

Questions and Question Submitted for the Draft RFP

Contract: G14PS00153

- 1. Question:** Section L.17, p.64: Period of Performance (PoP) start is stated as 5/30/2020. PoP is elsewhere identified as 6/1/2015. Please clarify.

Government's Response: It is anticipated that the Period of Performance will begin 5/1/2015.

- 2. Question:** Section L.25, Factor D: Cost/Price Proposal pages 70-71: Item #5 contains instructions to provide buildup for hourly rates through fee. Shall these rates including fee be designed for FFP or CPFF Task Order pricing? This statement also refers to ODCs, which would not be cost into hourly rates. Please clarify the intent of instruction #5.

Government's Response: The Government would like the offeror to build up for hourly rates through the fee on CPFF orders and profit on FFP orders. ODCs should reflect any fees/rates that are applied to these items.

- 3. Question:** Section L.25, Factor D: Cost/Price Proposal pages 70-71: Instructions 7-10 are cost proposals for FFP and CPFF tasks referring to breakdowns detailed in #5. Since these contract types vary, should they be using the developed hourly rates from #5? Or built up individually, disclosing the same elements of cost as #5. (also, it appears this section should be referencing #5, but it references #4)

Government's Response: Yes. See the RFP for changes.

- 4. Question:** Section L.25, Factor E: Small Business Subcontracting Plan page 72: The web address <http://rfuAMES.sc.doe.gov/> does not appear to be a live address. Please provide correct link.

Government's Response: This website is no longer available. For information regarding small business activities within the Department of the Interior small, please go to: <http://www.doi.gov//pmb/osdbu/index.cfm>.

- 5. Question:** Section L.26, GS2182 Price Proposal Instructions pages 72-73: Indicates that submission of detailed cost or pricing data is not required. Does this contradict the requirement to furnish supporting cost buildup information stated elsewhere in section L?

Government's Response: Section L.26 will be removed for the RFP.

- 6. Question:** Section L.27 b.2, Cost Proposal Preparation Instructions pages 73-74: Indirect Costs - in the event that a Forward Pricing Rate Proposal is the most recent rate basis, is that an acceptable document to mitigate the requirement to supply the stated computations? We typically operate under a Forward Pricing Rate Recommendation, which would otherwise be acceptable, but this proposal may occur during a period when we are under a FPRP vs. FPRR.

Government's Response: Yes

7. **Question:** Section L.27, Cost Proposal Preparation Instructions pages 73-74: Shall L.27 be repeated for Transition and each of the 3 Sample Task Orders? Or may duplicate supporting data be provided only once to prevent unnecessary repetition?

Government's Response: Please supply this data only once.

8. **Question:** Section M.1, GS2301 Single Award page 75: M.1 page 75 indicates the sum of all Section B priced items will constitute total evaluated price, but Section B only includes fill-ins for indirect rate ceilings. Please clarify the specific elements which will be summed to yield total evaluated price.

Government's Response: Please see updated clause.

9. **Question:** Section M.6, Vol II Factor D: Cost/Price Proposal page 79: The text states that "total price for all contract years" will be evaluated. It is not evident how this value will be determined. It also states that total price for all years will be added to the total price for the basic award, which appears to double-count the first contract year. Please clarify.

Government's Response: Please see updated clause.

10. **Question:** Section M.6 Vol II Factor E: Small Business Subcontracting Plan page 80: The text states a SB goal of 25%, which is significantly lower than the incumbent value stated in L.25 of 44%. For these values, please clarify if they are % of subcontracted dollars, or % of total contract value.

Government's Response: The subcontracting goal for this contract is 25% of the total contract value for each year of performance.

11. **Question:** Section C.4.6, page 11: The text states that EROS Communications and Outreach activities include, "ensuring those publications, reports, brochures, videos, and other EROS communications." What is being ensured regarding those publications? Is the contractor required to ensure that the information is accurate and approved by Government sponsors?

Government's Response: See the RFP for correction.

12. **Question:** Section L.24, Factor C, Page 70: The text states that past performance information is required of each contract reference cited in Factor G. There is no Factor G. Should this be Factor F?

Government's Response: See the RFP for correction.

13. **Question:** Sections B-M: The file "Draft Solicitation - Sections B-M.pdf" is not searchable. Will the government please provide the final solicitation in a searchable pdf format?

Government's Response: Yes.

14. **Question:** Section L.24, Sub-Factor B-2 page 69: Skills Resource Management: The text states, "The process for effectively and efficiently managing the assignment of technical skilled staff to tasks. An allocation of staff using the skills matrix, requested above, is required for each representative task in

sub-factor A-2.” Does the government want the staffing allocation for the sample tasks to be discussed in this section? Or in the sample task section A-2? Or both?

Government’s Response: Staffing allocation for the sample tasks should be discussed in A-2.

15. Question: Sample Task 3, Ba) c. iii, page 4: Research and Applications Branch Sample – Statement of Objectives: The text states “Assist with the reprocessing of 8 and 20 “ What do the “8 and 20” refer to?

Government’s Response: See the Sample Task 3 for correction. LIDAR datasets vary in size; thus the wide goal of 8 to 20. If reprocessing the larger datasets, the goal reached may be closer to 8. If reprocessing smaller datasets, the goal reached may be closer to 20.

16. Question: Section L.23 Table, Volume I, Factor B, Management Plan, Key Positions, page 66; Factor B, Sub-Factor B-1, page 69: The Table allows a 2-page limit for each resume; second bullet on page 69 requires resumes and signed statements of availability as attachments to proposal. Please clarify that the signed statements of availability are outside the 2-page resume limit.

Government’s Response: The signed statements of availability can be included within the resume or ONE (1) separate page.

17. Question: Sample Task 1, Section V, A., page 2, Landsat Development Task Statement of Objectives: The text states that the Government will provide all property necessary for the execution of work performed on-site at the EROS Center.

a. Can we assume all hardware and software, i.e. compilers, databases, and storage and archive technologies are to be provided by the Government? If so, please provide the list of baseline hardware and software, which will be available to support this Sample Task.

