

Pursuant to 60A-1.042, an agency may request information by issuing a written Request for Information. Agencies may use Requests for Information in circumstances including, but not limited to, determining whether or not to competitively procure a commodity or contractual services, determining what solicitation process to use for a particular need, or researching general, special, and/or technical specifications for a solicitation.

Advertisement Detail

Department of Management Services REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

SUNCOM COMMUNICATIONS SERVICES (SCS)

RFI Advertisement Number: DMS 16/17-025

Begin Date: November 15, 2016

End Date: December 15, 2016

Commodities:

43191511 IP phones

43222900 Telephony equipment accessories

81161711 Videoconferencing service

83110000 Telecommunications media services

83111500 Local and long distance telephone communications

83111502 Long distance telephone services

83111508 Toll free inbound telephone service

83112200 Enhanced telecommunications services

83112400 Switched dial up and leased dedicated line circuit telecommunications services

I. INTRODUCTION

The Department of Management Services Division of Telecommunications (Department) is issuing this Request for Information (RFI) to Florida's vendor community to obtain the latest information on the SUNCOM Communications Services (SCS) environment.

This is a RFI as defined in section 287.012(22), Florida Statutes, for planning purposes only. This is not a solicitation for offers. The information gathered from this RFI may be used to develop a future competitive solicitation. Please monitor the Vendor Bid System for any changes or notices prior to submitting a response.

II. PURPOSE OF AN RFI

Rule 60A-1.042, Florida Administrative Code, provides that an agency may request information by issuing a written RFI. Agencies are authorized to use an RFI in circumstances including, but not limited to, determining whether or not to competitively procure a commodity or contractual services, determining what solicitation process to use for a particular need, or researching general, special, and/or technical specifications for a solicitation. A vendor's response to a RFI is not an offer and the agency may not use the vendor's submission to justify a contract with that vendor without otherwise complying with Chapter 287, Florida Statutes (F.S.) and Rule 60A-1.042, F.A.C. Vendors submitting a response to an agency's RFI are not prohibited from responding to any related subsequent solicitation.

Any future purchase of the services will be conducted in accordance with Chapter 287, F.S. The Department may use responses to this RFI to prepare one or more competitive solicitations and as the basis for any subsequent vendor meetings.

III. DEFINITIONS

- A. **ADA/ADAAA:** Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and amended via ADA Amendments Act of 2008 (Public Law 110-325, ADAAA).
- B. **CALEA:** Communications Assistance for Law Enforcement Act, enacted October 25, 1994.
- C. **Call Paths:** The virtual path on which a telephone call travels. Call paths are configured inside the Session Internet Protocol (SIP) trunk.
- D. **Centrex:** Centrex is a partitioned local access, central office based switching system configured with special calling service features or a specific customer group, in this case, the Department of Management Services.
- E. **DivTel:** The Division of Telecommunications within DMS, which is responsible for establishing telecommunications standards and procuring telecommunications services for the State of Florida's telecommunications enterprise.
- F. **E-rate Program:** Common name for The Universal Service Program for Schools and Libraries – based on the Telecommunications Act of 1996. This program is administered by the Schools and Libraries Division (SLD) of the Universal Services Administrative Company (USAC) under the jurisdiction of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC).
- G. **HIPAA:** The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996.
- H. **Internet Protocol (IP):** The method by which data is sent from one computer to another on the Internet or other networks.
- I. **Interactive Voice Response (IVR):** A system that automates the process of answering phone calls. It provides pre-programmed prompts and transfers the call to the most appropriate resource based on the caller's answers to the prompts.
- J. **Local Area Network (LAN):** A computer network housed within a single area such as a business workgroup.
- K. **Local Access and Transport Area (LATA):** Geographic areas that were used to demarcate the division of assets between AT&T and the "Baby Bell" companies at Divestiture of the Bell System, on January 1, 1984.
- L. **Legacy Circuits:** Wired connections used in switched voice networks, generally using time-division multiplexing technologies.
- M. **MyFloridaNet (MFN):** The statewide IP network provided by DMS. MFN is the current Multi-Protocol Label Switching network used by Florida's state agencies, cities, and counties.
- N. **Private Branch Exchange (PBX) Equipment:** Telephone switching system that provides intercommunication between stations within the organization.

