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| Question ID | Question | Answer |
| ISS 5\_01 | The RFI identifies that ‘selected’ hardware and software in figure 1 will be provided as GFE.  Will GFE include a TDS/DLP system? | No.  The SNC is message agnostic and a TDP/DLP is not necessary.  NILE PMO currently uses the NILE Reference System (NRS) as a compatibility tester and MLST-3 as conformance and interoperability tester.  Other conformance and interoperability options exist and can be used with the concurrence of the NILE PMO.  The NILE MOU compels the project to select a NILE Interoperability Test Tool (NITT). |
| ISS 5\_02 | Will the contractor be required to use an in-house developed TDS/DLP for the purpose of verifying SNC and SPC software modifications? | No |
| ISS 5\_03 | Will the contractor be authorized to use an in-house developed TDS/DLP for the purpose of verifying SNC and SPC software modifications? | Yes with concurrence of the NILE PMO. |
| ISS 5\_04 | Will the contractor be required to troubleshoot competing Link-22 TDS/DLP systems? | NILE PMO supports Link 22 implementations in a variety of TDP/DLP systems worldwide.  The vendor may be required to support an authorized vendor with a competing TDP/DLP implementation.  Conversely, other vendors may need to support your delivered TDP/DLP implementation if you are the successful vendor. To date, support has consisted of e-mail and phone exchanges between vendors and the SNC developer.  More direct involvement is possible. For their protection, the successful vendor will be required to execute a Proprietary Data Protection Agreement that prevents disclosure of information related to a competing vendor system. |
| ISS 5\_05 | Will any Organizational Conflict of Interest (OCI) be created for a contractor that wins this award and simultaneously offers a Link-22 TDS/DLP system? | Probably. An OCI may exist when factors exist that creates an actual or apparent conflict of interest on a current or future contract (such as this RFP). One common scenario is that covered by this question, where a contractor wins a support contract for a system that it is delivering. Any vendor who believes it may be impacted by an OCI should consider the applicable regulations at FAR 9.5, Organizational Conflict of Interest, and the vendor is encouraged to contact the Contracting Officer if it believes it may have an OCI that involves the NILE ISS RFP. |
| ISS 5\_06 | Background/Foreground Voiceover question during Industry Day Presentation | We were asked to make a comment on foreground and background information: Background Information is defined by the NILE ISS MOU as “Information not generated in the performance of the Project”.  There is currently no Background information in the project.  Vendors may propose proprietary solutions.  If approved these solutions must comply with the NILE MOU and allow use by the NILE PMO and NILE member nations.  If you are the successful Offerer, other NILE Vendors will have access to your Background Information.  Re-use of your background Information requires the approval of the originating NILE Nation. Foreground Information is defined by the NILE ISS MOU as “Project Information generated in the performance of the Project”.  The ISS vendor will almost certainly generate this type of information. Re-use of this information requires the approval of all NILE Nations.  Vendors should be aware that US export control obligations apply to the contract deliverables.  Other NILE Nations have a right to exert export control restrictions but have not done so at this time. |
| ISS 5\_07 | What is the timeline for the RFP? | The Government plans to release a draft RFP in March 2021, followed by the final RFP package in May 2021. This is subject to change. |
| ISS 5\_08 | Is it possible to share an architectural structure diagram of the NILE software? | No. The information required to answer to this question is not releasable on a public website.  |
| ISS 5\_09 | Is it possible to get a copy of the slides from the Industry Day? | If vendors would like a copy of the slides presented at the Industry Day, please email marissa.aguilar.ctr@navy.mil and they will be provided via DoD SAFE. Please note that the slides will not be posted on this website, and vendors must adhere to the dissemination control statements on the slides. |
| ISS 5\_10 | Is it possible to get a copy of the ISS 4 contract and statement of work? | Not directly. Vendors interested in obtaining a copy of the ISS4 contract and PWS may submit a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request for the ISS 4 contract. The FOIA request will be considered by the Government using FOIA disclosure procedures, and the ISS 4 contractor will be given an opportunity to redact proprietary information from the contract if the FOIA request is approved.  |
| ISS 5\_11 | How do companies get a CISMOA in place? | The Government is working with the NSA to get an answer to this question. Updates will be posted to this Q&A log as available. |
| ISS 5\_12 | How quickly after contract award is the ISS vendor expected to provide LLC 7M expertise to Raytheon? | The LLC 7M is a mature design and is in its third production run. The Government does not currently know of any issues which would require the ISS vendor to provide support to Raytheon, but by their nature, these can occur at any point.  |
| ISS 5\_13 | What are the main advantages of Link 22 over Link 16? | The main advantages of Link 22 over Link 16 are the range of Link 22 and Late Network Entry. Other advantages are detailed in the Industry Day Technical Brief |
| ISS 5\_14 | Does Link 22 use JREAP to achieve the range of 1000NM? | No, Link 22 uses the HF frequency range to achieve this range. JREAP can be used on Link 22 but it has to be processed by the DLP. Link 22 does not utilize satellites or airborne relay. It is proven to work at ranges of up to 1200NM plus routing and relay capabilities. |
| ISS 5\_15 | In an implementation, would the DLP be required to have an ICD for connectivity with the SNC and the LLC? | No, the DLP interfaces with the SNC directly and the SNC takes care of the communications behind it. All interfaces are fully developed and documented. |
