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Questions and Answers

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1. What is the current annual contract value and how long has the incumbent been providing this service?

A: The value of the last option year of the contract is \$2,279,380. The incumbent has been providing this service since April 2004.

2. Is the incumbent eligible to bid?

A: Please contact the incumbent.

3. What is the current staffing for the base service (CLIN 001) by DOL Labor category?

A: This information may be considered proprietary to the incumbent contractor and therefore, will not be provided. You may wish to submit a FOIA request at the address below, but the information is not guaranteed. <http://www.uspto.gov/web/offices/com/sol/foia/submit.htm>

4. How many FTEs are currently assigned to this contract?

A: This information may be considered proprietary to the incumbent contractor and therefore, will not be provided. You may wish to submit a FOIA request at the address below, but the information is not guaranteed. <http://www.uspto.gov/web/offices/com/sol/foia/submit.htm>

5. Are the current employees unionized?

A: No.

6. Are the tasks and services to be provided as outlined in the Statement of Work released with the RFP the same as those currently provided under the incumbent's contract? If not, what has changed, been added, or been removed from the project responsibilities?

A: The RFP for the current contract, which includes the Statement of Work, is posted on the USPTO web site at <http://www.uspto.gov/web/offices/ac/comp/proc/filerepo/filrehom.htm> and may be used to compare the changes.

7. What is the anticipated contract award date?

A: 21 Mar 2008

8. Is the current contract subject to the AbilityOne (JWOD) 5% staffing requirement? If so, what organization is currently providing the services to fulfill this requirement and how many disabled, challenged individuals are currently assigned to the project?

A: The current contract requires a teaming arrangement with an AbilityOne company but does not specify a percentage. SOC is currently providing the services to fulfill this requirement. The number of individuals provided by SOC under the current contract may be considered proprietary to the incumbent contractor and therefore, will not be provided. You may wish to submit a FOIA request at

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<http://www.uspto.gov/web/offices/com/sol/foia/submit.htm>

9. Please provide a government furnished equipment list (GFE) for the items provided to contractor personnel for use in completion of the RFP requirements.

A: A complete list of GFE will be provided upon award. In general, the USPTO will provide bar code readers, printers, hand held CPUs, ladders (small, medium, and large), mail bags, mail bag racks, fans, fax machines, forklifts/pallet jacks, computers, monitors, work assist vehicles, mobile stock pickers, and riding/golf carts.

10. Is there any contractor equipment required inside the existing facilities?

A: No.

11. Is employee parking available at the existing facilities?

A: Yes.

12. Is overnight parking available at the existing facilities for the contractor delivery vehicles?

A: Yes.

13. Will a site visit be scheduled? It would be helpful to see the current operation to identify and propose future efficiencies.

A: No. However, we are currently working to post, on the RFP web site, a 508 compliant video showing the inside of the USPTO File Repository. Until that occurs, interested vendors may request a copy of the video by sending an e-mail to Teresa Kelley at teresa.kelley@uspto.gov.

14. Reference C3.3, page 8-9: Who is responsible for receiving the requests directly from the requestor – government personnel or the contractor personnel? In other words, will contractor personnel be responsible for receiving the faxes, emails, and telephone calls with file requests?

A: The receipt of e-mail, fax, etc., requests are rare. However, when they are generated, they would be directed to the contractor for action.

15. What is the history of Task Order work, i.e. how frequently are Task Orders issued and for how many hours of support by labor category?

A: Task Orders are issued as needed to accommodate special needs or temporary increases in the volume of work.

16. How many files fit into a box?

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A: Patent and trademark files vary significantly in size. On average, a box contains between 10 and 30 files.

17. What is the average size of a file (inches)?

A: The average size of a file is 14 ¾" X 12 X 9 ½".

18. What type of heavy equipment will be available to the contractor to move cases and boxes?

A: See Question 9.

19. What is the weight of an average box?

A: Boxes vary in weight between 30 and 50 pounds.

20. Will the files to be picked up off site be boxed already, or will they need to be boxed up by the contractor?

A: The repository houses open-faced files and files/documents that are boxed. As such, the contractor will be picking up loose files that are typically bagged for return to the repository as well as boxed files.