- O. Public Switched Telecommunications Network (PSTN):** The aggregate of the world's circuit-switched telephone networks that are operated by national, regional, or local telephony operators, providing infrastructure and services for public telecommunication.
- P. Respondent:** A vendor who submits a response to this RFI.
- Q. Service Level Agreements (SLA):** Established performance standards for how contracted services will be provided, generally with related service credits for non-performance.
- R. Session Initiation Protocol (SIP):** Is an Internet Engineering Task Force ([IETF](#)) standard communications protocol for signaling and controlling multimedia communication sessions such as voice, video, presence, and instant messaging over IP networks.
- S. SUNCOM:** The statutorily established brand name used by DMS to provide voice, data and conferencing telecommunications services for government pursuant to section 282.702, Florida Statutes.
- T. Telephony:** The field of technology involving the development, application, and deployment of telecommunication services for the purpose of electronic transmission of voice, fax, or data, between distant parties.
- U. Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP):** A methodology and group of technologies for the delivery of voice communications and multimedia sessions over Internet Protocol (IP) networks, such as the Internet.

IV. BACKGROUND

- A.** Section 282.703(2), F.S., states, "The department shall design, engineer, implement, manage, and operate through state ownership, commercial leasing, contracted services, or some combination thereof, the facilities, equipment, and contracts providing SUNCOM Network services, and shall develop a system of equitable billings and charges for telecommunications services." Pursuant to section 282.703, F.S., the SUNCOM network is established within Department of Management Services (DMS) and DMS' Division of Telecommunications is delegated this specific responsibility.

SUNCOM, the state's program for providing the delivery of telecommunication services, has always been an enterprise-modeled entity. Its mission has been to harness the buying power of the state and provide economies-of-scale in the purchase of telecommunications services for SUNCOM customers. The state has provided voice, data, and video services to meet the growing needs of its customers, and at the same time, maintained a base level of standardization to foster interconnectivity.

- B.** DMS contracted for a business case to review and evaluate voice service optimization as an enterprise solution. The recommendation made within the business case is to issue a combination of an insourced and outsourced competitive procurement as an Invitation to Negotiate (ITN). The key driver in this recommendation is to embrace current and evolving technology utilizing existing MFN core services to improve cost savings across the state.
- C.** The goals are to: (1) provide the full availability of SIP enabled VoIP services and supporting capacity, via MFN, for improved cost, support, and feature capabilities; and (2) provide next generation communications services delivered over an IP network while supporting the existing embedded base of SUNCOM telephony services and

providing an integrated and cohesive migratory path to IP based services for legacy services.

D. Services Overview

The SUNCOM portfolio of services currently includes the following individual voice communication services.

1. Centrex Contracts

DMS manages separate contracts for Centrex service with AT&T, CenturyLink and Frontier. The total spending on these contracts is approximately \$31 million annually. There are four types of Centrex services provided by these contracts.

- A. Legacy Centrex** – A telephony service providing PSTN access to handsets over legacy circuits from a commercially shared hardware platform. The service provider owns and operates the central equipment. The handsets are owned and maintained by the customer. Approximately 60,000 Centrex access lines are serving SUNCOM voice customers with an approximate annual spend of \$24 million.
- B. IP Centrex** – A Hosted VoIP service providing PSTN access to handsets over dedicated IP data circuits from a commercially shared software platform. The service provider owns and operates the central system. The handsets are owned/rented and maintained by the customer. Approximately 22,000 SUNCOM users subscribe to this telephone service with an approximate annual spend of \$6 million.
- C. Primary Rate Interface (PRI)** – A legacy voice communication circuit providing PSTN access to Private Branch Exchange (PBX) equipment owned and maintained by the customer. Approximately 700 PRIs are installed to customer PBXs.
- D. SIP Trunking** – An IP-based voice communication service providing PSTN access to IP-enabled PBXs. Approximately 5,000 call paths are installed to customer PBXs with an approximate annual spend of \$700,000.

