

Q&A

1. Work Schedule, Hours, Full-Time/Part-Time Status –

Q:10. Since full-time support is not expected for the Senior Acquisition Specialist position, would the Government provide input on the expected work schedule (e.g., hours/week) and work cadence (e.g., expected work times or frequency) for the Senior Acquisition Specialist?

A: Review Section 10.01 from the SOW. MARAD is flexible on which days, and hours of the week are worked.

Q:59. Could the government confirm the number of working hours to use per FTE? Or are these employees considered PTEs?

A: This is not a full-time requirement. Review Section 10.01 from the SOW. MARAD is flexible on which days, and hours of the week are worked.

Q:65. The total contract hours for both positions is 1500 per year. Considering this volume of work, is the Government anticipating one full-time equivalent (FTE) in the Junior role and one part-time equivalent in the Senior role, or a different staffing approach?

A: This is not a full-time requirement. Review Section 10.01 from the SOW. MARAD is flexible on which days, and hours of the week are worked. Offerors may propose one person to cover both roles.

2) Must contractor personnel be available for the entire window specified in Section 10.0 (6:30 AM - 6:00 PM), or only during specific hours within that window?

A: Review Section 10.01 from the SOW. MARAD is flexible on which days, and hours of the week are worked.

3) Can the annual hours be concentrated in certain periods, or must they be distributed evenly throughout the year?

A: Review Section 10.01 from the SOW. MARAD is flexible on which days, and hours of the week are worked.

4) Will the Government provide advance notice of scheduling needs, or should contractor personnel maintain a consistent daily/weekly schedule?

A: Review Section 10.01 from the SOW. MARAD is flexible on which days, and hours of the week are worked.

Q:84. Question: Given the maximum total annual hours of 1,500, and the near similar Required Credentials, Experience and Skills listed in the SOQ section 4.5, can the Government's confirm they anticipate 2 part time specialist or will the contractor be disqualified if they bid 1 person to cover both positions?

A: Offerors may propose one person to cover both roles.—review Section 10.01 from the SOW. MARAD is flexible on which days, and hours of the week are worked. Offerors may propose one person to cover both roles.

2. Incumbent Contractor/Contract History

Q:23. Can MARAD share whether this requirement represents new work or a follow-on to an existing acquisition-support contract? If this requirement is a follow-on to an existing acquisition-support contract, who is the current incumbent?

A: These services are not being performed currently. Acquisition support services were previously provided under contract 6933A220P000032

<https://sam.gov/workspace/contract/opp/89c97b32cd1844b683114a83c19b5588/view>

3. Certification and Experience Requirements for Personnel

Q: 4. Could you please confirm whether NCMA professional certifications—specifically the Certified Professional Contracts Manager (CPCM) or Certified Federal Contracts Manager (CFCM)—meet the intent of the minimum certification requirement?

A: The solicitation lists the acceptable certifications. No other certifications meet the requirements of the solicitation.

Q: 5. If not, would offering candidates who hold CPCM or CFCM certifications render a proposal non-compliant?

A: The solicitation lists the acceptable certifications. No other certifications meet the requirements of the solicitation.

Q: 8. Will you be requiring resumes and certificates?

A: Yes, certificates are required, as stated in the solicitation (CSS) page 3- 1. Technical. Review updated CSS from Amendment 0002.

Q:29. The solicitation and Statement of Work describe two positions — Senior Acquisition Support Specialist and Junior Acquisition Support Specialist — but the qualification requirements appear similar, including comparable education, certification (FAC-C or DAWIA Level III), and years of acquisition experience. Please clarify the intended distinction between the two labor categories in terms of:

1. Required experience level
2. Certification expectations (e.g., Level III for Senior, Level I/II for Junior); and
3. Relative responsibility or independence (e.g., leadership or supervisory role for the Senior position)

A: The solicitation lists the acceptable certifications for each position. No other certifications meet the requirements of the solicitation. Review updated sections 4.5.1 and 4.5.2 from the updated SOW in Amendment 0002.

Q:46. Are offerors required to submit a copy of their Reps & Certs? If so, will a statement indicating that our Reps and Certs are current and active in sam.gov satisfy this requirement?

