

**ALLIANT SB EMAILBOX AND WEBCAST
SOLICITATION TQ2006MCB0002
GOVERNMENT RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS**

GENERAL

Question 1: Section L, L.11.2, Page L-6

What are the options for delivering to the designated address? Can we hand deliver, over-night courier, U.S. Mail, etc.

Answer: Refer to Federal Acquisition Regulations (FAR) 15.208

Question 2: Section L; page L-9, CD-R 3, Folder H: Alliant SB Basic Contract Plan. Does the page limitation of 30 pages include sections (a) Resources, (b) Program Management System and (c) Corporate Commitment?

Answer: The 30 page limit is not for each section in Folder H; rather it is for all three sections combined.

Question 3: Section H.2 – This section says that the PM is not to have billable hours, but the pricing table includes the program manager. Should we assume that task orders can have billable program management hours?

Answer: H.2.1 Contractor Program Manager is referring to the Basic Contract. The pricing table is correct to include “program manager” which may be utilized for individual task orders.

Question 4: Section L, L.12.3 (c) and (d), Pages L-15 and L-16

Please provide clarity on the differences between single award service contracts that have tasks orders versus delivery orders. Our interpretation of this section is that single award service contracts have delivery orders rather than task orders.

Answer: By definition delivery orders are for supplies and task orders are for services.

Question 5: Will all tasks be sent out to all Alliant small business awardees?

Answer: Fair Opportunity guidelines will be followed (refer to FAR 16.505). An ordering guide will be developed for Alliant SB which will further define the ordering process.

Question 6: Under Section G.9, it states that all contractors will have to respond to all task order requests. Under most GWACs, a contractor does not have to respond to all task order requests (time constraints, resources, etc.). Under GSA Alliant, however, will this indeed be the case?

Answer: Negative responses (no bids) are required. See Section G.9(e).

Question 7: L.12.1 states that the Representations and Certifications file is page limited to the form, and except for a few fill-ins the form points to the online ORCA web record for the company; however, L.12.2(b) states that "The Offeror shall submit a completed "Representations and Certifications" that was entered into the Online Representations and Certifications Application (ORCA)." The question is, should ABC-ORCA.pdf contain (A) just Section K of the RFP, or (B) just a pdf copy of the company's ORCA record, or (C) both Section K and the full ORCA record?

Answer: The ABC-ORCA.pdf file should contain both Section K and the full ORCA record.

Question 8: Do you know at this point how many awards will be made for the above referenced contract? i.e. will you be awarding it to all qualified vendors or just the top X number of vendors?

Answer: Refer to L.3 of the solicitation

Question 9: Can a small business submit a proposal for both the Alliant SB GWAC (TQ2006MCB0002) solicitation and the full and open Alliant GWAC (TQ2006MCB0001)?

Answer: Yes. They are two distinct solicitations

Question 10: TQ2006MCB0001 refers to Alliant full and open and TQ2006MCB0002 refers to Alliant small business. Each appears to be an independent procurement. Accordingly, Alliant Small Business awardees will not automatically be allowed to submit proposals under Alliant full and open task orders? Rather if a small business wants to participate under Alliant full and open the small business must submit a proposal under Alliant full and open now?

Answer: A small business can submit an offer under both Alliant and Alliant SB. You are correct that Alliant SB awardees will not be competing for Alliant task orders.

Question 11: We are an 8A Disadvantaged company but we are not on GSA Schedule 70. Are we still eligible to bid?

Answer: Yes. Alliant SB is open to all conforming small businesses.

Question 12: Where can we find an example of a completed Alliant RFP?

Answer: You can find the RFP at FedBizOpps (www.fedbizopps.gov). The offeror will have to complete it.

Question 13: Also, who will have access to our completed proposal? Specifically, who will view our Section J Attachment Spread Sheets and Past Performance Tables?

Answer: The Government Alliant SB evaluation and legal teams. Additionally, per Section M.10 the government may use contractor support in the evaluation process.

Question 14: If we find deals can we bring them to the contract similar to GSA schedule 70 business?

Answer: Task orders must comply with Fair Opportunity procedures and the exceptions to Fair Opportunity as enumerated in FAR 16.505.

Question 15: Is it possible that a portion of this procurement can be set-aside as a sole source 8(a)?

Answer: No. Alliant SB is a total small business set-aside.

Question 16: Does the GSA plan on giving a Price Evaluation Adjustment for Small Disadvantaged Business Concerns in accordance with FAR 19.11?

Answer: No.

Question 17: Section L.12.3(d) – Is 541512 the only NAICS code for which past performance references should be cited? The scope of IT services outlined in the solicitation appears to be much broader than this NAICS code.

Answer: The scope of work in Section C is the requirement and is not limited to only NAICS code 541512. The Overall scope should be addressed in submitting past performance references. An amendment will be forthcoming clarifying this point.

Question 18: On page L-21 paragraph “Folder K,” the RFP states “Offerors shall submit a total compensation plan setting forth salary ranges and fringe benefits proposed for the professional employees” Does the Offeror have to repeat the itemized information previously provided in Folder I or will a reference to Folder I suffice to meet this requirement? If a reference to Folder I will not suffice, is the Government looking for aggregate corporate data in Folder K, e.g., “salary ranges vary from \$50,000 to \$100,000 and our fringe benefits equate to 34% of salary.” Please clarify how much detail is required to assist GSA in evaluating proposals.

Answer: Folder I and Folder K are two distinct requirements. Folder I relates to the cost and pricing analysis of proposed prices/costs under the contract. Folder K relates to the requirements of FAR Subpart 22.11 and FAR Clause 52.222-46 “Evaluation of Compensation for Professional Employees.”

Question 19: Can a small business which intends to submit a proposal as a prime for the Alliant Small Business contract also submit a proposal as a prime for the Alliant (Large Business) contract?

Answer: Yes.

Question 20: Can a company which intends to prime the Alliant Small Business contract also be a subcontractor to a firm who is priming the Alliant (Large Business) contract?

Answer: After contract award an Alliant SB contractor can be a subcontractor under the full and open Alliant.

Question 21: Are current GWAC holders allowed to be sub-contractors on the full and open Alliant proposal and also make a proposal as a prime on the Alliant SB proposal?

Answer: Yes.

Question 22: Given that the RFP (B.6.1 Order Type Preference and B.6.2 Performance Based Preference) lists fixed-price as first in the order of precedence, why are offerors with past performance on fixed-price efforts not viewed more favorably than those on cost reimbursement efforts?

Answer: The simple answer is that fixed price contracting is a common type of contract which most (if not all) offerors will have experience in. However, cost reimbursement contracting is a more complex type of contract and is a part of Alliant SB and therefore experience in it is valuable to the government.

Question 23: The contractor access fee CAF, is to be reported two weeks after a monetary payment transfer, would consideration be given for a quarterly payment and reporting?

Answer: There are no plans to change the CAF Payment Data – Report.

Question 24: Section G.4 There is a reference to contractors participating in various trade shows hosted by GSA to facilitate outreach efforts, presently what are the planned locations and dates of these outreach activities?

Answer: The dates and locations are unknown at this time.

Question 25: Section H.21 During the open season process, will the government consider allowing the remaining prime contract holders to resubmit revised or discounted price rates to remain competitive and offer customers best value?

Answer: Alliant SB contractors will not be able to alter their contracts in conjunction with an open season that the government may conduct. Alliant SB contractors always retain the ability to offer their best pricing in competitions for individual task orders.

Question 26: Page L-21, FOLDER L – COST/PRICE SPREADSHEETS: “Attachment 2 consists of 10 years of Government-Site Work. Attachment 3 consists of 10 years of Contractor-Site Work.” Will companies in existence for fewer than 10 years be penalized?

Answer: No. The Cost/Price Spreadsheets are prospective, i.e., future costs/prices.

Question 27: If the Offeror does not allow uncompensated overtime, will a statement to this effect be sufficient?

Answer: Please refer to the requirements of Section L.12.5, Folder K for information regarding what’s required. This is where any such statements would be addressed.

Question 28: L.12.4. CD-R 3, Folder H: Alliant SB Basic Contract Plan, (a) Resources, (1) Internal Resources, Para 3.

Based on the length of time which is forecasted to lapse between the solicitation response, will a Letter of Intent as opposed to an Irrevocable Letter of Commitment satisfy the requirement?

Answer: If not a current employee of the contractor, the Government requires a letter of commitment and individual resume for the Key Personnel.

Question 29: Are resumes required solely for the Program Manager or for all proposed key personnel/key labor categories?

Answer: Only for the Program Manager (Key Personnel) defined in Section H.2 of the RFP.

Question 30: Within the small business set asides, will you consider establishing a goal similar to the Administration's goal of x% for each of the socio-economic groups?

Answer: No. Alliant SB is a total small business set-aside.

Question 31: In Part 1 Section B.5 a contract access fee is applied to all invoiced costs. However, Section B.8 requires that travel will be reimbursed at actual cost. Since we are required to pay a contact access fee on the total invoice, please confirm that this fee will be added to the cost of the travel.

Answer: Section B.8 allows contractors to apply indirect costs to travel in accordance with the contractor's usual accounting practice.

Question 32: There is mention in several areas of the Solicitation of OCONUS work...are we required to provide OCONUS support?

Answer: Although this is a decision to be made at the task order level, the government expects to award Alliant SB contracts to offerors currently capable, or through capacity building, of performing requirements on a global basis.

