



Procurement Hub – Fredericton
301 Bishop Drive
Fredericton, NB E3C 2M6

April 16, 2021

F5211-200766

ADVANCED CONTRACT AWARD NOTICE

TITLE: Response to Dead Marine Animals in DFO Gulf and Maritimes Regions

INTRODUCTION:

The purpose of this Advance Contract Award Notice (ACAN) is to signal the government's intention to award a standing offer for these services to the University of Prince Edward Island's Atlantic Veterinary College, and the Canadian Wildlife Health Cooperative Atlantic Regional Centre, located at 550 University Ave., Charlottetown, PEI, C1A 4P3. Before awarding a standing offer, however, the government would like to provide other suppliers with the opportunity to demonstrate that they are capable of satisfying the requirements set out in this Notice, by submitting a statement of capabilities during the ACAN posting period.

If other potential suppliers submit a statement of capabilities during this ACAN posting period that meets the requirements set out in the ACAN, the government will proceed to a full tendering process on either GETS or through traditional means, in order to award the standing offer.

If no other supplier submits, on or before the closing date, a statement of capabilities meeting the requirements set out in the ACAN, a standing offer will be awarded to the pre-selected supplier.

The aim is to ensure the safe examination and/or necropsy of whales or small cetaceans, or other marine animals, when deemed safe to do so, thus providing scientific information on marine species, with an emphasis on species currently listed under the *Species at Risk Act (SARA)*, and informing mitigation measures for the protection of marine species. This project is also an opportunity to collect data safely, that may contribute to scientific studies to improve our understanding of these species.

OBJECTIVE

The purpose of the Response to Dead Marine Animals in DFO Gulf and Maritimes Regions is to support veterinary services for marine animals when the need arises.

BACKGROUND, ASSUMPTIONS AND SPECIFIC SCOPE OF THE REQUIREMENT

History of Participation in Marine Animal Response

The Atlantic Veterinary College at the University of Prince Edward Island was established in 1986. The College is committed to improving the health and well-being of animals and humans through education, research and professional services. The Canadian Wildlife Health Cooperative (CWHC), established in 1992, is a national network of wildlife health specialists located primarily at veterinary colleges across Canada. The CWHC Atlantic Regional Centre (CWHC-Atlantic) is based at the Atlantic Veterinary College (AVC) at the University of Prince Edward Island. For the past 27 years, CWHC Atlantic has performed wildlife disease surveillance, with a focus on marine mammal necropsy and health investigation for incidents throughout the Canadian Maritime provinces. CWHC-Atlantic has particular veterinary and technical expertise and experience in marine mammal necropsy and mortality investigation, having led or participated in dozens of large whale necropsies and hundreds of small cetacean and seal necropsies. Of note, CWHC Atlantic personnel attended all the Canadian North Atlantic Right Whale necropsies of the summers of 2017 and 2019, and are lead and key authors on the 2017 Incident Report and the forthcoming 2019 incident report. Additional resources of CWHC Atlantic include a national database designed specifically for wildlife health surveillance; access to diagnostic laboratory facilities at the AVC and other CWHC Regional Centres; and long-established, highly collaborative, and complementary relationships with colleagues at the Marine Animal Response Society in Nova Scotia, other stranding network groups, and other scientific colleagues.



The Contractor is required to deliver the project in accordance with the Statement of Work ONLY in situations and conditions considered safe for such delivery. Under no circumstances should the contractor attempt to respond to a marine animal if environmental/weather conditions, or the logistical circumstances are not reasonable and safe given the circumstances of the disentanglement or release activity proposed. The contractor shall monitor the environmental/weather conditions for changes that render the response operation no longer safe. The contractor must adhere to SARA permit issued and any other protocols and authorizations that may be provided by the DFO.

REQUIREMENTS

TASKS AND ACTIVITIES

The response capabilities must include delivery of the following:

