QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS
SOLICITATION NO. DOC52PAPT0801020
USPTO OCIO IT HELPDESK SERVICES

Q1: Q-Factor A Relevant Experience. (a) The offeror must provide 5 references. "At least (3) of the five (5) references must demonstrate the Offeror's experience in handling at least 600 calls per day". Our question is: we have multiple contact centers and helpdesk contracts throughout the government and commercial marketplace. One of these is a helpdesk with calls in excess of 600 calls per day. Several are contact centers which have call volumes in excess of the 600 per day requirement. Will PTO consider these contact centers as acceptable past performance experience?

A1: Yes, if an Offeror can demonstrate that they can meet the requirements of the RFP, including Section L.15.b, Factor A – Relevant Experience, paragraphs a. and b.

Q2: C.4.1.10—Is the Help Desk staff responsible for going to customer work sites to lock down equipment?

A2: Yes, but only for advance problem resolution support.

Q3: C.4.2.2.6—What is the number of OSPs currently maintained?

A3: Currently, there are 160 Operational Support Plans (OSP).

Q4: C.5.3.2.2.5.a—In the event of a systems failure or widespread outages causing a high volume of voice mails and emails to be received outside regular hours of operation, is the 15 minute response time waived? If so at what volume is this waver instituted?

A4: Yes, the 15 minute response time is waived. The volume is waived on a case-by-case basis.

Q5: C.6.2.1.a—This SLA does not include a goal (i.e., 95% of the time). Is the goal for this SLA 95% of the time?

A5: There is no stated goal. It is up to the Offeror to propose the SLA.

Q6: C.6.2.1.a and C.6.2.1.b—There appears to be a conflict between the two requirements, please provide clarification. C.6.2.1.a states answer speed requirement is one minute for call volume up to 600 calls per day. C.6.2.1.b stated that after twenty seconds if a user decided to abandon the call it would miss that SLA—is the answer in excess of one minute?

A6: No, these are two separate requirements.

Q7: C.6.2.1.d—Does this mean the current requirement to return all voicemails within 2 hours during production hours?

A7: Yes.

Q8: C.7.4—Is the Help Desk responsible for coordinating or scanning assets for field service work? This is typically outside the core functionality of a helpdesk.

A8: Yes, but only for advance problem resolution (APR) support.

Q9: C.4.2.2.1—Will APR be monitoring only the APR or other EAMS queues? Does "customer site" include ERA home visits?

A9: All queues, including APR and EAMS, are monitored. Currently, the USPTO does not require ERA home visits.

Q10: 6.2.1.g. In the labor rates spreadsheet, there is not a labor category for Program Manager (PM). Can this be added?

A10: No. See also response to Q23.

Q11: The past performance requirement for three references of 600 calls per day and one year of performance would seem to unnecessarily limit competition in the $23M size standard. Does the government feel there will be adequate competition for this contract?

A11: Yes.

Q12: Is the government interested in performance-based solutions or rather a labor-based contract?

A12: The USPTO requires a performance-based contract whereby services can be acquired via performance-based task orders. In response to the Help Desk Services RFP, the USPTO is requesting labor rates to serve as a basis from which the USPTO will issue any resulting task orders.

Q13: Will the government consider making the contract fixed priced?

A13: No.

Q14: Does "relevant experience of the offeror" imply that newly-formed joint venture entities do not satisfy the burden of performance since the new entity has not supported the work for one year?

A14: Yes.

Q15: Limiting the technical approach to 10 pages (*including* the transition plan), seems to minimize the importance of all other factors in Section C. The ability of bidders to present an innovative approach should, for example, address ways to drive down what seems to us to be an unreasonably high call volume for a base of 10,000 users. Will the government consider relaxing the 10 page restriction?

A15: No.

Q16: We see no references in the solicitation to specific [or sample] task orders to be issued under this contract. In the absence of such requirements, how does the government plan to evaluate proposals that, as currently structured, do little more than describe past performance on help desk calls? Is it not necessary to demonstrate the ability to perform the full range of requirements stated in Section C through either a more detailed technical approach or sample tasks?

A16: See Section M for information on how the Government intends to evaluate proposals. See Section L for the proposal requirements.

Q17: Section C.6.2.3 - USPTO will be entitled to assess disincentives/penalties in the event SLAs are not achieved. A penalty may result in a price reduction for the billing period when an SLA is not achieved. How, under a T&M arrangement, does the government intend to issue performance penalties? The FAR allows

vendors working under a T&M contract to charge for all hours worked, whether performance requirements are met or not.

A17: Although a Labor Hour/Time and Material type contract will be awarded, the USPTO is not prohibited from incorporating and requiring performance metrics and standards, and disincentives into the contract.

Q18: Section C.3.1.5 states "The contractor shall be required to staff a help desk for the Electronic Business Support (ESB)." What is the current level of incidents received by the ESB today?

A18: EBS handles 250 total calls/emails per day on average from the public.

Q19: Section C.3.1.5 states "The contractor shall be required to staff a help desk for the Electronic Business Support (ESB)." What is the estimated growth of incidents to be received during the contract period?

A19: This information is not necessary to respond to the RFP.

Q20: Section C.3.1.5 states "The contractor shall be required to staff a help desk for the Electronic Business Support (ESB)." How many people are currently supporting the help desk for the ESB?

A20: This information may be considered proprietary to the incumbent contractor and therefore cannot be provided.

Q21: Sections C.3.2.1 and C.3.3.1 state: Hours of Operations Approximately 155,000 change, service and incidents are logged per year. What are the current volumes for change, service and incidents logged during the following hours?

Monday-Friday
5:30 A to 12:00 (Noon)
12 (Noon) – Midnight

Saturday-Sunday
5:30AM-12 (Noon)
12 (Noon) - 10PM

A21: This information is not necessary to respond to the RFP.

Q22: Section C.3.3.1 indicated current annual volume of problems/requested. The current volume (155,000 annually) indicates an average of 442 problems/incidents per day. Section L.15; Factor A- Relevant Experience; paragraph a requests at least three (3) off the five (e) references must demonstrate the Offeror's experience at least 600 calls per day, C.4.3.1 (estimated 210,000 annually or 35%). Section B 0001A -0001E describe Labor Category Description for the Help Desk Manager supporting more than 6500 users. C.2.2 indicated an employee base of 10,000 users. The expected growth of 1200 new users is (12%) per year. Will the government put the Section L evaluation criteria to match the current problem/incidents currently generated by the 10,000 users in order to make the requirement consistent to the actual volume in order to allow for a competitive solicitation for Small Businesses and not requested the third year's anticipated volume of users and incidents?

A22: No.

Q23: H.9 Key Personnel and Section B Labor Category. For the Key Personnel Labor categories, 1) Program Manager, 2) Help Desk Manager, and 3) Advanced Problem Resolution Team Lead listed in Section H, only the Help Desk Manager is listed in the CLIN structure to be priced out. Where are the other 2 labor categories supposed to be aligned? Will the Government please clarify which personnel are key?

A23: The titles listed in Section H.9 are the key personnel – but they are not necessarily labor categories. The Key Personnel listed are position titles that may be filled with the labor category deemed most appropriate by the Offeror, except for the Program Manager, which is an overhead position. It is only a coincidence that there is also a "Help Desk Manager" labor category by the same name.