A: To be eligible for award, Quoters must be registered in SAM and have completed Reps & Certs in SAM. Offerors are not required to submit a copy of theirs Reps and Certs

4. Past Performance References and Questionnaire Format

Q:11. Would the Government clarify the requirement for Key Personnel references? Would the Government clarify the requirement for corporate prior work performance?

A: Past performance submission requirements have been revised in amendment 0002

**Based on the Past Performance requirement quoted above, it seems that there are three potential scenarios for interpretation:

- Scenario 1: Include nine references in total: three references for the Senior Acquisition Specialist; three references for the Junior Acquisition Specialist; and three references for Offerer Company
- Scenario 2: Include six references in total: three references for the Senior Acquisition Specialist; and three references for the Junior Acquisition Specialist
- Scenario 3: Include three references for Offerer Company

Which of the three scenarios (Scenario 1; Scenario 2; Scenario 3) is the correct interpretation of the Past Performance requirement quoted above? If none of the three scenarios are correct interpretations of the Past Performance requirement quoted above, what is the correct interpretation?

A: Quoters may provide up to three contracts in total, with no more than one page per contract. Past Performance submission requirements have been revised in CSS amendment 0002

Q:43. Performance Questionnaires (PPQs): The solicitation references PPQs but does not provide a template. Could you confirm whether the agency will supply a standard PPQ form, or should we use our own format?

A: The past performance language has been revised in amendment 0002

Q:77. The RFQ does not specify the evaluation criteria, rating scale, scoring methodology, or weighting of the Past Performance factor relative to the Technical factor.

Question: Will the Government please provide:

a) The specific evaluation criteria for the past performance questionnaire;

- b) The rating scale or scoring methodology (e.g. excellent/good/satisfactory/unsatisfactory);
- c) The relative weight of the Past Performance factor in the overall best value tradeoff;
- d) How CPARS data will be incorporated into the Past Performance evaluation; and
- e) Whether past performance will be evaluated at the company level, key personnel level, or both? This information is necessary for offerors to understand how they will be evaluated and compared on this significant evaluation factor.

A: The past performance requirement has been amended review CSS AMD 0002. Note: This RFQ follows the evaluation requirements of Revolutionary FAR Overhaul 12.203 Evaluation.

5. Proposal Submission Format, Attachments, Content

Q:22. Can the Government allow for a one-page cover letter to be submitted?

A: Quoters may submit a cover letter, but it is not required.

Q:25. May offerors submit multiple attachments (e.g., separate PDFs for technical, past performance, and pricing), or is one consolidated document preferred? Are PDF files required, and is there a maximum email attachment size?

A: Yes, offerors can provide separate documents, but keep them concise and include only relevant information. PDF or Word is acceptable. Review CSS Amendment 0002.

Q:37. Can offerors include a brief pricing narrative (e.g., methodology and compliance with federal regulations) alongside the “Attachment+2+Pricing+Spreadsheet+updated” to support the Government’s evaluation of price reasonableness and realism?

A: Quoters may submit a Pricing Narrative, but it is not required. The RFQ explains how price will be evaluated.

Q:72. Does the three-page limit apply strictly to the resume itself, or does it include any cover sheet or certifications that may be attached to the resume?

A: The certification would be a separate submission from the resume. A cover sheet is not required, but it will not count toward the resume page limit.

Q:74. For clarity on technical submission requirements: Are personnel resumes the only technical documentation required for evaluation under the Technical factor, or should quoters also submit supplemental technical documentation such as a technical approach/work plan, quality control measures, transition/staffing strategy, or other technical information demonstrating the company's capability to perform the acquisition support services described in the SOW?

This clarification will ensure we submit a proposal that fully addresses all technical evaluation criteria.

A: Resumes and certifications are the only documents required for the technical submission. The Technical submission requirement has been revised in Amendment 0002.

Q:75. For clarity on evaluation methodology: In a best value tradeoff analysis where Technical is significantly more important than the other factors, what technical documentation beyond individual resumes should quoters submit to enable the Government to conduct meaningful technical comparisons and tradeoffs between competing proposals? For example, should quoters provide technical approach/work plans, capability statements, quality assurance methodology, transition/staffing strategy, or other technical materials demonstrating company-level capability to execute the acquisition support services in the SOW?

