JUSTIFICATION FOR OTHER THAN FULL AND OPEN COMPETITION (OTFAOC)

Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) Part 6 Justification & Approval (J&A), Supporting Procurements under FAR Part 12 and FAR Part 15

CSS Tracking Number: 842675078
Funding Document Number: HC108926NTMG015
Contract Number: To be determined (TBD)
Task Order Number: TBD
Procurement Title: Forward Networks Unlimited Enterprise License Agreement (ELA)
Estimated Value: [redacted]
Regulatory Authority: FAR 6.103-1, Only one responsible source and no other supplies or services will satisfy agency requirements.

J&A Number: JA26-061

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1. REQUIRING AGENCY AND CONTRACTING ACTIVITY:
Requiring Agency: Defense Information Systems Agency (DISA)/Hosting and Computer (J-9)
Contracting Activity: DISA/Defense Information Technology Contracting Organization (DITCO)/Mobility (PS8414)

2. NATURE/DESCRIPTION OF ACTION(S):
Type of Action: New Contract
Type of Contract: Firm Fixed Price

3. DESCRIPTION OF SUPPLIES/SERVICES:
This requirement will provide a commercial off-the-shelf (COTS), brand-name Forward Networks software solution. This software establishes a digital twin of the Department of Defense Information Network (DoDIN) across physical, virtual, and multi-cloud environments for multi-vendor network visualization and prediction. To accelerate deployment and ensure secure, continuous daily operations, the software ELA includes two dedicated, embedded resident engineers possessing the proprietary technical expertise necessary to integrate the platform across the complex DoDIN infrastructure. Additionally, the requirement includes an option for further resident engineering support should the agency's operational needs expand beyond the two baseline engineers provided under the ELA. The period of performance will be from August 16, 2026 – August 15, 2029, consisting of a one-year base period and two, one-year option periods, at an estimated total of [redacted]. This acquisition enables DISA to implement an enterprise-scale, predictive network modeling and behavioral verification platform to support the Department of War (DoW) Information Technology (IT) Advancement Strategy,

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DISA Zero Trust Architecture (ZTA) objectives, and the Presidential Executive Order on Artificial Intelligence (AI).

4. IDENTIFICATION OF STATUTORY AUTHORITY:
The United States Code (U.S.C.) and FAR reference permitting other than full and open competition: (1) 10 U.S.C. 3204(a)(1), FAR 6.103-1, Only one responsible source and no other supplies or services will satisfy agency requirements.

5. DEMONSTRATION OF CONTRACTOR'S UNIQUE QUALIFICATIONS OR THE NATURE OF THE ACQUISITION REQUIRED:

BRAND-NAME SOFTWARE: DISA's minimum capability requirement is for a mathematically accurate, interactive, and vendor-agnostic digital twin replica of the entire physical, virtual, and multi-cloud DoDIN infrastructure. To support mission-critical operations, the software must go beyond static network mapping and active pinging to enable real-time searching, verification, and predictive modeling of complex network behavior. Static mapping fails to predict security vulnerabilities before they occur, whereas Forward Enterprise's mathematical twin allows for pre-deployment verification. Only Forward Networks' Forward Enterprise software provides the proprietary mathematical modeling engine required to meet this technical threshold and support IT and Security Operations.

The procurement of brand-name Forward Enterprise software and associated technical services is vital to DISA's mission. Forward Networks possesses exclusive, proprietary architectural knowledge, source-code-level access, and advanced backend diagnostic tools for the Forward Enterprise platform. These intellectual property rights and technical capabilities are legally and technically restricted from third-party vendors. The advanced engineering required to integrate this mathematical digital twin, customize its query engine, and deploy Zero Trust behavioral checks across the agency's complex, multi-vendor network fabric can only be performed by certified, dedicated Forward Networks resident engineers.

Consequently, both the software licenses and the specialized engineering support must be acquired through a single, proprietary brand-name solution. The software's unique capabilities include:

- Mathematical Digital Twin: Creates a complete, mathematically accurate software copy of the network. It calculates every possible path a packet can take across the infrastructure, rather than relying on live traffic or manual traceroutes.

- Vendor-Agnostic Normalization: Aggregates and normalizes configuration and state data across multi-vendor on-premise hardware and major cloud platforms into a single console.