Government’s Response: Yes. The current Landsat 8 Ingest Subsystem includes: two (2) Dell PowerEdge R900 servers, Oracle as the database manager, and several additional COTS products (ODBC, Qt 4, Perl, General Cartographic Transformation Package (GCTP), GNU Scientific Library (GSL), Hierarchical Data Format v5 (HDF5), Naval Observatory Vector Astrometry Subroutines (NOVAS)-C, Object Description Language (ODL)). However, this is expected to be a new development and will not necessarily use the same equipment or software. The Offerors should assume equipment and software will be available and not be priced/costed as part of this task. The Offeror should include any assumptions about specific hardware and software as part of the task plan and/or basis of estimate.

b. Also, for external services, i.e. Cloud, SaaS, etc., can we assume that the Government will grant a waiver?

Government’s Response: Yes. Assume this system is an internal EROS system (i.e., not part of the Cloud, SaaS, etc.).

c. Where may we obtain a copy of the USGS LSDS Technology Control Plan (TCP)?

Government's Response: The LSIDS Technology Control Plan is not necessary as part of Sample Task 1 and will be deleted from the task.

18. Question: Section H-3, Compliance with Subcontracting Limitations, pages 27 and 41: Compliance with FAR 52.219-14 Limitations on Subcontracting; is this clause applicable since this procurement is not a set-aside?

Government's Response: This clause has been removed.

19. Question: Section L-17, Estimated Award Date, page 64: The estimated award date for this acquisition is June 1, 2015 with a period of performance to begin May 30, 2020. Did USGS mean "with a period of performance to end May 30, 2020"?

Government's Response: This should read, "The estimated award date for this acquisition is May 1, 2015 with a period of performance to begin no later than July 1, 2015."

20. Question: Section L-1, Clauses Incorporated by Reference, page 59: FAR 52.222-46 -- The RFP incorporates 52.222-46 Evaluation of Compensation for Professional Employees. This clause requires the submission of a Total Compensation Plan. However, there is no instruction in the RFP for the inclusion of the TCP in any of the volumes. What is the Government's instruction on the submission of a TCP?

Government's Response: The Evaluation of Compensation for Professional Employees has been added to the RFP and is now Factor G.

21. Question: Section L-15, Factor D. Cost/Price Proposal, Item 15, page 71: 'Proof of an approved accounting system and an approved purchasing system.' -- The requirement for an approved purchasing system will restrict the pool of offerors significantly because the work performed on this contract does not require the level of purchasing activity which normally triggers the need for a deemed adequate purchasing system. We ask that the Government limit this requirement to state 'Proof of an approved accounting system.'

Government's Response: No. Section L-25, Factor D, Item 15 - Proof of an approved accounting system and approved purchasing system will be necessary for this requirement. The vendor is often requested to purchase equipment, software, and maintenance licensing, etc., on behalf of the Government under delineated task orders.

22. Question: Section L-23, GS2150 Proposal Format and Submission Instructions, page 65: Proposals shall be submitted in three volumes Did USGS mean two volumes, as indicated in the table on page 65?

Government's Response: Yes. See the RFP for correction.

23. Question: Section L-23, Volume 1: Technical Proposal Format, page 65: Volume II (page 66) requires you to provide a Cover Letter & Introductory Narrative, but Volume 1 had no such requirement. Please confirm you do not want a cover letter for Volume 1.

Government's Response: No, Cover Letter or Introductory Narrative is required for Volume I.

24. Question: Section L-23, A-2.2, L-23 Proposal Format and Submission Instructions, A-2.2: Sample Task 1 – Landsat Next Task (CPFF), page 65: Sample Task 1: Landsat Development, A-2.2, Task Plan 10 Pages, Representative Deliverable 10 pages -- The page limit for these items is 10 pages. Please verify you expect a 10-page response to Sample Task 1, in addition to a 10 page Representative Plan or should they both be contained in a 10 page document?

Government's Response: The Task Plan shall be no longer than 10 pages. The Offeror is allowed an additional 10 pages for Representative Deliverables (as outlined in the Sample Task 1 Statement of Objective, Part III – Performance Objectives).

25. Question: Section L-23, Volume I: Technical Proposal Format, page 66: B-1: 2 page limits on each resume, B-2: 15 pages (plus up to 10 pages additional for position descriptions) -- Please clarify that the total page count for B-1 and B-2 is 15, excluding the pages for resumes and position descriptions.

Government's Response: Correct. Factor B – 15 pages. Plus resumes – 2 pages each (plus and additional page each for signed statement of availability if not included with the resume – see question #16). Plus position descriptions – 10 pages.

26. Question: Section L-24, Factor C: Past Performance Information, page 70: The second line of Bullet refers Factor G. Did USGS mean Factor F?

Government's Response: See question #12.

27. Question: Section L.25, Factor E: Small Business Subcontracting Plan, page 72: For information purposes, the Small Business Subcontracting Plan goals and achievements of the incumbent contractor are available for review on the website <http://rfpAMES.sc.doe.gov>. This link is broken; can you please provide the information?

Government's Response: See question #4.

28. Question: Sample Task Order 3, CoNED – LCMAP Attachment V, Performance Objectives, #3, pg 2: “3. As required and needed, provide media service support?” -- Can you be more specific about the type of media or frequency of the support needed?

Government's Response: Some examples for media services support include the following: 1) high-end graphic creation, 2) report-document layout assistance, 3) poster printing and framing, and 4) poster development support. Media services support is typically on-demand so the frequency varies

quite a bit. In a typical year, we might submit 4-5 work order requests to media services with most of the work falling in the poster realm.

29. Question: Task 3 Reference Document Coastal National Elevation Database (CoNED): The link to this task is broken in the reference library.

Government's Response: This link is now available.

