

RFP Questions and Clarifications Memorandum

To: Vendors Responding to RFP Number 3612 for the Mississippi Department of Information and Technology Services (ITS)

From: David L. Litchliter

Date: July 19, 2010

Subject: Responses to Questions Submitted and Clarifications to Specifications

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RFP Number 3612 is hereby amended as follows:

1. Title page, INVITATION is modified as follows:

INVITATION: Sealed proposals, subject to the attached conditions, will be received at this office until July 26, 2010 @ 3:00 p.m. Central Time for the acquisition of the products/services described below for Mississippi Department of Information and Technology Services.

2. Title page, third box is modified as follows:

<p style="text-align: center;">PROPOSAL, SUBMITTED IN RESPONSE TO RFP NO. 3612 DUE July 26, 2010 @ 3:00 p.m., ATTENTION: Donna Hamilton</p>
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3. Section VIII, Technical Specifications, Item 2.1 is being modified as follows:

2.1 The Mississippi Department of Information Technology Services is seeking proposals from qualified Vendors to provide security hardware and software products, and related installation and configuration services for the wide area, local area and other

network based systems used by **ITS** and its customers (state agencies and entities). The objective of this RFP is to provide a tool for the acquisition of security hardware and software that will allow **ITS** and its customers to incorporate their desired security measures within their network and systems infrastructure. Vendors should focus on proposing security solutions that cannot be purchased under the \$50,000 two-quote limit (\$25,000 for ARRA funded projects).

4. Section VIII, Technical Specifications, Item 4 Procurement Project Schedule is amended as follows:

Task	Date
Deadline for Questions Answered and Posted to ITS Web Site	July 19, 2010
Open Proposals	July 26, 2010
Evaluation of Proposals	7/26/10 – 8/13/10
Contract Negotiation	8/16/10 – 9/3/10

5. Section VIII, Technical Specifications, Item 8.4.2 is deleted and replaced with sub item 8.4.1.1:

8.4.1.1 Alternatively, Vendor may show they have the financial ability to provide products and services of at least \$100,000.00 by the following:

8.4.1.1.1 Vendor must provide a letter of credit from its major supplier or distributor or banker or other guarantor(s) showing available credit for EPL purchases up to at least \$100,000.00.

8.4.1.1.2 Credit letters may be from multiple sources, for instance a \$50,000 credit level from your bank and a \$50,000 level from your distributor.

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: Sect VIII.5, Item 5.1.11

How does ITS define Data Loss Prevention?

Response: Systems that monitor and protect information/data during transactions, transport and at rest to prevent unauthorized access, modification, use or abuse of that information/data.

Question 2: Section IX, Cost Information Submission.

RFP 3612's Cost Submission Spreadsheet includes a column for "Category" (1-Firewall, etc.) and a "MFG #" column for a single manufacturer's part number for that solution. Some manufacturer's security solutions meet multiple category requirements depending on the options selected for the base hardware.

For example, here is a partial paste from Cisco's web site for some of Cisco's "Security" offerings: Email and Web Security (Cisco ASA Content Security and Control (CSC) Security Services Module); Network Security (Cisco ASA 5500 Series Adaptive Security Appliance and Cisco ASA Advanced Inspection and Prevention (AIP) Security Services Module); Secure Mobility (Cisco ASA 5500 Series SSL/IPsec VPN Edition); etc.

This "paste" not only provides an example of a single base hardware product (the ASA) that can be applicable to multiple 3612 security categories, but it also provides an example of how multiple manufacturer part numbers may be needed to supply a complete solution. In the example of the ASA, some customers may want to purchase an ASA bundle to meet a particular security need, and in other cases, a customer may want to purchase an ASA security option to make their existing single-purpose ASA into a multi-purpose ASA.

One suggested solution to this problem would be to allow vendors to price individual components that comprise a bundle as well as the bundle total with the customer having the option of purchasing the bundle or purchasing an individual component from the bundle.

Another suggested solution to this problem would be change 3612 into a category bid with a percentage off each manufacturer's security subcategory, i.e. X% off Cisco Ironport; X% off Cisco Security Products (excluding Ironport); X% off Cisco SmartNET for Cisco Security Products, etc.