2. SUNCOM Telephony Equipment Premise Service (STEPS)

STEPS is a premises-based telephony equipment service providing PSTN access to handsets using dedicated equipment located on customer premises. The equipment is either owned by the customer or rented from the service provider. State agencies are required to purchase annual management and support to ensure system longevity and performance. DMS manages three separate contracts for STEPS with Avaya, Cisco and Unify (formerly Siemens). Twenty-three state agencies subscribe to this service and total spending on these contracts is approximately \$10 million annually. The STEPS contract has expired and is closed to new customers. Currently, Avaya, Cisco, and Unify equipment can be purchased by customers from DMS alternate source contracts through MyFloridaMarketPlace (MFMP).

3. Long Distance

Long distance is a telephony calling service for customers to place out-going nationwide and international calls. The DMS long distance contract is with EarthLink Business. SUNCOM offers two access options for long distance services, one utilizing dedicated circuits for access and the other using switched access. When dedicated circuits are utilized, customers pay a lower per minute rate than switched access. There are over 120 sites with dedicated access. For

the switched long distance service, there are approximately 500,000 telephone lines or direct inward dial phone numbers. The average monthly usage for long distance usage is 8.5 million minutes and the total annual spending on this contract is approximately \$2.4 million.

4. Toll Free

Toll-free is an inbound calling service where the cost of the call is paid by the owner of the called number. The service includes flexibility to route incoming calls to single or multiple destinations based on resource schedules, call volume, or other criteria. DMS manages a single contract for toll-free calling with EarthLink Business for both switched and dedicated access. The average monthly usage is 33 million minutes, and the total spending on this contract is approximately \$6 million annually.

5. Audio Conference Services

Under contract with BT Conferencing Inc., SUNCOM offers two types of audio conference services: Meet Me and Operator Assisted. Meet Me provides on-demand audio conferencing, allowing the customer to initiate a conference call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for up to 150 participants without the need to make a reservation. The average monthly usage is 3 million minutes, and the total annual spending on this contract is approximately \$400,000.

6. Web Conference services

Under contracts with AT&T and Citrix Online LLC, SUNCOM offers web conferencing services. It is used to conduct live meetings, training, or presentations via the Internet. This enables customers to share projects, data, presentations, and ideas, through the use of a phone and any computer connected to the Internet. For Citrix, there is an average of 650 active subscribers and the total annual spend is approximately \$217,000. For AT&T Connect, there are 450 subscribers and the annual spend is approximately \$157,000.

V. GOAL

The Department intends to obtain the latest information on the SUNCOM Communications Services (SCS) environment. The Department is looking for organizations that will provide solutions to meet the state's current and future needs and would appreciate responses to Section VI., below.

VI. RESPONSE

In order to develop a new solicitation for the latest information on the SUNCOM Communications Services (SCS) environment, the Department is requesting the following information:

A. TAB 1: Company information cover letter

- i. Must reference RFI No.: DMS 16/17-025, Florida's SUNCOM Communications Services Environment.
- ii. Primary contact
- iii. Address
- iv. Phone
- v. Email
- vi. Are you a certified business enterprise with the state of Florida?
- vii. Customer references, including any previous work with federal, state, local, or county government.

B. TAB 2: RFI Questions and Response:

Reprint each question posed below in your response.

