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11 Laurier St. / 11, rue Laurier
Place du Portage , Phase III
Core 0A1 / Noyau 0A1
Gatineau, Québec K1A 0S5
Bid Fax: (819) 997-9776

SOLICITATION AMENDMENT
MODIFICATION DE L'INVITATION

The referenced document is hereby revised; unless otherwise indicated, all other terms and conditions of the Solicitation remain the same.

Ce document est par la présente révisé; sauf indication contraire, les modalités de l'invitation demeurent les mêmes.

Comments - Commentaires

Title - Sujet LCSS Cable Assemblies	
Solicitation No. - N° de l'invitation W8476-134421/A	**Amendment No. - N° modif.** 007
Client Reference No. - N° de référence du client W8476-134421	**Date** 2013-11-29
GETS Reference No. - N° de référence de SEAG PW-$$QD-025-24074	
File No. - N° de dossier 025qd.W8476-134421	**CCC No./N° CCC - FMS No./N° VME**
Solicitation Closes - L'invitation prend fin **at - à 02:00 PM** **on - le 2013-12-11**	**Time Zone** **Fuseau horaire** Eastern Standard Time EST
F.O.B. - F.A.B. **Plant-Usine:** ☐ **Destination:** ☑ **Other-Autre:** ☐	
Address Enquiries to: - Adresser toutes questions à: Dewar, Francine	**Buyer Id - Id de l'acheteur** 025qd
Telephone No. - N° de téléphone (819) 956-5974 ( )	**FAX No. - N° de FAX** (819) 956-6907
Destination - of Goods, Services, and Construction: **Destination - des biens, services et construction:**	

Vendor/Firm Name and Address
Raison sociale et adresse du fournisseur/de l'entrepreneur

Instructions: See Herein

Instructions: Voir aux présentes

Delivery Required - Livraison exigée	**Delivery Offered - Livraison proposée**

Vendor/Firm Name and Address
Raison sociale et adresse du fournisseur/de l'entrepreneur

Telephone No. - N° de téléphone
Facsimile No. - N° de télécopieur

Name and title of person authorized to sign on behalf of Vendor/Firm (type or print)
Nom et titre de la personne autorisée à signer au nom du fournisseur/ de l'entrepreneur (taper ou écrire en caractères d'imprimerie)

Signature **Date**

Issuing Office - Bureau de distribution
Defence Communications Division. (QD)
11 Laurier St./11, rue Laurier
Place du Portage, Phase III, 8C2
Gatineau, Québec K1A 0S5

Canada

This RFP Amendment No. 007 is raised to:

1. Make administrative changes; and
2. Address further questions from bidders.

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1. Administrative changes:

Correction - typographical error:
At RFP Amdt #006 - Item 1. Q&A set: Answer to Question #30 was listed as "A.29" in error. Please ink amend to read "**A.30**". There is no change to the text.

2. Bidders' Questions and Answers Set (Questions #31 to 38 inclusive)

Q.31: We have products specified for use on this project which are reflected on some of the drawings. As no one has approached us for a quotation on these parts, would that render their submissions all non-compliant?

A.31: Submissions that meet all of the requirement of the RFP will be considered compliant. Preparation and content of the proposal are the responsibility of the bidder.

Q.32: Some of the product specified for use on these assemblies are sole source and as a result, we have no other option for supply. If some suppliers elect to price support some companies over others, will the Crown consider this to be 'price fixing' and as a result, disqualify those submissions or even those suppliers/manufacturers?

A.32: Canada does not enter into price negotiations for component parts on behalf of bidders. As stated at A.31, preparation and content of the proposal are the responsibility of the bidder. All bidders are responsible for adhering to the provisions of the Code of Conduct, which is a mandatory element of this RFP.
Reference: Section 01, Form 2003, *Standard Instructions - Goods or Services - Competitive Requirements* version 2013-06-01 per RFP Part 2 - Bidder Instructions, Section 1; and RFP Part 5, Section 1.1.

Q.33: At Amendment 005 which was issued against this solicitation, you are asking for an excel spreadsheet with the submission. Will the electronic copy of this spreadsheet be provided to us?

A.33: The requirement for an excel spreadsheet was indicated in the original RFP. Bidders are responsible to prepare and provide the requested documentation.

Q.34: The Canadian Content Certification states that a minimum of 80% of the total bid price must consist of Canadian goods. All of our cable assemblies will be manufactured in Canada but the majority of the parts and material required to manufacture these cable assemblies, are of US origin. We are limited, on the purchase of these parts, to the manufacturer specified on the TDP, which for the most part are in the US or abroad. If these parts are purchased from the manufacturer's Canadian distributor, can they then be

considered Canadian content?