Question 33: Will the Government consider moving the DCAA, EVMS, and Secret Facility Clearance evaluations to the Responsibility Determination phase of the Evaluation Process? This would allow for companies which are primarily service providers to obtain these qualifications.

Answer: The DCAA documentation is required for cost/price analysis, the Secret Facility Clearance is a definitive responsibility matter, and the EVMS is not a

requirement but will be considered and the proposal evaluated more favorably if it exists.

Question 34: Compensation Plan & Policy for Uncompensated Overtime: Could you clarify why salary ranges are required if we could substantiate pricing methodology in our Basis of Estimate?

Section M.5.1 (e) is this section applicable to small business primes?

Answer: Folder I and Folder K are two distinct requirements. Folder I relates to the cost and pricing analysis of proposed prices/costs under the contract. Folder K relates to the requirements of FAR Subpart 22.11 and FAR Clause 52.222-46 "Evaluation of Compensation for Professional Employees."

Question 35: After contract awards, will task orders be available to both offerors of the full and open Alliant GWAC and Alliant SB GWAC? In other words will Alliant SB winners be able to submit bids on all task orders? Or how will the government determine the criteria for which task orders will be issued under full and open Alliant and which task orders will be issued under Alliant SB set aside? (i.e. will Alliant SB task orders be limited to those between \$100K and \$999K, and Alliant full and open task orders as all those over \$1M?)

Answer: No, They are two distinct solicitations. There are no task order limitations on Alliant SB.

Question 36: Page L-18, Paragraph L.12.4(2), External Resources—As part of a comprehensive response, may Offerors describe the process used to supplement core capabilities and provide examples of firms with whom the Offeror has historically worked?

Answer: It is sufficient to identify areas of expertise (as related to Section C) to be provided by external resources in order to supplement core capabilities. A list of subcontractors and their respective merits is not necessary and will not be evaluated. The focus should be on your methodology for acquiring, managing, and overseeing subcontractors.

Question 37: In section M, one of the criteria the government states that having a PM that has had experience in managing contracts "like SB Alliant" would be evaluated more favorably. Which current contracts would be considered similar to SB Alliant?

Answer: Multiple Award, Indefinite Delivery, Indefinite Quantity contracts for information technology services.

BASIC CONTRACT PLAN

Question 38: can small business discuss sub contract relationships in the Basic Contract Plan?

Answer: A small business can discuss subcontract relationships in the Basic Contract Plan; however, it is sufficient to identify areas of expertise (as related to Section C) to be provided by external resources in order to supplement core capabilities. A list of subcontractors and their respective merits is not necessary and will not be evaluated. The focus should be on your methodology for acquiring, managing and overseeing subcontractors—the “how” vs. the “who.”

Question 39: If, in order to show that we can expand our ability to support you in IT areas wherein we are not currently strong (i.e., in our Contract Plan writeup), we include (as a sub) one or more large businesses with strong capabilities in those areas, is that acceptable?

Answer: It is acceptable to include one or more large businesses with strong capabilities in IT areas where you are not current strong to show that you have the ability to fulfill the breadth of requirements in Section C; however, a list of contractors and their respective merits is not necessary and will not be evaluated. The focus should be on your methodology for acquiring, managing and overseeing subcontractors—the “how” vs. the “who.”

Question 40: In the last paragraph of subsection (1) Internal Resources, the RFP states, “If applicable, the offeror shall provide evidence of an approved purchasing system by submitting the DCAA/DCMA-issued approval letter.” We respectfully ask the Government how a potential bidder would know if they are DCAA/DCMA approved? And if we are not do we have to be approved to be considered for award? By using the word system, is the government referring to a process or procedure, or an actual software system?

Answer: An approved purchasing system is desired, but not required, in order to be considered for award. It is the collective methodology including policies, procedures and performance related to the contractor’s purchasing of material and services, subcontracting, and subcontract management from development of the requirement through completion of subcontract performance. Software may be a component of the purchasing system. Offerors should contact their cognizant ACO regarding the approval documentation. See FAR 44.

Question 41: Section L (a) (1) requires contact details (tel/email) to be included in the resumes of key personnel. Is it the Government's intention to contact these key personnel during the evaluation process?

Answer: It is not the Government's intention to contact these key personnel; however, the Government reserves the right to do so if deemed necessary and appropriate during the evaluation process.

Question 42: To propose on the Basic Contract, a Contractor Team Arrangement is defined as (joint ventures and/or SBA Mentor-Protégé Arrangements. You may include proposed subcontractors in your Basic Contract Plan in a limited context for consideration as an evaluation factor under the subfactor for 'Resources.' Is this an accurate statement of the relationship between a prime and subcontractors under Alliant SB?

Answer: The Government will not be evaluating proposed subcontractors for the Alliant SB Basic Contract. The Government will not be evaluating past performance information regarding proposed subcontractors. In the limited context of the Basic Contract Plan, the Government will be evaluating how a prime contractor intends to supplement its "core" capabilities, which may be through contractor team arrangements or subcontracting. A list of proposed subcontracts is not beneficial or useful. The focus should be on how the prime contractor will augment its core offerings so that it can propose on orders that include requirements from all three component areas.

Question 43: Reference: CD-R 3, Folder H - Alliant SB Basic Contract Plan. Is it allowable for the offeror to use 11"x17" paper as long as each 11x17 sheet counts as 2 pages?

Answer: It is allowable for the Offeror to use 11x17 paper as long as each 11x17 sheet counts as two pages.

Question 44: Is it the Government's intent to have the Statement of Work requirements addressed ONLY in *Folder H: Alliant SB Basic Contract Plan* (for Alliant SB) and *Folder H: Alliant SB SB Basic Contract Plan* (for Alliant SB SB)? Please clarify the Government's intent to evaluate responses to the Statement of Work requirements.

Answer: The Government is evaluating the Statement of Work requirements in both Past Performance and the Basic Contract Plans for both Alliant SB and Alliant SB Small Business.

Question 45: According to Section L.12.2, Folder D, last line first paragraph: "Notwithstanding the above, the Government will consider proposed subcontractors in the limited context of evaluating an Offeror's Alliant SB SB Basic Contract Plan under Section M.5.2, when evaluating the subfactor "resources". Since M.5.2 says that you will evaluate the Offeror's ability to deliver relative to identified gaps, does this mean that you

will look at past performance of proposed subcontractors? If the answer is "yes", how is this different from accepting formal teaming arrangements from the beginning? If the answer "no", than how will the Government evaluate subcontractors in M.5.2 w/o past performance?

Answer: The Government will not evaluate the past performance of proposed subcontractors.

Question 46: Are you requesting a separate write up that addresses the 3 component areas of Section C (i.e. Infrastructure, Application Services and IT Management Services), or are you requiring that the three subfactors include a separate write up that addresses the three component areas of Section C identified above?

Answer: Subfactors must be separately addressed. Offerors should address the three component areas of Section C, as appropriate, in order to fully address any strengths and weaknesses as related to successfully performing the contract requirements. Offerors will differ in their proposed Resources, Program Management and Corporate Commitment. Though subfactors must be separately addressed, it is up to individual Offerors how best to use the thirty pages to explain their plan. The documentation on purchasing systems, key personnel resumes, EVMS and organizational charts is now excluded from the thirty pages.

Question 47: Must companies who submit proposals be required to demonstrate their capabilities in all aspects of the SOW as subcontractor capabilities will not be evaluated? What if a contractor is unable to demonstrate their capabilities in all areas of the SOW, are we still allowed to submit a bid for this procurement?

Answer: Offerors do not need to demonstrate their capabilities in all aspects of the SOW; however, in the Basic Contract Plan, Offerors need to explain their procedures and methods for acquiring, tracking and managing subcontractors, and generally how they will complement their core capabilities to be able to propose (perform) on all three component areas in Section C of the solicitation.

Question 48: Section L.12.4.H.c – States that “the organizational chart shall also include the locations of the corporate headquarters, regional offices, any other satellite offices, as well as any pre-identified CTAs.” Must the office locations be included in the organizational chart? Would it be acceptable to provide the headquarters and other office locations in a separate graphic or table?

Answer: In their organizational charts, Offerors should include only those offices that are relevant to Alliant SB.

Question 49: Section L.12.4 states: "The Offeror should convey its ability to insure successful performance of all aspects of the Basic Contract and Orders to include all 3 component areas of Section C (i.e. Infrastructure, Application Services and IT Management Services). The Offeror shall demonstrate a clear understanding of the management and performance requirements of this solicitation by providing a concise description of its management approach for the following three subfactors; (a) Resources; (b) Program Management; and (c) Corporate Commitment." In addition to the reference of the three component areas in L.12.4, the reference is also made in the instructions for each subfactor. Are you 1) requesting a separate introduction that addresses the 3 component areas of Section C (i.e. Infrastructure, Application Services and IT Management Services), 2) requiring that the three subfactors include a section that addresses the three component areas of Section C identified above, or 3) is the reference to the three component areas **not** required as a separate write up in either an introduction or within the subfactors?

Answer: There is no requirement as to the specific construction of this section of the Offeror's Proposal beyond what is stated. The Offeror may choose how to construct their Proposal as they see fit.

Question 50: Section L.12.1 Table, CD-R 3, Folder (H) Alliant SB Basic Contract Plan. Request that the Government allow the Contractor to include a 1 to 2 page Executive Summary at the beginning of Folder H (exclusive of the 30 page limitation in Section H).

Answer: See change to solicitation regarding Executive Summary.

