CSO Q&A LOG
Notice ID: HT003825S0001
Date: 7 July 2025

QUESTION #	DATE RECEIVED	PROSPECTIVE VENDOR'S QUESTION	DATE OF REPLY	GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE
1	26-Jun-25	For companies responding to both AOI 1a and 1b, can the Government confirm that there should be two separate 4-page capability statements (e.g. 4 pages for 1a and separate 4 pages for 1b)?	27-Jun-25	Yes, each AOI has a 4 page limit, if responding to both, the total limit is 8 pages. If briefing slides are used, each AOI has a 15 page limit, if responding to both, the total page limit is 30 pages.
2	26-Jun-25	Is there going to be a release of evaluation criteria for this 1A and 1B due on the 14th?	27-Jun-25	No, evaluation is based on the merit of the response. Per the AOI, capability statements will be reviewed for merit. Government intends to provide a use case and invite those companies who have been determined to possess sufficient merit.
3	26-Jun-25	Would the Government confirm there is a centralized data governance process?	27-Jun-25	Yes.
4	26-Jun-25	Guidance from the document suggest that interested parties may address either 1a or 1b or both 1a and 1b. However, it also notes that industry intel suggests significant overlap. Will the government consider allowing more slides for a combined response for 1a and 1b?	27-Jun-25	No, see answer to question #1.
5	26-Jun-25	Is the evaluation criteria and our submissions for this RFI is based on corporate capabilities or are you looking for a solution or both?	1-Jul-25	We are interested in both your company's proven capabilities and your potential for innovative solutions. The evaluation will consider your organization's expertise and resources, as well as the feasibility and potential impact of your proposed approach to the requirement.
6	27-Jun-25	Will the Government award multiple prototype agreements per AOI? For example, could two different vendors be awarded two different portions of AOI 1b? Our understanding of CSO rules is that it's permitted.	1-Jul-25	Yes, the Government may award multiple prototype agreements per AOI. The CSO states the Government may make one award for the combined 1a and 1b or make multiple awards/treat these as separate AOIs. Awarding different portions of AOI 1b to different vendors is permitted.
7	27-Jun-25	May a company serve as a prime on one AOI (e.g., 1a) while acting as a subcontractor or partner on another AOI (e.g., 1b)?	1-Jul-25	Yes, a company may serve as a prime on one AOI (e.g., 1a) while acting as a subcontractor or partner on another AOI (e.g., 1b). The CSO does not restrict companies from participating in multiple AOIs in different roles.
8	27-Jun-25	No definition or criteria for "merit." What evaluation criteria will be used to determine if a submission has "sufficient merit" to advance?	1-Jul-25	The Government will assess submissions based on their potential to contribute to the EIDS PMO mission and the specific objectives outlined in AOI 1a and 1b. Key considerations include the relevance of the proposed capabilities, the potential for innovation, the feasibility of implementation, and the overall quality of the submission.
9	27-Jun-25	For companies responding to both AOI 1a and 1b, can the Government confirm that there should be two separate 4-page capability statements (e.g. 4 pages for 1a and separate 4 pages for 1b)?	1-Jul-25	See answer to question #1.
10	27-Jun-25	Please confirm if offerors should treat this as an active solicitation or as a draft response? If offerors do not respond and only respond to the "final" CSO, will they be penalized? If there are material changes between the draft and final CSO documents, offerors are concerned that there will not be sufficient time to address in their submissions.	1-Jul-25	This is a draft CSO. While responses to the draft are encouraged to inform the Government's understanding, there will be no penalty for only responding to the final CSO. The Government will consider the need for sufficient response time based on the extent of changes between the draft and final versions.
11	27-Jun-25	The draft AOI notes that 'the Government's market intelligence indicates a significant overlap in this area of expertise' (referring to AOI 1a and 1b). Can the Government clarify which specific functional areas, technical capabilities, or solution components it sees as overlapping between Data Product Management (1a) and Data Integration (1b)? Understanding this would help vendors better structure their submissions, especially if pursuing a combined response.	1-Jul-25	The Government acknowledges the potential overlap between Data Product Management (1a) and Data Integration (1b). We encourage vendors to identify and articulate in their submissions where they perceive the overlaps to be, specifically highlighting how their proposed solutions address these interconnected aspects of data management. This will allow the Government to better understand the vendor's holistic approach and assess the potential for integrated solutions.