Q24: C.4.2. Advanced Problem Resolution Required. Will the government provide the current number of APR's supporting the Help Desk Tier 1 personnel used for supporting C4 ?

A24: See response to Q20.

Q25: C.4 USPTO IT Help Desk Services Contractor Support. Will the government provide the current number of staffing supporting C.4?

A25: See response to Q20.

Q26: C.7.5 Off-Site Facilities. In order for the contractor to consider providing an off site facility, can the government indicate an approximate number of personnel to be located at the off site facility?

A26: It is up to each Offeror to determine the number of personnel.

Q27: L.15 Proposal Requirements Subfactor 3. The Management Approach shall not exceed seven (7) pages in total, inclusive of all Offeror attachments. Section c. [sic] Quality Management Approach shall include the minimum SLA requirements in Section C.6.2.1 as well as Offeror-proposed SLAs. In order to allow for Offeror proposed SLA's in addition to those requirements in Section C.6.2.1, will government exclude the Offeror proposed SLA's in the page count of 7?

A27: Yes, Attachment 2 – Service Level/Performance Metrics Worksheet for proposed SLA's is excluded from the 7 page limitation.

Q28: Section L.15 Factor A
Since the current level of calls per day on average is 442 not 600, will the government either eliminate the reference to 600 calls per day? If not , will government indicate a scale for evaluation from current volumes to expected volumes to 600 calls per day?

A28: No, the reference to 600 calls per day will not be eliminated or revised. No a scale of current volumes to expected volumes will not be provided.

Q29: Section H. 9 b. and c.
b. The key personnel shall be assigned and available on the contract from the date of contract award.
c. During the first ninety (90) days of performance, the Contractor shall make no substitutions of key personnel unless the substitution is necessitated by illness, death, or termination of employment.

Will the government provide current Key Personnel resumes and contact information with government indication of approval of individual's past performance so the contractor can interview and or hire for this contract?

A29: No.

Q30: Section H.22 (f) Subcontracts
Contractor shall include the substance of this clause, including this paragraph, in all subcontracts. Will the government provide the paragraph referenced?

A30: Paragraph (f) is referring to the entire clause H.23 – Security Processing Requirement which shall be included in all subcontracts pertaining to this requirement.

Q31: Section L.15 Proposal Requirements Factor D Technical Approach (10 pages total) Subfactor 2. Transition Plan
Will the government exclude the transition plan as part of the 10 page limitation for the Technical Approach in order to allow for a key element for thoroughness and little or no interruption of service?

A31: No.

Q32: On the B-tables that are provided for CLIN pricing, there are 2 methods of pricing, On Site w/ furniture and On Site w/o furniture. What does the contractor need to include in their rate pricing (i.e. what furniture needs will the contractor have to add into their pricing efforts - cubes, desks, chairs, i.e.)?

A32: Pricing for on-site without furniture (Offeror provides furniture/Govt provides space) is at the discretion of the Offeror as it is up to the Offeror to decide its furniture requirements. Pricing for on-site with furniture includes a Government provided cubicle or space that is furnished with typical office furniture.

Q33: Please clarify the seemingly contradictory statements in C4.2.2.12 ("the Contractor shall complete ninety-five percent of service requests for fewer than ten desktop upgrades or installs within five business days of receipt of service ticket with the exception of local software installs which is completed within two business days") and C4.3.6 ("The Contractor shall be responsible for any service requests for software installs of 10 workstations or less. The software shall be installed within 4 hours after final approval").

A33: Section C.4.2 refers to APR requirements, and Section C.4.3 refers to Incident Tracking and Service Handling Requirements.

Q34: Ref. C.6.2.1 a. Call Wait to Answer: The Contractor shall maintain a daily average call to answer speed of one (1) minute or less when the weekday call volume is 600 calls or less. Q. Is there an SLA for call wait to answer after the call volume exceeds 600 calls?

A34: There is no stated SLA for call wait to answer after the call volume exceeds 600 calls. Offerors may propose the SLA.

Q35: Ref. C.6.2.1 d. E-mail Response: The Contractor shall properly respond to all incoming e-mail messages sent to HELPDESK 9000 using the Electronic Contact Center (ECC) or MS Outlook as the backup. Messages must receive a response within 2 hours. What is the email volume associated with the SLA for email response time?

A35: This information is not necessary to respond to the RFP.

Q36: Ref. C.6.2.1 g. Critical Problem Notices: The Contractor shall start the Critical Problem Notices (CPN) process within 15 minutes of notification of a major production outages or a major loss of functionality to multiple customers. Does the 15 minutes apply only for production hours or is it intended for 24x7support? Please clarify.

A36: The 15 minutes is intended for 24x7 (24 hours x 7 days) support.

Q37: Ref. C.5.3.1.4 Abandonment: a. Measures must be in place to minimize call abandonment. Please clarify how calls are defined or determined to be abandoned.

A37: Abandonment is determined by system call logs.

Q38: Under section L, Factor A – Relevant Experience, Item e, #3
It states that the contractor shall demonstrate a minimum of one (1) year of experience with the customer. Does this exclude other agencies that operate under the Department of Commerce? (i.e. The U.S. Census Bureau, National Technical Information Service, etc.)

A38: No.

Q39: Does each past performance have to total 600 calls per day or can the past performances total 600 calls per day?

A39: Yes, 3 of the 5 past performance references each must total 600 calls per day. See Section L.15, Factor B, paragraph b.

Q40: Page 6, Section C.3.1.5 reads: The Contractor shall be required to staff a help desk for the Electronic Business Support (EBS). The EBS Help Desk, a sub-group of the USPTO IT Help Desk Services, is the primary point of contact for

public `customers reporting problems or asking questions related to the application systems available on the USPTO web site (www.uspto.gov). The EBS Help Desk staff is knowledgeable with all e-business applications available on USPTO web site and web-related technology such as HTML, viewers, and browsers and is familiar with all reference materials related to general USPTO information regarding patent and trademark processes and procedures.

Do the volume metrics provided within the RFP (e.g., 10,000 users, 600 calls per day, 200 emails per day) include the users, calls, emails, etc for the Electronic Business Support (EBS)? Would all of these calls & emails be handled under the DOC52PAPT0801020 Help Desk Services contract or would a significant part of the work be handled under other contracts or by government personnel? If so, what is the estimated breakdown between EBS and other support organizations that comprise the Helpdesk Services?

A40: No, the EBS Help Desk handles 250 total calls/emails per day on average from the public. Yes, all would be handled under this contract.

Q41: What is the breakdown of call/issue types and the required responses for the listed volume of Help Desk traffic (for example: Questions resolved over the phone or by email; Issues requiring deskside support; Issues requiring subject matter expert support; Equipment moves, adds, changes; Issues referred to computer/network infrastructure support teams; Network/computer system account changes, etc.?

A41: This information is not necessary to respond to the RFP.

Q42: Page 68, Section L.14.b, Invite and Receive Offeror's Submissions, Paragraph (b) reads: Offerors are not prohibited from submitting proposals that contain a Joint Venture (JV) or partnership business arrangement. However, JV's or similar partnership business arrangements must demonstrate and meet the relevant experience and past performance requirements set forth in Section L.15 below. Proposals from newly-formed JV's that cannot demonstrate relevant experience, as defined below in Section L.15 (including a demonstration that the JV provided a minimum 1 (one) year of experience with the customer) may be deemed unacceptable.
Is it acceptable that one or more of the entities or partners involved in the JV business arrangement meet the relevant experience requirement or must the JV itself meet the relevant experience requirements?