21. What types of boxes are currently used (any security mechanisms like locks used)?

A: The boxes used to support file repository operations are Federal Record Center type boxes and are 14 ¾" x 12" x 9 ½" in size.

22. What type of file tracking systems are in place currently? Is there scanning type tracking capabilities since files have barcode labels?

A: File collections at the repository are supported by a highly elaborate barcode-based tracking system, wherein files are scanned into and out of the repository. Files/boxes containing files are also scanned to shelf locations.

23. What is the current integrity of the files (how will misfiled cases from before the start of the contract be addressed with the contractor)? Is there a way to delineate/identify existing errors?

A: Because of the elaborate scanning of files to shelf locations, we feel that file integrity is extremely high. Existing errors, if any, could only be detected by a physical inventory.

24. How large is the files area?

A: The File Repository contains approximately 326,000 square feet of space.

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25. Where are the files filed (shelving, or drawers)?

A. The files are filed on shelves.

26. How high are the shelves and or drawers stacked (are ladders required to reach files—if so, are they provided)?

A: The repository houses a variety of shelving configurations, with a typical shelving unit composed of 14 shelves at a height of approximately 15 feet. See Question 9 for a list of Government-provided equipment.

27. When was the last physical inventory/audit taken of the files area? Will there be a physical inventory of the files before the new vendor comes aboard.

A: Complete inventories on various collections have been performed throughout the life of the File Repository. A physical inventory of the files will not be performed before the new vendor comes on board.

28. Are government vehicles provided to pick up the files, or are the vehicles provided by the contractor? Are any special licenses required to operate vehicles?

A. The contractor is responsible for providing vehicles to pick up/deliver files. Please check with the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles for any special licensing requirements.

29. Are loading spaces provided for vehicles conducting distribution/pick-up or will the contractor park on the street?

A: Yes.

30. Page 42 of the RFP indicates that we cannot use more than 12 characters per square inch. It is our understanding that you would like us to use no smaller than 12 cpi (characters per inch). Would you prefer the lines to be single or double-spaced?

A. It is up to the Offeror as to whether the lines are single or double-spaced.

31. Can we schedule a site tour to the three USPTO facilities (Loisdale Drive in Springfield, USPTO in Alexandria and the File Information Unit in Crystal City)

A. Please see Question 13.

32. The solicitation is due March 6th and the period of performance states April 1 for a commencement date. For transition planning, is the April 1 start date realistic?

A. Yes.

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33. Can you tell us how many employees currently support the contract and what there job classifications are?
- A. Please see Questions 3 and 4.
34. How many vehicles are being used and are they contractor vehicles or government owned?
- A. Please see Question 28. This information may be considered proprietary to the incumbent contractor and therefore, will not be provided. You may wish to submit a FOIA request at the address below, but the information is not guaranteed.
<http://www.uspto.gov/web/offices/com/sol/foia/submit.htm>
35. When files are delivered to USPTO offices, are they delivered to a central mailroom for further distribution or directly to the requestor? What is the process for picking up files?
- A: Please see Attachment 1, Delivery Locations, and Section C. Files are picked up and delivered to multiple designated distribution locations (i.e., not to the individual requestor) throughout the USPTO's two primary campus locations and the Federal Records Center in Suitland, MD.
36. Does the government furnish a parking space or loading dock access for vehicles transporting files to and from various USPTO offices and if not, is there an average wait time to get access to the loading dock?
- A. Please see Question 29. Occasionally, there is a short wait of up to 30 minutes.
37. Please clarify that the government will provide all hardware and software needed to support the PALM (Patent Locating and Monitoring System) and the TRAM (Trademark Locating and Monitoring System).
- A. The USPTO will provide all hardware and software needed to support the PALM and TRAM systems.
38. For Image File Wrapping (IFW) processing, is the contractor responsible for providing the scanning equipment? If so, are there any network limitations as to what system(s) can be used?
- A. No.
39. Section D.1 states that domestic shipments must be packed in a manner that will ensure acceptance by common carriers and safe delivery to destination. Is the USPS one of those carriers and if so, will it be a requirement of the contractor to have a mail meter machine to apply postage to shipments?
- A. There are no mailing requirements, and a mail meter is not required.
40. Section F.4 states that the principle period of operation is 8:30 am-5:00 pm. However, the contractor has the flexibility to work before and after those hours as the file repository is operational from 7:00

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am-6:30 pm. Does this mean the contractor must have staff available from 7:00 am-6:30 pm, Monday through Friday?