| ISS 5\_16 | Does Link 22 base all transmissions on TSR with no dedicated transmit? | Yes, all message transmissions start with TSR. |
| ISS 5\_17 | Has Link 22 implemented a Quality of Service (QoS) method to determine what data will be transmitted HF and what data will be transmitted UHF? | No, the QoS is not involved in the choice of the network media. The process for Link 22 operation starts with network planning. Before the Link 22 operation starts, the planner has to define which networks will be activated and which media each network will use. Moreover, the planner defines which units are allocated to each network . The media can be changed after the start of the operation, but at the start it is determined by the planner and the QoS is not involved at all. |
| ISS 5\_18 | What system will provide the TOD? | There are three options for the TOD: GPS signal, NTP server, or atomic clock. The ToD is an external feed that has to be provided to the components of the Link 22 system. |
| ISS 5\_19 | Will the DLP have to implement the STANAG 5522? | Yes. The DLP will have to implement ATDLP 5522, and be compliant with ATDLP5516.  |
| ISS 5\_20 | Is a response to the RFI required to eligible to respond to the RFP? | No. Vendors are not required to respond to the RFI nor attend an industry day in order to be eligible to respond to the RFP. |
| ISS 5\_21 | Does the Government recognize the value in providing a draft RFP package? | Yes. The Government is planning to issue a draft RFP in March 2021, and a final RFP package in May 2021. These dates are subject to change. Additionally, the Government plans to provide a minimum of 45 days for industry to respond to the final RFP. |
| ISS 5\_22 | Do subcontracts have to be from NILE Nations? | Yes. The prime contractor and first tier subcontractors have to be from NILE Nations, in order to comply with the NILE ISS MOU.  |
| ISS 5\_23 | Is there a timeline for approval of current Third Party Sales requests? | The NILE Nations are fixed (CAN, DEU, ESP, FRA, ITA, UK and USA). We have a range of NILE Partner Nations who are eligible to receive NILE software. There is no fixed timeline for approvals for new NILE Partner Nations, as they are all at different stages of the process, and approval is subject to the NILE Nations’ individual approval processes. There is no set timeline for Third Party Sales approvals, the timeline is based at least in part on the complexity of the request, as well as which Participants could be affected and who the Third Party is. All requests will be handled within a commercially reasonable timeline.  |
| ISS 5\_24 | Will the NILE PMO own the software code in the ISS contract? | No, but the Government currently holds Unlimited Rights in the NILE source code, and the expectation is that the data rights and intellectual property rights posture will remain undisturbed, and that the Government will continue to hold Unlimited Rights to the NILE source code and the end of the NILE ISS contract. |
| ISS 5\_25 | Are there different Interface Documents for different radios and SNCs? | No, there is just one set of Interface documents. For clarity, there is only one SNC, in 2 different implementations (Windows and Linux Red Hat Enterprise), but no different versions of Interface documents. The NILE PMO is about to deliver BCR 10 in Nov 2020 and previous NILE BCRs are backward compatible to BCR7. There may be cause to move to a non-backward compatible version in the future, but the PMO does not have any plans for a non-backward compatible version at present.  |
| ISS 5\_26 | Is everything still planned to be based on the OPTASK link message? | Yes.  |
| ISS 5\_27 | Is there a desired format and structure for the RFI response? | The RFI response should be structured in accordance with section 7 of the RFI document. Section 6 of the RFI lists the capability questions, which vendors are required to respond to in their submissions. Responses are limited to 10 pages as per the RFI. Other than the points noted in the RFI document, the specific format and structure of the RFI response is up to the vendor. |
| ISS 5\_28 | Is it possible to have the recording of the Industry Day? | Unfortunately, this is not possible. As a record of the event, the Government is posting this Q&A log, and the slides are available by contacting the NILE PMO (see Q ISS 5\_09) |
| ISS 5\_29 | How long will it take for a vendor to be named on a CISMOA? | The Department of Defense is working with the National Security Agency (NSA) to establish the process of naming a vendor on a CISMOA.  |
| ISS 5\_30 | Is MLST3 still in scope of the ISS 5 contract, and must the ISS vendor maintain compliance with MLST3? | The MLST3 is still in scope. However, given the recent information regarding MLST3 no longer being supported by the US Navy after 2021, the NILE PMO has not made any decisions regarding compliance an alternative NILE Interoperability Test Tool (NITT). Vendors should reference the NILE ISS 5 RFI document, which encourages vendors to propose an alternative NITT. |
| ISS 5\_31 | Do vendors have to state proposed teaming arrangements in the RFI response? | Vendors are strongly encouraged to state any proposed teaming arrangements in RFI responses. However, listing a team member does not obligate the Vendor to that team member at this point in the process. Vendors will not be penalized if they do not provide this information in their RFI response, but if the team members are not listed, the Government will be unable to verify whether the team members are from NILE nations. |
| ISS 5\_32 | Do vendors have to identify which of the 4 requirement areas they can deliver against in the RFI response? | Yes. Vendors are requested to state which of the requirement areas (engineering services, COMSEC, project management, development and testing) they are able to deliver in their RFI responses. |
| ISS 5\_33 | Are there any planned evolutions of the LLC 7M during the ISS 5 contract? | No, there is currently no planned evolution for the LLC 7M. |
| ISS 5\_34 | Has the Government considered backward compatibility of the NILE source code in the context of a possible change of ISS vendor? | Yes. Backwards compatibility will be a requirement for all SNC software releases, with sufficient rights to allow for sustainment by any ISS vendor. |