A42: The JV itself must meet the relevant experience requirements.

Q43: Page 69, Section L.15.b, Proposal Submission Details, Paragraph (d.) reads: If the Offeror proposes a teaming arrangement whereby any one subcontractor will perform more than 30% of this RFP's requirement, the Offeror must submit a Relevant Experience Worksheet (See below and Attachment "3") for that subcontractor that meets the size and type of contract set forth in sub-paragraph e.3 below. IMPORTANT: Regardless of whether the Offeror chooses a teaming arrangement, the Offeror must still provide at least three (3) references that demonstrate the Offeror's experience in handling at least 600 calls per day. Can you be more specific as to the requirements of size and type of contract for subcontractors performing more than 30% of the work?

A43: See response to Q131.

Q44: Does a single contractor currently provide all of the services described under DOC52PAPT0801020? What is the annual and total contract value of the current contract(s) which provide the services described within this procurement?

A44: Yes, a single contractor, Trawick and Associates, currently provides all of the services described under solicitation number DOC52PAPT0801020. Additional information regarding the current contract can be obtained under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) (see the following: http://www.uspto.gov/web/offices/com/sol/foia/submit.htm).

Q45: What are the current staffing levels for the current contract(s) which provide the services described within this procurement?

A45: See response to Q20.

Q46: What particular problems or specific issues does USPTO want to resolve by outsourcing your IT infrastructure?

A46: See Section C of the RFP for the USPTO's requirements.

Q47: What IT asset management system are you currently using to manage USPTO's assets?

A47: USPTO currently uses the Remedy system.

Q48: What critical technical skills are important to you in creating your desired solution?

A48: See Section C of the RFP for the USPTO's requirements.

Q49: Are there any Network Monitoring tools in place today at USPTO? If yes, explain.

A49: This information is not necessary to respond to the RFP.

Q50: Page 68, Section L.14.b. Offerors are not prohibited from submitting proposals that contain a Joint Venture (JV) or partnership business arrangement. However, JV's or similar partnership business arrangements must demonstrate and meet the relevant experience and past performance requirements set forth in Section L.15 below. Proposals from newly-formed JV's that cannot demonstrate relevant experience, as defined below in Section L.15 (including a demonstration that the JV provided a minimum 1 (one) year of experience with the customer) may be deemed unacceptable. Is a newly-formed JV that cannot demonstrate a minimum of one year of experience with the customer considered acceptable or unacceptable?

A50: See response to Q42.

Q51: 1. Page 68, Section L.14.b. Offerors are not prohibited from submitting proposals that contain a Joint Venture (JV) or partnership business arrangement. However, JV's or similar partnership business arrangements must demonstrate and meet the relevant experience and past performance requirements set forth in Section L.15 below. Proposals from newly-formed JV's that cannot demonstrate relevant experience, as defined below in Section L.15 (including a demonstration that the JV provided a minimum 1 (one) year of experience with the customer) may be deemed unacceptable. Does the JV entity have to meet the minimum required FACTOR A – RELEVANT EXPERIENCE and FACTOR B – PAST PERFORMANCE requirements to be eligible to submit a compliant offer?

A51: See response to Q42.

Q52: 1. Page 68, Section L.14.b. Offerors are not prohibited from submitting proposals that contain a Joint Venture (JV) or partnership business arrangement. However, JV's or similar partnership business arrangements must demonstrate and meet the relevant experience and past performance requirements set forth in Section L.15 below. Proposals from newly-formed JV's that cannot demonstrate relevant experience, as defined below in Section L.15 (including a demonstration that the JV provided a minimum 1 (one) year of experience with the customer) may be deemed unacceptable. Is a newly-formed JV required to demonstrate a minimum 1 (one) year of experience to be considered acceptable?

A52: See response to Q42.

Q53: 1. Page 68, Section L.14.b. Offerors are not prohibited from submitting proposals that contain a Joint Venture (JV) or partnership business arrangement. However, JV's or similar partnership business arrangements must demonstrate and meet the relevant experience and past performance requirements set forth in Section L.15 below. Proposals from newly-formed JV's that cannot demonstrate relevant experience, as defined below in Section L.15 (including a demonstration that the JV provided a minimum 1 (one) year of experience with the customer) may be deemed unacceptable. As required by FAR 19.101(7) does each member of the JV have to meet the Small Business size standard under the associated NAICS Code 541519, in order to be considered a small business for this requirement?

A53: See applicable SBA Regulations.

Q54: 1. Page 68, Section L.14.b. Offerors are not prohibited from submitting proposals that contain a Joint Venture (JV) or partnership business arrangement. However, JV's or similar partnership business arrangements must demonstrate and meet the relevant experience and past performance requirements set forth in Section L.15 below. Proposals from newly-formed JV's that cannot demonstrate relevant experience, as defined below in Section L.15 (including a demonstration that the JV provided a minimum 1 (one) year of experience with the customer) may be deemed unacceptable. Does a newly-formed JV have to be populated prior to submission of the proposal?

A54: Yes, but see also the response to Q42.

Q55: Page 68, Section L.14.b. Offerors are not prohibited from submitting proposals that contain a Joint Venture (JV) or partnership business arrangement. However, JV's or similar partnership business arrangements must demonstrate

and meet the relevant experience and past performance requirements set forth in Section L.15 below. Proposals from newly-formed JV's that cannot demonstrate relevant experience, as defined below in Section L.15 (including a demonstration that the JV provided a minimum 1 (one) year of experience with the customer) may be deemed unacceptable. Does the JV have to be approved by the Small Business Administration in order to be considered eligible as a Small Business under the associated NAICS Code 541519?

A55: As long as the JV entity meets the small business standard of the identified NAICS code, it does not have to be SBA certified.

Q56: C.3 Is it the agencies intent to include support for users with disabilities that require specialized equipment in order for the agency to conform to Americans with Disabilities Act requirements under this procurement or would the agency consider a separate Task Order as separate effort in order to provide specialized technical support for these users?

A56: Yes.

Q57: C.3.1.2 Indicates that "the office of CSSG is the single point of contact for all USPTO employees and contractors reporting problems with , or requesting service or changes involving OCIO supported hardware and software to include telephone devices…" Does this indicate that the contractors Help Desk Service will be required provide support for telephony related hardware devices? If so, what percentage of USPTO users currently TTY software or hardware?

A57: This information is not necessary to respond to the RFP.

Q58: C.3.1.4 states that the "contractors Help Desk Services shall be knowledgeable regarding USPTO…technical environments. As well as proficient in providing support for desktop software and hardware…" Does the current USPTO infrastructure include users with disabilities that require specialized equipment in order for the agency to conform to Americans with Disabilities Act requirements?

A58: Yes.

Q59: C.3.1.4 Does USPTO currently utilize the same delivery process for both assistive IT needs to conform to the needs of those employees covered under the Americans with Disabilities Act as the agency does for mainstream IT?

A59: Yes.

Q60: C.3.1.4 Does the USPTO environment include Assistive Technology devices used by employees covered under the Americans with Disabilities Act? If so, will the agency provide a list of the type of devices and software, as well as the quantity of these products in operation in the USPTO technical environments that contractors Help Desk Services will be required to support prior to the proposal due date?