A. Please see Amendment 1 to the RFP.

41. Section H.16 *Ability One Program*. Does the current contract mandate a five percent minimum set-aside for this program? If so, can you provide the name of the organization currently providing those services?

A. Please see Question 8.

42. Given that there are a variety of files that may be processed using very specific procedures according to file type, please describe nature of files for which the contractor is responsible and the anticipated volume.

A. This information is contained within Section C of the RFP.

43. Please provide an anticipated, comprehensive delivery schedule.

A. Section C.3.2, Delivering and Picking Up Files, provides the number of pick ups/deliveries required to/from each area on a daily basis. It is up to the Offeror to propose a method of fulfilling this requirement.

44. Will personnel be located in one specific location or will there be multiple contractor staff locations, (i.e., Alexandria and Springfield or just one location)?

A: Contractor personnel are located at the File Repository in Springfield, VA, and also at the File Information Unit located in Arlington.

45. Will the Government provide office space for on-site contractor personnel?

A. The USPTO will provide office space for the key personnel assigned to this contract. Other employees will be provided with work areas.

46. Of the six contract references, how many can be submitted by subcontractors?

A. References may be submitted by subcontractors; however, the USPTO is most interested in an Offeror's experience as a prime contractor.

47. Referencing section C.3.3., what percentage of the total file requests are requested via fax, email, telephone, and paper documents, rather than through the electronic file ordering system?

A: File requests received via fax, e-mail, telephone, and paper documents are rare.

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48. In section C.3.11., the third paragraph state, “In addition, the contractor shall pick up on average 50 IFW boxes per day and deliver them to the File Repository for filing.” From where will these IFW boxes be picked up? Will it be from multiple USPTO program areas?

A: IFW boxes will be picked up from Patent program office locations throughout the USPTO Alexandria campus.

49. How many, or what percentage or requests are received through fax, email, phone, or paper methods?

A. Please see question 47.

50. The completion timelines are based on the time from pickup at their initial locations (4 hours, 8 hours, etc.). Does this take into account the driving time/traffic?

A: Yes.

51. Could your team provide a breakdown of the average amount of time each task takes to complete?

A: No.

52. Can we get a copy of the list of equipment that is furnished by the government or a list of the contractor supplied equipment to assist in pricing?

A. Please see Question 9. The Contractor is responsible for providing the vehicles to pick up and deliver files.

53. How many/what types of vehicles are currently being used for this process?

A. This information may be considered proprietary to the incumbent contractor and therefore, will not be provided. You may wish to submit a FOIA request at the address below, but the information is not guaranteed. <http://www.uspto.gov/web/offices/com/sol/foia/submit.htm>

54. What are the current workforce numbers and classification levels of the workers used to provide the file repository monthly support services not including any of the additional services?

A. Please see Questions 3 and 4.

55. How long does the paperwork take for officially retiring files?

A: The timeframe ranges, but on average, the USPTO receives approval to deliver files to the Federal Records Center between two and four weeks after submitting the required paperwork.

56. Can you provide a breakdown of the number of files/boxes that are picked up/dropped off at each location?

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- A. The number of files/boxes picked up/dropped off at each location varies. However, the estimated volumes for each task are included in Section C of the RFP.
57. C.3 through C.12 discusses the activities that are required under the contract. Would the USPTO provide workload data for each task performed by month for calendar year 2006?
- A. No. The estimated volumes in the Statement of Work represent current workloads.
58. Given the fixed price nature of the bid, it would be beneficial in developing our price to see the Newington facility. Would the USPTO conduct a site tour of the warehouse facility in Newington?
- A. See Question 13.
59. Section F.2 states that during the term of the contract it is possible the facility will have to relocate to another facility in the Washington metropolitan area. What is the lease term of the current facility located on Loisdale Road?
- A. The file repository is housed in Government-owned space. As such, there is no lease. Should the USPTO be forced to relocate, we anticipate receiving an approximate 18-month advance notification.
60. Under the current contract, how many vehicles are utilized and what types of vehicles are used?
- A. See Questions 28 and 34.
61. Are the File Repository facilities available for contractor access on the weekends?
- A: Yes, on a prearranged/exception basis.
62. H.15 Change in Work Volumes states “USPTO reserves the right to renegotiate prices at the time of option exercise if at any time during a one-year period of performance workloads for tasks under CLINs 0001, 1001, 2001, 3001, or 4001 increase or decrease by 20% or more.” Will the USPTO renegotiate the price in the event workloads increase by 20%?
- A. The answer to your question may be found in paragraph H.15 Change in Work Volumes.
63. L.3 Proposal Preparation Instructions, c) states that fonts used must not be less than 12 point. Can tables and exhibits be not less than 10 point?
- A. Please see Amendment 1 to the RFP.
64. **C.2:** Will there be an opportunity to tour the Springfield facility?
- A: Please see Question 13.