12	27-Jun-25	Given the acknowledged overlap, what is the government's rationale for splitting these AOIs vs. combining them under a single award structure?	1-Jul-25	The Government's rationale for splitting the AOIs, despite the overlap, is to encourage specialized expertise, promote competition, maintain flexibility, and address different skill sets.
13	27-Jun-25	Will evaluation be done by the same review panel for both AOIs to ensure consistent assessment of capabilities? a. What are the merit criteria used during the Capability Statement evaluation (e.g., innovation, past performance with similar scope/complexity, scalability) and how will those be weighted? b. Will government evaluators apply different weightings for technical feasibility vs. maturity/readiness of solution?	1-Jul-25	The CSO and AOIs do not specify whether the same review panel will be used for both AOIs. a. The CSO and AOIs do not explicitly define "merit" or provide weighted factors. However, the Government will consider the potential of the proposed solution to contribute to the EIDS PMO mission and the specific objectives outlined in AOI 1a and 1b. b. The CSO and AOIs do not specify whether government evaluators will apply different weightings for technical feasibility vs. maturity/readiness of the solution.
14	27-Jun-25	Will there be a formal annual reissuance of the CSO, or will all updates be ad hoc as mission priorities evolve?	1-Jul-25	The Government intends to leave this CSO open and continuously post updates as necessary. There is no formal annual reissuance planned; updates will be ad hoc based on evolving mission priorities.
15	27-Jun-25	Will the government provide criteria or a framework for determining when a prototype is considered successful and eligible for a follow-on production agreement under 10 U.S.C. 4022(f)?	1-Jul-25	The Government may or may not award a production OT based on the results of the prototype OT. Technical success will be evaluated for each prototype as designed.
16	27-Jun-25	Can a vendor respond to multiple AOIs under different prime/sub roles and still be eligible for follow-on production under multiple awards? Will there will need to submit OCI adjudication (i.e., firewall)	1-Jul-25	Yes, vendors may respond to multiple AOIs with different prime/sub relationships. Eligibility for additional prototype or potential follow-on production OT agreements will not be impacted. The need for OCI adjudication (e.g., a firewall) will depend on the specific circumstances of each award and the nature of the potential conflict. The Government will assess OCI issues on a case-by-case basis as awards are considered. Vendors should be prepared to address potential OCI concerns and propose mitigation strategies if necessary. It is recommended that vendors proactively consider potential OCIs and include relevant information in their submissions.
17	27-Jun-25	Will the problem statements in later review phases be based on known MIP priorities or real use cases from existing/projected work?	1-Jul-25	The problem statements will be based on a combination of known MIP priorities and real use cases derived from existing or projected work. This approach ensures both alignment with strategic objectives and practical relevance to ongoing initiatives.

18	27-Jun-25	Regarding the inclusion of cloud services in 1a, can the government provide rationale behind combination with Data Product Management? Based on offeror's understanding of the requirement, cloud services better align with AOI 1b, Data Integration.	1-Jul-25	The inclusion of Cloud Services in 1a (Data Product Management) reflects the understanding that effective data product management requires a comprehensive approach to managing the underlying infrastructure and environment. Cloud services are not simply a matter of data integration, but also encompass the management, administration, security, and optimization of the cloud environment in which data products are developed, deployed, and operated.
19	27-Jun-25	There appears to be significant conceptual and functional overlap between AOI 1a (Data Product Management) and AOI 1b (Operational Sustainment), particularly around areas like data integration, interoperability, and data stewardship. For instance, AOI 1a emphasizes governance and stewardship, while AOI 1b references data dictionaries and integration—components typically foundational to effective data governance. Can the government clarify whether AOIs 1a and 1b are intended to be awarded to separate performers working independently, or if there is an expectation (or preference) for a unified team or coordinated approach across both AOIs to reduce duplication and ensure alignment in data strategy and sustainment efforts?	1-Jul-25	While separate awards are possible, the Government recognizes the potential benefits of a unified or coordinated approach across AOIs 1a and 1b. A coordinated approach is preferred to reduce duplication and ensure alignment in data strategy and sustainment efforts, but is not requried. Submissions should clearly articulate how the proposed solution would integrate with other efforts and ensure a cohesive data ecosystem.