A60: Yes, the USPTO environment does include Assistive Technology. No, a list of the quantities and types of devices and software will not be provided. The information is not necessary to respond to the RFP.

Q61: C.3.3.1 states that "approximately 155,000 change, service and incidents are logged per year." Can the agency provide a detailed list of the percentage of those incidents that were from users utilizing TTY's and those who requested service for Assistive Technology related hardware and software?

A61: This information is not necessary to respond to the RFP.

Q62: C.4.1.5 states that "the contractor shall provide facilities", does that statement indicate that the contractors Help Desk Service shall be located offsite at a contractor provided and contractor operated facility?

A62: No.

Q63: C.4.1.11 states that "the contractor shall provide technical support for all USPTO-operated systems…" Is it necessary for the contractor to provide technical assistance for hardware utilized to support individuals that fall under ADA?

A63: Yes.

Q64: C.4.2.2.9 states that contractor shall provide support for the USPTO ERA Telework Programs… Currently over 4,000 employees participate…" What percentage of these employees utilizes Assistive Technology devices and will the contractor be responsible for supporting these devices?

A64: The percentage information is not necessary to respond to the RFP. Yes, the Offeror will be responsible for supporting these devices.

Q65: General - Would the USPTO please provide a report for the last 6-12 months that breaks out incidents by USPTO employees and those from the General Public?

A65: No.

Q66: General - Would the USPTO please provide a report for the last 6-12 months that breaks out incidents by teleworkers and employees located at the USPTO?

A66: No.

Q67: General - What is the average time to handle incidents?

A67: See Section C.6.2.1, Paragraph h; Incident Escalations.

Q68: General - Would the USPTO please provide information on call arrival patterns? (e.g., number of calls arriving each hour of the day for each day of the week.)

A68: This information is not necessary to respond to the RFP.

Q69: General - Would the USPTO please explain what is required for the telework program and support?

A69: See Section C.4.2.2.9 and Section C.4.2.2.10.

Q70: General / Labor Category - The Help Desk Manager Labor Category Description (in ATT1.xls) requires the individual to hold ITIL certifications for both Foundations and Service Manager. Can these certificates be substituted by a Project Management Professional (PMP) certification or COMPTIA certification or any other type of project management certification?

A70: No.

Q71: General / Labor Category - Our bidding entity is a Joint Venture (JV) formed under the Small Business Administration (SBA) Mentor-Protégé program and is fully approved by the SBA. The JV is managed by the 8(a)/WOSB; the other venturer is a large company. One component of this SBA approved JV/ Mentor-Protégé program indicates that any past performance of the larger company can

be leveraged in a competitive solicitation process. According to this definition, the large company is not a sub-contractor or teaming partner – the two companies are the JV and the JV's past performance comprises thef [sic] past performance by either venture partner. In our other JV, formed under the same program and with the same venture partner, all work meets the SBA requirement that the 8(a) manages the entity and exceeds the requirement of the 8(a) performing at least 51% of the work. If the past performance is relevant to and meets the requirements of the DOC52PAPT0801020 solicitation, will the USPTO recognize the past performance of either venturer as qualifying and compliant past performance of the bidding JV entity?

A71: See response to Q131.

Q72: C.3.2.1(6) Page 7/ F.4 Page 27/F.4b Page 27 -- Section F.4 lists the holidays observed by USPTO, and Section F.4b states Government offices may be closed to the contractor's staff on the day(s) they are observed. However, Section C.3.2.1 (6) states the offices will be closed on only three holidays and that "support will be required as normal for all other holidays." Would the USPTO please clarify on what holidays the contractor will be required to provide support?

A72: See Sections C.7.3 and C.3.2.1.

Q73: C.4.1.11 Page 9 --- This section indicates the contractor is responsible for the technical support on all USPTO-operated systems, including COTS products, proprietary applications, and various desktop hardware components.
Would the USPTO please provide a list of these products and applications?

A73: No.

Q74: C.4.2.2.3 Page 11/C.4.2.2.9 Page 12 --- Section C.4.2.2.9 indicates there are currently more than 4,000 USPTO teleworkers, and the number is likely to increase. Section C.4.2.2.3 references equipment moved, delivered, or installed by the contractor. Is the contractor required to visit the private residences of teleworkers to resolve an incident? If so, what is the geographic distribution of the teleworkers?

A74: Currently, the USPTO does not require ERA home visits.

Q75: C.4.2.2.11 Page 12 --- This section states the contractor shall respond to 95% of service requests within two (2) hours of receipt of the service ticket. Would the USPTO please define its perception of response? (i.e., contacting the user to initiate trouble-shooting or resolving the problem)

A75: Response is defined as contacting the customer regarding the service ticket.

Q76: Attachment 1, Pricing Schedule --- On the pricing schedule, excel file, there are labor rates called "On-Site with Furniture" and "On-Site w/o Furniture." Would the Government further define what is included and excluded in the "Furniture" definition?

A76: See response for Q32.

Q77: Sub-question: Our experience with "On-Site" rates is that the government would provide furniture, telephone and computer technology. Is that the proper expectation for "On-Site with Furniture"? Or will the contractor be expected to provide our own computer technology? If so, would we be providing LAN connectivity as well?

A77: See response to Q32. The Offeror is expected to provide their own computer technology and USPTO will provide LAN connectivity for Government furnished space. See Section C.4.1.5.

Q78: Attachment 1, Pricing Schedule --- What is the total square footage of the office space for the On-Site without Government-Furnished Furniture (Government provides space only)?

A78: This information is not necessary to respond to the RFP.

Q79: Relevant Experience – RFP states shall demonstrate a minimum of one (1) year of experience with the customer. One of our past performances began July 25, 2007. Given that this contract will likely not be awarded prior to July 25 2008, will the PTO consider such a past performance complaint where, at time of award we will have had a full year of experience with the client?

A79: Yes.

Q80: Section L.15 Factor A – Relevant Experience --- Page 69 ---<u>Sub-Section a</u>. The Offeror shall demonstrate its past relevant experience in providing the services required by Section C of this RFP. The Offeror shall accomplish this by providing five (5) reference contracts where the Offeror served in the role of a prime contractor or subcontractor that will collectively demonstrate the Offeror's ability to perform the activities specified in Section C of this solicitation. At least

three (3) of the five (5) references must demonstrate the Offeror's experience in handling at least 600 calls per day.
Sub-Section d. If the Offeror proposes a teaming arrangement whereby any one subcontractor will perform more than 30% of this RFP's requirement, the Offeror must submit a Relevant Experience Worksheet (See below and Attachment "3") for that subcontractor that meets the size and type of contract set forth in sub-paragraph e.3 below. IMPORTANT: Regardless of whether the Offeror chooses a teaming arrangement, the Offeror must still provide at least three (3) references that demonstrate the Offeror's experience in handling at least 600 calls per day. Based on the current requirement that at least three (3) of the five (5) references demonstrate the Offeror's experience in handling at least 600 calls per days, an offeror must demonstrate experience handling approximately 12,000 calls/month for each past performance or approximately 36,000 calls/months across 3 past performances. Based on industry standard metrics, a company handling approximately 432,000 calls/year for at least one (1) year would likely not qualify as a small business under the $23.0 million size standard. Would USPTO consider relaxing the requirement by allowing the team to submit past performance references that demonstrate experience in handling 600 calls per day total across 3 concurrent contracts within the past 3 years?