Question 51: Section L.12.4 CD-R 3, Folder H. Under Alliant SB Basic Contract Plan, paragraph (c) Corporate Commitment, 2nd paragraph, the last sentence reads, "The organizational chart shall also include the locations of the corporate headquarters, regional offices, any other satellite offices, as well as any pre-identified CTAs." Our organization has numerous regional and satellite offices that would be impossible to include all locations on the organizational chart. Suggest the requirement be changed to read, "The organizational chart shall also include the location of the corporate headquarters, and all Key Personnel. In addition, the Contractor shall include as an attachment 1(x), a listing of all regional and satellite offices, as well as any pre-identified CTAs. This attachment shall be exclusive of the 30 page limitation for the Alliant SB Basic Contract Plan.

Answer: Offerors shall include only those components of the organization that will be working on the Alliant SB program.

Question 52: The Alliant SB Basic Contract Plan consists of 30 pages but three separate PDF files. How will the government count partial pages at the end of each section? Typically, if the Basic Contract Plan were one file instead of three, one subsection would

immediately follow the previous subsection on the same page, thereby minimizing potentially wasted space in a page-constrained response.

Answer: To eliminate this problem, the Government has revised the Basic Contract Plan pdf file to gather all information (except purchasing system, resumes, EVMS, organization charts) into one pdf file with a thirty page limitation.

Question 53: Per Section B.7.2: If one or more of a prime contractor's purchasing systems are approved, can the prime process all purchases through one of their systems?

Answer: If the Offeror indicates availability of an approved purchasing system, that system should be utilized for this acquisition.

Question 54: Section L.12.4, FOLDER H: ALLIANT SB BASIC CONTRACT PLAN, (2) (B): This section sets forth the requirement for a detailed organizational chart including the locations of the corporate headquarters, regional offices, and other satellite offices. Since we have >150 CONUS/OCONUS offices around the world, there isn't a way to include all of them within this organizational chart. May we include our organization chart with the names for our key positions and their locations on one chart and a second chart showing the locations of our corporate headquarters, regional offices, and all satellite offices on the second chart?

Answer: Offerors shall include only organizational components that will be involved in the Alliant SB program.

Question 55: In Section M - EVALUATION FACTORS FOR AWARD, under the Basic Contract Plan, it is stated that Offerors with approved purchasing systems and EVMS will be "evaluated more favorably". Could you explain the evaluation process? How much weight will be given to these factors and how will this be applied to the overall evaluation?

Answer: See Section M.2. (b). The purchasing system is covered in the Resources subfactor which is more heavily weighted than Program Mgt subfactor (which includes EVMS).

Question 56: Since the Basic Contract Plan is to be submitted in three separate files, can we reference information from one section in another or will common information across the sections need to be repeated in each section (i.e. will each section be evaluated separately?)

Answer: Let's put it in one file. Cross ref within the BCP is acceptable.

Question 57: REF: Section L.12.1, CD-R 3-- The Alliant SB Basic Contract Plan is restricted to 30 pages with certain exemptions. The Purchasing System Documentation, the Program Manger Resume, and the Contract Administrator Resume are all excluded from the 30-page limit (Folder H (a) Resources). Folder H (b) Program Management System requests information regarding the Earned Value Management System (EVMS). In order to provide the Government with complete information, we request the section pertaining to an offeror's EVMS be excluded from the 30-page limit.

Answer: Amendment One will clarify these issues.

Question 58: L.12.4CD-R 3 FOLDER H: ALLIANT SB BASIC CONTRACT PLAN that an offeror should not include subcontractor lists or subcontractor qualifications. In addition, the Alliant SB website states that offerors should not include teaming:

Answer: The RFP is the official legal document which should be followed.

Question 59: Regarding Section M.5.2, Alliant SB Basic Contract Plan, (b) Program Management: We request the Government please provide more detail on or elaborate on what capability is required regarding "electronic commerce/electronic business processes." Specifically we would like to know how mature an EC capability is desired, as there is a wide range of capability that could be proposed – EC can be seen as simple as electronic paper trail or as sophisticated as Wal-Mart's purchasing system. Please amplify the text about the desired level for EC for Alliant SB.

Answer: This phrase has been deleted in the solicitation.

Question 60: Folder H, ALLIANT SB BASIC CONTRACT PLAN, (a) Resources, (1) Internal Resources: It is/will be extremely difficult for JV to have to have an approved and in place Purchasing System? Would it be acceptable to the Government that an Offeror have a milestone plan containing an approved purchasing system in place by the time the contract is awarded?

Answer: An approved purchasing system is not required in order to be considered for award. Offerors should include any information relevant to Alliant SB requirement which conveys their ability to perform successfully on all aspects of the contract.

Question 61: Per Section B.7.2: Will prime contractors whose purchasing system has not been approved be considered for award?

Answer: An approved purchasing system is not required in order to be considered for award.

Question 62: Section M does not indicate any favorable evaluation criteria for firms that are ISO certified or have CMM/CMMI. Please explain.

Answer: The Government will evaluate the Offeror's program management system, and as such, will note those outstanding aspects of a system that would qualify it for various certifications. The Government chose not to evaluate specific certifications.

Question 63: If we propose additional key personnel, may we include their resumes? Does the "no page limit" still apply even if we submit 6 additional resumes?

Answer: The Government does not want a resume for positions other than Program Manager. This resume is not included in the page count.

Question 64: References Section L.12.4, CD-R 3, Folder H: Alliant SB Basic Contract Plan (a) Resources (1) Internal Resources, statements relative to Purchasing System, as follows: "...effectiveness of business systems, including evidence of an approved purchasing system." "If applicable, the Offeror shall provide evidence of an approved purchasing system by submitting the DCAA/DCMA-issued approval letter." Section M.5.2 Alliant SB Basic Contract Plan (a) Resources (1) Internal Resources, statement relative to Purchasing System, as follows: "Offerors with approved purchasing systems will be evaluated more favorably." Per GSA's October 12 webcast, we understand that fewer than ten of more than 500 leading IT companies currently have DCMA approval of their purchasing systems. We also understand that the schedule for obtaining a DCMA audit of purchasing systems is years, not months. Therefore, the provision of a more favorable evaluation for only a few companies, when many of the Alliant SB competitors may simply be unable to obtain timely DCMA audit of their purchasing systems, appears inequitable. Will GSA consider removing this requirement from the solicitation?

Answer: This is only one component of one subfactor in the proposal evaluation. The Government believes that contractors with approved purchasing systems provide a real benefit to the Government in terms of reduced risk in areas such as cost and compliance, as well as reduced administrative efforts associated with consent to subcontract. Offerors are not precluded from explaining their situation in regards to obtaining DCMA approval and may provide additional information supporting the adequacy of their purchasing system.

Question 65: Reference Section L.12.4, CD-R 3, Folder H, Alliant SB Basic Contract Plan. The Capability Maturity Model Integration (CMMI) for Systems Engineering and Software Engineering (SE/SW) is a process optimization approach used to reduce risk and improve quality across IT projects. Given Alliant SB's scope of work and the IT Service Categories described in Section C of the RFP, Alliant SB customers would benefit from Offerors with certified CMMI SE/SW processes. Would the Government consider requiring, or at least evaluating favorably, Offerors with CMMI SE/SW Level 3 or above certifications, similar to the evaluation of EVMS and purchasing systems under paragraph M.5.2 of this solicitation?

Answer: The Government is evaluating the Offeror's program management system. The Government is not evaluating the specific certifications of a system.

Question 66: (Question also covered in past performance.) With regard to the use of subcontractors in the prime proposal, it is our understanding that subcontractors will not be evaluated as part of the prime proposal, and that subcontractor past performance will not be evaluated as well. Can the prime use mention of a subcontractor and their qualifications as an example of how effective our proposed solution is to managing external resources and the types of solutions they would provide?

Answer: Your statement that the Government will not be evaluating information regarding proposed subcontractors as part of the past performance evaluation is correct. As to the Basic Contract Plan evaluation factor, the Government will evaluate how effective a prime contractor will be in managing its external resources, such as subcontractors. However, at this stage the Government is not interested in the name(s) of any specific proposed subcontractors.

Question 67: Can the prime proposal mention names (not a list of subcontractors) in the body of the technical proposal as we explain our methodology? Again, we intend to use this information as proof to our claim that our proposed solution will yield results that benefit the Alliant SB customer base.

Answer: The specific names are irrelevant in the evaluation process. The skill sets/capabilities that the Offeror plans to subcontract and how the Offeror plans to acquire, manage and oversee its subcontractors is relevant to the evaluation.

Question 68: Reference Section M.5.2 Alliant SB Basic Contract Plan, Part (b) Program Management, page M-6, The section reads in part "Offerors providing a comprehensive and effective program management strategy with quantifiable performance metrics that link incentives to performance and quality controls that ensure a comprehensive and verifiable approach for monitoring and reporting performance will be evaluated more favorably." Do the incentives mentioned refer to performance based contracting incentives to be negotiated on each task order, compensation or other incentives that the

offeror provides internally to program and task order managers, both of these, or something else?

Answer: This refers to both internally provided incentives that may relate to employees, such as Program and task order managers, as well as externally applied incentives related to subcontractors in order to insure optimal performance is achieved. Offerors may also address how they incorporate TO level incentives into their overall program management plan. The key is the effectiveness of the overall program mgt strategy in assuring optimal quality of performance—timeliness, cost, quantity/quality/innovative solutions. Performance incentives are not restricted to performance based contracts and can be similar in nature. The distinction is that incentives are a required component of performance based contracts.