1. Explain in detail how the products and services offered by your company can help DMS provide SUNCOM Communications Services.
2. The majority of SUNCOM customers have deployed premise-based VoIP systems which, at this time, typically communicate with each other via Time Division Multiplexing (TDM) gateways. Please describe any Enterprise Policy, Session Management, and Security services that your company offers which facilitates the secure, on-net routing of calls between different SIP calling domains as well as other hosted service providers including SIP trunking.
3. Describe the bundle options that are offered to provide local access, long distance and toll free access for legacy time-division multiplexing services and IP services.
4. DMS is considering two deployment options for SUNCOM Communications Services in a hosted environment, 1) a dedicated system assigned to a specific customer; and 2) a system serving multiple customers, where each customer appears to exist in a dedicated environment, but in reality, exists within a distinct partition of a shared system. Does your company offer both of these options? Are there other options that your company offers which DMS should consider? List the pros and cons for each of the options your company can provide.
5. Does your company offer more than one hosted telephony platform that customers can select? If so, please describe.
6. Describe the different hosting options for SUNCOM Communications Services. For example, a communications system could be hosted at the state's data center(s) or at the service provider's data center(s). Please list and describe the pros and cons for each option presented.
7. For SUNCOM Communications Services hosted at the service provider's data center(s), please list and describe the options available for interconnection with MFN.
8. DMS will use MFN, or its replacement, to deliver SUNCOM Communications Services to state agencies. DMS is seeking information about additional access options to provide SUNCOM Communications Services to other eligible users who do not use MFN. Please describe the access options your company offers.
9. Do you offer customers the ability to access your hosted voice service using the public Internet as transport? If so, please describe the service uptime for customers who select this option. Describe any other considerations with regards to delivery of hosted services over the public Internet.
10. Provide your minimum LAN and WAN requirements or recommendations for customers who subscribe to your hosted VoIP service.
11. Do you require an assessment of the customer's LAN before offering hosted voice service? If so, please list and describe all charges, if any, related to the LAN assessment.

12. Do you utilize any tools that monitor a customer's Local Area Network (LAN) and send an alarm to your Network Operations Center (NOC) when a threshold is exceeded? Describe any similar tools.
13. Describe any tools for the customers/end-users to monitor and administer the operation of their services?
14. Do you require the installation of any voice network equipment (Session Border Controller (SBC), gateway, remote modules, monitoring equipment, etc.) at the site of a customer who subscribes to your hosted service? If so, please list the equipment and provide a description.
15. For equipment installed at the customer's site in support of a SUNCOM Communications Service, please explain how the customer is charged for the cost of equipment. For example, are these costs typically included in the monthly subscription, purchase, or rental?
16. Describe your approach to system security for hosted services. What are the considerations DMS should take into account for security? Include a discussion of media encryption, signaling encryption, remote access, and management.
17. Describe your approach to system security for managed premise-based telephony services. What are the considerations DMS should take into account for security? Include a discussion of media encryption, signaling encryption, remote access, and management.
18. Describe your approach to monitoring, reporting, and alarming on the voice call quality and end user experience provided by your service. What tool(s) do you use to monitor system performance, and provide SLA violation reporting?
19. Do you provide end users a method to provide immediate feedback about the call quality experience?
20. Do your systems offer various levels of operational support? Some customers have the expertise to assume responsibility for troubleshooting and making configuration updates such as moves, adds, changes, and deletes (MACDs). For customers who can assume these operational responsibilities, are there cost savings compared to customers who completely rely on the service provider for full service management?
21. Presently for premise-based systems, SUNCOM offers vendor management services that the service providers on behalf of the customer to manage the operation and administration of the customers' communications systems. This includes, all MACD functions, creating reports associated with the operation of the systems, system triage and collaboration with other vendors in resolving troubles, etc. Describe your managed services and available options.
22. Customers may need to move to a new office, requiring that some equipment (such as SBCs, gateways, and phones) be relocated. Do you offer customers the option to move the equipment themselves saving professional service charges associated with moving equipment? Discuss the options available for office relocations.
23. Provide a list of all billable elements associated with the implementation of hosted voice services. The list should include each billable element of the service, such as equipment purchase/rental, installation charges, MACD

charges, professional services, training, technology refresh, survivability, and system maintenance.