20	27-Jun-25	Can the government clarify if there are any minimum Technology Readiness Level (TRL) expectations for solutions proposed under this OTA? Additionally, are there any segregating criteria that would disqualify a proposed capability—such as lack of an Authority to Operate (ATO), FedRAMP authorization, or similar certifications at time of submission?	1-Jul-25	There are no minimum TRL expectations for solutions proposed under this OTA. The government is interested in a range of solutions, from existing technologies to those requiring further development. Lack of an ATO, FedRAMP authorization, or similar certifications at the time of submission will not automatically disqualify a proposed capability. However, submissions should address how these requirements would be met during the prototype project. Demonstrating a clear path to achieving these certifications will be viewed favorably.
21	27-Jun-25	In the context of AOI 1b: Data Integration, can the government elaborate on what is meant by "cognitive computing"? Specifically, is this term being used to refer broadly to AI/ML-enabled data systems (e.g., intelligent automation, NLP-driven insights), or is the government seeking specific cognitive architectures that simulate human reasoning and learning?	1-Jul-25	In the context of AOI 1b: Data Integration, "cognitive computing" is being used broadly to refer to AI/ML-enabled data systems. This includes, but is not limited to, intelligent automation and NLP-driven insights. The government is not necessarily seeking specific cognitive architectures that simulate human reasoning and learning, but rather solutions that leverage AI/ML techniques to enhance data integration processes and derive valuable insights from integrated data.
22	27-Jun-25	Based on the title and introduction, this CSO appears established for the entire PEO DHMS portfolio while the first three (3) AOIs focus on EIDS. Please confirm that PEO DHMS intends to use this CSO for additional innovation opportunities aligned to DHMSM and JOMIS over the course of the 1-year opening.	1-Jul-25	Yes, PEO DHMS intends to use this CSO for additional innovation opportunities aligned to DHMSM and JOMIS, in addition to the EIDS-focused AOIs.
23	27-Jun-25	AOI 1a states "critical support in defining and managing comprehensive Cloud Services, to include management and administration of the AWS Cloud Environment." However, on 6/26/2025, DHACA/PEO DHMS posted a recently executed 4-yr Direct Award to an Alaskan Native Corporation for "Amazon Web Services (AWS) - Cloud Compute and Store Services." How does the recent ANC Direct Award impact prototype projects for AOI 1a. Also, please indicate whether the Government plans to issue other non-competitive Direct Awards that overlap with the scope identified in the CSO AOIs.	1-Jul-25	The recent ANC Direct Award for AWS Cloud Compute and Store Services provides the foundational infrastructure for cloud services. Prototype projects under AOI 1a should focus on leveraging this existing infrastructure to deliver innovative data product management capabilities. These projects should not duplicate the core cloud compute and store services provided by the ANC Direct Award but should instead build upon them. The Government does not currently plan to issue other non-competitive Direct Awards that overlap with the scope identified in the CSO AOIs, but reserves the right to do so if necessary to meet mission requirements. Any such awards would be made in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.
24	27-Jun-25	#5 of the General Guidelines introduces the potential need for a SECRET Clearance. Please clarify when this requirement would be known and whether this clearance requirement may apply to both company facilities as well as company personnel.	1-Jul-25	The Government will provide notification of the specific clearance requirements as soon as they are known. *As the CSO and AOIs do mention compliance with cybersecurity requirements, you should address how you would meet these requirements.*
25	27-Jun-25	Similar to the SECRET Clearance, please provide any additional conditions or constraints that may be applicable. For example, will Company personnel be required to obtain CACs and complete the SAAR process?	1-Jul-25	Company personnel may be required to obtain CACs and complete the SAAR process, depending on the level of system access required for the prototype project. Other potential conditions or constraints may include compliance with specific cybersecurity requirements, data handling procedures, and security training. These requirements will be determined on a case-by-case basis and communicated to the awardee as the prototype project progresses.