65. **C.3.3, C.3.4, C.3.5, C.3.7, C.3.8, C.3.9, C.3.10, C.3.11, and C.3.12:** There are various statistics quoted regarding numbers of files, boxes, requests, etc. These numbers are quoted as “average”. Over what period of time is this average based upon? Are numbers available that show any trends over the past 5 years?

A: The statistics quoted regarding numbers of files, boxes, requests, etc., are based on the previous 12 months of activity. However, a comparison between the current Statement of Work and the one in the RFP may be helpful. The current Statement of Work is posted on the USPTO web site at <http://www.uspto.gov/web/offices/ac/comp/proc/filerepo/filrehom.htm>.

66. **C.3.3:** Are files tracked and inventoried through PALM and TRAM?

A: Yes.

67. **C.3.2:** Why are delivery and a pick up listed as separate trips?

A: The listed number of deliveries and pick ups required on a daily basis is not intended to indicate separate trips.

68. **F.2:** Relocation – where will the new repository be located?

A: The new location has not been determined at this time, but will be in the Washington Metropolitan Area as indicated in paragraph F.2 of the RFP.

69. **G.8, J.1:** Please furnish a list of Government-furnished property to allow offerors to develop pricing.

A: Please see Question 9.

70. **L.4.2 and L.4.3:** Will the past performance of a subcontractor be viewed the same as that of the prime?

A: If an Offeror submits references related to work performed as a subcontractor, they will be evaluated accordingly.

71. **B.2.1 (CLIN 001):** How many FTEs does the incumbent require to fulfill the requirement?

A: Please see Question 4.

72. **C.3:** Is the requirement substantially different from the work being performed by the incumbent?

A: Please see Question 6.

73. **C.3.6** What is the average volume of FRC files to be received, inventoried, retained for 30 days, and returned to the FRC?

A: Please refer to C.3.5 Fulfilling File Requests from the Federal Records Center (FRC).

74. **C.1, C.3.2, G.8, J.1:** Must the contractor furnish the courier vehicles? If so, are there any specific capacities & requirements that the courier vehicle must meet? (i.e. size, alarm systems, GPS tracking)

A: Yes. There are no specific capacities and requirements that the courier vehicle must meet. However, the courier vehicles proposed must be able to meet the requirements of the tasks outlined in Section C of the RFP.

75. **C.3.2:** Currently how many courier drivers and or vehicles are used to perform the contract?

A: Please see Question 34.

76. **C.3.2:** Is there a requirement for a certain number of individuals to be with the courier vehicle at all times?

A: No.

77. **C.3.2:** What sizes and weights are the containers being transported?

A: The size and weight of the containers will depend on the number of files being transported at any one time. Please refer to Section C of the RFP for estimated volumes for each task.

78. **C.3.2:** How many containers must the courier vehicle transport at any given time?

A: The number of containers being transported at any given time will depend on the number of files being transported at any given time. Please refer to Section C of the RFP for estimated volumes for each task.

79. **C.2:** The last paragraph says PTO continues to migrate processes. How much do they anticipate the work volumes under the contract may be reduced, expanded or eliminated?

A: The amount by which work volumes under the contract may be reduced, expanded, or eliminated cannot be determined at this time as it depends on when processes migrate. Please refer to paragraph H.15, Change in Work Volumes, for additional information.

80. **B.2.1 (CLIN 001):** How many position titles currently work on the contract? How many personnel per position work on the contract?

A: Please see Questions 3 and 4.

