Enterprise Hardware Procurement Methodologies & Contract Structuring

THIS IS A REQUEST FOR INFORMATION NOTICE ONLY. *This notice is for informational and planning purposes only. In accordance with (IAW) the Revolutionary Far Overhaul (RFO) Part 10 and the Revised - Defense Federal Acquisition Regulations (R-DFARS) Part 210, the Government is conducting market research. This Request for Information (RFI) does not constitute solicitation for bids or proposals, and in no way binds the Government to solicit or award a competitive contract. Classified information, proprietary information, and/or trade secrets shall NOT be submitted in response to this RFI. The Government will not review any submittals with classified information, proprietary information, and/or trade secrets. All submittals must be unclassified. The Government will not be liable for any information not properly marked and clearly identified. The Government is not obligated to and will not reimburse respondents for any costs associated with preparing or submitting a response to this notice. All costs associated with responding to this RFI are solely at the responding parties' expense. All submissions become Government property and will not be returned to the sender.*

This Request for Information (RFI) is from the Airspace Mission Planning Division (C3M) of the Command, Control, Communications, and Battle Management (C3BM) Portfolio Acquisition Executive (PAE) located at 16 Eglin Street, Hanscom AFB, MA 01731. C3M is seeking unclassified information from potentially interested parties.

Any response submitted to this RFI constitutes consent for that submission to be reviewed by Government personnel, Federally Funded Research and Development Center (FFRDC) employees, System Engineering & Integration Contract (SEIC) engineers employed by Leidos S&R and Intelligence System Services, and Advisory & Assistance Services (A&AS) contractors. Any objection to the release of this information to FFRDC employees, SEIC engineers, and/or A&AS contractors shall be provided, in writing, via the cover letter accompanying the respondent's submission.

Background:

The Government is issuing this RFI to gather industry feedback. The Government's objective is to maximize industry participation in C3M's hardware procurements. With this RFI, the Government intends to identify best practices to mitigate supply chain volatility risks, reduce unnecessary pricing uncertainties (for the Government and for potential offerors), and assess contract structure alternatives.

Currently, a typical C3M hardware procurement is competed as a Firm Fixed-Price (FFP) commercial product off a Federal Supply Schedule (FSS) or mandatory source IAW RFO Part 8 and awarded on a lowest priced-technically acceptable (LPTA) basis. Specific technical/minimum requirements vary between each hardware procurement. Aside from meeting the product specifications, the Government may also require offerors to provide military-standard test(s), report(s), and/or certification(s) prior to award. Additionally, the

Enterprise Hardware Procurement Methodologies & Contract Structuring

Government generally requires a non-standard four (4) year warranty period for completed/accepted end items.

The technical acceptability of offerors is typically evaluated in two phases: 1) once quotes are received, offeror's paper proposals are evaluated as either acceptable or unacceptable based on the procurement's specific minimum requirements; 2) the Government requests that the three (3) lowest priced offerors who were found acceptable in phase 1 submit evaluation articles for inspection and practical evaluation. Evaluation articles are submitted at the offeror's own risk (manufacture, transportation, and maintenance of the evaluation articles is done at no cost to the Government). If the lowest priced offeror's evaluation articles pass, award is made to the lowest priced offeror; if the lowest priced offeror's evaluation articles do not pass, the second lowest priced offeror's evaluation articles are evaluated; if the second lowest priced offeror's evaluation articles pass, award is made to the second lowest priced offeror; if the second lowest priced offeror's evaluation articles do not pass, the third lowest priced offeror's evaluation articles are evaluated; if the third lowest priced offeror's evaluation articles pass, award is made to the third lowest priced offeror; and so on, as needed. Evaluation articles that are ultimately not evaluated are left unopened and are returned to the respective offeror(s).

Any subsequent contract award is generally structured as follows: 'Early Production' – delivery of 15 test units within ~45 days of award (for the Government to conduct tests, as needed), 'First Article' – delivery of the first completed unit off of the production line within ~100 days of award, 'Completed Units' – delivery of the base quantity of units (varies by procurement) within ~190 days of award, and 'Option – Completed Units' – an option for delivery of additional completed units (varies by procurement) above the initial base quantity; option(s) may be exercised at or within one (1) year of award.

To ensure that C3M is aligning with commercial supply chain realities and implementing good business practices the Government is seeking feedback from industry on C3M's current hardware procurement process and the below areas of interest.

Areas of Interest:

1. Economic Price Adjustment (EPA) for Volatile Memory (SSDs & RAM)
   The Government recognizes that the current market for computer memory hardware is in flux. Given the market fluctuations, the Government is exploring the use of a Fixed-Price contract with Economic Price Adjustment (FP-EPA) to help mitigate market risk and reduce the risk premium on a Firm-Fixed-Price (FFP) contract.