24. Describe your approach to providing Emergency 911 for your hosted and/or premise-based services. Include a description of technologies and standards that may be used to automate the location of any VoIP phone or soft client, and periodically update the 911 Automatic Location Identifier database. What is a reasonable time for updating the customers' information in 911 databases? Would you associate an SLA matrix/table for meeting this deadline? Describe any tools that are provided to the customer to update subscribers 911 location.
25. Do you bundle long distance and toll-free minutes with your SIP trunking service offering? Without offering pricing, list the description of the various bundles your company provides.
26. What should DMS consider with regards to the migration of existing legacy TDM services voice services to Hosted VoIP services?
27. For any of the services listed in the Services Overview section, do you offer tiered pricing, if so describe the tier thresholds? Is this on a per site basis, an aggregated basis across the contract, or some other tiered strategy?
28. For the services listed above in the Service Overview section, DMS desires to offer uniform pricing statewide. Should DMS consider regional pricing versus a uniform statewide rate? If so, explain why and how should regions be defined (for example, by county, city, LATA, etc.)?
29. What pricing models should DMS consider for hosted services? For example, price per seat, bundled versus unbundled (bundled includes phone, PSTN access, long distance, and toll-free in the service rate), tiered pricing, feature packages (basic, enhanced, premium), and a la carte pricing for advanced applications (Interactive Voice Response (IVR), Computer Telephony Integration (CTI), speech recognition, etc.).
30. What pricing models should DMS consider for installation and management of premise-based systems? For example, price per seat, bundled versus unbundled (bundled includes phone, PSTN access, long distance, and toll-free in the service rate), tiered pricing, feature packages (basic, enhanced, premium), and a la carte pricing for advanced applications (IVR, CTI, speech recognition, etc.).
31. Describe the feature packages available with your Hosted Voice services (basic, enhanced, premium, and others).
32. DMS utilizes an in-house ordering, billing and inventory system. Can your company interface with such an in-house system? For example, do you provide the capability for the DMS to utilize customer defined fields for work orders and inventory identification?
33. Do you provide a web-based portal allowing agency staff to perform standard maintenance tasks to update account profiles to accomplish moves/adds/changes? Are those systems capable of interfacing with the DMS ordering, billing, and inventory systems via an Application Programming Interface (API)?

- 34.** The SUNCOM NOC utilizes an electronic trouble reporting and monitoring system. Describe how your NOC service can interface with the SUNCOM NOC. Can your ticketing system be partitioned so that SUNCOM customers gain access into your system to open and monitor their tickets, while the SUNCOM NOC has a global view for all reported troubles?
- 35.** In the event of an IP network failure where a site loses IP network connectivity to the Hosted VoIP service, please describe the option(s) you provide to support remote site survivability so that phones at the site can continue to place outbound calls. Are any additional costs associated with remote site survivability or are they included as part of quality services that you provide? Can your systems also support re-route of inbound calls to an alternate number or location in the event of an IP network failure?
- 36.** DMS procures services in bulk and offers the services to the eligible SUNCOM users and needs to audit the charges and reconcile anomalies in order to invoice SUNCOM customers. DMS requires detailed information about the service utilization, including call detail records, main station counts, utilization for SIP trunk concurrent call-paths and trunks. Describe, your company's ability to provide this information in real-time or near real-time.
- 37.** Provide a copy of, or a hyperlink to, one or more governmental solicitations for hosted communications services in which your organization was a respondent.
- 38.** Provide a copy of your response to a governmental solicitation.
- 39.** Provide copies of other recent non-governmental procurement documents for hosted and premise-based communications services you believe were facilitated through an open, fair, and competitive procurement.
- 40.** Provide a copy of your response to a non-governmental solicitation.
- 41.** Provide a copy of one or more existing contracts for hosted and premise-based services offered by your organization.
- 42.** Provide a list of actual contracted performance metrics and service level agreement guarantees that are being used to measure the quality of hosted and premise-based services offered by your organization.
- 43.** DMS requires SLAs for the following categories of services: system installation, system uptime, system maintenance, trouble resolution, and invoicing. List and describe SLAs that your company offers for hosted and premise-based services.
- 44.** Describe the process that you have established to monitor, report, and manage SLAs.
- 45.** A number of SUNCOM customers require state-of-the-art features within their IVR service. Describe your IVR offering and make a distinction between features offered as part of the basic service and those offered for a fee. Also describe how professional services are provided for the customization of call routing. Does your system provide a self-service portal which customers can use to modify the IVR call flow? Without offering specific prices, describe how the monthly/yearly service maintenance is structured.