81. **C.3.1:** What is the quantity and frequency of replacing boxes containing files when existing boxes are worn or are in disrepair?

A: The quantity and frequency of replacing boxes that are worn or in disrepair cannot be accurately determined as it depends on how often the boxes are handled.

82. **C.3.1:** What is the quantity and frequency of replacing bar code labels when existing labels are no longer readable or have been torn off file wrappers under the current contract?

A: The quantity and frequency of replacing worn or torn bar code labels cannot be accurately determined as it depends on how often the labels are handled.

83. **C.3.3 – C.3.11:** Are there current production standards for the processes outlined in C.3.3 through C.3.11? If so, what are the standards?

A: The quality and timeliness standards for tasks outlined in C.3.3 through C.3.11 are included in the Statement of Work in Section C of the RFP.

84. **C.3.7:** Is each piece of material contained in the Patent or Trademark file to be bar-coded? Or, is only the file holder/box bar-coded?

A: Only the patent or trademark file holder/box is bar-coded.

85. **C.3.9:** The section notes that ‘In addition, the Contractor shall develop an organized tracking mechanism that clearly defines each box and its contents. The list shall then be used to prepare the official documentation required for retiring files to the FRC.’ Is there a current tracking mechanism in place and would that system be available for use? If not, what is the deadline to implement the tracking system once the contract has been awarded?

A: See Amendment 1 to the RFP.

86. **C.5:** The section outlines File Maintenance Special Projects. On average, how frequently and in what volume are these special projects performed under the current contract? Will the current frequencies and volumes be indicative of what can be expected under the new contract?

A: Please see Question 15.

87. **E.2:** How will the random COTR inspections be conducted? How frequently will the results be provided (daily, weekly, monthly, etc.)?

A: Please see Amendment 1 of the RFP.

88. **F.2:** The section notes that the USPTO Files Repository *may* be forced to relocate from the present location at 6808 Loisdale Road, Springfield, VA and the USPTO Campuses in Arlington and Alexandria, VA. And notes that any such move would be elsewhere in the Washington metropolitan area. Will pricing be revisited with such changes in the event that the relocation increases the time it takes for the courier to complete the mail runs outlined in the RFP?

A: No.

89. **F.4:** The RFP notes that the principal period of operation shall be from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., local time, Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays, unless otherwise specified. However, the Contractor has the flexibility to work before and after the principle period of operation hours, as the file repository is operational from 7:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.

a. Are these hours of operation subject to change? If so, and hours of operation change, will pricing be open for renegotiation?

A: The hours of operation are not expected to change.

b. The contract requirements, standards, and accepted quality levels utilize the term 'within X working hours'. Please clarify if timeliness is measured by the 'principle period of operation (8:30am-5:00pm)' or the 'expanded hours of operation (7:00am-6:30pm)'. Also, clarify if the timeliness clock will start/stop at the beginning/end of the workday, in accordance with the clarification requested above.

A: Please see Amendment 1 to the RFP.

90. **H.15:** The section notes that USPTO reserves the right to renegotiate prices at the time of option exercise if at any time during a one-year period of performance workloads for tasks under CLINs 0001, 1001, 2001, 3001, or 4001 increase or decrease by 20% or more. Will the Contractor be able to request a review of pricing due to workload volume fluctuations, process changes or timeline adjustments during the life of the contract? If so, is there any limitation as to when the fluctuations can be addressed by the Contractor?

A: The requirement is as stated in paragraph H.15 Change in Work Volumes.

91. **H.16** Does the 5% non-profit requirement have to be directly satisfied through a teaming/sub contract with an organization affiliated with AbilityOne, or can these employees be provided to either a prime or other sub-contractor through a staffing agency-like relationship with an AbilityOne organization?

A: The requirement in H.16 must be satisfied through a teaming arrangement between the Offeror and an organization affiliated with AbilityOne.

92. On page 4 of the RFP, there is an asterisk at the bottom of the base period pricing chart. What is the intent of this asterisk? Does it intend that the only hourly rates to be provided for CLIN 0002A-0002M are to be for those categories that fall under the SCA or does the USPTO wish to see hourly rates for all proposed employees, exempt and non exempt?

A: If a proposed labor category is covered by SCA, an asterisk should follow the title of the labor category.