A80: No.

Q81: Section L.15 Factor A – Relevant Experience --- Page 69 ---<u>Sub-Section a</u>. The Offeror shall demonstrate its past relevant experience in providing the services required by Section C of this RFP. The Offeror shall accomplish this by providing five (5) reference contracts where the Offeror served in the role of a prime contractor or subcontractor that will collectively demonstrate the Offeror's ability to perform the activities specified in Section C of this solicitation. At least three (3) of the five (5) references must demonstrate the Offeror's experience in handling at least 600 calls per day.
Sub-Section d. If the Offeror proposes a teaming arrangement whereby any one subcontractor will perform more than 30% of this RFP's requirement, the Offeror must submit a Relevant Experience Worksheet (See below and Attachment "3") for that subcontractor that meets the size and type of contract set forth in sub-paragraph e.3 below. IMPORTANT: Regardless of whether the Offeror chooses a teaming arrangement, the Offeror must still provide at least three (3) references that demonstrate the Offeror's experience in handling at least 600 calls per day. Must all three (3) of the five (5) references demonstrating experience in handling at least 600 calls per day come from the Prime contractor?

A81: Yes.

Q82: Section L.15 Factor A – Relevant Experience --- Page 70 ---Sub-Section e.
In addition to the aforementioned requirements, the proposed reference contracts shall also meet the following requirements:

1) Shall be valued at a minimum of $1,000,000.00 a year over the life of the contract.
2) Shall be with Government and/or Commercial entities and must be currently in process or completed within the past three (3) years from the proposal due date.
3) Shall demonstrate a minimum of one (1) year of experience with the customer.

Since the above requirements are overly restrictive for Small Businesses and the fact that size of the Help Desk operation may expand over the life of the contract due to consolidation in the client base and help desk operations across the agency, [SIC[Would USPTO consider reducing the requirement by reducing the one (1) year to six (6) months, which would still demonstrate a solid record of performance, or eliminating the one (1) year of experience with the customer?

A82: No.

Q83: Factor C – Management Approach --- Page 72 --- Sub-Section b. (2)
If a teaming arrangement is involved, the Offeror shall describe the plan to manage the teaming arrangement, specify the exact percentage of work to be performed by each proposed subcontractor, and shall include copies of proposed teaming or subcontracting agreements and key personnel resumes.
Will copies of the proposed team or subcontracting agreements count against the seven (7) pages permitted for the Management Approach?

A83: No.

Q84: Factor C – Management Approach --- Page 72 ---Sub-Section c.i
The Offeror shall complete the Service Level/Performance Metrics Worksheet (Attachment "2") for each SLA and performance metric summarizing the minimum SLA requirements and include the Offeror-proposed SLAs and/or performance metrics and associate financial penalties.
Will the Service Level/Performance Metrics Worksheet (Attachment "2") for each SLA count against the seven (7) pages permitted for the Management Approach?

A84: See response to Q27.

Q85: Section E: Price Proposal (Volume II) --- Page 73---2. Section 2 - Firm Fixed Pricing for C&A Requirements shall contain the following:
The Offeror's proposed Firm Fixed Price to comply with Clause H.21 - Security Requirements for Information Technology Resources under CLIN 0003 in Section

B. However, if the Offeror proposes to provide the services required under CLIN 0003 of the RFP at no cost, then the Offeror shall insert "No Charge" in the price column for CLIN 0003 in Section B – Supplies or Services and Prices/Costs (Schedule of Prices) (Attachment "1"). Attachment "1" does not include CLIN 0003. Please clarify if USPTO will be issuing a revised Attachment "1" or if potential offerors should update the table to include CLIN 0003.

A85: Attachment 1 will not be revised. The Base Year does include CLIN 0003. Option years 1-4 do not.

Q86: Factor E: Price Proposal (Volume II)---Page 73---1.(a) Each offeror shall complete Section B – Supplies or Services and Prices/Costs (Attachment "1") (using the exact same format) by proposing fully burdened hourly rates (including wages, overhead, general and administrative expenses, profit, etc.) for each labor category identified in Attachment "1" and priced in each of the following three (3) ways:
(1) On-Site with Government-Furnished Furnished (sic);
(2) On-Site without Government-Furnished Furniture (Government provides space only)
(3) Off-Site
For each of the different pricing scenarios, should all proposed staff be included either on-site for scenarios 1 and 2, or off site for scenario 3? For example, with scenario three, do we price the entire staff as if everyone were located off-site? The answer to this question will affect the pricing because depending on space requirements, the facility costs (and therefore the indirect rates) will be impacted.

A86: For evaluation purposes, Offerors shall propose all staff as being on-site with Government-furnished furniture, on-site without Government-furnished furniture, and off-site.

Q87: Factor E: Price Proposal (Volume II)---Page 73---1.(a) Each offeror shall complete Section B – Supplies or Services and Prices/Costs (Attachment "1") (using the exact same format) by proposing fully burdened hourly rates (including wages, overhead, general and administrative expenses, profit, etc.) for each labor category identified in Attachment "1" and priced in each of the following three (3) ways:

(1) On-Site with Government-Furnished Furnished (sic);
(2) On-Site without Government-Furnished Furniture (Government provides space only)
(3) Off-Site

What is included (what does the Government provide) in the Government-Furnished Furniture setup in Scenario 1

A87: See response to Q32 and Q77.

Q88: Factor E: Price Proposal (Volume II)---Page 73---1.(a) Each offeror shall complete Section B – Supplies or Services and Prices/Costs (Attachment "1") (using the exact same format) by proposing fully burdened hourly rates (including wages, overhead, general and administrative expenses, profit, etc.) for each labor category identified in Attachment "1" and priced in each of the following three (3) ways:

(1) On-Site with Government-Furnished Furnished (sic);
(2) On-Site without Government-Furnished Furniture (Government provides space only)
(3) Off-Site

For scenario 1, with Government-Furnished furniture, will the Government provide computer work stations?

A88: No.

Q89: Factor E: Price Proposal (Volume II)---Page 73---1.(a) Each offeror shall complete Section B – Supplies or Services and Prices/Costs (Attachment "1") (using the exact same format) by proposing fully burdened hourly rates (including wages, overhead, general and administrative expenses, profit, etc.) for each labor category identified in Attachment "1" and priced in each of the following three (3) ways:

(1) On-Site with Government-Furnished Furnished (sic);
(2) On-Site without Government-Furnished Furniture (Government provides space only)
(3) Off-Site

For Scenarios 1 and 2, does the Government provide telephone and internet?

A89: Yes.

Q90: Section B. Past Performance---Page 78--- Sub-Section 2. Those Offerors who have no relevant past performance history will not be evaluated either favorably or unfavorably on past performance.

Will a past performance that does not meet the required minimum FACTOR A – RELEVANT EXPERIENCE or FACTOR B – PAST PERFORMANCE requirements be rated as Neutral or will the offer be considered non-compliant?

A90: Offerors who do not meet the minimum requirements under Factor A, Relevant Experience, will be rated accordingly. The use of a neutral rating is specific to Past Performance.

