

## RFP Questions and Clarifications Memorandum

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**To:** Vendors Responding to RFP Number 3610 for the Mississippi Department of Information Technology Services (ITS)

**From:** David L. Litchliter

**Date:** February 25, 2010

**Subject:** Responses to Questions Submitted and Clarifications to Specifications

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The following questions were submitted to ITS and are being presented as they were submitted, except to remove any reference to a specific vendor. This information should assist you in formulating your response.

**Question 1: Page 12, Paragraph 13.5 – “Vendor Personnel”.**

Given the nature of the RFP which is to identify companies who can provide specific skill sets on a case-by-case basis for individual agencies’ statements of work, please elaborate on the definition of a “project” as it is used in this paragraph. Is the overall Master Security Consulting Services Agreement the “project”, or are the individual engagements with their individual statements of work each considered to be a “project”?

**Response: The individual engagements with their individual statements of work would each be considered a “project”.**

**Question 2: Section III, Item 13.5**

The personnel assigned to a project will remain a part of the project throughout the duration of the contract as long as the personnel are employed by the Vendor. Please clarify if this pertains to each individual Letter of Configuration which is different for each project, or if it’s true for the contract represented by the overall Master Security Consulting Services Agreement?

**Response:** **Section III, Item 13.5 pertains to the individual projects that result from State agencies seeking security consulting services via RFP No. 3610.**

**Question 3:** Item 20 (page 19) states that “All references in the RFP to “Vendor” shall be construed to encompass both the Vendor and its subcontractors”. Subsequently, in Section X – item 3-Subcontractors states – “The Vendor must note that the same requirements found in the References section apply to subcontractors.” In instances where the company references are associated with projects worked in partnership with a subcontractor, can the subcontractor use the same references as the primary respondent?

**Response:** **Yes.**

**Question 4:** **Section VIII, Item 2.3 – “General Overview and Background”.**

This paragraph says EPL clients will place their own purchase orders directly with EPL Vendors. Will each client be responsible for making payments to the Vendor(s), or will payment be made by the Department of Information Technology Services (ITS)?

**Response:** **ITS EPL clients are responsible for making their own payments to the Vendor(s).**

**Question 5:** **Section VIII, Item 2.6 – “General Overview and Background”.**

Is the overall requirement to provide resumes at the time of RFP submission, or, as is indicated in this paragraph (e.g., Section VIII Paragraph 2.6), are resumes only required for the follow-on support projects which are granted on a case-by-case basis?

**Response:** **Resumes are required both at the time of proposal submission for RFP No. 3610, and if requested by the customer, for each project initiated by a particular agency.**

**Question 6:** Beginning Page 44 under section IX, Cost Information Submission, the section labeled Security Alerting Services. We would like some additional information on how ITS views a “Security Alerting Service”.

- Is this a service WITHIN the ITS environment that needs staffing?
- Is this a service in which ITS would like to subscribe to?
- Is this a service in which ITS wants to know about security status “In the Wild”?
- Is this a service in which ITS wants to know about the security status within the ITS environment?
- Is this a service that ITS would like to build with outside staff?

**Response:** **Security Alerting Services provide the customer timely updates on virus outbreaks, threats and/or vulnerabilities that exist in their network from various sources and information on how to mitigate these risks.**

**Question 7: Section IX – Cost Information Submission**

Will the State consider accepting various rate levels based on different job titles for the individual Function/Expertise components (i.e. Security Architect = \$150 / hour, Security Engineer=\$100 / hour)?

**Response: No; The State believes that Vendors should evaluate each Security Function and determine the level of expertise required in most instances. If Vendors are in doubt, Vendors should propose the higher level of expertise. As State agencies contact Vendors with Security Consulting needs, Vendors will have an opportunity to better assess the needs of a particular project and at that time may propose a lower level of expertise if appropriate.**

**Question 8: Section IX – Cost Information Submission**

Would the State consider fully managed services in regards to the Security Alerting Services areas? If so, could the pricing reflect a different pricing model as opposed to a fully-loaded hourly rate (i.e. pricing per site and per administrative user)?

**Response: No; Please see the response to Question Number 6 for the State’s definition of Security Alerting Services. The information provided in the Security Consulting Services EPL will be used by agencies and institutions that vary in size. Information regarding specific sites and/or number of users will not be known until agencies initiate a project; therefore, Vendors must submit a fully-loaded hourly rate.**

**Question 9:** The last sentence of Article 26 on page 62 of RFP 3610 states “It is understood by the parties that the Contractor cannot perform security assessment services for customers in situations where the Customer and the Contractor have a pre-existing network business relationship”. In our judgment, the definition of “pre-existing network business relationship” is subject to broad and varied interpretations that would (in many cases) exclude vendors in situations in which no conflict of interest exists.

Will ITS replace the aforementioned sentence with the following suggested sentence for the RFP specifications? Our suggested replacement sentence is: “It is understood by the parties that the Contractor cannot perform security assessment services for Customer accounts in which the Contractor provided design and implementation services for the Customer’s current network security solution.”

**Response: No; Refer to RFP No. 3610, Section VIII, 8.2.1. Beyond the referenced requirement, it is ultimately the state agency/entity’s responsibility to make a business decision to appropriately separate the work of managing and operating their technology infrastructure from the work of assessing the same. Awarded Vendors for RFP No. 3610 that are also awarded Vendors**

**for RFP No. 3606 are encouraged to have conversations with their customer agencies to understand how the customer agency plans to separate these functions.**

RFP responses are due March 5, 2010, at 3:00 p.m. (Central Time).

If you have any questions concerning the information above or if we can be of further assistance, please contact Donna Hamilton at 601-359-9613 or via email at [donna.hamilton@its.ms.gov](mailto:donna.hamilton@its.ms.gov).

cc: ITS Project File Number 38242