- a. What is the best way (on the Cost Submission Spreadsheet) for vendors to reference a product that meets multiple category requirements and for which multiple part numbers are required to provide a complete working solution?
- b. What is the best way for vendors to reference a security "add on option" on the Cost Submission to be used with a product that a customer already has?
- c. How should vendors include products for one category on the Cost Submission which are dependent on another product in a separate category on the Cost Submission?

Response: The initial release of the Security Hardware and Software EPL is considered a pilot and the State will reevaluate the number of product lines allowed for the next release. In order to assist Vendors concerned about the 300 line limitation, ITS suggests that Vendors not list every tier package. For instance, there is a ten-pack of a product, a fifty-pack, and a single pack. List the single pack as a not-to-exceed cost. If the customer wants a quantity discount and orders a quantity of 100, the Vendor would give them the 100 tier package price at the time of sale. Similarly, if a Vendor wants to list a product that comes with several non-cost (\$0) line items but is concerned with exceeding the 300 line limit, then the Vendor should add a comment to the Description column indicating that the Agency should check with the Vendor regarding subordinate parts at the time of ordering.

- a. Vendors may utilize the Description column to add information that would be helpful in describing the particular product offering; however, Vendors should limit the number of characters per cell to 250 characters. Vendors must indicate that a product meets multiple categories by listing all the applicable codes in the Category column separated by a comma. In cases where a solution may be purchased as a bundle, Vendors may list that bundle separately and identify it as a bundle. If a particular bundle can be broken up and purchased as separate products, then Vendors should also list each product separately.
- b. The intent of the Security Hardware and Software EPL is to provide a procurement vehicle for agencies to purchase Security Hardware and Software products. Customers are still responsible for researching purchases and Vendors should advise customers regarding product features. Vendors may add a reasonable amount of information, up to 250 characters, in the Description column to describe associated products or features.
- c. If the products are dependent on each other, they should be listed together, even if they are listed in both categories. Vendors may add a reasonable amount of information in the Description column to describe associated products or features.

Question 3: Exhibit A - Standard Contract and Exhibit B - Standard Contract, Item 8.6

RFP 3612 Exhibit A Item 8.6 requires the minimum warranty period term to be one-year. The 3612 Cost Submission sheet allows a space for a single manufacturer's part number for each part # quoted, but the single part numbers for Cisco security products (i.e. ASA, Ironport, NAC, MARS, etc.) only provides for a 90 day warranty. Should vendors itemize the cost of each component of a "bundle" for such products (as well as a bundle total) so that the bundle includes both hardware and a 1-year 9X5XNBD SmartNET warranty upgrade? If so,

would customers have the option of deleting the cost of the 9X5XNBD warranty and adding the cost of better warranty SKU (i.e. 24X7X4-hour SmartNET, etc.)?

Response: Vendors should list each maintenance option separately. Vendors may utilize the Description column to add a reasonable amount of information to describe the particular product. The Manufacturer Part Number Column may have more than one part number listed, separated by a “plus” (+) symbol. The table below provides an example. In this scenario, the base product includes 1st year next business day maintenance, which makes it meet specifications, but the customer could back out the \$123 NBD maintenance and substitute the higher 4 hour response time maintenance.

Product Name/Description	CAT*	MFG #	Manufacturer	License Type	List Price	Discount %	Cost to State
Product ABC; includes 1 st Year Smartnet XYZ @ \$123 MSRP	1	ABC + XYZ	CISCO		\$3000 + \$123	35%	\$2030
Smartnet 1-year 9x5xNBD	1	XYS	CISCO		\$123	35%	\$80
Smartnet 1-year 24x7x4	1	QRS	CISCO		\$210	35%	\$153

Question 4: Exhibit A and Exhibit B, Item 8.6

Will ITS delete the phrases “arising out of or” and “performance of or” from RFP 3612 “Exhibit A” ARTICLE 20? In our judgment, this language modification would place liability on the Vendor only if the Vendor is at fault for damages, not if a Vendor simply supplied a product and damages were caused by operator error, warranty-covered equipment failure, etc.

Response: No.

RFP responses are due July 26, 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.

cc: ITS Project File Number 38243