Q91: Section B. Past Performance---Page 78--- Sub-Section 2. Those Offerors who have no relevant past performance history will not be evaluated either favorably or unfavorably on past performance. Will offerors that do not meet ALL the required minimum requirements of FACTOR A – RELEVANT EXPERIENCE and FACTOR B – PAST PERFORMANCE requirements be considered non-compliant?

A91: All Offerors will be evaluated in accordance with Section M.

Q92: Section C.3.2.1 mentions the USPTO Security Office. What kind of support is expected for the USPTO Security Office?

A92: See Section C.3.3.2.f.

Q93: Section C.3.3.2 outlines the types of problems handled. Is there any historical data that can be offered to show the regularity of these problems; e.g. software installations, operational questions, account administration, etc.? Is there any historical information for peak call volume?

A93: This information is not necessary to respond to the RFP.

Q94: Section C.4.1.3 says that ratings will be measured through the Customer Quality Check process. Is this an USPTO administered process, and if so, what metrics would determine 're-open' status rather than create a new service request; e.g. password lockout, browser issue, etc?

A94: Yes, this is an USPTO administered process. The additional information is not necessary to respond to the RFP.

Q95: Section C.4.1.5 What function does the Baseline software serve? What components are contained in the baseline software?

A95: This information is not necessary to respond to the RFP.

Q96: Section C.4.1.5 requires the contractor's equipment be at a minimum compatible to the current USPTO environment. Is there a list of minimum requirements available?

A96: Currently, our minimum requirements are a 3.4 GHz PC compatible workstation.

Q97: Section C.4.1.9 requires a RCA for problems when requested. Is there any historical information for how many RCA's are requested? On a weekly or monthly basis?

A97: This information is not necessary to respond to the RFP.

Q98: Section C.4.1.10 – What does 'lockdown' mean; physical restrictions or software restrictions or both?

A98: Physical.

Q99: What version of ITIL framework do you expect to implement- full version of V2 or V3 or ITIL Lite?

A99: At a minimum, ITIL V2.

Q100: Section C.4.2.2 requires notifying Task Managers of any incidents that require RCA's (Root Cause Analysis). Does this mean that in addition to the Task Managers requesting RCA's that staff supporting the APR department request RCA's? If so, will the criteria be provided by USPTO?

A100: Yes and the criteria will be provided by the USPTO at the task order issuance.

Q101: Section 4.2.2.8 What type of request merits the services listed for the ITTD support services

A101: This information is not necessary to respond to the RFP.

Q102: Section C.4.4.1.4 mentions the use of a web-based incident reporting/problem report forms. Does Remedy currently not support this feature?

A102: Remedy currently supports this feature.

Q103: Section C.3.3.2 Item D requires software installs of 10 users workstations or less. Is this value for daily, weekly/monthly, etc?

A103: This is per request.

Q104: Sections C.4.1.10, C.4.2.2.2, C.4.2.2.3, and C.4.2.2.4 indicate that the Contractor is responsible for add/moves/changes to a user's desktop or other peripheral equipment. These responsibilities seem identical to those required in the USPTO's EUS and FM projects. Is this a joint effort with shared responsibilities between contractors to replace/install/troubleshoot customer equipment on site?

A104: Yes.

Q105: Section C.4.2.2.9 requires support for over 4000 USPTO employees participating in the ERA program. Is there any data that shows the geographic dispersion of these employees? Will the contractor be required to provide on-site (at-home) support for all ERA participants within a defined local area? If so, how large of a coverage area will be required and how many ERA participants are located in this coverage area

A105: See response to Q74.

Q106: Section C.6.2.b - Please define (criteria used in determining the abandonment rate of 1%) what goes into determining the abandonment rate is?

A106: See response to Q37.

Q107: Does the call abandonment rate outlined in Section C.6.2.1 reflect unreturned abandons (calls that are returned do not count towards the abandonment rate)? Also, does the 20 seconds limit reflect the inclusion of an IVR script times?

A107: Yes, the abandonment rate reflects unreturned abandons. This additional information is not necessary to respond to the RFP.

Q108: Regarding Section C.6.4.1 will the USPTO perform Customer Quality Checks via an IVR or email system?

A108: This information is not necessary to respond to the RFP.

Q109: Section C.4.3.2 Will BMC Software provide on-going product support and development for Remedy throughout the contract period? What will the on-going development of Remedy now that Remedy now that it has been bought by BMC Software?

A109: This information is not necessary to respond to the RFP.

Q110: Section L.15 Can the schedule for the transition (Plan) period be included as a separate attachment? Would this count toward the 10 page technical proposal page count?

A110: No, it cannot be included as a separate attachment. Yes, the transition plan will count toward the 10 page technical proposal page count.

Q111: Section 5.3.1.1 "Calls are to be answered by a Help Desk agent within 1 minute." When does the 1 minute time begin – when the caller enters the hunt group for an agent or when a call is offered to the switch?

A111: This information is not necessary to respond to the RFP.

Q112: C.6.2.1 Item A: "Call wait to answer". Please expand and clarify item A if call volume exceed 600.

A112: This information is not necessary to respond to the RFP.

Q113: C.6.2.1 Item F. Does the four hours resolution time include all three tiers?

A113: Yes.

Q114: <u>Section C.3 USPTO Help Desk Services.</u>
Section C.3.1.2. How many USPTO personnel are located at the South Tower Building and USPTO HQ in Alexandria ?

A114: This information is not necessary to respond to the RFP. However, all USPTO personnel are included in the employee base described in Section C.2.2.

Q115: Section C.3.2.1. How many contacts come into the Electronic Business Support (EBS) via phone and e-mail?

A115: See response to Q40.

Q116: Section C.3.3.1. Does the 155,000 total change, service, and incidents logged per year include both the IT Help Desk and EBS Help Desk? Please provide the number of change, service, and incidents per help desk.

A116: This information is not necessary to respond to the RFP.

Q117: Section C.3.3.1. Approximately how many change, service, and incidents are handled by the Advanced Problem Resolution team per month or year?

A117: This information is not necessary to respond to the RFP.

Q118: Section 3. C.3.4.2. The work statement makes reference to Operational Support Plans. Does the USPTO have a fully defined Service Catalogue available to their customers? What % of total calls is escalated?

A118: This information is not necessary to respond to the RFP.

Q119: Please provide a work flow of incidents per hour of the day in order to determine proper staffing levels per shift.

A119: This information is not necessary to respond to the RFP.

Q120: <u>Section C.4.2.2.2 – Advanced Problem Resolution</u>.
Section C.4.2.2.2 indicates that members of the Advanced Problem Resolution team may perform a site visit to correct a problem at a customer's work location. Please explain the differentiation between responsibilities of the Advanced Problem Resolution team and the Desktop Support team described in the previous solicitation called End User Support Services.

A120: This will be addressed at the task order level.

Q121: Section C.4.2.2.12 indicates that the Advanced Problem Resolution team will perform all desktop upgrades and installations, including requests for more than ten desktop upgrades/installations at a time. Please explain the differentiation between responsibilities of the Advanced Problem Resolution team

and the Desktop Deployments described in the previous solicitation called End User Support Services.

A121: This will be addressed at the task order level.

Q122: <u>Section C.6.2 Service Level Agreements</u>.
Section C.6.2.1 - Call Abandonment Rate. The RFP states that "the contractor shall maintain a daily average of 1% or less after 20 seconds for call abandonment." Could the Government please clarify how call abandonment is measured? Are only those calls abandoned after 20 seconds included in the calculation?