Question 69: Section M.5.2, Alliant SB Basic Contract Plan, The RFP states: “As part of its evaluation of the contract plan, The Government will evaluate the offeror’s overall capability to support the Alliant SB program by determining whether the plan sufficiently addresses any gaps or weaknesses not addressed in past performance.” Request clarification on this requirement. Is the Government looking for the offeror to identify areas where they lack experience and how they are going to team, subcontract, etc. to fill this lack of experience or is the Government looking for the Offeror to identify lessons learned and performance improvements to overcome them?

Answer: The Government is looking for the Offeror to identify areas where they lack experience and how they are going to team, subcontract, etc. to fill this lack of experience and for how the Offeror will compliment core capabilities to cover the areas where they lack experience. It is up to the Offeror whether or not to identify lessons learned and performance improvements as part of this exercise.

Question 70: Section L.12.4 CD-R3 Folder H: Alliant SB Basic Contract Plan, and (b) Program Management, the RFP states in Folder H: Alliant SB Basic Contract Plan: “The Offeror shall explain in the Alliant SB Basic Contract Plan how it will continuously identify, mitigate, manage and control risks within its holistic approach for managing the comprehensive scope of the Alliant SB program.”

Answer: The question is unclear; however, the Government’s intent is that throughout the Basic Contract Plan, the Offeror will address risk as it relates to a particular subfactor.

Question 71: L.12.4 (b) Program Management. “The Offeror shall explain the methodology for risk minimization, schedule controls, costs controls, and efficient utilization of resources for ensuring task accomplishment.” Given the 30 page limitation for this section, could the Government provide further clarification as to what section they would like the risk mitigation plans to be included?

Answer: Risk mitigation shall be addressed as appropriate throughout the Basic Contract Plan with particular emphasis in the Program Management subfactor.

Question 72: L.12.4 also calls for information on topics such as “...current core capabilities, such as its ability to recruit, train, and retain high quality personnel; the number of personnel with security clearances and level of clearance; qualifications of key personnel, and effectiveness of business systems...” as part of the Internal Resources section of Folder H. Please clarify what is desired by the government in this section of the proposal response (Folder H). Specifically: a) Which parts of the Internal Resources response are page limited; b) what is meant by “purchasing system documentation” vs. “evidence of an approved purchasing system” and c) please bring the two cited sections of the RFP into alignment.

Answer: The Basic Contract Plan is limited to 30 pages, exclusive of resumes and purchasing systems, as indicated in the L.12.1 Table. The Government will also exclude organizational charts from the 30 page limitation. The Government will correct terminology to consistently state ‘evidence of approved purchasing system’ which can be a letter or memo from the cognizant ACO responsible for approving the purchasing system per FAR part 44.

Question 73: Basic Contract Plan Evaluation, Section M.5 of the Alliant SB RFP states that the Government will evaluate its confidence level in the Offeror’s ability to manage risk and to deliver high quality service and solutions. Under the Alliant SB Basic Contract Plan, the RFP states that the Government will look “prospectively” and consider the Offeror’s potential for success. In order to increase the Governments “confidence level”, it would be beneficial to include brief examples of past experience and success using the processes and procedures described in an Offeror’s program management strategy as part of the Basic Contract Plan submission in CD-R 3, Folder H. The purpose of such references would be to document past experience with program management tools, processes and procedures, but NOT to supplement past performance information in CD-R2, Folder F. Will the Government accept the inclusion of such references to prior work in the Basic Contract Plan?

Answer: The Government will accept the inclusion of such references.

Question 74: Section L.12.1 and L.12.4. GSA has indicated it intends to evaluate proposal CD-R 3, Folder H, Alliant SB Basic Contract Plan, to determine offerors’ abilities and processes for managing and performing the scope of work under Alliant SB. This calls for descriptions and explanations of resources, program management systems, organizational commitments, etc. To best provide GSA with the level of detail it needs to perform a fair and thorough evaluation of each offerors’ ability in each of these areas, we offer that GSA considers expanding the page limit for this section. We respectfully ask

that GSA consider changing the page limitation on proposal Folder H from 30 to 45 pages. While we understand this provides the agency with more work in reviewing additional pages, we also believe it serves GSA's mission and will provide for better identification of best-in-class contractors.

Answer: The Basic Contract Plan is limited to 30 pages, exclusive of resumes and purchasing systems, as indicated in the L.12.1 Table. The Government will also exclude organizational charts from the 30 page limitation.

Question 75: Under M.5.2 (b) Alliant SB Basic Contract. We are not aware of a Government entity that can approve an EVMS. Will GSA favorably consider expert EVM practices as compliant for the evaluation specified in M.5.2 (b)?

Answer: An approved EVMS system is not required to be considered for award. The cognizant federal agency (FAR 2.10) is responsible for approval and oversight of the contractor's EVMS—per FAR 52.234-4. Typically, this is the DCMA ACO. Offerors may provide any other relevant EVMS related information for consideration.

Question 76: L.12.4, CD-R 3, Offerors are instructed to provide information re: managing the comprehensive scope of the Alliant SB program as well as identify gaps or weaknesses in Past Performance and address them. There is no file specified for this information. Would the Government allow the Offerors to provide a file to be named by the Government in which we are able to address this information or should this information be included in the Resources file?

Answer: These instructions are intended to convey the Government's overall objective and provide Offerors with an overall approach for addressing the specified subfactors. A separate file is not necessary. This is an overall plan which is intended to complement/supplement the past performance factor. The objective is to insure that the Offerors identify their weaknesses or any gaps in past performance and explain how they will address these to insure that they can provide optimal performance to the Government.

PAST PERFORMANCE

Question 77: Will the Government permit the submission of Past Performance References for commercial customers if the work performed pertains to the Alliant SB SOW?

Answer: Yes

Question 78: Will commercial past performance be evaluated with the same weight as Government past performance?

Answer: Yes

Question 79: On page L-15, Section L.12.3 (c) Table 1 states that Offerors are limited to (1) GWACs, (2) MA-IDIQs, and (3) Multiple Award Blanket Purchase Agreements (BPAs). However, Column A instructions, in the following table, do not include “BPAs”: “Enter GWAC or MA-IDIQ Contract Number”. Nor does Column I, “Enter Number of Task Orders Issued under the GWAC or MA-IDIQ“. Similarly, Attachment 6 Past Performance Table 1, column one does not list “BPAs”. Please clarify if BPAs are to be included in Column A.

Answer: Yes, Table 1 will be amended to include BPAs.

Question 80: Will GSA accept Single award service contracts and/or GSA Schedule performance for (c) Table 1 past performance?

Answer: The RFP stands. See Section L.12.3 as amended.

Question 81: How many past performances references shall be evaluated?

Answer: Refer to Section L.12.3, Folder F (e) of the solicitation.

Question 82: Page L-15: This section states as follows: “Offerors shall list the master contract only, not any task order contracts, which may have been issued there under.” However, Page L-14, Section L.12.3(a) (6) states “Relate to projects for which the Offeror is (or was) the prime-contractor or for which the Offeror performed as a first-tier subcontractor where the Offeror had complete (turnkey) responsibility for a separately identifiable part of an overall system or service.”

Regarding Table 1, our firm is a valued first-tier subcontractor on a number of BPAs, GWAC, MA-IDIQ and contract vehicles. We understand that GSA does not want our task work detailed in this table. It is our intention to list GWACs, MA-IDIQs, and BPAs that we participate under in Table 1. Please clarify if this is acceptable.

Answer: An amendment will be issued to clarify. The offeror is to be the prime contract holder for Table 1. First-tier subcontracting work is to be listed under Table 2 only.

Question 83: Folder F: Past Performance Tables, (a) Acceptable Offers, (3) Be over \$100,000 total estimated amount

Page L-14: In support of a client, we have multiple task orders, with similar technical scope, that are cumulatively over \$100,000 and are ongoing after 1 Jan. 2004. We are assuming that this cumulative entry is acceptable for Table 2?

Answer: This is not acceptable. Task orders and contracts must stand on their own.

Question 84: A Small Business is normally allowed to utilize the personal experiences of its Officers, vice corporate experiences, to meet Past Performance and Experience requirements of RFPs. Will GSA accept the personal experiences, within the limits specified within the RFP, of the Officers of the members of the Contractor Team Arrangement (CTA) in fulfilling the Past Performance requirements of Folder F?

Answer: Past performance must meet the guidelines in FAR Subpart 15.305 and conform to the requirement of the RFP.

Question 85: Reference Page L-15,16, Folder F, PAST PERFORMANCE TABLES: Are Past Performance Tables 1 and 2 only for Primes Offerors (NO SUBCONTRACTOR PAST PERFORMANCE WILL BE ACCEPTED)? However when submitting a JV proposal submission, the JV members Part Performances are acceptable on Table I and 2. Please Clarify

Answer: The past performance of the individual members of the joint venture adhere to the joint venture entity past performance.

Question 86: L.12.3 CD-R2, Folder F Past Performance.

Based on the information provided by GSA with respect to past performance, it appears that the Offeror may only submit past performance information related to their experience and not the experience of a team mate/subcontractor that may be used to fill gaps or area of weakness with respect to past performance. Is this an accurate understanding?

Answer: Yes

Question 87: Is it acceptable to use Past Performance for only single awards (table 2) and not GWACs or MA-IDIQs (table 1) awards or do we need past performance in both?

Answer: If an offeror has no past performance on either Table 1 or Table 2, a neutral rating will be assigned. Refer to FAR Subpart 15.305(a)(2)(iv).