A: Resumes and certifications are the only documents required for the technical submission. The Technical submission requirement has been revised in Amendment 0002.

6. Remote Work, GFE (Government Furnished Equipment), Equipment

Q:38. What is the street address of the primary place of performance if contractor personnel report on-site to perform the services?

A: This position is 100% remote.

Q:86. Questions: 1) Because these two sections appear to conflict, an the government please clarify if they will provide a computer and software, or must the contractor provide all equipment when performing work remotely?

2) If the contractor must provide their own computer and equipment for remote work, how will contractor personnel access Government systems including ESC-PRISM, FPDS-NG, SharePoint, and other systems referenced in Section 4.1?

3) How will contractor personnel authenticate to Government systems on contractor-provided equipment (e.g., VPN access, PIV card reader requirements, software licenses)?

4) What are the Government's security and compliance requirements for contractor-provided equipment used to access DOT/MARAD systems?

A: The government will provide a computer to access all DOT/MARAD systems. PIV Cards will allow access to government systems via the government-provided computer. Any other equipment (chairs, keyboards, etc) to facilitate telework will not be provided. Review updated SOW AMD 0002

7. Travel Requirements

Q:13 Section 7.0 Travel reads in part "Minimal travel may be required." Please describe the travel that may be required.

A: Travel may be required to obtain a Personal Identification Verification (PIV) Card. Additionally, travel may be required no more than twice a year to attend meetings in the continental US.

8. Invoicing/FFP/T&M and Pricing

Q:30. The solicitation identifies the requirement as Firm-Fixed-Price but also specifies that payment will only be made for hours actually worked, excluding hours and leave. Please clarify if the contractor will invoice the government for a fixed monthly amount.

A: The monthly invoices amount would fluctuate based on hours works.

Note: This requirement does not dictate how the contractor pays its employees.

Q:60. Page 3 of 8 of the combined synopsis/solicitation states that "The hourly rate quoted must account for federal holidays and leave. Payment will only be made for hours worked." However, Page 1 of 8 states, "The Government intends to award a firm-fixed-price purchase order..." Can you please confirm whether the MARAD intends to award a Firm-Fixed-Price (FFP) purchase order or a Time and Material/Labor-Hour (T&M/LH) type order? (i.e., FFP results in a single fixed price for defined deliverables, whereas T&M/LH provides fixed hourly rates for actual hours worked.)

A: This will be a Firm-Fixed-Price (FFP) purchase order

Q:66. Can the government please confirm the quoted hourly labor rate must be inclusive of all costs, including employee leave, holidays, and overhead, such that only the hours actually worked are billed to the Government with no separate reimbursement for time off.

A: Only actual hours worked can be invoiced. No separate reimbursement will be made for time off.

Q:81. 1) If this solicitation is for a firm-fixed-price contract, how does the "payment only for hours worked" language apply?

2) Given the maximum annual hours specified (500 Senior / 1000 Junior per year), how should contractors structure their hourly rate quotations—should we quote an hourly rate, and if so, how does that rate account for the fixed-price nature of the contract?

3) If a contractor quotes an hourly rate for an FFP contract and the employee works fewer hours than the maximum annual hours (due to leave or other factors), is the contractor paid only for hours worked at that rate, or is there a different pricing mechanism?

A: This will be a Firm-Fixed-Price (FFP) purchase order. Price on page 3 of the CSS provides an example. Note: This requirement does not dictate how the contractor pays its employees.

9. Communication of Assignments/Work Management

Q:24. The solicitation does not indicate an anticipated award date or expected contract start date. Please confirm the target award date and expected start of performance for the base period.

A: Expected to start in the new year, 2026, upon successful completion of the background check

Q:55. Can the government please clarify the proposed start date for this contract?

A: This is addressed in amendment 0002, SOW.

Q:82. Question: Section 5.0 references "Daily assignments" and a "Team Lead," but the SOW does not specify the work assignment process. Please clarify the following:

Questions: 1) How will assignments be communicated to contractor personnel (e.g., email, meetings, task management system)?

2) How much advance notice will the Government typically provide for work assignments?

Q:83. Question: What is the formal mechanism (e.g., specific ticketing system, shared log, email, or platform like SharePoint/ESC-PRISM) that the Government Team Lead or other employees will use to formally input, track, and prioritize daily assignments and deliverables to the contractor?