26	27-Jun-25	Please indicate whether the Government is willing to entertain prototype projects that involve substantial changes to the existing EIDS/DHA infrastructure and tech stack.	1-Jul-25	The Government is willing to entertain prototype projects that involve substantial changes to the existing EIDS/DHA infrastructure and tech stack, provided that these changes are well-justified, demonstrate a clear path to implementation, and offer significant improvements in terms of performance, security, or cost-effectiveness. Proposals should clearly address the potential impact of these changes on existing systems and processes and outline a plan for mitigating any risks.
27	27-Jun-25	Please indicate whether the Government expects all prototype project activities to be performed using the Government's existing infrastructure. That is, can prototype development/testing be completed in the Vendor's infrastructure?	1-Jul-25	The Government prefers that prototype project activities be performed using the Government's existing infrastructure to facilitate integration and testing within the operational environment. However, the Government will consider proposals that involve development and testing in the Vendor's infrastructure, provided that the proposal includes a clear plan for transitioning the solution to the Government's infrastructure for final integration and deployment. The proposal should address any security concerns associated with using the Vendor's infrastructure.
28	27-Jun-25	Please indicate if/when Cost/Price considerations shall be taken into account during the downselect process or at least prior to OTA issuance.	1-Jul-25	Cost/Price will be a factor in the final selection process. After evaluating Capability Statements and potentially video responses, the Government intends to request a proposal, including cost/price details, from the vendor(s) determined to have the most merit.
29	27-Jun-25	If possible, please expand on the basis or provide additional details on the inclusion of Data Science and Cloud Services under AOI 1a. While these areas do have management functions, they can tend to be more technical in nature.	1-Jul-25	The inclusion of Data Science and Cloud Services under AOI 1a (Data Product Management) is based on the understanding that effective data product management requires oversight and governance of the entire data product lifecycle, including the underlying technologies and resources.
30	27-Jun-25	Will the reviewers judge a business process innovation (e.g., automated governance workflow) the same as a technical solution innovation? Or is there a preferred ratio?"	1-Jul-25	The reviewers will value both business process innovation and technical solution innovation. There is no preferred ratio. The relative weighting will depend on the specific requirements of the problem statement and the potential impact of the innovation. Submissions should clearly articulate the benefits of their proposed innovation, regardless of whether it is a business process or a technical solution.

31	27-Jun-25	Since evaluation is “based on the merit of the response,” can you share any weighted factors (innovation, past performance, cost realism, etc.) or is everything truly level-set?	1-Jul-25	See answer to question #2.
32	27-Jun-25	Multi-phase timing —After capability statements are accepted, what is the expected timeframe before you issue the 5–7-minute video use-case request and subsequent problem statements?	1-Jul-25	Depending on the quality and number of submissions for AOIs 1a and 1b, the Government intends to provide a use case and invite those companies who have been determined to possess sufficient merit based on the Capability Statement to respond with a 5-7 minute video. The Government then plans to notify companies of their status with respect to the AOI. Once the initial multi-phased review process yields a group of companies who have been determined to have merit, the Government intends to share one or more problem statements with some or all of those companies and elicit responses leading to the award of one or more prototype other transaction agreements. The Government will provide more details with respect to the review process in connection with the issuance of the problem statements.
33	27-Jun-25	Down-select feedback — Will offerors receive advisory notices (e.g., “competitive range” letters) at each phase, or only go/no-go results?	1-Jul-25	The Government will notify companies of their status.
34	27-Jun-25	4022(d) compliance —How does the Government verify proof of non-traditional defense-contractor status?	1-Jul-25	The Government will verify proof of non-traditional defense contractor status through self-certification by the offeror, along with supporting documentation as requested. This documentation may include information regarding the company's ownership, revenue sources, and prior experience with the DoD. The Government may also conduct independent research to verify the offeror's status.