Question 88: AR regulations indicate that contract performance of all entities of a federally recognized Indian tribe may be used as past performance references on a RFP responses if additional criteria stated in the RFP are met. If the additional RFP criteria are met (i.e. prime contractor, same 541512 NAICS code, GWAC or MA-IDIQ, date parameters) may federally recognized Indian tribal companies utilize past contract performance references from all entities of the same tribe on this RFP?

Answer: Only the past performance of the prime offeror, which includes the past performance of members of a legally established joint venture, will be evaluated.

Question 89: If a small business does not have past performance in all the functional areas, will it be judged ONLY on those areas in which it is experienced? In other words, if it has outstanding experience in ONLY 25% of the functional areas, would its proposal be considered 75% deficient?

Answer: Refer to Section M.5.1.3

Question 90: Please clarify your comment during the web cast that you would like to see ALL relevant past performance. Is that ALL past performance for only the team lead in a joint venture, or is that ALL past performance for every member of the joint venture? In other words, in preparing our proposal, is it true that we do NOT have the option to pick and choose which past performance projects we want to cite?

Answer: The past performance of the individual members of the joint venture adhere to the joint venture entity past performance. The offering entity may choose any conforming past performance examples up to the limits specified in Tables 1 and 2.

Question 91: Page L-14, Folder F (c) indicates Table 1 is limited to "Governmentwide Acquisition Contracts (GWACS). Do GSA contracts like the IT Schedule 70, MOBIS, and PES qualify as GWAC contracts for the purpose of Table 1?

Answer: The RFP stands. Please refer to Section L.12.3 as amended.

Question 92: On page L-15 Section L Folder F (c) Table 1: will the Government accept inclusion in Table 1 of single or multiple award BOAs with separate task orders?

Answer: The Government will not consider multiple award Basic Ordering Agreements (BOA) with separate task orders in Table 1.

Question 93: On page L-15 Section L Folder F (c) Table 1: will the Government accept inclusion in Table 1 of a single award, competitive BPA with separate task orders?

Answer: No, Table 1 is reserved for GWACS, MA-IDIQs, and Multiple Award BPAs for services

Question 94: Section L.12.3 Folder F: Past Performance Tables
Table I (Pg L-15 and L-16)

Does this include the GSA MOBIS Contract? or Are those contracts to be listed only in Table 2?

Answer: Only multiple award BPAs against GSA Federal Supply Schedule contracts can be used for Table 1, not the contract by itself. Task orders issued against those contracts are permissible for Table 2.

Question 95: According to Section L.12.3(a)(6) of the Alliant SB solicitation, past performances must “Relate to projects for which the Offeror is (or was) the prime-contractor or for which the Offeror performed as a first-tier subcontractor where the Offeror had complete (turnkey) responsibility for a separately identifiable part of an overall system or service.”

This restriction could eliminate many very capable companies. For years GSA has lead the way in the use of small businesses and seems to me it would be contradictory to this policy to limit past performance to only instances where the offeror was the prime. Will you reconsider your position on past performance and permit past as a prime or as a sub performance to be considered?

Answer: Past Performance Table 2 permits first tier subcontracting that conforms to L.12.3, Folder F (a) (6).

Question 96: Reference: Section L.12.3(d)(2). The RFP states that Offerors are limited to: “Task Orders (no delivery order contracts), applicable to NAICS code 541512, which have been issued under GWACs, MA-IDIQs, BPAs or GSA schedules.”

Question/Comment: NAICS code 541512, the primary NAICS code for this solicitation, is specific to Computer Systems Design Services. However, the broad scope of work described in the Statement of Work also covers other NAICS codes, such as 541511 (Custom Computer Programming Services) and 541519 (Other Computer Related Services). In order to include task orders in Table 2 that reflect our capabilities in other areas of the SOW (beyond Computer Systems Design), we request that the Government either include additional NAICS codes in this section, or, instead of specifying a NAICS code, require that offerors show task orders that demonstrate the offeror’s capabilities in any area included in the SOW.

Answer: A forthcoming amendment will clarify that past performance examples should conform to Section C and not be limited to NAICS code 541512.

Question 97: Section L.12.2, Folder F: Past Performance Tables; (c) Table 1 and (d) Table 2: The solicitation provides a limit of twenty (20) applicable Past Performance efforts to be listed in Table 1 and a limit of fifty (50) applicable Past Performance efforts to be listed in Table 2. Item (e) Government Targeted Task Orders/Contracts states that “The Government intends to use reasonable efforts to check approximately ten (10) efforts selected from Tables 1 and 2, including the three (3) efforts which the Offeror has identified. The RFP has provided a maximum number of Past Performances for Table 1 and 2. Are there a minimum number of Past Performance efforts for each Table?

Answer: The minimum number of efforts to be listed is 20 for Table 1 and 50 for Table 2. These minimums must be adhered to if at least that many exist. If less than these minimums exist, offeror must list all past performance experiences.

Question 98: Can a contractor use current task order awards under a large contract it holds as separate past performance references?

Answer: Yes in Table 2. Refer to Section L.12.3, Folder F (d) (2).

Question 99: Past Performance Table 2 allows task orders from GWACs, IDIQs, BPAs & GSA Schedules. However, Table 1 only allows GWACs, IDIQs, & BPAs. Could GSA Schedule Contracts be included in Table 1?

Answer: Only multiple award BPAs against GSA Federal Supply Schedule contracts can be used for Table 1, not the contract by itself. Task orders issued against those contracts are permissible for Table 2.

Question 100: May we use State-issued IDIQ contracts as references?

Answer: Yes

Question 101: Reference RFP Section L.12.3(a)(1), which states that relevant past performance information submitted must be ongoing or completed after 1 Jan 2004, and L.12.3(b)(3), which states that projects completed more than 3 years ago would be non-acceptable. As an example, a project completed in December 2003 would be disallowed by the first reference, but allowed by the second (assuming that “3 years ago” is measured from the date of proposal submission). Please clarify.

Answer: An amendment will clarify the dates for relevant past performance information.

Question 102: Reference RFP Section 12.3(a)(3), which states that relevant past performance information must be over \$100,000 total estimated amount. We have several instances of sustained performance issued via separate task orders issued in amounts less than \$100,000 in order to accommodate our client's funding process. Also, many short-term assessments or other focused IT and business process consulting tasks may have relatively low dollar value but very significant business value to the Government customer. We request that GSA reduce the acceptable amount to \$25,000 to allow these types of references to be used.

Answer: The RFP stands as written.

Question 103: Page L-15, Paragraph L.12.3(c), Table 1—Per the instructions in Subparagraph (3), only Multiple Award Blanket Purchase Agreements (BPAs) are cited for inclusion in Table 1. So long as all parameters of this section, solicitation requirements, and evaluation criteria are met, may Offerors also include Single Award BPAs in Table 1?

Answer: The RFP stands as written.

Question 104: Page L-17, Paragraph L.12.3(f)—CTAs—In the cited paragraph, it states that “*Offerors that submit a proposal in the form of a CTA, the Government will evaluate Past Performance information submitted in Section L.12.4, Folder D ...*” Does the Government intend this paragraph to state “Section L.12.2, Folder D” instead?

Answer: An amendment will correct this typo.

SUBCONTRACTING

Question 105: Section J – Attachment 7

This attachment is the Alliant SB Subcontracting Report and it was included as part of the Alliant Small Business RFP. We cannot find any reference to this report in RFP #TQ2006MCB0002. The data required does not seem to apply to this RFP. Is completion of this attachment necessary?

Answer: Attachment 7 (Subcontracting Report) is not required at time of proposal submission. Attachment 7 is required every 6 months after award pursuant to Section G.8 of the RFP and resultant contract.

Question 106: Is there a requirement to perform 51% of the direct labor for the small business prime in a 12 month period? If so, will this be evaluated on every task order or against the total amount of work under the umbrella contract?

Answer: Alliant SB awardees must comply with FAR clause 52.219-14 “Limitations on Subcontracting.” The requirements of this clause apply to the life of the basic contract, not on individual task orders.

Question 107: Section M.5.1 (e) – As a small business prime, is it the Government’s intent that we still meet small business subcontracting and socioeconomic goals, as specified in this section?

Answer: Section M.5.1 (e) is not applicable to Alliant SB. A future amendment will remove Section M.5.1 (e) from the Alliant SB solicitation. The Limitations on Subcontracting Clause 52.219.14 still applies.

Question 108: On page L-11 paragraph “Folder D,” the RFP states, “...the Government will consider proposed sub-contractors in the limited context of evaluating an Offeror’s Alliant SB Basic Contract Plan under Section M.5.2...” and on page L-18, (2) External Resources, states “...Offeror may indicate the intent to use subcontractors; however, it should not include subcontractor lists or subcontractor qualifications.” These requirements seem to conflict. Will you please clarify if it is the Government’s intent that key sub-contractors not be identified and sub-contractor qualifications provided in Folder D but that they should be identified in Folder H?

Answer: The two sections cited do not conflict and are actually referring to each other. A clarifying amendment will be issued. In the Basic Contract Plan offers should show their ability to supplement their core capabilities through subcontracting. Folder H(a)(2) is clear as to what the government is looking for.

Question 109: On page L-15, Section L.12.3 (c) Table 1. Do we understand correctly that it is the Government’s intent that only contract level, not subcontractor information, is to be listed in Table 1?

Answer: Yes, Table 1 should only include experiences where the offeror was the prime.