- 1) Informing and advising those persons reporting marine mammal incidents regarding an appropriate approach for them to deal with the reported incident, including a safe perimeter to maintain and any additional safety considerations. This activity is done in collaboration with the Marine Animal Response Society who monitor the toll free number for reporting marine mammal emergencies in the Maritimes.
- 2) Communicating with the DFO Marine Mammal Coordinator within the appropriate DFO region regarding the incident and response plan, including DFO approval of the approach and necropsy if deemed necessary; and to maintain ongoing communication with DFO, until the incident is effectively addressed.
- 3) Providing an appropriate and safe response to dead marine mammals, including sampling, examination and necropsies. There are risks involved when responding to dead marine animals and each situation is unique and can be unpredictable. DFO's objective is to ensure that response actions proceed in the safest manner possible for everyone involved in order to minimize risk to human safety.
- 4) Responders must be physically fit and able to work safely in adverse conditions, including harsh and, unpredictable marine environments. The contractor should use the appropriate safety equipment.
- 5) If part of the work is conducted while on a DFO vessel, the contractor should ensure that persons engaged in the marine mammal response activity wear appropriate safety equipment during the entire length of the activity, including any equipment required by DFO. Safety equipment includes, but may not be limited to, a safety helmet and personal floatation device that meets Canadian safety standards.
- 6) Discussing general species biology of various marine animals inhabiting the waters of the DFO Gulf, Quebec and Maritimes Regions with commercial and recreational fishers and the public. This activity is done in collaboration with the Marine Animal Response Society who will monitor the toll free number for reporting marine mammal emergencies in the Maritimes.
- 7) Providing expert advice on how to safely handle dead marine animals to DFO, or other organizations, as requested.
- 8) Safely collecting samples from dead marine animals. Any such sampling activities would only take place under the direction of DFO Science. Contractor would need to be authorized under appropriate permitting processes.
- 9) Liaising with and providing scientific information to DFO Marine Mammals scientists in the region, and elsewhere, who are interested in and/or who work with marine animals;
- 10) Maintaining, in good and safe working order, emergency response equipment for the safe examination, sampling and necropsy of dead marine animals.



11) Communications

11.1 Informing the public and stakeholders about the program through media and public outreach.

11.2 Acknowledging DFO's contribution in any public communications about the program.

11.3 Ensuring that any announcements, brochures, advertisements, web content or other materials promoting the programme will display the DFO-approved signature, Canada wordmark or otherwise make reference to DFO. DFO shall provide the Contractor with the DFO-approved signature, Canada wordmark, or other required logo, and any updates thereto.

11.4 As a courtesy, DFO will be notified in advance of media interviews taking place on marine mammal response. Questions from media related to the Marine Mammal Response Program must be directed to the Department's media relations. (DFO Media Relations, 613-990-7537 Media.xncr@dfo-mpo.gc.ca) DFO will be consulted on any, announcements, brochures, advertisements, web content or other materials that will display the DFO signature, Canada wordmark or otherwise make reference to DFO.

11.5 Agreeing to the distribution by DFO of information about the programme as part of public communication initiatives including, but not limited to, feature stories, news releases, speeches, web content, DFO promotional materials and special publications.

11.7 DFO may, at its sole discretion, withdraw the requirements of the contractor's acknowledgement of the DFO's contribution in all public communications of the programme.

ESTIMATED LEVEL OF EFFORT

The services outlined above will be required on an as and when required basis, for which the Contractor shall make all reasonable efforts to respond to. The contractor is required to provide a report on each instance they respond to, as outlined in this Statement of Work.

SPECIFICATIONS AND STANDARDS

Details are noted above in Tasks and Activities. In addition, DFO does have the following requirements for this scope of work.

TRAINING

The contractor must have completed and keep up to date appropriate veterinary training and experience consistent with national and international standards. The post mortem examination should be conducted by a knowledgeable veterinarian, preferably a trained pathologist or other professional competent to describe and interpret gross findings and to collect and preserve diagnostic samples in an appropriate manner for further analysis.

OPERATING FROM A DFO VESSEL

If the contractor is operating from a DFO vessel, DFO employees will provide a security briefing to the contractor, which includes the location of vessel safety equipment, emergency measures, safety regulations and the route, navigation or patrol plan as per DFO procedures. DFO employees will maintain control of the vessel at all times. Personal Protective Equipment worn by the contractor must align with DFO safety standards when operating from a DFO vessel.

RESPONSE TO LIVE ANIMALS

In the event that a live marine animal is in need of veterinary care or assessment, the contractor may be requested by DFO to undertake the appropriate response on an as and when needed basis. This would only be done at the written request of Fisheries and Oceans Canada. It is acknowledged that the capability of the Contractor to respond in a veterinary capacity to live animal incidents will vary from province to province depending on the provincial veterinary licensure of the responding veterinarian.



PROJECT MANAGEMENT CONTROL AND CHANGE MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES

The contractor will:

- Deliver the University of Prince Edward Island, Atlantic Veterinary College Program, for the Response to Dead Marine Animals in DFO Gulf and Maritimes Regions, as per the Statement of Work.
- Prepare and submit, via email, accurate, written response reports following the incident, as per DFO-provided reporting template. This will include the provision of appropriate photos and videos documenting the response efforts, depending on the circumstances of each incident, and only if such photos and videos can be safely obtained.
- Prepare and submit an accurate final annual report summarizing all project activities and results, as per the DFO-provided reporting template, due by March 31st, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025 and 2026..

DFO OBLIGATIONS

DFO will provide the required reporting template format (in Word and Excel formats) for the contractor, which may be updated from time to time.

DFO will make the identified Project Authority available to the contractor as the main point of contact for all activities.