46. "The FCC has issued WT Docket No. 10-208, Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (Nov. 18, 2011) (FCC order page 18170, p. 511 of the pdf) which fundamentally changes the structure and prices for access charges on a nationwide basis." It indicated that by "July, 2018 there will be no per minute of use access charge associated with terminating 800 or long distance calling into AT&T, Verizon, and CenturyLink exchanges." Discuss your interpretation, intention, and expected impact of this order to SUNCOM services.
47. The FCC indicated there would be a "phasing down" support for voice services, and a phasing down and ending support for certain legacy services. Discuss your interpretation, intention, and expected impact to SUNCOM services as referenced on FCC 14-5, Order, Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, Released January 13, 2014, page 8.
48. Recently the FCC stated the subsidy for E-rate voice would be phased out. Discuss the impact to DMS, the E-rate community and its general impact on pricing. Should we require special pricing for voice services for the E-rate customers to mitigate such phasing out by FCC?
49. Do you offer specific per use pricing for operator assistance services such as station-to-station, person-to-person, busy line verification, busy line interrupt, and other similar services?
50. Options exist for offering voice services using the Internet as access; for example, Skype, MagicJack, and Vonage. What are the values associated with these offerings? What are the drawbacks to these offerings?
51. Are there options DMS should consider for pricing that is not the typical month-to-month?
52. What is the expected amount of time required to port numbers to your hosted service or SIP trunking service?
53. Are there common off the shelf tools for operational management that allow both the provider, DMS, and the customer to have a view into the enterprise health, or are tools proprietary?
54. The effort to accomplish a migration of SUNCOM's voice services to a potentially new contract will be significant. Do you have any lessons learned that would help guide DMS in its preparation for a project of this magnitude?
55. Provide your recommendations for best practices for customers to follow for disaster recovery.

C. TAB 3: Additional Information

Please provide additional information for consideration. For example, if there are questions you felt we should have asked that we did not please provide them using a question and answer format.

Please do not provide any specific cost or pricing information at this time; as this is not a solicitation for an offer. However, general pricing information may be provided (e.g., price ranges and variable factors that impact the price).

VII. RESPONSE FORMAT

Potential vendors should respond at least to the following sections at a minimum:

- a)** Introduction;
- b)** Background;
- c)** Contact Information (company name, phone, email); and
- d)** Response to Section VI.

PLEASE NOTE: Any submitted material is subject to the Public Records Act, section 119.07 of the Florida Statutes.

VIII. RESPONSE SUBMISSION

Responses should address each request and question in Section VI., point by point. Responses shall be submitted in both Microsoft Word and portable document format ("PDF") on a compact disc ("CD") or USB drive labeled with the Respondent's organization's name and the RFI number.

A redacted copy should also be provided (if applicable), see Section XIV below. The response is due to the Procurement Officer noted below within the required date and time, identified in Section XI, below. The response must be submitted to the Procurement Officer at the address identified below:

Department of Management Services
Departmental Purchasing
ATTN: Carvin Smith
4050 Esplanade Way, Suite 335
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0950

IX. PROCESS

Responses to this RFI will be reviewed by the Department for informational purposes only and will not result in the award of a contract.

The Department will review the responses to determine the feasibility of issuing a competitive solicitation for IT research and advisory services.

Any request for cost information is for budgetary purposes only.

If necessary, the Department may ask to hold presentations with one or more of the responding vendors.

Responding to the RFI does not prevent a vendor from being eligible to contract with an agency pursuant to section 287.057(17)(c), Florida Statutes.

X. PRESENTATIONS

After the Department receives responses to this RFI, and at the sole discretion of the Department, one or more Respondents may be selected to demonstrate to the Department the Respondent's products and services relating to the information submitted in the RFI response. The purpose is to learn about the most current solutions available. This economy of presentation will be applied to all verbal discussions as well. The meeting moderator will be polite but direct in an effort to keep discussions on topic and will

not allow the meetings to take on a sales tone. Vendors are encouraged to bring technical and legal representatives to the presentation meetings.