Question 110: Is more weight given to my past performance submissions where I performed as a prime versus when I performed as a subcontractor or is the focus on the relevancy and quality?

Answer: They are considered equal when the work performed by the offeror as a first tier subcontractor conforms to the requirements stated in Folder F(a)(6).

Question 111: Section G.8 For a period when no task orders and subcontractors are retained, will the prime contractors have to submit Attachment J semi-annually?

Answer: Yes. Negative reports are required. A future amendment will make Section G.8 more specific.

Question 112: Section L.12.3

This is a two part question, the first part is will subcontractors past performances be valid in table one and two? With the two past performance tables that are provided, is the only difference between table one and two that table two is for past performances sightings for OCONUS contracts.

Answer: No, subcontractors will not be evaluated (see Folder F(a)(6). The RFP is clear on the matter of the differences between Table 1 and 2 (see Section L.12.3 Folder F(c) and F(d))

Question 113: Page L-16, Table 2, when referencing work performed as a first tier subcontractor may offeror chose between providing government and prime contractor as Point of Contact (POC)? For example, may offeror provide prime contractor as contractual POC and provide either government COTR or prime contractor Program Manager as Program Manager POC?

Answer: L-16: Column D should be for the prime contractor POC and Column E should be for the program/government POC.

Question 114: Will the past performance of my proposed subcontractors be evaluated in my proposal, or is past performance limited to my company only?

Answer: Past performance of subcontractors will not be evaluated (See Section L.12.3(a)(6).

Question 115: Page L-14 Folder (F), (a) (6), please revise to accept all first tier subcontractors and not require turn key responsibility because turn key responsibility is hard to measure and first tier subcontractor establishes technical capability.

Answer: We do not intend to remove this requirement.

Question 116: Reference L.12.2, Folder D. At the end of this paragraph, the RFP states, "...the Government will consider proposed subcontractors in the limited context of evaluating an Offeror's Alliant SB Basic Contract Plan under Section M.5.2, when evaluating the subfactor for "Resources."

Question/Comment: In the above reference, the Government says that it will consider "proposed subcontractors" in the stated limited context. The term "*proposed* subcontractors" seems to imply that the Government will consider (in the stated limited context) specific subcontractors the Offeror is proposing as part of their Alliant SB Team (e.g., those who have signed a teaming agreement with the Offeror). However, this reference seems to be contradicted by Section L.12.4 (a) (2), which states that the Offer should not identify specific subcontractors, and should only include a discussion of procedures and methods for acquiring, tracking and managing subcontractors. Please clarify.

Answer: Offers should not identify specific subcontractors anywhere in their proposal. "Proposed subcontractors," as used in the instructions for Folder D, is not an artful way to state our intentions. A clarifying amendment will be forthcoming.

EVMS

Question 117: Section M.5.2.b states that "Offerors with approved EVMS will be evaluated more favorably". What Agency EVMS approval is GSA requiring and does the approval have to have been granted within the last year?

Answer: Evidence of experience with EVMS can be from any cognizant Federal agency. There is no time limit. For evaluation purposes, the Government is interested in knowing whether the Offeror has any past or current experience with EVMS. If an Offeror is in the process of working with a cognizant Federal agency on an effort involving EVMS, but does not yet have an approved EVMS, the Offeror should provide documentation (a letter) from the cognizant Federal agency explaining that the Offeror has an effort where EVMS is applicable and the Offeror's EVMS is in the approval process.

Question 118: The RFP indicates in L.12.4 Folder H (b) that the Offeror shall indicate evidence of an approved EVMS, if applicable. Could you clarify and/or expand upon the words "evidence" and "approved"?

Answer: For evaluation purposes, the Government is interested in knowing whether the Offeror has any past or current experience with EVMS. A letter from the cognizant Federal agency is "evidence". If an Offeror is in the process of working with a cognizant Federal agency on an effort involving EVMS, but does not yet have an approved EVMS, the Offeror should provide documentation (a letter) from the

cognizant Federal agency explaining that the Offeror has an effort where EVMS is applicable and the Offeror's EVMS is in the approval process.

Question 119: In Section M.5.2(b) Program Management, the solicitation states "Offerors with approved EVMS will be evaluated more favorably." What constitutes "approved EVMS" and what organization will GSA recognize as authority to approve the system?

Answer: Evidence of experience with EVMS can be from any cognizant Federal agency. There is no time limit. For evaluation purposes, the Government is interested in knowing whether the Offeror has any past or current experience with EVMS. If an Offeror is in the process of working with a cognizant Federal agency on an effort involving EVMS, but does not yet have an approved EVMS, the Offeror should provide documentation (a letter) from the cognizant Federal agency explaining that the Offeror has an effort where EVMS is applicable and the Offeror's EVMS is in the approval process.

Question 120: Reference Page L-19, Folder H, ALLIANT SB BASIC CONTRACT PLAN, (b) Program Management: It is/will be extremely difficult for a JV to have to have a approved and in place an EVMS? Can a milestone plan to have a EVMS to be put in place by the time the contract is awarded acceptable in the proposal submission

Answer: An approved EVMS is not required for award. Offerors in a Contractor Team Arrangement may include information on EVMS for any of the companies making up the Contractor Team Arrangement. For evaluation purposes, the Government is interested in knowing whether the Offeror has any past or current experience with EVMS. If an Offeror is in the process of working with a cognizant Federal agency on an effort involving EVMS, but does not yet have an approved EVMS, the Offeror should provide documentation (a letter) from the cognizant Federal agency explaining that the Offeror has an effort where EVMS is applicable and the Offeror's EVMS is in the approval process.

Question 121: References Section L.12.4, CD-R 3, Folder H: Alliant Basic Contract Plan, (b) Program Management, statement relative to Earned Value Management Systems, as follows: "The Offeror shall indicate evidence of an approved Earned Value Management Systems (EVMS), if applicable." Section M.5.2, Alliant Basic Contract Plan, (b) Program Management, statement relative to Earned Value Management Systems, as follows: "Offerors with approved EVMS will be evaluated more favorably." We understand that the only Agency authorized to certify a company's EVMS is DCMA, and further, that only Agencies/Activities – not industry – can request certification of an EVMS through DCMA. Therefore, will GSA accept Agency/Activity documentation at the program level as evidence of an approved EVMS?

Answer: The Government will accept Agency/Activity documentation at the program level as evidence of an approved EVMS?

Question 122: Reference: L.12.4. (b) and M.5.2. (b) Program Management—Earned Value Management System (EVMS). Please identify who is authorized to approve an EVMS per the requirements of the RFP, or are you referring to an EVMS that is ANSIEIA STD-748A compliant? Per OMB, an EVMS is not required for operational/steady state projects.

Answer: EVMS will be applicable only if required at the individual task order level. EVMS is also not required for award of the Basic Contract; however, those Offerors showing experience with EVMS will be evaluated more favorably.

Question 123: Clause H.1, Clauses Incorporated by Reference, specifically 52.234-2, 52.234-3, 52.234-4; and L.12.4 CD-R 3, Folder H, (b). H.1 states that the clauses incorporated by reference apply at the Order Level, as applicable. Section L asks Offerors to provide evidence of an “approved” EVMS. The Section L request seems to follow the policy at FAR subpart 32.2. Please clarify whether Offerors are to provide a “comprehensive plan for compliance with these EVMS standards” with their offers (proposal); or if this requirement is deferred to the individual Order.

Answer: A comprehensive plan for compliance with EVMS standards is not required for award; however, Offerors who demonstrate experience with EVMS will be evaluated more favorably. For evaluation purposes, the Government is interested in knowing whether the Offeror has any past or current experience with EVMS. If an Offeror is in the process of working with a cognizant Federal agency on an effort involving EVMS, but does not yet have an approved EVMS, the Offeror should provide documentation (a letter) from the cognizant Federal agency explaining that the Offeror has an effort where EVMS is applicable and the Offeror’s EVMS is in the approval process.

Question 124: Clause H.1, Clauses Incorporated by Reference, 52.234-2, 52.234-3, 52.234-4; and L.12.4 CD-R 3, Folder H, (b). If Offerors are required to submit a “comprehensive plan for compliance with these EVMS standards” with their offer (proposal), then will the Government please consider the following: (1) providing further direction as to what constitutes a “comprehensive plan for compliance with these EVMS standards,” (2) providing additional page count to allow for such an extensive document, and consider additional evaluation criteria in Section M.

Answer: A comprehensive plan for compliance with EVMS standards is not required for award; however, Offerors who demonstrate experience with EVMS will be evaluated more favorably. For evaluation purposes, the Government is interested in knowing whether the Offeror has any past or current experience with

EVMS. If an Offeror is in the process of working with a cognizant Federal agency on an effort involving EVMS, but does not yet have an approved EVMS, the Offeror should provide documentation (a letter) from the cognizant Federal agency explaining that the Offeror has an effort where EVMS is applicable and the Offeror's EVMS is in the approval process.

Question 125: The Request for Proposal (RFP) #TQ2006MCB0002 Section L.12.4 CD-R 3 titled FOLDER H: ALLIANT SB BASIC CONTRACT PLAN Section (b) Program Management paragraph 3, page L-19 states "The Offeror shall indicate evidence of an approved Earned Value Management System (EVMS), if applicable." Can you define what designates an approved EVMS system?

Answer: Refer to FAR Clause 52.234-4 "Earned Value Management System". An approval letter/memo issued by the Cognizant ACO is considered evidence of an approved Earned Value Management System (EVMS).