30. Question: Transition-In Sample Statement of Objectives, V.F, page 2: Quality Assurance Plan and Performance Metrics for the transition -- A QAP and metrics are listed in the SOO. Are they part of the 10-page limit?

Government's Response: No. The 10-page Task Plan should outline the approach for meeting the performance objectives in the Statement of Objectives and the instructions in L.24, Factor A-2.1. The selected Offeror will provide any deliverables per the Transition-in Task and F.11.1.

31. Question: Section F.11, Transition Plans, page 20: "The contractor shall complete all phase-in efforts in accordance with the approved transition plan ... and be prepared to being performance immediately and to be completed no later than ten (10) calendar days after award." -- The Weekly Status Report during the phase-in is not due until the 20th calendar day following award? Can USGS please clarify?

Government's Response: See the RFP for correction.

32. Question: Sample Task 1, Section II, page 2: For estimating purposes, the contractor should assume the same mission data format as Landsat 8 (see LDCM-DFCB-001) Mission Data for DFCB for the data format to assume). Can the USGS place this document in the technical library since it is referenced in the Sample Task?

Government's Response: The document identifier has changed to LSDS-749 and is included as a reference document. The text in the task will be edited from, "... (see LDCM-DFCB-001 Mission Data DFCB..." to "...(see LSDS-749 Landsat 8 (L8) Mission Data Format Control Book (DFCB)..."

33. Question: Section D.3, FACTOR D: COST/PRICE PROPOSAL, page 70: "Cost breakdown to include loaded and unloaded labor rates per labor category, indirect costs (G&A, overhead, fringe benefits, material handling, etc.)..." -- Will the Government provide labor category descriptions and staffing levels for producing pricing for the cost plus contract? If not, can the Government provide guidance for making estimations?

Government's Response: No. It is up to the Offeror to provide the staffing levels and labor categories necessary for this requirement.

34. Question: Section F.11, Transition-In Task SOO, page 20: Transition-In Task (page 1) – Please clarify duration of transition period. F.11 refers to 10 calendar day completion – we believe this is referring to the transition plan itself and not the transition activities? The Transition-In Task refers to a two

month period of performance, yet also states that the Contract Award is in May 2015 and performance begins June 2015. Does the Government intend for the Transition-In period to overlap the beginning of contract performance?

Government's Response: Yes. The final transition plan is due no later than ten (10) days after contract award. The planned contract award date is May 1, 2015. The transition-in period will begin at that time. The transition-in period may overlap with the beginning of contract performance on many tasks. Task performance will begin as task plans are completed and approved. All initial task plans shall begin no later than July 1, 2015.

35. Question: Section L.25, Business Management Proposal Instruction, page 71: Items 7, 8, 9 and 10 refer to paragraph #4. Does the government intend for these sections to refer to paragraph #5?

Government's Response: Yes. See the RFP for correction.

36. Question: Section 5.2, Sample Task Order #2, page 4: To help in sizing the maintenance organization, can the government provide data on number of SW discrepancies opened and closed/resolved per year and also the current open list of SW discrepancies? Or applicable workload historical data?

Government's Response:

Software discrepancies –

- A) Release 8.2 from Raytheon (NASA Contractor for ECS) had 150
- B) LP DAAC ERB – 1,000 tickets per year average

New Since Last Meeting

- 3504996 Schedule Modification for ASTER/MODIS Timeline
- 3504997 L1BE data available back to 2011 in Data Pool
- 3504998 Please install Visio on my machine
- 3504999 Setup a VM proxy/loadbalancer in the DMZ
- 3505000 OPS:External Web: Post news announcement for 2nd SRTMGL1 release
- 3505001 DAAC2Disk updates and feedback
- 3505002 Add Data in Action Story on Permafrost to the website
- 3505003 John needs COTS pkgs installed
- 3505004 Move SRTM data for Sheri to implement in GDEx
- 3505005 MRTWeb: Take Pride in America logo
- 3505006 Modify DAACSAN Brocade Switch Zone Configuration to allow access to new RAID unit DAACSAN3.
- 3505007 DAAC2Disk Web GUI error messages
- 3505008 Install docker on e5dal02
- 3505009 Need Visio installed on Strande's laptop
- 3505010 VM Setup Request
- 3505011 Generate Browse for SRTMIMG and SRTMIMGR
- 3505012 Install Visio request for Dawn S.

- 3505013 EMS Distribution by Host metrics - resolve by country
- 3505014 Drupal: Drupal core and module updates available
- 3505015 OPS:User Services:Broken Link in Kayako auto-reply email
- 3505016 S4PM: Cannot send mail
- 3505017 ASTER GED Data Issues
- 3505018 Schedule Modification for NASA SRTM 3.0 Phase 2
- 3505019 Post downtime message to MRTWeb & AESICS and then remove after PM completes
- 3505020 Modify LMdiE to replace FTP calls with REST calls for ECHO ingest
- 3505021 GDex: Remove unnecessary map layers from Geoserver

37. Question: Section 5.3, Sample Task Order #2, page 4: Under suggested activities, the Government references "one major and 3 minor releases per year". Can the Government quantify or define what a major release consists of vs a minor release? This data is needed in order to adequately size the organization. Also, maintain multiple test environments (TS2 and TS1), can you provide information on the test hardware and software?

Government's Response: One major release for the core system from Raytheon (NASA ECS Contractor maintaining the core system). Major = grouping of many tickets or a significant single upgrade or migration. Minor – bug fixes or minor configuration changes.

The LPDAAC had 30+ DAAC Unique Extensions that support the ECS core, but are maintained at the LPDAAC, not by Raytheon.

Test environment is GFE and similar to the operational system. They are different modes to assure adequate testing.

38. Question: Section 5.2, Sample Task Order #2, page 4: Would the government provide the current PMI schedules for all equipment which is part of the TSSC RFP? This data is needed to adequately size the organization.

Government's Response: Routine patching of system software, such as OS and COTS, occur on a weekly basis. Following approval by the project configuration change board (CCB), new releases of project systems also occur as a part of routine maintenance. Exceptions to the weekly process are possible, especially in the case of security patches.

