

Q&A RESPONSE

Offerors are requested to respond to this list of questions to clarify details of the bids.

General Product Questions:

1. Describe how your product handles evidence analysis for multiple types of forensic analysis disciplines.

Each forensic discipline may be configured to have their own worksheets, data entry screens, report templates, review cycle steps, and final report formats. It is typical for the lab to provide guidelines for formatting on a laboratory wide basis while leaving space to accommodate the differences between disciplines.

2. What is your implementation structure for on premises, include an overview of architecture.

A minimum setup would include a database server (SQL or Oracle), a web server (IIS) , an application server (IIS) , and a prelog/dmz server(IIS). Each server can be made redundant by adding additional nodes and a load balancer.

Please see the attached "Network Design Options.PDF" for more detailed information.

3. Describe a typical implementation plan and timeline for your product, including initial and on-going training.

Depending on complexity, a typical implementation will take from 9 – 18 months including initial training. On-going training can be quoted on an as-needed basis or included in the support contract. A yearly user group in Schaumburg, IL is also available for training and the costs for this can be included in the support fee if desired.

Please see the attached "Sample Project Plan.PDF" for more detailed information.

4. Describe your product support program, including customer project assistance and issue response time. Does this include emergency technical support?

PLC provides web portal, email, and phone support during business hours. Special contact information (phone number) is provided for after-hours/emergency support.

5. Describe your product's scalability for future growth in terms of users, cases, and volume of data.

The product can accommodate thousands of users and multiple thousands of cases per year. Both supported databases (SQL / Oracle) provide immense scalability well into the multi-terabyte range.

6. Describe your product's customizability.

Entry forms, data lists, search screens, and reports can all be customized. This is typically done during implementation as a part of the project. However, the ability to customize the user interface is still available after go-live and is used to accommodate the inevitable needs for change that arise over time.

A more detailed description of the customization capability included in the attached document titled, "Customization Capabilities.pdf"

7. Describe how your product facilitates electronic or paperless functionality.

The application provides an entry screen called the Matrix which facilitates paperless note taking. It is described in more detail in "Customization Capabilities.pdf"

8. Describe any add-on modules that are not included in the out of the box application package.

Please see "LIMS Overview and Specifications.pdf"

9. Describe how your product is licensed.

The customer will purchase perpetual license for a number of users. Enterprise licenses are also available.

10. Describe your product's security: e.g roll-based, function-based, module-based. Include level of security that can be applied (e.g. read, read/write)

Controlled application functions such as add, edit or delete access on different screens are assigned to roles. Then, these roles are assigned to users. Users may have more than one role assigned. This allows roles to be designed for specific laboratory job functions.

11. Describe your product's auditing abilities.

Auditing information including log on / log off, password changes, and other record changes, is stored in a database table named AUDITLOG. The audit log includes the information changed (old and new) as well as the user, computer, date/time and IP address of the client. This information can be searched, viewed, and printed by authorized users.

12. Describe how your product handles task management and notifications.

Tasks can be assigned to examiners automatically, individually, or in batch by supervisors. All tasks have a type, status code, assigner, assignee, and date fields to track when the task was assigned and completed. Users can be notified on the dashboard or via email when tasks are assigned or overdue.

13. Describe how your product accounts for automated data requests to/from external customers and partners.

PLC prefers to interface with third parties using rest web service technology and has experience doing so with many vendors and interfaces. Legacy interface technology can also be supported including ftp file shipping, xml or SOAP services, and direct database connections etc.

14. Describe how your product facilitates appropriate security for CODIS database information.

Our databank product can be integrated within LIMS and be protected by user roles. In addition, Databank may also be installed in a separate database and application server if desired. In the separated model an API is available to allow for hit letters to be generated referring to cases from the other database.

15. Describe how your product provides ad-hoc data extraction and what limitations there are, if any.

The LIMS database is open to authorized BI analysts and LIMS Administrators. The data can be extracted and analyzed using third party tools. Examples include SSRS, Oracle reports, COGNOS, SAP Business Objects, MS Access, and MS Excel. Also, the LIMS itself includes integrated ad hoc reporting using Stock management reports, customizable management reports and crystal reports.