Question 126: H.18 – This paragraph sets the requirement for an Earned Value Management System (EVMS) when applicable to an individual order. Section L12.4. (b) states that an approved EVMS is required if applicable. Without knowledge of future individual orders, the Government has made the interpretation of the EVMS requirement impossible, e.g., will there be orders in which EVMS is a requirement? Since the implementation of an EVMS is a major purchase for a small business, could the Government state clearly and directly if an EVM system is a requirement for the pre-award audit and the receipt of an award.

Answer: Refer to L.12.4 Folder H (b) and M.5.2 (b). An Earned Value Management System (EVMS) is not a requirement for receipt of an award. Offerors with an EVMS approved by the cognizant ACO will be evaluated more favorably.

Question 127: L.12.4.(b) If an offeror submits a plan to achieve compliance with ANSI/EIA Standard - 748 (as per FAR 52.234-2) for the proposed EVMS, can this plan be submitted as a separate file in the proposal that is exclusive of the Alliant SB Basic Contract Plan 30 page limit?

Answer: An amendment will be issued to indicate that evidence of approved EVMS under Folder H will not be include in the 30 page limit.

Question 128: Section L.12.4 Contests of CD-R 3 under paragraph (b) Program Management (page L-19) asks "the offeror shall indicate evidence of an approved Earned Value Management system (EVMS), if applicable. Will the government elaborate on

EVMS required approvals? In addition, is a self certification (made by a senior official of the offeror) of compliance with ANSI/EIA-748 EVMS Standards permissible?

Answer: Refer to FAR Clause 52.234-4 “Earned Value Management System”. An approval letter/memo issued by the cognizant ACO is considered evidence of an approved Earned Value Management System (EVMS).

CONTRACT ADMINISTRATION AND CONTRACT ACCESS FEE (CAF)

Question 129: In Section B.5 Contract Access Fee the solicitation states, the total CAF collected per Order will be capped at a set amount to be determined by the Government. Has a cap been determined?

Answer: A cap has not been determined. Offerors should not assume that a cap will be determined before the award date.

Question 130: In Section B.5 “Contract Access Fee,” the solicitation states, “The total CAF collected per Order will be capped at a set amount to be determined by the Government.” Has a cap been determined?

Answer: A cap has not been determined. Offerors should not assume that a cap will be determined before the award date.

Question 131: Reference B.5 - Contract Access Fee. Please confirm the CAF will be addressed entirely at the task order level as a separate line item and not included in any prices in the Basic Contract.

Answer: Correct, the CAF will be addressed entirely at the task order level as a separate line item and not included in any prices in the Basic Contract.

Question 132: B.5 Contract Access Fee. B.5, 2nd sentence, Formula The 2nd sentence states: “The formula is: Total CAF = Total Invoiced Costs * CAF percentage. Please note that the CAF is also included in the total invoiced amount. It should, therefore, be removed from the calculation. The calculation should be “Total CAF = (Total invoiced / 1.0075) * .0075”

Answer: “Total Invoiced Costs” are those costs for the services rendered to the customer, not including the CAF.

Question 133: B.5 Contract Access Fee. Does the Contract Access Fee (CAF) replace the Industrial Funding Fee (IFF)? If not, is the IFF also applicable to the Alliant SB GWAC?

Answer: The CAF and IFF are synonymous.

Question 134: Section F.5 The contractor access fee CAF, is to be reported two weeks after a monetary payment transfer, would consideration be given for a quarterly payment and reporting?

Answer: There is no change to the requirements for Contract Access Fee (CAF) reporting.

Question 135: Section G.9.7, (b), The RFP states: (b) Invoice Data - The contractor shall report all invoicing activity within 60 calendar days of performance acceptance by the customer. Invoice data includes, but is not limited to: ... Based on the level of detail described, may we assume the Government is simply asking for copies of all invoices with supporting detail, e.g., SF1034 and SF1035?

Answer: The level of detail must be sufficient to the degree that the Government can determine how costs were accounted in the task order.

Question 136: Section G.8 For a period when no task orders and subcontractors are retained, will the prime contractors have to submit Attachment J semi-annually?

Answer: The report must still be submitted.

Question 137: G.9.7 Contractor Administrative Reporting. (b) Invoice Data. The Invoice Data Report requires at line (5) Line Item Charges and line (6) Labor Category Usage (Hours and Composite Rates, per category, including non-standard/specialized labor categories). It is requested that GSA consider eliminating the requirement to report at this level (items (5) and (6)). This represents an enormous amount of detailed data and would be administratively burdensome to provide, as well as review by the Government as this data is to be required for each invoice submitted. Throughout the life of this contract, it is assumed thousands of orders will be awarded. The total invoiced amount should be sufficient to determine appropriate payment of CAF.

Answer: The Government's requirement stands.

Question 138: Section G.8 (e). The RFP states the following: "Reporting will take place on the Order level." It is believed that requiring reporting at the task order level

would require much more effort for both the Government and Contractor and the current reporting on ANSWER and Millennia is at the Contract Level. Suggest this be changed to read: "Reporting will take place at the contract level unless otherwise specified in the task order."

Answer: The Government's requirement stands.

Question 139: Section G.9.7, (b), The RFP states: (b) Invoice Data – The contractor shall report all invoicing activity within 60 calendar days of performance acceptance by the customer. Invoice data includes, but is not limited to: Based on the level of detail described, may we assume the Government is simply asking for copies of all invoices with supporting detail, e.g., SF1034 and SF1035?

Answer: The level of detail will be sufficient to the degree that the Government can determine how costs were accounted in the task order.

Question 140: Referring to Article G.9.7(b)(6), are contractors required to include the labor category usage detail (hours and composite rates, per category, including non-standard/specialized labor categories) on all cost type invoices?

Answer: At minimum, the level of detail required will be by CLIN.

Question 141: Can contractors report usage of hours per category without the composite rate on Fixed Price and Cost Reimbursement contracts?

Answer: Contractors may report usage of hours per category by CLIN.

Question 142: G.8 Subcontracting Reports. This section requires that reporting will take place on the order level. We believe this will be burdensome on both the contractor and the government since every task order that has any subcontracting will require a separate report. Recommend reporting levels should be at the contract level so that only one report needs to be submitted.

Answer: The Government's requirement stands.

Question 143: G.9.5 Contract Access Fee Remittance. The requirement to remit CAF to GSA within 45 calendar days will be burdensome on both the contractor and the government. It is suggested that the requirement be revised as follows; "Contractors shall remit the CAF to GSA in US dollars within 45 calendar days after the end of each calendar quarter and the payment based shall be based upon receipt of payments in that quarter."

Answer: The Government's requirement stands.

Question 144: Article G.9.7 Contractor Administrative Reporting, (b) Invoice Data states, "The contractor shall report all invoicing activity within 60 calendar days of performance acceptance by the customer." What indicates "performance acceptance" by the customer?

Answer: "Performance acceptance" is when the Government accepts the contractor's services, such as occurs on a Form DD250.

Question 145: Section F.5(1) DELIVERABLES, and Section G.9.7 Contractor Administrative Reporting: Would GSA consider and accept delivery of Order/Modification Data on a regular schedule (e.g., every 30 or 60 days) for all active TOs, vs. an ad hoc requirement based on the date of each individual acceptance to minimize the contractor's administrative burden? One report every 30 days would provide all acceptance notices for all task orders on the report within the 30 day window identified.

Answer: Offerors may determine when and how often they submit reporting data as long as it meets the enforcement periods stated in the contract.

Question 146: Section F.5(1) DELIVERABLES, and Section G.9.7 Contractor Administrative Reporting: Would GSA consider and accept delivery of Invoice Data on a regular schedule (e.g., every 60 days) for all active TOs, vs. an ad hoc requirement based on the date of each individual order acceptance/award to minimize the contractor's administrative burden?

Answer: Offerors may determine when and how often they submit reporting data as long as it meets the enforcement periods stated in the contract.

Question 147: Section F.5(3), G.9.5 DELIVERABLES: Would GSA consider and accept payment via EFT of CAF remittance on a regular schedule (e.g., every 45 days) for all active TOs, vs. an ad hoc requirement based on the date of each individual receipt of payment from a customer to minimize the contractor's administrative burden? Alternately, would the Government consider and accept CAF payment based on the periodic full amount invoiced by the contractor to the customer, and reporting and payment of these amounts 28 days after periodic invoicing?

Answer: The Government's requirement stands.

Question 148: Section G.8 (e), SUBCONTRACTING REPORTS: (e) requires reporting at the Order level. Would GSA consider revising (e) as follows: (e) Reporting will take place at the Basic Contract level.

Answer: The Government's requirement stands.

Question 149: Section G.9.6, Invoice Submission: Since there are no specific invoicing instructions at the Basic Contract level, does GSA anticipate the individual Order invoicing requirements will be standardized between the various contract types?

Answer: Invoice submission is specified on the individual task order.

Question 150: H.12.1 Contractor Webpage. There is a requirement to include the Basic Contract on the vendor's Alliant SB Web site. Does this mean we must provide a downloadable copy of a current version of the Basic Contract on our Web site? Or, will the Basic Contract be available on the GSA Alliant SB Web site, and may we simply link to it from our site for the purpose of version control?

Answer: The Basic Contract will be available on the GSA Alliant SB website. Offerors may simply link to their sites.

Question 151: Paragraph G.4 and G.6 discuss the opportunity to participate in various conferences, tradeshows, etc. We would appreciate if the Government would provide an estimated number of major (national) conferences/tradeshows and a number of (local) regional conferences/tradeshows that will be required.