39. Question: Section 5.2, Sample Task Order #2, page 4: Would the government provide data on the number of HW discrepancies opened and closed/resolved per year and also the current open list of HW discrepancies? Or applicable workload historical data? This data is needed to adequately size the organization.

Government's Response: Less than 5 drive failures per month for ~4 PB of disk from NASA. Internal DUE hardware is refreshed every 5 years or so. ECS is refreshed from the EED (NASA/Raytheon contractor) may be a 100 tickets or so per year.

40. Question: Section 5.5, Sample Task Order #2, page 5: Can the government provide detailed data on any/all downtime experienced over the past 3 years? This data may determine an approach for conducting maintenance and systems administration.

Government's Response: Routine downtime – Wednesdays; nominally 4 hours per week. The LPDAAC is trying to significantly reduce this planned downtime. Some unplanned downtime due to electric/cooling may be 1 or 2 per year.

41. Question: Section J.1, Section J, Attachment B Government Furnished Property / Material, page 50: J.1 references Attachment B contains 64 pages. The Attachment B provided in the draft RFP is only 1 page. Can the government please validate if the complete GFP/M list is complete?

Government's Response: Attachment B in the draft RFP is a summary of the GFP/M. A complete itemized list with serial numbers for each item will be included in the final contract.

42. Question: Section L.27, Section L. Cost Proposal Preparation Instructions, page 73: The RFP requires the submission of a Standard Form 1411. This form is obsolete. Is there another form that should be submitted in its place?

Government's Response: Please see correction in RFP.

43. Question: Section L.27, Section L. Cost Proposal Preparation Instructions, page 74: The government has defined a significant subcontractor as "performing at least 20% of the total proposed labor hours", but in section L.27 b. Individual Cost Elements (5) Subcontracts, the government is asking for detailed subcontractor cost in the same format at the prime for 25 % of the estimated contract value or \$25,000 whichever is less. Please note \$25,000 is less than the simplified threshold value of \$650,000. Can the government please validate the threshold value of which the subcontractor's detailed cost information is required?

Government's Response: See updated RFP.

44. Question: The NASA Goddard Space Flight Center, under GSFC 52.242-91, provides offerors with historical contract data for follow-on services contract procurements. This may include historical labor category descriptions, full-time equivalents (FTEs), average direct labor rates, and other information for use by all potential offerors to allow a comprehensive and fair evaluation of competitive proposals and increase the probability that realistic pricing is provided. This minimizes the risk that unrealistic or unsubstantiated pricing could become an inappropriate discriminator among competing offerors.

The Technical Support Services Contract (TSSC) is a follow-on competition. Providing historical labor category descriptions, full-time equivalents (FTEs), and average direct labor rates by position description would benefit the Government by eliminating barriers to a comprehensive and fair evaluation of competitive proposal cost data.

Would the Government consider providing historical labor category descriptions, full-time equivalents (FTEs), and average direct labor rates by position to ensure a comprehensive and fair evaluation?

Government's Response: No. Labor categories and labor category descriptions are determined by the Offeror. Section C.1 provides historic labor hours in general categories. Releasing some historical data could be construed as "Proprietary Information" for the current incumbent's method of proposing.

45. Question: Section L.27.b, Item (5), page 74: Item 5 on page 74 identifies a major subcontractor as performing 25% of the total contract or \$25K, whichever is less. Did you mean \$25M?

Government's Response: See question #43.

46. Question: Section L.17, p.64 and Document "Transition-In Task Order", page 1: The Draft RFP states, "The estimated award date for this acquisition is June 1, 2015 with a period of performance to begin May 30, 2020." The Transition-In Task Order section V, paragraph C states, "Award is tentatively set for March 2016 with performance beginning June 2016." Please clarify the intended award date, performance commencement date, and transition-in period of performance.

Government's Response: See questions #19 and #34.

47. Question: Section L.23, page 65 and Transition-In Task Order, page 1: Page 65 of the Draft RFP (section L.23) states "Proposals shall be submitted in three volumes...." However, the table on pages 65 and 66 lists two volumes (Volume I: Technical Proposal and Volume II Business Management). Also, section V of the Transition-In Task Order refers to the "...price submitted to the Government in Volume III of the offeror's proposal." Please clarify whether Task Order Proposals should be included in the Technical Proposal or contained in a separate volume.

Government's Response: See question #22.

48. Question: Section L.24, Sub-factor B-1, pages 69: The second bullet under "Key Positions" on page 69 of the Draft RFP states "Resumes and signed statements (of availability for the project) shall be attached to your proposal." The table on pages 65 and 66 indicate a 2-page limit for key position resumes without reference to the signed statements. Please confirm that both resumes and signed statements should be attachments to the proposal and that the 2-page limit applies to the individual resumes only.

Government's Response: See question #16.

49. Question: Section L.24, A-2.4, page 69 and pages 65-66 and Document "Sample Task 3 - CoNED-LCMAP: Section L.24, A-2.4 (Sample Task 3 – Science Support Representative Task) and the table on pages 65 and 66 identify Sample Task 3 as "Science Support Representative Task" and "Science

Support Task” respectively. However, the Draft RFP attachment for Sample Task 3 is titled “CoNED – LCMAP.” Please confirm the correct title for Sample Task 3.

Government’s Response: The titles will be consistent in the final RFP. However, these are all referring to the same sample task.

50. Question: “Transition-In Task Order”, page 1: Section III states: “The period of performance is Date of Award and for 30 days.” Section V, paragraph C states “Award is tentatively set for March 2016 with performance beginning June 2016. The Government requires a description as to how the task order planning will occur during this two month period....” Please clarify the intended award date, performance commencement date, and transition-in task order period of performance.

Government’s Response: See questions #19 and #34.