A122: See response to Q37.

Q123: <u>General – Tools</u>.
What version of Remedy is currently in use?

A123: Remedy Version 6.0.

Q124: What tool and version is currently used to perform remote software installations and remote desktop support?

A124: This information is not necessary to respond to the RFP.

Q125: Does USPTO have an IVR system in place for the Help Desk, or do calls go into the queue immediately?

A125: No, USPTO Help Desk does not use an IVR system. Yes, calls go to the queue.

Q126: Section C.4.2.2.13. What is the Knowledge Base software used by the USPTO?

A126: This information is not necessary to respond to the RFP.

Q127: Section C.4.4.1.5. How are warm call transfers closed out in EAMS?

A127: This information is not necessary to respond to the RFP.

Q128: Section C.5.3.1.4. Is the contractor responsible for the ACD system set-up?

A128: No.

Q129: <u>General – Facilities</u>
Will office space be provided by USPTO for all three key positions (Program Manager, Help Desk Manager, and Advanced Problem Resolution Team Lead)?

A129: If onsite, yes space will be provided by the USPTO. If offsite, no, space will not be provided by the USPTO.

Q130: Sections C.7.5 and F.8 indicate the potential use of contractor facilities. What does USPTO anticipate contractor facilities will be needed for? Are there any restrictions on the proximity of contractor facilities to the USPTO campus?

A130: The Offeror will determine how the offsite will be utilized to meet the requirements in Section C and contract SLA's. Other than the restrictions set forth in Section C.7.5, there are no additional restrictions on the proximity of contractor facilities.

Q131: <u>Section L – Instructions</u>
Section L, Factor A indicates that the offeror must submit 5 reference contracts. Additionally subparagraph (d) indicates that a significant subcontractor must submit a Relevant Experience Worksheet. Is the correct interpretation of these instructions that the prime offeror must submit 5 Relevant Experience Worksheets (at least 3 of which must have 600 calls per day) while a significant subcontractor must additionally submit 1 Relevant Experience Worksheet? This is confusing due to Factor B clearly stating that a total of 5 references must be submitted, and 2 of the 5 references may be from significant subcontractors.

A131: The correct interpretation is that of the 5 required contract references, 1 of the references may be for a subcontractor that will perform a significant portion of the services, defined as 30% or more of the cost of performance. Therefore, if an Offeror chooses to subcontract a significant portion of the services, the Offeror must submit 5 references where at least 3 of the 5 references demonstrate the Offeror's experience in handling at least 600 calls per day and the remaining references must be for either the subcontractor or the Offeror. An Offeror complies with this requirement by submitting a Relevant Experience Worksheet(s). The Offeror must submit the same 5 references used for the Past Performance factor that was used for the Relevant Experience factor.

Q132: Section L, Factor C.b.2 states that teaming or subcontractor agreements must be included with the proposal. Does USPTO require the entire teaming or subcontractor agreement to be included, or just the Statement of Work? Are these agreements excluded from the page limit?

A132: Yes, USPTO requires the entire teaming agreement as a separate attachment to the Management Approach, which is excluded from the page limit.

Q133: Section L, Factor C.a states that "the Management Approach shall not exceed seven (7) pages in total, *inclusive of all Offeror attachments* (emphasis ours). However, resumes of Key Personnel … will not be included." In Sections L, Factor A.b.2 and c.1 the following attachments to the management plan are required: Copies of proposed teaming or subcontracting agreements, and the Service Level/Performance Metrics Worksheet (Attachment "2") for *each* (emphasis ours) SLA. Please note that the minimum SLAs found in Section C.6.2.1 alone would require 9 pages and exceed the page limits for this section. We request that all required attachments (Key personnel resumes and letters of intent, teaming agreements, and SLA Worksheets be excluded from the 7-page limit.

A133: That is correct.

Q134: Section L, Factor C.b.3 requires offerors to submit signed letters of intent for the proposed key personnel. Are these letters of intend excluded from the 2-page limit for resumes? Likewise, are the excluded from the 7 page limit for Management Approach? If they are not excluded from both of these limits, would the Government deem a signed statement indicating intent to perform as part of the resume (versus a separate letter) acceptable?

A134: Yes, the letters of intent are excluded from the page limit for resumes and the Management Approach.

Q135: In Section L.16.a.5 through 7, the Government states that characters per inch "shall not exceed twelve (12) characters per linear inch or be smaller than twelve (12) point; and "the font shall be Arial 12 pt,: and shall not exceed six (6) lines per vertical inch. Does this restriction apply to Exhibits (i.e., graphics and tables)? We request that a smaller font that retains and even enhances readability, such as Arial Narrow 10, be allowed for exhibits.

A135: Yes, the restriction applies to exhibits.

Q136: The government has requested significant amounts of information in both the management and technical approaches with stringent page limitations. With this in mind, would the Government kindly consider allowing the use of Times New Roman 12 rather than Arial 12 (with the concomitant increase in characters per vertical inch) as the text font?

A136: No.

Q137: We respectfully request a one week extension to the proposal due date in order to have time to incorporate USPTO's responses to our questions into our proposal.

A137: The proposal due date will not be extended.

Q138: Technical - Does the government require all contractors to be on site? Can support be done remotely (in-state, out of state, out of country by US legal residents)?

A138: No, the Government does not require all contractors to be on site. See Section C.7.5.

Q139: SOW - In C.1 Purpose, the future requirement synopsis states that HD Tier 1 and HD Tier 2 and 3 services will be awarded separately? Can this synopsis be updated, if still valid?

A139: The future requirement synopsis issued on 2/20/08 will not be updated or modified because it was only considered to be an <u>outline</u> of the <u>anticipated</u> approach for a number of upcoming and <u>potential future</u> requirements, and was not intended to be the actual synopsis for the Help Desk requirement. The initial synopses for the Tier 1 and Tier 2/3 requirements were issued on 2/29/08 and CANCELED on 5/1/08, and were then superceded by the final Help Desk synopsis also issued on 5/1/08 (which deleted the Tier 1 and Tier 2/3 requirements as well as the conflict of interest requirement).

Q140: Technical - Which group maintains the Remedy maintenance and customization?

A140: This information is not necessary to respond to the RFP.

Q141: Technical - Is there any Disaster/Recovery exercises anticipated in the scope of work?

A141: This information is not necessary to respond to the RFP.

Q142: RFP Section C.3.2 on page 7 - Due to the hours of operation (M-F, 05:30 am – 12:00 midnight; Saturday & Sunday 05:30 am – 10:00 pm; and Normal Operation during holidays), shifts will likely be required. Will shift differentials be applied for the daily and weekend shifts and how will we incorporate it into a single rate for each of the 3 Rate Category Columns (On-Site with & without furniture & Off-Site) as stated in 'Attachment 1 – Section B'??? Will this result in composite rates for the Labor Categories???

A142: No.

Q143: Will the prime be expected to bid the costs for CLIN 0003 (IT Security Implementation)?

A143: Yes.

Q144: Will the prime provide guidance on how subs should price onsite labor rates, without furniture and offsite rates? In other words, will subs be responsible for providing furniture and/or facilities? Can the subs assume these requirements will be fulfilled by the prime and propose onsite labor rates for all positions for all three columns—onsite labor rates, onsite labor rates without furniture, and offsite rates?