35	27-Jun-25	Can the Government confirm whether Area of Interest #2: Data Applications and Area of Interest #3: Data Exchange are components under AOI #1a & AOI #1b, or if they are being treated as standalone areas to be solicited at a later time?	1-Jul-25	Area of Interest #2: Data Applications and Area of Interest #3: Data Exchange are being treated as standalone areas to be solicited at a later time. They are not components under AOI #1a & AOI #1b.
36	27-Jun-25	How should Offerors scope AOIs #1a & #1b since there are no CLINs or pricing elements required by the government at this phase? Can the Government confirm at which phase it will require pricing/cost elements?	1-Jul-25	See answer to question #28
37	27-Jun-25	The Government states that it "will review the Capability Statements for merit and may make one award for the combined 1a and 1b or make multiple awards/treat these as separate AOIs." How many awards does the Government anticipate making for each AOI? If it intends to award to multiple Offerors, how does it intend to compete work for each AOI at the OTA level for TOs?	1-Jul-25	The Government will not be awarding Task Orders under this solicitation. The decision on the number of Other Transactions to be awarded for AOI 1a, 1b, or a combination thereof, will be made after a thorough evaluation of vendor proposals based on merit and alignment with program objectives. No specific number of awards is predetermined.
38	27-Jun-25	How will the Government evaluate Offeror responses to AOIs #1a & #1b? What defines "sufficient merit" for AOIs #1a & #1b? Will its evaluation include strengths and/or deficiencies? If so, how does it define them?	1-Jul-25	See answer to question #2
39	27-Jun-25	The Government states that "3. Companies may submit multiple Capability Statements in response to this CSO focused on any single AOI if each submission represents a separate and distinct concept." Can the Government confirm how many separate and distinct concepts an Offeror may propose for each AOI?	1-Jul-25	See answer to question #1.
40	27-Jun-25	Since Offerors may propose solutions at various and potentially inaccurate scales, can the Government please elaborate on anticipated budget for AOIs?	1-Jul-25	The Government is not able to elaborate on the anticipated budget for the AOIs at this time.The Government encourages offerors to focus on proposing the most effective and valuable solutions, regardless of potential budget constraints.
41	27-Jun-25	Can the Government list the tools and GFE licenses that currently exist in the MIP?	1-Jul-25	The Government is unable to provide a comprehensive list of all tools and GFE licenses that currently exist in the MIP at this time. This information is considered sensitive and may be subject to change. However, the Government will provide relevant information regarding available tools and licenses as part of specific problem statements or use cases issued during subsequent phases of the selection process.
42	27-Jun-25	Can Offerors anticipate sustainment and O&M activities for MIP after the pilot phase is completed?	1-Jul-25	It is possible that Offerors may be asked to support sustainment and O&M activities for MIP after the pilot phase is completed, depending on the success of the prototype and the Government's ongoing needs. However, there is no guarantee of follow-on work.
43	27-Jun-25	Regarding Data Exchange (AOI #3), which involves "interfacing with complex systems, such as MHS GENESIS, DHA and VA platforms," what are the specific expectations for leveraging or integrating with existing interoperability standards and frameworks beyond OMOP, such as FHIR APIs or TEFCA/QHINs?	1-Jul-25	As AOI #3 has not yet been released, specific expectations for leveraging or integrating with existing interoperability standards and frameworks, such as FHIR APIs or TEFCA/QHINs, cannot be provided at this time. Further details will be provided when AOI #3 is released.
44	27-Jun-25	"Getting Data Right" and implementing the OMOP common data model have been communicated as key priorities for DHA. What is the current maturity level of the OMOP implementation, and how are Offerors expected to leverage or contribute to this common data model within their proposed solutions for any AOI?	1-Jul-25	The CSO and AOIs do not specify the current maturity level of the OMOP implementation. However, given that data quality and standards are important, vendor responses to any Capability Statement or Use Cases should describe how you will ensure any data provided is of high quality and conforms to standards, including how you will leverage the OMOP common data model within your proposed solution.
45	27-Jun-25	For AOI #1b, the focus on "AI, ML, and NLP capabilities" is highlighted, with 36M+ clinical notes processed by NLP already. Are there specific AI/ML/NLP use cases (e.g., predictive analytics for readiness, enhanced clinical decision support, automating data quality checks) that are of highest interest for prototype exploration?	1-Jul-25	The CSO and AOIs do not specify particular AI/ML/NLP use cases. Your response to Capability Statements or Use Cases should propose innovative uses of AI/ML/NLP capabilities to enhance data integration and provide value to the MHS.