51. Question: Section L.23, page 65: The Technical Proposal Format table identifies Sample Task 1 as “Landsat Development.” Section L.24, A-2.2 identifies Task 1 as “Landsat Next Task.” The file name for Task Order 1 is “Landsat Next,” and the pdf document is titled “Landsat Development Task.” Please provide the correct title for Sample Task 1.

Government’s Response: The titles will be consistent in the final RFP. However, these are all referring to the same sample task.

52. Question: Section L.25, Factor D: Cost/Price Proposal, page 70: Because of the size of this contract, the price proposed will be highly dependent on the labor categories and number of hours per labor category. In order to do a comparable comparison of price, will the government provide the current contract labor categories and hours per labor category? Which labor categories qualify for shift differentials and historically how much shift differential has been incurred on the contract?

Government’s Response: See questions #33 and #44 and site visit question #14. Shift work will be identified in individual task orders. See Site Visit questions and answers #14 for shift work task orders

53. Question: Section L.25, Factor D: Cost/Price Proposal, item 16, page 71: Item 16 of Draft RFP section L.25, Factor D states “The offeror’s proposal shall consist of the following: Proof of an approved accounting system and approved purchasing system.” We have no objection to an approved accounting system requirement, but we believe there should be no requirement to have a Government-approved purchasing system to be eligible for this procurement. First, and as a matter of fairness, contractors cannot control whether the Government elects to review their purchasing system. See FAR Subpart 44.3 (“The ACO shall determine the need for a CPSR....”). Second, as a regulatory and business matter, a requirement to have had the Government approve an offeror’s purchasing system also violates the FAR by restricting the field of potential eligible offerors. See FAR 6.101 (stating that agencies shall promote and provide for full and open competition in soliciting offers). We have a strong, well-documented purchasing system. We have no objection to requiring offerors to have established purchasing systems if that is USGS’s desire, but contractors should not

be excluded from the competition or downgraded merely because the Government has chosen not to evaluate and, thus, approve, the contractor's purchasing system. We request this aspect of the RFP be changed.

Government's Response: No and see question #21.

54. Question: Section L.24, Technical Proposal Instructions, paragraph 2, page 67 and L-23, Proposal Format Instructions, Volume I: Technical Proposal Format, Factor A: Technical Approach, page 65: The Draft RFP states, "Each proposal must be sufficiently complete to demonstrate an understanding and an ability to comply with all the requirements referenced in the applicable solicitation and performance work statement." Use of the words "must" and "all" indicate a requirement that all of the elements of the PWS must be addressed; however, in the proposal format instructions, Factor A: Technical Approach there is no section addressing this requirement or page count to respond to this requirement. Does the government intend to remove this requirement?

Government's Response: No. The Offeror must demonstrate in Factors A, B, and C and demonstrate an understanding and an ability to comply with all the requirements referenced. An inability to meet the needs of the Performance Work Statement could result in an unsatisfactory proposal.

55. Question: Section L.25, Factor F: Corporate Experience, paragraph c), page 72 and L-23, page 66: The Draft RFP states: "Corporate experience information is limited to a maximum of two pages per contract." There is no page count allocated for an introduction to the overall past performance. Would the government consider allowing additional page count for an introduction to the past performance section in order to introduce the team and its past performance qualifications across the entire scope of work?

Government's Response: No. Five (5) pages are included in Factor C.

56. Question: Section L.24, Factor B: Management Plan, page 69: The Management Plan is limited to 15 pages, yet there are no requirements to discuss the team, subcontracting, or subcontract management. Would the government consider including these requirements along with a corresponding additional page allocation to accommodate this information?

Government's Response: No, please include in the 15 page limit.

57. Question: Section L.24, Sub-factor B-2.1 Skills Resource Management, page 69: The Draft RFP requires that we provide a "technical skills position matrix that shows the various skill groups, skill levels, and the training/certification and experience associated with each skill level." The current incumbent has access to this information. To ensure equal access to information would the Government consider providing the current contract labor categories and hours per labor category?

Government's Response: No and please see questions #33 and #44.

58. Question: Section L.1, page 59: FAR 52.222-46 is referenced in Section L.1. There is no requirement for a Total Compensation Plan. Is this an omission or has it been intentionally left out?

Government's Response: See question #20.

59. Question: Section L.24, Factor C, item a., p.70: Draft RFP section L.24, Factor C.a. states, "offerors are to provide past performance information for each contract reference cited in Factor G." There is no Factor G. Do you mean Attachment G Past Performance Questionnaire?

Government's Response: See question #12.

60. Question: Section L.24, Factor C, item a., page 70 and L-23, Proposal Format Instructions, Volume I: Technical Proposal Format, Factor A Technical Approach, page 66: Draft RFP section L.24, Factor C.a. states, "offerors are to provide past performance information for each contract reference cited..." and L.23, Factor C: Past Performance states, "No page limits on past performance questionnaires." Is the past performance information we are to provide for each contract reference limited to the past performance questionnaires or CPARS, or is additional information allowed? If so, is there also no page limits on the additional information we provide?

Government's Response: See updated RFP.

61. Question: Section L.25, Factor D, item 6, page 71: May a large business subcontractor use the model small business subcontracting plan provided as Attachment H to the Draft RFP, as required for the prime contractor in L.13(b), rather than the GSA model small business subcontracting plan referenced in this clause? There are differences between these two models.

Government's Response: Yes. The link is a sample.

62. Question: Section L.2 and SF 33 Solicitation, Offer and Award, pages 2-4 and Section L.25, Factor D, Item 5: Why does this solicitation list a firm fixed price task order (\$10M) AND a cost plus fixed fee task order (\$50M) for each contract year? Section L.2 says this is a performance-based contract. How this contract is a performance based contract? Section L.25, Factor D, item 5 requires a detailed estimate of labor costs and ODC for the entire period of performance of the contract. Should our cost proposal include separate sub-sections and sub-totals for the FFP and CPFF sections of the contract as specified in L.2? If so, how should we determine the appropriate categories (FFP or CPFF) for the various categories of proposed costs?