A144: Pricing is the prime's responsibility.

Q145: RFP section H.9 - Key Personnel are identified. An 'Advanced Problem Resolution Team Lead' is identified as key personnel. This Labor Category not specifically called out in 'Attachment 1 – Section B'. Is this Labor Category labeled with a different title in 'Attachment 1' or will a description for this category be provided?

A145: See response to Q23.

Q146: Reference Section L.15(b)—Factor E (page 73), Section 1(c) - The government encourages quantity discounts for labor rates for each labor category; however, the estimated annual hours provided by the government is by CLIN. Does the government intend to provide quantity estimates by labor category?

A146: No.

Q147: Will the prime provide guidance re: annual escalation factors?

A147: See response to Q144.

Q148: Will the prime provide guidance re: shift premiums?

A148: See response to Q144.

Q149: Section B

Page 3 - Clause B.4 – (d) and (e) - Material Handling Fee – It states that the contractor can propose material handling costs in accordance with offeror's usual practices; however, the next clause states that the material handling fee can not exceed 3%. Please clarify.

A149: The Offeror may propose material handling fee, not to exceed 3%.

Q150: Section C, Page 8 - Clause C.4 – C4.1-5 - What specific items will not be reimburseable [sic] under the contract?

A150: The only reimbursable item is USPTO specific software.

Q151: Section L, Page 72, Section L.15, Factor C - Management Approach, paragraph c.(i): Are the "Service Level/Performance Metrics Worksheets" (Attachment "2") that are required to be completed for each SLA and performance metric found in Section C.6.2.1 included in the seven (7) page total page count for the Management Approach? (Note: There appears to be at least a minimum of nine of these worksheets required.)

A151: See response to Q27.

Q152: Page 72, Section L.15, Factor C - Management Approach, paragraph c.(ii): Are the "Service Level/Performance Metrics Worksheets" (Attachment "2") that are required to be completed for each proposed additional performance measure and standard included in the seven (7) page total page count for the Management Approach?

A152: See response to Q27.

Q153: Page 74, Section L.16, paragraph a.2.: Can USPTO provide Attachments 2 through 4 in Microsoft Word 2003 format so that these can be completed and submitted as required?

A153: Yes, the documents are now available in Word on the USPTO Internet site.

Q154: We assume there is an extra "data access" in C.3.1.3

A154: Yes.

Q155: Re: C.4.1.1. How will the contractor receive notification of system changes? What is the responsibility of the contractor if the notification is not provided in time to meet the requirements of this section

A155: This information is not necessary to respond to the RFP.

Q156: Re: C.4.1.7. Are there any plans to change the USPTO provided Remedy System?

A156: This information is not necessary to respond to the RFP.

Q157: Re: C.4.1.10. Does "lockdown" refer to a physical lockdown of computing equipment or to a "lockdown" of a computer configuration

A157: Physical.

Q158: Re: C.4.2.2.8. Please define "baseline/cost center"

A158: This information is not necessary to respond to the RFP.

Q159: Re: C.4.2.2.10. Does the EUS contractor have any responsibilities with respect to the ERA process.

A159: This information is not necessary to respond to the RFP.

Q160: Re: L.15 Volume 1 Factor A

Please confirm that per the e(3) reference in paragraph d that the subcontractor experience is only required to demonstrate one (1) year experience with the customer

A160: Yes.

Q161: Re: L.15 Volume 1 Factor A
Are the subcontractor experience citations in addition to or as a substitute for the prime contractor experience citations

A161: See response to Q131.

Q162: Re: L.15 Volume 1 Factor B
If more than 5 experiences are provided in Factor A (prime and subcontractor experience) should the past performance section of the proposal reflect all the contracts cited in Factor A?

A162: Do not submit more than 5 references. See response to Q131.

Q163: Re: L.15 Volume 1 Factor C
Are the Service Level/Performance Metric Worksheets excluded from the page limitation for this Factor?

A163: See response to Q27.

Q164: How does USPTO arrive at 240,000 hours for the T&M support?

A164: This is the USPTO's independent Government estimate (IGE).

Q165: Re: B.4 Cost/Prices: Does the USPTO expect to see the Program Management support costs broken out in the cost volume or are they inclusive in the burdened rates as overhead?

A165: The Program Management support costs are inclusive in the burdened rates as overhead.

Q166: Please clarify: ODC material handling, if included, is capped at 3%, regardless of the language in B.4.d regarding "all appropriate indirect costs".

A166: Yes, the material handling rate, if proposed, is not to exceed 3%.

Q167: If a material handling rate is included, how will it be evaluated?

A167: Material handling rates will not be used for evaluation purposes, but if a contract is awarded to the Offeror and materials are later identified, it will be utilized in any applicable task orders. See response to Q166.

Q168: C.2.3: This section indicates that the 1200 user increase will begin in FY2006. Does the 10,000 users included this staffing increase or is that additive beginning this year or next?

A168: This information is not necessary to respond to the RFP.

Q169: Is the support for EBS customers done via on-call (pager, cell, pda) or is this support staffed 24x7 in the helpdesk facility?

A169: Currently, support for EBS is staffed 24x7 in the helpdesk facility.

Q170: As contractor-provided facilities are included in the cost volume by the burdened rates, should there be any discussion elsewhere as to the location and quality of those facilities that will be evaluated?

A170: Yes.

Q171: Are the supplies, tools, and equipment required in C4.1.5 at the contractors [sic] discretion or is there a minimum list of expected items that the contractor will need to provide (and, therefore, cost) in the response?

A171: This is at the Offerors discretion.

Q172: Section F.4 discusses USPTO Holidays and contractor requirements for staffing on those Holidays. This conflicts with C3.2.1 regarding Holidays. Please clarify.

A172: See response to Q72.

Q173: H.3 Insurance coverage: Is any travel outside of the Washington, DC Metro area anticipated that would require the Automobile and Aircraft liability coverage?

A173: The USPTO does not currently anticipate that Help Desk personnel will make deliveries; however, the USPTO expects an Offeror to maintain adequate insurance appropriate for the applicable line of business that the Offeror is in.

Q174: Key Personnel: Which labor categories in the price volume correspond to these Key Personnel titles as only Help Desk Manager is in both places? Should we provide a cross-reference for these roles?

A174: See response to Q23.

Q175: Is the Program Manager a direct-bill position?

A175: See response to Q23.

Q176: Does the fixed-price C&A cost proposal only apply if an off-site facility is required?

A176: No, this applies to both.

Q177: Question: Attachment 1 - Schedule B states that the Help Desk Manager must hold ITIL Certifications (Foundation and Service Manager). Is the Service Manager certification required upon proposal submission or can we provide verification that it will be in place prior to contract start date? It also states that the Service Manager hold 1 or more Microsoft certifications preferably MCSE or equivalent. Typically these certifications are held by the technical staff and not the managerial staff. What would you consider equivalent for a management position?

A177: Yes, evidence of required certifications must be provided in the Offeror's proposal. The Help Desk Manager's resume must demonstrate that the individual holds a current ITIL certification upon proposal submission. Verification that the certification will be in place prior to contract start date is not acceptable. Yes, we will consider high level technical certifications such as MCSE, CCNE, and NCSE.