DFO will provide feedback within three business days of submission of any communications regarding the media relations aspects of the standing offer.

CONTRACTOR RESPONSIBILITIES

The contractor shall label any equipment loaned or provided by DFO, as being the property of Canada. The contractor shall take reasonable and proper care of all equipment loaned or provided by DFO. The contractor will also ensure that the equipment is returned to DFO in good working condition upon standing offer completion. The contractor is responsible for ensuring appropriate insurance coverage for all equipment.

LOCATION OF WORK, WORK SITE AND DELIVERY POINT

Contract activities will take place within the DFO Gulf and Maritimes Regions. Given the nature of the work it is not possible to anticipate where all response activities will take place.

Occasionally, on an as and when needed basis, the contractor may be required to travel elsewhere in Canada to undertake similar activities. This would only be done at the written request of Fisheries and Oceans Canada.

LANGUAGE OF WORK

English shall be the working language of all deliverables under this Standing offer.

SECURITY REQUIREMENTS

There is no requirement for security clearance because all work will occur offsite at a non-DFO facility and there is no classified or protected information arising from this work.

TRAVEL AND LIVING

No travel or living expenses will be paid as a result of any standing offer awarded.

REPORTING AND INVOICING REQUIREMENTS

DFO will pay the contractor for services and reimburse costs incurred as a result of response efforts, including but not limited to professional fees, costs of diagnostic testing, technician time, and travel, expenses, and accommodations pursuant to the National Joint Council on Travel Directive. The



contractor shall submit an invoice for the services and costs incurred as a result of response efforts and DFO shall pay the invoice within thirty (30) days of receipt of the invoice.

The contractor must submit, via email to the Fisheries and Oceans Project Authority (designated Marine Mammal Coordinator) following the incident occurrence, written incident reports (supported by invoices) including, but not limited to:

- information on number and species of marine animals
- location of response
- details on scientific data collected including number and kinds of samples taken from dead marine animal species
- issues or concerns related to the situations encountered
- number of fishers/recreational boaters, and/or other ocean environment recreational users contacted via an education or public awareness type scenario, and/or any other pertinent information.

These reports should be supported by photographs or videos of the response operations whenever possible. Submission of photographs and/or videos should also include the full names and pertinent contact information of all people in the photographs and/or videos.

Gross diagnostic reports and necropsy reports will be submitted to Fisheries and Oceans Canada when completed.

The required reporting template format will be provided by Fisheries and Oceans Canada, and may be updated from time to time.

MINIMUM MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS

- The proposed resource must have a minimum of 10 years' experience in conducting marine mammal necropsies, preparing samples for analysis, interpreting results and preparing gross diagnostic reports;
- The proposed resource must have completed veterinary training and experience consistent with national and international marine mammal necropsy standards;
- The proposed resource must have appropriate insurance and liability coverage, as well as the appropriate DFO permits to conduct marine mammal necropsies.

GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS REGULATIONS EXCEPTION AND LIMITED TENDERING REASONS:

The following policy requirements are applicable to this ACAN process:

Applicable Exceptions to Soliciting Bids under the Government Contracting Regulations (GCRs) (Section 6):

Section 10.2.1 Section 6 (d) only one person or firm is capable of performing the work applies to this ACAN for the following reasons:

There are no known alternative sources of supply University of Prince Edward Island is the only known supplier in the Gulf and Maritimes regions for this service.

STANDING OFFER PERIOD:

The standing offer period is estimated to be from Standing offer Award through to March 31, 2026

ESTIMATED VALUE:

The total estimated value of this standing offer is \$100,000.00 each year for a total potential value of \$500,000.00 excluding all applicable taxes.



INSURANCE

The Contractor is responsible for deciding if insurance coverage is necessary to fulfill its obligation under the Standing offer and to ensure compliance with any applicable law. Any insurance acquired or maintained by the Contractor is at its own expense and for its own benefit and protection. It does not release the Contractor from or reduce its liability under the Standing offer.

SUPPLIER'S RIGHT TO SUBMIT A STATEMENT OF CAPABILITIES:

Suppliers who consider themselves fully qualified and available to provide the services described herein, may submit a Statement of Capabilities in writing to the Contracting Officer identified in this Notice on or before closing date. The Statement of Capabilities must clearly demonstrate how the supplier meets the advertised requirements.

CLOSING DATE FOR SUBMITTING STATEMENT OF CAPABILITIES:

Tuesday, May 18, 2021 at 2:00 p.m. (Atlantic Time)

Inquiries and statements of capabilities are to be directed to:

Kimberly Walker

Senior Contracting Officer

Procurement Hub – Fredericton

Telephone: (506) 238-3511

Facsimile: (506) 452-3676

Email: DFOtenders-soumissionsMPO@dfo-mpo.gc.ca