Government's Response: Yes, this is a performance based contract. The offeror should propose labor categories they intend to use within the life of the contract for both FFP and CPFF task orders.

Section B.1 is where the offeror should place all rates (G&A, overhead, procurement handling, fee, profit, etc.) with ceiling ranges.

The sample task orders are to give the Government insight as how the offeror will propose task orders.

The Contracting Officer (CO) has to establish contract line items (CLINs) based upon an average amount spent on or over the life of the current contract. The CO may request to realign the ceilings if necessary throughout the life of the contract.

Lastly, L.25 has been revised and the Government makes the determination if a task order is FFP or CPFF.

- 63. Question:** Section C.1, page 2 and Section C.4, page 4: What is the distinction between “scientific applications of satellite remote sensing data” (page 2) under this contract and the scientific applications work under the separate USGS EROS contract operated by ASRC? This separate contract is also referenced in section C.4 on page 4 (“specific lead scientific research”), yet it is not defined. What scientific research is excluded from this contract?

Government’s Response: The TSSC provides "technical support" to our science activities while Science Support Services Contract (currently with Inuteq) provides the scientific principle investigators.

- 64. Question: Section C.4, p.4:** What EROS work is conducted at other USGS or EROS partner locations (not Sioux Falls), and to what extent is the contractor expected to perform the work at those locations?

Government’s Response: From Section F.2: Services may be provided off-site, on-site, or a combination of, depending on program requirements. However, the majority of the work will be performed at the USGS Earth Resources and Science (EROS) Center, located in Sioux Falls, SD.

- 65. Question:** Section C.4.3 - Systems Ops and Maintenance Support and Section L.24 (top of page 68): Section C.4.3 on Systems Ops and Maintenance Support of the Draft RFP states that “the projects of the Center require a broad range of...services and support.” It goes on to describe various support services in the areas of system administration, computer ops, desktops, and networks. To what extent is the contractor responsible for cross-project, Center-wide (enterprise-level) strategic systems planning, design, deployment, and operation?

Government’s Response: Many of the Center-wide capabilities are within the Center Information Technology Team (CITT) tasks (see Task Orders 145, 156, 157, and 158). There are other cross-project systems and capabilities in other tasks as well (e.g., Task Order 25, Section V.A.2). In addition to specific task order requirements, the TSSC Contractor is always welcome to suggest improvements to areas such as cross-project activities, enterprise-level system planning, or operations.

- 66. Question:** Section C.5 (4), page 11: Section C.5 (4) states “No training costs may be expensed...except for USGS specific requirements.” Are there any USGS-specific requirements today that need to be costed? If so, what are they?

Government’s Response: Not at this time.

67. Question: Section C.7, page 12: Section C.7 says that travel of an off-site/virtual contractor to EROS is not an allowable expense. Yet the next sentence says the government requesting an off-site/virtual contractor to travel to EROS will be reimbursed. Please explain.

Government's Response: Off-site/virtual employees traveling to EROS periodically to meet with supervisors or other TSSC staff is not an allowable expense. **IF the Government requests** for an off-site/virtual employee to attend a meeting/function at EROS (or elsewhere), the contractor will be reimbursed.

68. Question: Section C.7, page 12 and Section F.10.1: Section C.7 addresses alternative workplace. What is the guidance or requirement for alternative work schedule? Section F.10.1 states that contractors are expected to maintain work hours from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. Please explain.

Government's Response: Section F.10.1 states the general guidelines for work hours at EROS (both Federal employees and contractor employees). Most employees work standard 8 hour shifts nominally from 7:30am – 4:15pm. However, flexible start and end times are acceptable. In addition, alternative work schedules are used by some staff (e.g., 10 hour days Monday through Thursday with Friday off). The TSSC contractor is expected to meet the specific requirements of each task order and should set staff work hours accordingly.

69. Question: "Sample Task 3 – CoNED-LCMAP" – Section IV. Background, page 2: Page 2 of Section IV. Background states "It is important for the LCMAP team to analyze alternatives and to involve data users early to enable science users to verify that the Analysis Ready Data products meet their research and project requirements." Do you mean alternatives to the LCMAP methods (algorithms) used for construction of the analysis ready data (ARD)? Is it expected that the ARD may need to be re-assembled/reprocessed?

Government's Response: Yes. There are alternative analysis ready data (ARD) algorithm implementations that must be analyzed and reviewed by scientists and the user community.

Government's Response: Yes. It is expected that (once defined) the initial ARD be implemented and processed. Once available, refinements will drive reprocessing of that data.

70. Question: "Sample Task 3 – CoNED-LCMAP" – Section V. Performance Objectives, subsection B. Specific Objectives, item a) CoNED Elevation Project, sub-item a. Establish a Sandy Region Coastal National Elevation Database (CoNED), page 3: Item i. of Section V.B.a)a. states: "Assist in the development of the Sandy-related topobathymetric elevation models." What is the current status of the development?

Government's Response: This effort is supporting four regions of Sandy-related area: New Jersey/Delaware, Chesapeake Bay Area, New England (from the Bronx/Long Island area up to Cape Cod), and the Outer Banks. Version 1 of the project is half complete. Version 2 (using post-Sandy Lidar data) is not started.

71. Question: “Sample Task 3 – CoNED-LCMAP” – Section V. Performance Objectives, subsections B. Specific Objectives, item a) CoNED Elevation Project, sub-item a. Establish a Sandy Region Coastal National Elevation Database (CoNED), page 3: Item ii. Of Section V.B.a)a. states: “Assist in the reprocessing of pre and post Hurricane Sandy lidar datasets for the development of topobathymetric models in the four regional areas.” Does reprocessing here actually mean processing? If the datasets need reprocessing, is it because the previously used methodology or procedures are in question? What are the deliverables for the CoNED Elevation Project?

Government’s Response: Yes. Reprocessing involves geospatial processing of the data. Reprocessing is generally due to new/ improved algorithms or the introduction of new or updated data. The reprocessed data and ancillary information are the expected deliverables.