- Network Query Engine (NQE): Allows teams to treat their network as code. Using NQE, you can query your entire global network infrastructure (e.g., checking for specific vendor vulnerabilities or open ports) in seconds using standardized queries.

- Behavioral Intent Verification: Rather than checking if a device is simply "up," it continuously audits the network to verify that behavior matches security intents (such as Zero Trust policies) and triggers proactive alerts before issues cause outages.

- Pre-Deployment 'What-If' Sandboxing: A built-in behavioral sandbox allowing Agency engineers to modify configuration text files, routing tables, and security access control lists inside the digital twin environment to verify the exact blast radius and policy impacts prior to pushing changes to production infrastructure.

- Unified Multi-Cloud/On-Premises Abstraction: The capability to abstract hardware configuration logic from over 30+ disparate network hardware vendors alongside native public cloud entities into a single, vendor-neutral queryable database.

- Dedicated Platform-Specific Engineering Support: The platform provider must deliver dedicated, embedded resident engineering services possessing advanced backend diagnostic and platform integration capabilities.

IMPACT: Failure to procure the brand-name Forward Networks software and services will create a critical operational blind spot across DISA's hybrid, multi-cloud network, leaving sensitive defense data and proprietary AI model capabilities exposed to automated, machine-speed cyber threats. DISA's defensive posture will be instantly degraded by severing security controls that are currently functioning. Specifically, the agency will immediately lose continuous Zero Trust Architecture (ZTA) validation, real-time vulnerability mapping, and predictive change modeling used to prevent human-error network outages. Consequently, denying this procurement presents unacceptable mission risks, threatens the stability of DoW AI initiatives, and exposes the joint warfighter's communication pathways to catastrophic disruptions.

6. DESCRIPTION OF THE EFFORTS MADE TO ENSURE THAT OFFERS ARE SOLICITED FROM AS MANY SOURCES AS POSSIBLE:
Although the Government is restricting this requirement to a specific manufacturer due to the highly unique capabilities and the critical need to sustain the on-going implementation to meet the Presidential Executive Order mandate, the Government intends to maximize competition to the maximum extent practicable at the reseller level.

To ensure offers are solicited from as many potential sources as possible, the requesting office and Contracting Officer will take the following steps:

a. Maximizing Reseller Competition (Open Market)
   Market research has confirmed that Forward Networks, Inc. utilizes a robust channel of authorized value-added resellers (VARs). The Government intends to solicit this requirement on the open market as a brand name acquisition, encouraging all Forward Networks, Inc. resellers to respond.

b. Compliance with FAR Part 5 Publicizing Requirements

A notice will be publicized as required by FAR Part 5.201. The Government will post a combined synopsis/solicitation to the Governmentwide Point of Entry, System for Award Management, and this approved brand name justification document will be published simultaneously with the solicitation.

7. DETERMINATION OF FAIR AND REASONABLE COST:
The Contracting Officer shall determine if the prices offered for the Forward Networks, Inc., Forward Enterprise ELA are fair and reasonable based on price analysis techniques outlined in FAR 15.404-1(b). The complexity and circumstances of this requirement will determine the level of analysis, and the techniques used to determine the proposed price are fair and reasonable.

8. MARKET RESEARCH:

a. Market research was conducted from June 5, 2026, through June 20, 2026. The Government gathered information from a variety of sources, to include data from current acquisitions, searches of the DISA market research repository, exchanges with knowledgeable individuals in industry and Government, reviews of existing DISA-wide contract vehicles and Government-Wide Acquisition Contracts (GWACs), and determination of potential sources.

b. The first step in conducting market research was to determine if alternative commercial software and service solutions could meet the Government's minimum requirements. DISA reviewed similar technologies across the market, including traditional network mapping utilities, static configuration analyzers, and standard vulnerability scanners. While these alternative platforms offer basic network visibility, mapping, and security analysis, they all lack the critical capability to mathematically model the live, end-to-end network state to predict behavior and verify changes before they are implemented. Instead, alternative market offerings are either reactive, static, or limited to basic configuration audits, which fail to meet DISA's operational threshold for predictive zero-trust validation.

c. The second step in conducting market research was to determine the optimal contracting vehicle for this procurement. A review of DISA's premier contract vehicles, including Systems Engineering, Technology and Innovation (SETI) and Encore III, determined that these vehicles are designed for professional services and do not have the scope to act as a reseller for COTS software products.

