Introduction

The NATO Communications and Information Agency (NCIA) hereby notifies the following Procurement Opportunity in accordance with the Procurement Policy for NATO Common Funding (link). This notification is issued to foster open and fair competition among eligible vendors from participating nations. This notification does not constitute a commitment to award a contract.

Vendors are invited to review the requirements described herein and to submit their bids in accordance with the instructions provided in this notification and subsequent solicitation documentation. All interested vendors are reminded that timely registration and compliance with eligibility requirements are essential, as deadlines for submission may not be extended. Vendors are advised to regularly check for updates to this notification.

This opportunity reflects NATO's commitment to transparency, equal treatment of suppliers, and the efficient delivery of goods, works, and services in support of NATO missions and participating nations.

1. **Title of Procurement Opportunity**

NATO Enterprise PBN Wireless LAN

2. **Description of Requirement**

The NATO Communications and Information Agency (NCIA) is dedicated to acquiring, deploying, and defending communication systems for NATO's political decision-makers and Commands. It operates on the frontlines against cyber-attacks, collaborating closely with governments and industry to prevent future debilitating attacks. NCIA plays a crucial role in maintaining NATO's technological edge and ensuring the collective defence and crisis management capabilities of the Alliance.

The NCI Agency currently operates NATO's NATO UNCLASSIFIED (NU) business network across the NATO Enterprise. In addition to being the bearer for business services at both NU and NATO RESTRICTED (NR), among the most critical services offered by this network is secure Internet and Cloud Access.

The emerging Protected Business Network (PBN) capability will replace legacy end user devices with both wired and mobile devices (including laptops, tablets, smart phones) and shift workloads to the Commercial Cloud. In this way, it aims to create a unified Enterprise platform for building a classified digital workplace up to NR. This changes the Enterprise's way of working and completely redefines its traffic profiles.

The PBN P1 Comms project approach was derived in response to deliver Cloud and Internet network access services in a holistic way. This permits NCIA to better coordinate and budget all efforts as part of the NCIA Cloud Portfolio and to minimize risks of unmet dependencies and gaps in scope that could arise from multiple piecemeal projects. The scope of this Work package of the PBN P1 Comms project is to provide the PBN capability with a Wireless LAN capability in 32 locations where PBN will be used.

Historically there have been various initiatives to implement wireless LANs (WLANs) at various NATO headquarters. This has left inconsistent design and pockets of coverage under local

or central management. In all cases, the existing WLAN infrastructure is now considered end of life.

The NCI Agency does not intend to manage commodity IT services, as this is not a core business. Hence the purpose of this Project is to outsource Wireless networking as services to an industry partner.

Problem Statement

[0001] The existing Enterprise WLAN backend infrastructure is now considered obsolete. This includes but is not limited to: access points, controllers, servers, storage, routers, and firewalls.

[0002] The PBN capability brings cloud laptops to all headquarters, commands and locations that are eligible to NATO Enterprise services, each of different size, with the intent of supporting 29,000 users. Currently, the NCIA agency has WLAN at 15 headquarters, with a total of 13,000 clients. Both the coverage at existing locations and the number of Enterprise locations is expected to increase. The current wireless network designs are not able to effectively meet current or future projected growth or scale in response to changes in demand.

[0003] The soon to be delivered, multi-domain NU and NR end user devices call for a solution that offers a single infrastructure operating in support of multiple security domains. In accordance with a device's operating mode and security profile, mobile connectivity must respect the intended internet/guest/NU/NR/management data service segmentation.

[0004] The Enterprise is undergoing a Digital Transformation to enhance connection to the Modern Market. Existing services lack modern orchestration, telemetry, analytics and IT financial management. Simultaneously, the Enterprise is migrating workloads to the Commercial Cloud and introducing SDN Fabric which requires a homogenous, modern, interoperable wireless network design to support integrated management of traffic and security. Furthermore, in its pursuit of data-centricity, the existing wireless network cannot seamlessly exchange intelligence with other systems and services.

[0005] Existing wireless infrastructure is unable to meet standards of reliability, performance and user satisfaction for the suite of different traffic profiles. Furthermore, it cannot keep up with the cadence of required SW, HW and security updates, leading to repeated obsolescence.

[0006] Current WLANs have standalone identity repositories requiring repeated logons, complicated account provisioning and AAA policies. These are not seamlessly integrated across the Enterprise, let alone the Alliance. The WLAN needs a standardized and secure design which can meet the objectives of WPA3, ZTNA, MFA, SSO while leveraging the NATO PKI and advanced cipher suites.

Expected Outcomes

The expected outcome is to establish partnership with longevity between the Contractor and the NCIA Agency where the Contractor delivers the following:

[0007] Replace aging infrastructure, interoperating with existing Enterprise wired networks, security and management systems.

[0008] Replace aging wireless access points with up-to-date technology and deliver a "Protected and Managed" Wi-Fi solution and service for the 32 main locations

across 20 different NATO Member countries in scope. Although the scope is currently 32 sites, it is expected that the current scope size of 32 sites will increase as more NATO sites will use PBN capability and thus also require WLAN services as part of this contract.

[0009] Deliver a fully managed WLAN service and ensures NATO is relieved from the operational management of WLAN capability service for PBN in all locations in scope.

[0010] Provide platform administration services for administration and engineering of the WLAN infrastructure, while providing an integrated management pane

[0011] Assess, Design, Implement and integrate the multinational WLAN service within the NATO Enterprise service offerings, trees and catalogues.

[0012] Fulfil support, maintenance and operations in accordance with agreed responsibility sharing model, Service level agreements (SLAs) and contractual agreements.

[0013] Integrate the WLAN service with the Enterprise network SDN fabrics and Internet/Cloud network access policies as delivered by the NCIA Agency or its Service Integrator Contractor.

3. Anticipated Procurement Method

a. NATO Competitive Procurement

b. Intended Pool of Vendors (for Limited Competition or Pre-Competed Award only):

i. Not Applicable

4. Vendor Eligibility

a. Participation in this Procurement Opportunity is restricted to vendors from participating nations to be indicated in the solicitation documents. Vendors from non-participating nations are not eligible to serve as prime contractors or sub-contractors.

b. This restriction applies to the eligibility of the vendors only and does not require that the goods, works, or services themselves be manufactured or produced within participating nations.

5. Access to Solicitation Documentation

a. Interested vendors may participate to and access the solicitation documentation for this Procurement Opportunity as of the Anticipated Solicitation Release Date as follows:

i. Obtaining a Declaration of Eligibility (DoE) through the Vendor's National Authorities to be included in the Bidder's List.

ii. To participate should the solicitation be issued, prospective Bidders must hold a valid DoE issued by their National Delegation to NATO.

iii. A template of the DoE is provided in the Annex to this NPO for reference and completion. The prospective Bidder is responsible for arranging for their National

Delegation to complete the form and to transmit the signed DoE directly to the Point of Contact (PoC) identified in this NPO.

iv. Prospective Bidders are advised to initiate this process early, as NCIA cannot request or obtain a DoE on behalf of a prospective Bidder. Failure to ensure that a valid DoE has been received by the PoC may result in exclusion from the solicitation process.

6. Security Requirements

a. This opportunity is classified as NATO UNCLASSIFIED (NU) and interested vendors are required to meet the above mentioned security level.

7. Language of Solicitation and Bid Submission

a. Solicitation Documentation and Proposal Submission Language(s): English

8. Additional Engagement Opportunities

a. The NCIA may organize the following engagement activities:
   i. **Industry Day:** Not Applicable
   ii. **Pre-Bid Conference:** Not Applicable

End of Notification