16. Describe how your product integrates with external applications and products.

The application uses MS Office and Adobe Acrobat Reader for many functions. Each user should have a license for MS Office locally installed applications. The free version of Adobe Acrobat is sufficient.

17. Describe how your product provides secure access to reports and data; e.g. portals.

The system provides two different portals for access to work product. PRELOG is a web portal designed for submitting agencies to submit cases, access case status and view and download completed reports. Prosecutors may also have access to PRELOG for download completed report for departments they have jurisdiction over.

The Discovery Portal is a specialized portal for prosecutors to use. They are able to create self service requests for discovery which are automatically filled by the discovery services, zipped and downloaded by the requestors. The lab has the option of being able to review the discovery packages before publishing if desired. The discovery portal is typically used when a high volume of discovery requests might otherwise overwhelm the laboratory staff.

Authentication for both portals can be application defined or be integrated with enterprise identity providers.

Technical Questions:

1. Describe how your product utilizes externally licensed programs.

Users will require Microsoft 365 licenses to install local copies of Office products such as WORD and Excel. Crystal Reports Designer must be purchased and licensed on the web servers and for any user who would edit report definitions. Regular users do not require a license for crystal reports. The customer is responsible for purchasing and maintenance of these licenses.

2. Describe how your data is stored; Database type (e.g. SQL), tables, warehouse, management, architecture, etc.

We use a combination of SQL Data Tables for relational data and network file storage for images and attachments.

3. What are the proposed solution's security controls and permission levels? How granular can user permissions be configured?

The security roles are customizable for the lab. Roles can be defined, and specific security permissions are then assigned to the roles. Finally, each user may be a member of one or more roles.

4. Do you have CE Cyber Security verification?

Being an on premise application if the lab hires an outside contractor or performs their own cyber security testing and certification PLC will correct or remediate any non-conformities related to the application.

5. Could you provide a SOC 2 type II report upon request?

Providing and securing cloud services is not a part of this proposal, but PLC is willing to provide a copy of their own security plan for review. PLC also maintains yearly ISO accreditation and can also provide that information.

6. FIPS 140-2 will end-of-life in 2026. Will the proposed solution be able to comply with FIPS 140-3 by then <https://csrc.nist.gov/projects/fips-140-3-transition-effort>.

Yes

7. Where is your hardware and electronics manufactured?

PLC does not provide servers, electronics, or network hardware. PLC recommends industry standard Zebra Technologies for barcode equipment and Dell servers but since this is an on-premise system it is the lab's choice.

8. Describe the disaster recovery and backup plan for the proposed solution.

For on-premise solutions, the customer will configure and maintain redundancy to meet their desired level of availability. The customer will also perform backups and store the media physically or in the cloud according to their in-house retention policies. The customer will perform restoration tests on an annual basis. PLC will provide necessary consultation and assistance with tests and actual recovery if required..

9. How frequently is data backed up and how frequently is the disaster recovery capability tested?

PLC does not provide this service for on-premise systems. PLC will participate and help plan the testing of the restore process with the in-house IT staff. The data can be backed up every 15 minutes if desired.

10. Is security awareness training required for all employees and contractors who access the system?

All of PLC's support staff receive training via CJIS online – level 4. PLC also conducts annual internal security training according to our security plan.

11. Are criminal background checks required for all employees and contractors who access the system?

Yes. However, being an on-premise system the lab or state would perform conduct the checks before issuing credentials to the contractor.

12. Is data encrypted in transit? What kind of encryption is used?

Yes, TLS 1.2

13. Does the web server support any legacy protocols?

Only if required. For example, Azure Open ID connect would be preferred over application defined passwords or basic authentication. The software can accommodate either. This is an on-premise system and the software would be configured to fit within the requirements of the state.

14. Does the web application require any plug-ins (e.g., Flash, Java, etc.)?

Flash and Java are not required. Plug ins for Adobe Reader and PLC's URI are installed. PLC URI is a custom uri PLC uses to facility some local service such as barcode printing, office automation, and instrument interfaces.

15. What browsers are supported by the web application?

Edge and Chrome are supported.

16. Does the application process any data that is protected by law (Criminal Justice Information, Protected Health information, personally identifiable information, etc.)?

Yes, this is a system that deals with both CJI and PII.