   Furthermore, a comprehensive review of other GWACs, specifically the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Solutions for Enterprise-Wide Procurement V, the DoW Enterprise Software Initiative, the Army's Computer Hardware, Enterprise Software and Solutions IT Enterprise Solutions – Software 2, and the General Services Administration Multiple Award Schedule, revealed that they are either near the end of their ordering lifecycles or do not currently offer the required unlimited ELA structure. Consequently, research has determined that no existing pre-established contract vehicle can offer a viable solution to meet the Government's specific licensing needs; therefore,

an open-market solicitation is the optimal acquisition strategy to procure the required brand-name software and services.

d. Based on the market research conducted from June 5, 2026, through June 20, 2026, it has been determined that the services described above are available from only one responsible source, namely, Forward Networks, Inc. and its resident engineer support.

9. ANY OTHER SUPPORTING FACTS:
None.

10. LISTING OF INTERESTED SOURCES:
Based on discussion with OEM and market research of viable VARs the following were identified:

Iron Bow Technology / 55RC1 / Large Business
World Wide Technology / 0MNV1 / Large Business
Carahsoft Technology Corp / 1P3C5 / Large Business
Blackwood Associates / 7P918 / Small Business

11. ACTIONS THE AGENCY MAY TAKE TO REMOVE OR OVERCOME BARRIERS THAT LED TO THE EXCEPTION TO FULL AND OPEN COMPETITION:

a. Procurement History.

Currently, DISA utilizes 10,000 Forward Networks, Enterprise licenses, procured under the following existing acquisition:

HC102818D0041 / HC108425F0175
Contract period of performance: August 16, 2024 – August 15, 2026
Contract value: [redacted]
Contractor name: Peraton
Contractor business size: Large
Method of acquisition: Task order under the single award Indefinite Delivery Indefinite Quantity contract
Vehicle: Communications Capacity Services II

Due to the strict mandate of the June 2, 2026 Executive Order 14409, "Promoting Advanced Artificial Intelligence Innovation and Security," DISA must rapidly expand its network visibility and security validation capabilities. To comply with this mandate and align with the DoW strategic modernization priorities, specifically the transition to a ZTA and advanced AI/Data Readiness, DISA now requires an unlimited ELA.

Because the scope and capacity limits of the current task order cannot support the growth required to implement a full ELA, a new contract vehicle is required to meet this expanded mission need.

b. Actions to Remove Barriers. DISA will continue to conduct ongoing market research and monitor the commercial marketplace for emerging technologies, third-party maintenance capabilities, and alternative cybersecurity solutions. To actively identify potential competitors, the Government will issue periodic Requests for Information to industry. Should a viable alternative emerge that can meet the agency's strict technical requirements and integrate seamlessly without causing mission-critical interoperability failures or unacceptable security gaps, the Government is fully committed to pursuing a competitive acquisition strategy for all subsequent requirements.

TECHNICAL CERTIFICATION: I certify that the supporting data under my cognizance which are included in the J&A are accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief.

NAME: [redacted]t SIGNATURE/DATE: [redacted]

TITLE/ORGANIZATION: Program Manager / COR / J-9

PHONE: [redacted]

REQUIREMENTS CERTIFICATION: I certify that the supporting data under my cognizance which are included in the J&A are accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief.

NAME: [redacted] SIGNATURE/DATE: [redacted]

TITLE/ORGANIZATION: BDL COR / BDL3

PHONE: [redacted]

CONTRACTING OFFICER CERTIFICATION: I certify that this justification is accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief.

NAME: Angela K. Zang SIGNATURE/DATE: [redacted]

TITLE/ORGANIZATION: DISA/PSD/PS8414

PHONE: 667-890-0997

PROCURING ACTIVITY COMPETITION ADVOCATE APPROVAL: I have reviewed this justification and find it to be accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief. Since this justification does not exceed [redacted], this review serves as approval and my written determination that the aforementioned FAR circumstances apply.

NAME: [redacted] SIGNATURE/DATE: [redacted]

TITLE/ORGANIZATION: Procuring Activity Competition Advocate (PACA)/DISA/DITCO

PHONE:

ALL QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS JUSTIFICATION ARE TO BE REFERRED TO Angela K. Zang, angela.k.zang.civ@mail.mil, 667-890-0997