46	27-Jun-25	Can you provide an estimated timeline for when the Government will complete its review of submitted Capability Statements for AOI #1a & AOI #1b and notify companies of their status? How much time between Phase 1 and Phase 2 will the Government allow, considering Offerors must create and develop a 5-7 minute video?	1-Jul-25	see answer to question #32
47	27-Jun-25	Upon receipt of down-select notices between phases, what feedback can Offerors anticipate?	1-Jul-25	see answer to question #33
48	27-Jun-25	Will the Government extend the AOI #1a & AOI #1b Capability Statements due date by 2 weeks to July 28, 2025 to allow Offerors the necessary time to digest and adjust materials based upon the answers to questions?	1-Jul-25	The Government will not be extending the AOI #1a & AOI #1b Capability Statements due date, at this time.
49	27-Jun-25	Is the Government prioritizing speed to deploy (e.g., rapid prototype within 3–6 months), or depth and scalability of the solution?	1-Jul-25	The Government is prioritizing both speed to deploy and the depth and scalability of the solution. The innovation proposed in capability statements or responses to the proposed vendor videos will allow the Government to make more informed decisions on weight of prioritization of these technical solutions

50	27-Jun-25	Can the Government clarify the expected user base size for performance testing should we assume 100,000 concurrent users or total users?	1-Jul-25	The CSO states "Capabilities include creating and maintaining responsive, Section 508-compliant interfaces that are accessible and engaging for up to but not limited to, 100,000 users." The Government is looking for solutions accessible and engaging for up to 100,000 users. You should clarify in your response if your solution supports 100,000 concurrent users or total users.
51	27-Jun-25	Are prototypes expected to be deployable in DHA environments, or can they be hosted in vendor-controlled test environments?	1-Jul-25	See answer to question #27
52	27-Jun-25	Will the Data Exchange prototype require direct integration with MHS GENESIS or VA systems during the initial phase, or is this out-of-scope for the prototype?	1-Jul-25	See answer to question #43
53	27-Jun-25	Will the prototype require authority to operate (ATO), or can it operate under an interim approval or government lab/demo environment?	1-Jul-25	See answer to question #27. You should describe in your response under what environment your prototype would operate.
54	27-Jun-25	Will the Government facilitate industry Q&A sessions or one-on-ones before the final AOIs are released?	1-Jul-25	The Government does not plan to facilitate industry Q&A sessions or one-on-ones before the final AOIs are released.
55	2-Jul-25	Based on the Government's Answer to Question 10 (regarding draft v. final CSO) posted in the Q&A document, could the Government please confirm if the desired response due on July 14 is solely for "informing the Government's understanding" on the released documents (under the solicitation - HT0038-25-S-0001) OR will the government review the responses on July 14 and make a final determination of the down select for AOI 1a and 1b?	7-Jul-25	Submissions for capabiltiy statements for AOI 1a and 1b are due July 14, 2025, 1500 ET. The Government will review Capability Statements to determine whether the submission has sufficient merit to invite the company to the next review step.
56	2-Jul-25	If the intention is solely for "informing the Government's understanding" could the Government please provide an estimate for when the Final CSO will be released for responses?	7-Jul-25	The Government expects the Final CSO and AOI #1 to be released this week with minimal changes from the DRAFT copies posted under HT00382S0001.
57	2-Jul-25	Furthermore, Section 1.3 of the Draft CSO states that all three provided AOI's are for draft purposes (v. final) - Is this the correct interpretation?	7-Jul-25	See answer to question #56
58	3-Jul-25	Does the government plan to issue a final Area of Interest document prior to the response due date of July 14, 2025 to include the updates from Q&A?	7-Jul-25	See answer to question #56
59	3-Jul-25	If so, can the government extend the response deadline by one week to allow for review of possible changes and impacts to vendor responses?	7-Jul-25	As of now the response due date will remain the same. See response to question #55 and #56.