A: Review section 17.0 Kick Off Meeting of the amendment 0002.

###10. Others

Q:56. Can the government please clarify to how many days this proposal should be valid for from date of receipt? As stated in solicitation: Validity of quote (Please specify how many days the quote is valid from the solicitation response date)

A: This is up to the quoter. Recommend at least 6-months.

Q:28. The solicitation states that “For each individual to be nominated as a replacement of a Key Personnel, the Prime Contractor shall submit to the CO a resume 60-45 days prior to the departure of the individual.” Please clarify the deadline for replacement of Key Personnel.

A: Review updated SOW Section 16.0

Q.63. Since both the Senior and Junior Acquisition Specialist positions require five years of operational experience, what is the key differentiating factor, beyond experience, that distinguishes the Senior role from the Junior role in terms of qualifications, duties, or required expertise?

A: Review updated SOW Section 4.5.

Q: 3.Can the employees we hire have other work commitments?

A: Nothing in the solicitation limits other work commitments.

Q:12 The QUOTATION SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS reads in part:

"The following factors shall be used to evaluate offers:

1. Technical: The key personnel resume(s) will be used to evaluate quote information as it relates to the SOW specification for each subfactor listed below."

Would the Government clarify which subfactors are being referenced? Would the Government specify which subfactors will be used to evaluate the Technical section of the submission?

A: Review updated CSS Page 3 language.

Q:14 The section reads in part: "The onboarding process can be lengthy, and the contract start date is contingent upon completion of the background check. Potential candidates should ensure they respond to security requests promptly and report issues to their contract manager."

Please advise as to the average length of the onboarding process.

A: Onboarding can take 6 months or more.

Q:19. Will kick -off meeting be schedule by the Government?

A: Yes, the CO/COR will set up the Kick-Off meeting to be held on Microsoft Teams

Q:26. The solicitation and pricing spreadsheet indicate a fixed number of labor hours per labor category for the base and option periods. Please clarify whether there is any potential for increased hours or expanded scope during the period of performance if additional workload arises.

A: See updated SOW section 3.0

Q:33. Does the Government have a funding ceiling for this acquisition?

A: No

Q:36. Is price realism a factor in the best-value tradeoff evaluation?

A: Page 4 CSS-Factor 1, Technical, is significantly more important than Factor 2, Past Performance. When combined, all non-price evaluation factors (Factor 1 and Factor 2) are significantly more important than Factor 3 (Price). This procurement is being conducted under FAR Part 12 of the revolutionary FAR Overhaul. Realism is not a factor.

Q:37. Can offerors include a brief pricing narrative (e.g., methodology and compliance with federal regulations) alongside the “Attachment+2+Pricing+Spreadsheet+updated “ to support the Government’s evaluation of price reasonableness and realism?

A: Quoters may submit a Pricing Narrative, but it is not required. The RFQ explains how price will be evaluated.

Q:41. Would the government allow offerors to split the hours of the Junior acquisition specialist into two positions, for example 500 hours for one and 500 hours for another? This would enable offerors to propose a wider group of competitive candidates.

A: The Junior acquisition specialist must be one person. Offerors may propose one person to cover both roles.

Q:67. Since the Class Deviation No. 2025-01 (FEB 2025) document impacts several clauses, what is the specific text or effect of the (DEVIATION SEP 2025) associated with FAR 52.204-7 (System for Award Management), as this deviation text is no longer provided in Attachment 3?

A: DOT/MARAD has implemented the Overhauled FAR Parts that are found at <https://www.acquisition.gov/far-overhaul/far-part-deviation-guide>. Overhauled FAR language and deviations can be found at this link.

Q:68. Please confirm that FAR 52.222-62, Paid Sick Leave Under Executive Order 13706, remains applicable to this solicitation and has no corresponding deviation or rescission that should be noted.

A: It's not included.

Q:69. What is the approximate record or data row volume of the "very large datasets" referenced, and are these files provided to the contractor or must they be extracted from a Government system?

A: All data would be available in government systems.

Q:71. Are there any demographic restrictions or preferences related to the proposed personnel?

A: Personnel must be in the United States – DOT policy does not allow computers outside the United States.