Navy sequestration strategy for training systems that are under contract or in the RFP process? Would sequestration provide more or fewer training and simulation opportunities?

(Answer :) At this point in time NAWCTSD will continue to execute IAW with the approved budget and spending plans until otherwise needed to accommodate budget cuts related to the pending sequestration. We expect that budget reductions affecting specifically combat systems operations will increase the need to replace some training time from the actual combat systems to simulation based systems (Flight training hours to Simulator training hours) but again, it will be naive to expect zero impact to our budget as well. One thing is certain and that is that we will have to become more efficient with our processes and the way we do business. It is also expected that contract performance assessments, program metrics, and the increase use of fixed price contracts are all terms and strategies that will become part of the common vernacular for both industry and government alike.