   Questions for industry – AoI #1:

a. Describe how your organization has been impacted by recent rapid fluctuations in the volatile memory market.
b. How does your organization handle pricing volatility in the commercial marketplace? (e.g., Is additional risk built into profit? Are quotes from vendors expected to remain valid longer? etc.)
c. Would the use of a Fixed-Price contract with Economic Price Adjustment encourage your organization's participation in C3M's hardware procurement(s)? Why or why not.
    i. If yes, IAW RFO 16.203-1(a) which of the three (3) types of EPA would be best suited for this commercial market?

2. Evaluation Articles and Contract Structuring

The Government is exploring alternative options to requesting evaluation articles from offerors prior to award, recognizing the potential cost impacts that request levies on industry partners. The Government also understands there may be confusion surrounding the need for and differences between evaluation articles, early production test units, and first article delivery (for testing). The Government's intention for requesting evaluation articles, early production test units, and first article delivery is to ultimately minimize any technical risk to the end user; given that mission planners, pilots, aircrew, etc. are the end users the Government aims to ensure that the hardware being delivered is immediately reliable and mission-ready for the safety of the users.

Questions for industry – AoI #2:

a. Would the removal of requesting evaluation articles prior to award encourage your organization's participation in C3M's hardware procurement(s)? Why or why not.
b. Does the potential for changes in unit quantity from solicitation to award impact your organization's decision to participate in a competition? If so, how?
c. Consider a contract structure where initial award is for delivery of evaluation articles/test units, and delivery of completed units is structured as an Option to be exercised (contingent upon acceptance of the evaluation articles/test units). Would the contract structure in consideration encourage your organization's participation in C3M's hardware procurement(s)? Why or why not.
    i. Would the contract structure in consideration impact your organization's pricing strategy? If so, how?
    ii. Would the contract structure in consideration impact your organization's supply chain staging efforts? If so, how?

   d. What contract structure would your organization recommend? (Keeping in mind the Government's intent to minimize technical risk to the end user while ensuring fair compensation for the delivery of evaluation articles).

3. General Hardware Procurement Methodology

   The Government is open to industry feedback and recommendations regarding C3M's hardware procurement process and methodology.

   Questions for industry – AoI #3:

   a. Does your organization consider products that require military-standard test(s), report(s), and/or certification(s) commercial?
   b. Are there commercial best practices the Government should be considering that may save time and money?
   c. Are there specific structural or methodological changes your organization would recommend for C3M's hardware procurement program?

Responses:

Submission Information

Responses to this RFI shall be submitted no later than **5:00PM ET** on **08 July 2026**.

Respondents should provide submissions to Capt Clayton Palmer at clayton.palmer.1@us.af.mil, Ms. Brenna Gonsalves at brenna.gonsalves@us.af.mil, Ms. Mikayla Sequeira at mikayla.sequeira@us.af.mil, Mr. Christopher O'Neil at christopher.oneil.15@us.af.mil, **and** Ms. Julia Hovasse at julia.hovasse@us.af.mil.

Questions pertaining to this RFI and submissions in response to this RFI should be sent to **all** points of contact (PoCs) provided above.

Contents of Response

RFI responses shall address each area of interest (AoI) and all questions posed above; responses shall be organized in the same order that the AoIs and questions are posed in.

Submissions shall **not** include classified information, proprietary information, and/or trade secrets. The Government will **not** review any submittals with classified information, proprietary information, and/or trade secrets. All submittals must be unclassified.

Format of Response

Submissions shall be provided as either Microsoft Word (.docx) or Adobe Acrobat (.pdf).

Responses shall use letter sized pages (8.5in by 11in) with a layout of at least 1in margins for the top, bottom, left, and right margins. Submissions shall not exceed 5 one-sided pages (excluding the cover page).

Enterprise Hardware Procurement Methodologies & Contract Structuring

Responses shall use a professional font (e.g., Times New Roman, Arial, Calibri, Aptos) with a font size no smaller than 11pts and line spacing no less than 1.0 (i.e. “single-spaced”).

Cover Page

Responses shall include a cover page that provides the following information, at a minimum:

I. Company information
   - Name
   - Mailing address
   - CAGE code
   - UEI
   - North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) code(s) applicable to this RFI
   - Phone number
   - E-mail of designated point of contact (PoC)

II. Business type

    i.e. other than small business, small business, small business concern (specify program status as a historically underutilized business zone (HUBZone) small business concern, service-disabled veteran-owned small business (SDVOSB) concern, women-owned small business (WOSB), and/or 8(a) participant)

III. Existing vehicle(s) your organization is party to with scope relevant to this RFI

IV. If applicable, objection(s) to the release of your organization’s RFI response to FFRDC employees, SEIC engineers, and/or A&AS contractors

Any submission not adhering to the instructions provided above may not be reviewed.