A.34: Per RFP, PART 5, sections 2.2.1 and 2.2.2 : please refer to Annex 3.6(9) example 2 of the Supply Manual, and to SACC Manual Clause A3050T Canadian Content Definition.

Q.35: The validity of the following stated requirements for LCSS Cable Assemblies are concerning, specifically the BER requirements of Annex A, para. 3.5 sub-paragraphs "a" and "b" (page 10 and 11 of 20).

Section a. is for an Ethernet cable, with stated BER of 10^-10 over a 2 minute data collection period. By our calculations the stated rate would cause an average of 1 error every 2 minutes. Statistically we think this is probably too short a period to really prove we are meeting the requirement, and likely there will be failures just due to random chance even though the cables are actually serviceable.

A.35: The IPC/WHMA-A-620B tests required do not take into account many factors that affect communication with more complex electrical waveforms associated with digital communication (e.g. IEEE 802.3 series standards). There are many purpose-built tests that can be used for this purpose. Related to IEEE 802.3, this would include Near End Cross Talk (NEXT), cable return loss, and cable insertion loss testing, to mention a few. However, the purpose-built tests are excessive to the requirement and require complex test setups and procedures that would overly burden the manufacturing process. The same concept is true for serial and USB cable testing.

In lieu of these purpose-built tests, a simpler signal continuity approach has been mandated. This approach balances the need for more advanced testing than the IPC/WHMA-A-620B tests, while minimizing the test overhead to facilitate the manufacture process. Essentially, each sampled cable is used to transfer the target signal for a specified period or fixed file size. If the signal is clean, the cable conforms to the requirement. Conceptually, it could be viewed as continuity testing, but with the target signal. To avoid situations where random, very low probability, errors are introduced into the test, instead of specifying zero errors for the test duration, the minimum error rate has been relaxed. Specifically, for the aim was to allow for 1 random error during the test period. For the Ethernet test, the error rate allows 1.2 errored bits during the test duration. The Serial test figure is incorrect and is adjusted to allow for the same random error rate (i.e. A BER of 1 * 10-7). The USB test procedure, using a file transfer approach remains unchanged.

Q.35 i) Can Canada confirm that the BER requirements of Annex A, para. 3.5 sub-paragraphs "a" and "b" still stand as the test requirement?

A.35 i) Yes with the adjustment as noted in Response 36 and 36 iii).

Q.35 ii) The requirement says to test all pairs simultaneously. An E-net cable actually has 4 pairs, though normally only two are used. Does Canada want all 4 pairs tested or just the normal 2 pairs (in full duplex)?

A.35 ii) All 4 pairs are to be tested simultaneously.

Q.35 iii) Section b. Serial RS-232C

The stated BER is 10^-12, the throughput is only 115.2kHz, and the collection period is 2 mins. By our calculations it would take continuous data collection for 100 days to get an average of 1 bit error and probably would need 5x as long to get a statistical sample. Can Canada confirm that the Serial Test as described in 3.5 b) still stands as being the Test Requirement?

A.35 iii): The test requirement stands, except the BER in section 3 b) iv) is changed to read:

" iv. If the measured BER is >= 1 * 10-7, the cable is considered Nonconforming."

Q.36: What will the expected contract award date be as a result of the revised response due date? (reference Solicitation Part 1- General Information, Period of Performance).

A.36: Contracts will be awarded as soon as possible after Bid Closing, following the Evaluation Procedures described at Part 4 of the RFP.

Q.37: What information is required in the "Delivery" column at Annex B, Table B-3 and is "Delivery" related to the cable assembly transportation cost or lead time?

A.37: In the "Delivery" column of the worksheet (table B-3), Bidders acknowledge the delivery terms indicated in the Delivery Schedule Table A1-1 of Appendix A1 of Annex A, which will form part of any resulting contract.

Q.38: With regard to Amendment 005 to the solicitation, it appears that the new methodology being utilized for evaluation and basis of selection is particularly favourable to the OEM manufacturers as specified within the technical package, especially in light of the fact that industry approved equivalents are still being excluded from use. The Cable family grouping approach does not fairly provide for a competitive solution and unwillingly incorporates a barrier to SMEs to compete fairly.
We request that an opportunity to discuss in person this solicitation further and the process be put on hold pending further review.

A.38: The methodology for evaluation and basis of selection has not changed. The same methodology that was to be used in a single contract prior to RFP Amendment no. 005 will now be applied to all contracts. The requirement is a "build-to-print". This has not changed from initial posting and will not change.
There will be no further response to bidders requesting changes to the TDP, or the requirement. Canada will not enter into voice communications or discussions with any supplier on this requirement nor will the RFP be placed on hold.

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ATTACHMENTS: None.

ALL OTHER TERMS AND CONDITIONS REMAIN UNCHANGED.