72. Question: USGS Acquisition Opportunities Website - Document “Sample Task 3 - CoNED-LCMAP”: We cannot download or open the “Task 3 Reference Document Coastal National Elevation Database (CoNED)” document from the USGS’s Acquisition Opportunities website http://www.usgs.gov/contracts/acq_opp/EROS_index.html. Can USGS fix the link to this document?

Government’s Response: See question #29.

73. Question: “Sample Task 3 - CoNED-LCMAP” - Section V. Performance Objectives, B.2, LCMAP..., page 4: Section V. Performance Objectives, B.2 (LCMAP: Prototype Analysis Ready Data Component (ARD) Algorithms & Refine ARD Design) states: “Note that these prototypes will be done with a minimum of existing production system modification and access to the data will be via manual retrieval from a server.” What are the specs of the existing production system?

Government’s Response: The Offeror should assume the existing production system is sufficiently sized for the effort. Any other assumptions can be included in the task plan or basis of effort. Specific documentation on the existing production system is IT Security sensitive and will not be provided.

74. Question: What percentage of the digital archive has been copied to a newer digital medium?

Government’s Response: This is a function of the near-line SL8500 tape silo, and we are currently migrating to LT06 media. For further information, please see:

<http://eros.usgs.gov/government/records/media/2014-Archive-and-Media-Study.pdf>

75. Question: What percentage of the film archive has been converted to a new film medium?

Government’s Response: Non-Acetate = 100%; Original only film = <20%

76. Question: What is the requirement for converting data to newer medium (both film and digital data?)

Government's Response: Only when at risk for film (ie: Vinegar Syndrome). Digital is on-going based up trends and improvements in storage media.

77. Question: What is the current turnaround time from user request to provision of data?

Government's Response: 2-3 weeks for On-demand film scans; ~24 hours for on-demand processed products; Minutes for access to near-line data files; Seconds for access to disk cache files

78. Question: Is there a requirement to search for missing data in the archive?

Government's Response: Yes - And that is initially serviced through the availability of orphan aerial frames and the Landsat Film Only data collections (MSS, RBV, & TM).

79. Question: "Sample Task 2 - LPDAAC System Maintenance Support", page 3: Section 5.1 Objective: Task Management for TSSC activities states: "Measures of success: Quality, Cost Control, Timeliness, and Customer Satisfaction." What metrics are used to evaluate the contractor's measures of success? Also, what level of accomplishment is currently being achieved on the metrics supporting the four measures of success?

Government's Response: Adhere to scope, schedule and the estimated budget to complete the activities that are called out in the SOO and described in the task order response. And we consider innovative technical approaches valuable.

"Also, what level of accomplishment is currently being achieved on the metrics supporting the four measures of success?" A response to this question would be considered proprietary information to the incumbent.

80. Question: "Sample Task 2 - LPDAAC System Maintenance Support", page 3: The DRFP states: "Maintain currency of Interface Control and other support documentation." Are the TSSC Interface Control Documents and other support documentation up to date? Are they available in the bidder's library?

Government's Response: TSSC is responsible for the Operations Agreements, and they are on a routine cycle. ICD's are developed and owned by NASA ESDIS, TSSC has a responsibility to assist with the drafts and reviews of the ICD's for input. Yes they are up to date; no they will not be available, as NASA ESDIS owns these documents in their CM library.

81. Question: "Sample Task 2 - LPDAAC System Maintenance Support", page 3: The DRFP states: "Maintain currency of EOS technical architecture documentation." Is the EOS technical architecture documentation up to date? Are they available in the bidder's library?

Government's Response: Yes, it is in a normal 2 year review cycle. Technical details are considered sensitive due to IT Security concerns and will not be provided in the bidders library.

82. Question: "Sample Task 2 - LPDAAC System Maintenance Support", page 3: Section 5.2 Objective: Integration and Ongoing Support of DAAC Unique Extensions (DUEs) into the LP environment states:

“Measures of Success: DUE Availability (including ability to operate without manual intervention).”
Has any DUE into the LP environment enabled operation without manual intervention? If yes, please describe.

Government’s Response: Jointly we developed a system automation capability with EED Raytheon to assist LP DAAC operations around 4 years ago that has helped. We do develop some scripts and GUI capabilities that help both operations DBA’s and system administration for specific work.

83. Question: “Sample Task 2 - LPDAAC System Maintenance Support”, page 5: Section 5.5 Objective: Provide System, Storage, and Database Administration states: “Measures of Success: Operational systems meet or exceed 95% up time through the course of the year.” Is the requirement to provide an average of 95% up time throughout the year? Is this average only evaluated on a yearly basis?

Government’s Response: Yes. Yes.

84. Reference - Section C.5.4 of the SOW states that “No training costs may be expensed to the resultant contract except for USGS specific requirements.”

Question: Are contractors prohibited from charging Labor Hours for contract personnel participating in training or is this training cost prohibition limited to Training ODCs?

Government’s Response: It is the responsibility of the offeror to maintain training for their staff. If training is provided for USGS specific requirements (i.e. Fraud Awareness Training), the Government will provide the training and the vendor is to charge the time to the direct billed to the contract/appropriate task order.

85. Reference - Sections F.6 and F.10.2

Section F.6 indicates the contractor may charge for the hours of staff dismissed during unscheduled closures if the contractor’s accounting practices treat such non-productive hours as paid leave.

Section F.10.2 indicates that the contractor can only charge the Government for productive direct labor hours and specifically calls out acts of God such as snow storms as an example for non-chargeable costs.

Question: Which of the two referenced sections should be used by the offeror in preparing our proposal?

Government’s Response: Both, in the event the Center is closed for such things as inclement weather, power outages, or other emergencies, the contractor will be allowed to bill the government for planned work. Contractor staff scheduled for leave or off-site (and not impacted by the closure) will bill as leave or productive direct hours respectively.