XI. TIMELINE

Listed below are important dates and times when actions should be taken or completed. If the Department finds it necessary to update any of the dates and, or times noted, it will be accomplished by an Amendment to the RFI. All times listed below are in Eastern Standard Time (EST) in Tallahassee, Florida.

DATE	TIME	
11/15/2016		Release of RFI
11/29/2016	4:30 p.m.	Questions due to the Procurement Officer
12/06/2016		Answers to vendor questions are posted to VBS
12/15/2016	4:00 p.m.	Responses are due to the Procurement Officer
TBD	TBD	Presentations, if applicable

XII. AMENDMENTS TO THE RFI

DMS will post amendments to the RFI on the Florida Vendor Bid System (VBS) at http://vbs.dms.state.fl.us/vbs/search.criteria_form. The Respondent may view amendments by selecting "Department of Management Services" in the "Agency" drop down box. Each Respondent is responsible for monitoring the VBS for new or changing information.

XIII. RFI QUESTIONS AND CONTACT WITH DMS

Respondents shall address all questions regarding this RFI in writing to the Procurement Officer identified in Section XVI. DMS will post answers to questions on VBS as noted in Section XI, Timeline.

XIV. CONFIDENTIAL, PROPRIETARY OR TRADE SECRET INFORMATION

If Respondent considers any portion of the documents, data or records submitted in response to this solicitation to be confidential, proprietary, trade secret or otherwise not subject to disclosure pursuant to Chapter 119, Florida Statutes, the Florida Constitution or other authority, Respondent must mark the document as "Confidential" and simultaneously provide the Department with a separate redacted copy of its response and briefly describe in writing the grounds for claiming exemption from the public records law, including the specific statutory citation for such exemption. This redacted copy shall contain the Department's solicitation name, number, and the name of the Respondent on the cover, and shall be clearly titled "Redacted Copy." The Redacted Copy should only redact those portions of material that the Respondent claims are confidential, proprietary, trade secret or otherwise not subject to disclosure.

In the event of a request for public records pursuant to Chapter 119, Florida Statutes, the Florida Constitution or other authority, to which documents that are marked as confidential are responsive, the Department will provide the Redacted Copy to the requestor. If a requestor asserts a right to the Confidential Information, the Department will notify the Respondent such an assertion has been made. It is the Respondent's responsibility to assert that the information in question is exempt from disclosure under chapter 119 or other applicable law. If the Department becomes subject to a demand for discovery or disclosure of the Confidential Information of the Respondent in a legal proceeding, the Department shall give the Respondent prompt notice of the demand prior to releasing the

information (unless otherwise prohibited by applicable law). The Respondent shall be responsible for defending its determination that the redacted portions of its response are confidential, proprietary, trade secret, or otherwise not subject to disclosure.

By submitting a reply, the Respondent agrees to protect, defend, and indemnify the Department for any and all claims arising from or relating to the Respondent's determination that the redacted portions of its reply are confidential, proprietary, trade secret, or otherwise not subject to disclosure. If Respondent fails to submit a redacted copy of information it claims is confidential, the Department is authorized to produce the entire documents, data, or records submitted to the Department in answer to a public records request for these records.

XV. VENDOR COSTS

Vendors are responsible for all costs associated with the preparation, submission, and any potential meeting to discuss this RFI. The Department will not be responsible for any vendor related costs associated with responding to this request.

XVI. PROCUREMENT OFFICER

If you have questions concerning this RFI, please contact:

Carvin Smith
Departmental Purchasing
Florida Department of Management Services
4050 Esplanade Way, Suite 335.2X
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0950
Phone: (850) 410-1423
Email: DMS.Purchasing@dms.myflorida.com

***** ALL EMAILS TO PROCUREMENT OFFICER SHALL CONTAIN THE RFI NUMBER
IN THE SUBJECT LINE OF THE EMAIL *****

XVII. SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS

Any person with a disability requiring special accommodations to participate in the RFI shall contact the Department contact person at the phone number above at least five working days prior to the event. If you are hearing or speech impaired, please contact this office by using the Florida Relay Services which can be reached at 1 (800) 955-8771 (TDD).

Certified Business Enterprises are encouraged to participate in the RFI process.

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