86. Reference - Section F.11.1 and the Transition Task Order

Section F.11.1 appears to indicate that the transition must be completed no later than ten (10) calendar days after award.

The Transition Task Order, Section III, describes a 30-day transition period, V.C says that the Transition will be two-months.

Question: What is the length of the Transition Period?

Government's Response: See question #31.

87. Reference - Section L.23 - The section describes in "Proposal Organization" three volumes, Technical Proposal, Task Order Proposals, and Business Management Proposal. Later in the section the tables in the "Proposal Format" section show only two volumes: Technical Proposal and Business Management Proposal.

Question: What volumes will make-up the required proposal submission?

Government's Response: See question #22.

88. Reference - Factor C: Past Performance - The section states that Past Performance questionnaires are, "not required if the offeror's information is in the PPIRS or CPARS systems".

Question: Can questionnaires be submitted and will they be evaluated for contracts that are in the PPIRS or CPARS systems?

Government's Response: No

89. Reference - Factor D Cost Price Proposal, Item 15

Item 15 requires offerors to provide information on how they will satisfy requirements in the PWS for licenses, professional certifications, or permits.

Question

Can the government clarify this requirement since no references to licenses, professional certifications, or permits are found in the PWS?

Government's Response: Licenses, professional certification, and permits should be provided as requested within the task orders. Note: Professional certification or permits, if required, will be delineated in individual task orders.

90. Reference - L.27.b(1)(iii) - The section requires offerors to "State whether any additional direct labor (new hires) will be required during the performance period of this acquisition. If so, state the number required."

Question: Since TSSC is an IDIQ contract it is difficult for offerors to know what if any new task orders will be issued by the Government. Will the government provide a target number of new hires they anticipate during the contract's period of performance or remove this requirement from the Final RFP?

Government's Response: No. The offeror may go into the Reading Room and see this year's Statement of Objectives as a point of reference.

91. Reference - M.6 Factor A - The section includes a NOTE pointing out the requirement for the offeror to “demonstrate clearly that the staffing level is adequate for the task orders.”

Question: - Given the IDIQ nature of the contract, should offerors assume that the initial set of contract task orders will be the same as the current task orders included in the procurement library? Otherwise, please clarify what is the expected set of task orders at contract start.

Given the IDIQ nature of the contract, should offerors assume, for proposal evaluation purposes, that all tasks issued at the start of the contract remain throughout the entire period of performance?

Government’s Response: The task orders within the Reading Room are fair indicators of upcoming work; however, the offeror should expect that work may change due to funding, sequestration, unknown variables that the Government has no way to predict.

92. Reference - Sample Task #2 -The sample task provides generic Objectives and Suggested Activities and requires the offeror to estimate the required skill mix and labor requirements to perform the task. The task does not provide sufficient details regarding the number and type of systems or the number and complexity of applications to be supported.

The sample task response requirement includes that the offeror shall provide a BOE that presents costs at WBS Level 4 but doesn’t provide enough detail to allow any offeror, except for the incumbent contractor, to accurately provide that level of cost detail.

Question: Will the government revise this requirement or provide greater detail to allow all offerors the opportunity to provide accurate and competitive responses to the Sample Task?

Government’s Response: See questions #36 - # 40 and #79 - #83. As section M indicates, Technical Approach is significantly more important than any other factor. The Offeror should include any assumptions about specific hardware and software as part of the task plan and/or basis of estimate.

93. Reference - Factor D: Cost/Price Proposal Item 12 - The section requires a “Personnel availability chart (chart reflecting availability of personnel dedicated to the contract...)”.

Question: Most offerors will propose a high percentage of incumbent retention with only a small number of positions to be filled by new staff. The referenced requirement unfairly favors the incumbent who is the only offeror capable of listing a majority of the current contract on a “chart reflecting availability of personnel dedicated to the contract”.

Is the government’s intent to have offerors indicate what fraction of the staff would be dedicated exclusively to the TSSC contract after completion of the transition task?

Government’s Response: No

94. Reference - Section F.3 and the CLIN - The period of Performance in the two referenced sections do not align.

Question: What is the contract’s Period of Performance for purposes of the proposal?

Government's Response: See questions #1 and #19.

95. Reference - Section B.1 provides Billing and Ceiling Rates for the contract which includes ceiling rates on Firm Fixed Price (FFP) CLINs.

Question: Please clarify the rationale for providing ceiling rates on FFP CLINs.

Government's Response: See question #62.

96. Reference - Draft RFP SF-33 - The SF-33 provides information that the contract will consist of Firm Fixed Price Task Order and a Cost Plus Fixed Fee task order. Each of these task orders has an annual not-to-exceed ceiling but no information is provided in the DRFP regarding the type of work performed under each task order type.

Question: - Will the government delineate between what is covered under FFP and Cost Reimbursable elements of the contract?

Government's Response: No.

97. Reference - Factor D: Cost/Price Proposal Item 16 - Item 16 states that the offeror shall provide "proof of an approved accounting system and approved purchasing system".

Question: For offerors currently undergoing the Government approval process will the Government except an estimated approval date or firm audit date to meet this requirement?

Can the Government clarify or provide a revision in the Final RFP to clarify that the accounting and purchasing systems must be approved at the time of contract award?

Government's Response: Yes and see final RFP.

98. Question: Reference – Section L Factor A.2 - Sample Task 3 – Science Support Representative Task (CPFF) Supporting Documents - Current Task Order (TO) 071-5

Comment

It is our impression, after comparing the requirements issued for Sample Task 3 to those in the referenced current task, TO 071-5, that they cover the same work. Therefore, it appears that the current contractor is performing the work covered in Sample Task 3, potentially giving them an unfair advantage over other bidders since the work has already begun.

Moreover, the incumbent has had, and continues to have, access to project stakeholders and information that is not accessible to other industry members. Industry strongly suggests that the government modify this sample task to reflect work indicative of the follow-on contract and not the current one.

Government's Response: No