Answer: The specific number of national conferences/tradeshows and the number of local and regional conference/tradeshows are not known at this time. When combined, there will be less than ten altogether.

Question 152: While we see there is a Basic contract Post Award Orientation planned (G.6.1), we would like to know if GSA anticipates conducting a more extensive National Start-up Plan for Alliant SB as it did in the past for ANSWER and Millennia, and if so, would like GSA to comment on the timeframe and resources that will be required.

Answer: The Government is not yet releasing information on a Start-up Plan for the Alliant SB Program.

CONTRACTOR TEAMING ARRANGEMENTS / JOINT VENTURE

Question 153: In ALLIANT SMALL BUSINESS UPDATE on 8/31/06 under FebBizOpps Web site, it has the following statement:

“If the Offeror is a joint venture entity, the joint venture entity must conform to guidelines and regulations pertaining to the composition and size standards of the joint venture membership established by Small Business Administration.”

Under 13 CFR 124.513 & 124.520, a small business can Joint Venture with a large business and remain small under SBA’s 8(a) Mentor Protégé program. Can you confirm that this type of Mentor-Protégé Joint Venture is qualified to bid on GSA Alliant Small Business?

Answer: SBA approved Mentor Protégé arrangements are permitted to compete under Alliant SB (13 CFR 124.520).

Question 154: How does GSA want teaming partners providing overlapping services to price and assign ownership for the labor category? I.e. Both teaming partners use Master Software Developer’s labor categories.

Answer: This is a business decision to be made by the offering entity in a competitive environment.

Question 155: Does *every* small business member of the joint venture need to have a secret facility clearance?

Answer: At least one member of the joint venture entity must, at a minimum, possess an interim secret facility clearance.

Question 156: Do all team members on a joint venture need to be small businesses (i.e. meet the size standard as identified)?

Answer: Yes. Members of a joint-venture must individually qualify to the size standard pursuant to 13 CFR 121.103(h)(3)(i)(B)(1).

Question 157: Would the government consider ensuring that the audit requirement for a Joint Venture bidder is based on the audits of the partner companies in the JV, rather than the JV (and ultimately, the prime contractor), subject to a post-award of the Joint Venture books which at time of award will show no active contracts and no significant revenue other than minor seed money from the Joint Venture partners?

Answer: The intent of the question is unclear. Please be more specific.

Question 158: In Alliant SB, will GSA accept an offer from a JV comprised of a small business that meets the small business size standard and a large business with which it has an established mentor-protégé relationship?

Answer: Only SBA approved Mentor Protégé arrangements are permitted to compete under Alliant SB (13 CFR 124.520).

Question 159: Please verify that each small business JV partner must qualify as a SB by ensuring that its revenues average under the \$23M for IRS tax returns for the last 3 years.

Answer: Yes. Members of a joint-venture must individually qualify to the size standard pursuant to 13 CFR 121.103(h)(3)(i)(B)(1).

Question 160: Please let me know how the weighting is done for adding team members. Does it help our proposal to have highly capable large and small team members?

Answer: Only the offerors prime contract past performance will be evaluated. The Government will not evaluate the past performance of proposed subcontractors. In the Basic Contract Plan, offers may show their ability to supplement their core capabilities through subcontracting; however, it should not include subcontractor lists or subcontractor qualifications. L.12.4 Folder H(a)(2) is clear as to what the Government is looking for.

Question 161: Under Section L page L-11, the solicitation outlines the options available to Offerors that propose either a Joint Venture or CTA.

Will the government accept a CTA? Under Section L page L-11 the solicitation states that the government will not accept a CTA and references FAR 9.601 (1) & FAR 9.601 (2).

However under Section L page L-13 (Additional Instructions) the solicitation states that the government will recognize the integrity and validity of a CTA provided it contains several prerequisite items. Which is correct it?

Answer: The RFP is clear that we will accept offers from a CTA conforming to FAR 9.601(1) (regarding joint-ventures) and will not accept FAR 9.601(2) arrangements (regarding subcontracting).

Question 162: L.12.3 Past Performance Folder F Section (f) indicates that CTAs can report past performance from both the CTA and the individual components of a JV.

What if a JV member has an SBA Mentor-Protégé agreement, can that Mentor's past performance be included as if a CTA, or must the Mentor-Protégé agreement be with the JV itself?

Answer: In order for the mentor's past performance to adhere to the protégé under a joint-venture (CTA), that joint-venture must be the offering entity.

Question 163: Can an SBA approved Mentor-Protégé agreement with a JV be included as a CTA? If so, would both sets of documents need to be included in Folder D?

Answer: Yes. The Mentor and Protégé must form a joint-venture to compete for the Alliant SB (13 CFR 124.520(d)). Both documents must be submitted, i.e., evidence of approved mentor-protégé agreement and the joint-venture document.

Question 164: RFP L.12.3, Folder F and other portions of the RFP use the term Offeror with respect to Past Performance.

In this context, is GSA using the term Offeror to mean the "Prime" or the "Team" (prime and subcontractors)? IF the intent is for the Prime only, this appears to be in conflict with the Fairness in Competition Act by limiting competition to only large Small Business, will the GSA reconsider this requirement and remove it from the RFP?

Answer: The RFP stands as is. For past performance evaluation the government will look only at work the offeror performed as defined in Section L.12.3, Folder F(a). The government will not be evaluating subcontractors in the context of past performance.

Question 165: Folder D – Reference to SBA approved Mentor-Protégé Agreements. Is a DOD approved Mentor- Protégé Agreement considered acceptable? Do the mentor and protégé companies need to enter into a formal CTA arrangement to be considered by GSA?

Answer: Only SBA approved Mentor-Protégé agreements are acceptable. Yes the mentor and protégé must enter into a joint venture to propose on Alliant SB (13 CFR 124.520(d)).

Question 166: Section 12.2 Folder D page L-11 says that Contractor Team Arrangement (CTA) as defined by FAR 9.601(1) as joint ventures but not as defined by FAR 9.601(2) based on prime / subcontractor relationships will be considered. Section L.12.3(f) states that for an offeror who enters into contractor teaming arrangements (CTA) as described on pages L-13 and 14 will be evaluated based on the individual entities past performance information. Please confirm that L.12.3(f) does not include evaluation of subcontractor past performance (unless joint venture or SBA mentor protégé) even if the CTA meets

the requirements of pages 13 and 14. Otherwise a small prime contractor may enter into a CTA base on normal prime / subcontractor relations to claim credit for a large subcontractor's past performance. Furthermore, please confirm that if offeror only has prime / subcontractor teaming relationships CD-R 1 Tab D as referred to on page L-9 should be blank.

Answer: The only acceptable CTA is one conforming to FAR 9.601(1). L.12.3(f) refers to the individual members to a joint-venture and does not include the evaluation of subcontractors. The RFP is clear as to the contents of CD-R 1, Folder D.

Question 167: Reference: Section L, page L-11, Folder D Contractor Team Arrangements, states offerors may form a Contractor Team Arrangement as defined in FAR 9.601(1).
GSA defines Contractor Team Arrangement for their schedules, see <http://www.gsa.gov/Portal/gsa/ep/channelView.do?pageTypeId=8199&channelPage=%2Fep%2Fchannel%2FgsaOverview.jsp&channelId=-13527>. Is this arrangement sufficient to meet the requirements of the solicitation as long as the CTA includes the issues identified under "Additional Instructions" on page l-13 of the solicitation?
If this form of CTA is acceptable are all members of the CTA required to individually qualify to the size standard?

Answer: The RFP is clear in defining the Contractor Teaming Arrangements acceptable to propose under the Alliant SB solicitation. The RFP stands on its own.

Question 168: Reference Page L-11, FOLDER D: FOR CONTRACTOR TEAMING ARRANGEMENTS (JOINT VENTURES AND/OR SBA MENTOR/PROTEGE ARRANGEMENTS) This paragraph seems to imply that joint ventures are encouraged and the classic contractor/subcontractor arrangement is discouraged to the point that the contractor/subcontractor arrangement will not even be considered. Would you please clarify this issue?

Answer: Contractor-subcontractor relationships will not be evaluated in regards to the past performance evaluation. In the Basic Contract Plan, Offerors may show their ability to supplement their core capabilities through subcontracting; however, it should not include subcontractor lists or subcontractor qualifications. L.12.4 Folder H(a)(2) is clear as to what the government is looking for.

Question 169: Reference Page L-12, Paragraph (5) and Page L-17, Paragraph (f) CTAs. These paragraphs indicate the "experience" and past performance requirements are met from the experience of the CTA/Joint Venture which is turn is the composite of the experience of each of the joint venture members. If a subcontractor is used, none of the

subcontractor's experience may be evaluated to meet the experience or past performance requirements. Please confirm this interpretation

Answer: Confirmed; any work performed in which the offeror was the prime contractor (or first-tier subcontractor as defined in L.12.3(a)(6)) may be used in the past performance tables.

Question 170: Large companies may be used as a subcontractor to a joint venture, in which case the large companies experience and past performance can not be used to meet the experience and past performance requirements but can be considered as a resource. Please confirm this interpretation.

Answer: Confirmed; the experience and past performance of a subcontractor will not be evaluated. In the Basic Contract Plan, Offerors may show their ability to supplement their core capabilities through subcontracting; however, it should not include subcontractor lists or subcontractor qualifications.

Question 171: How are the Compensation Plan and Facility Clearance handled for a CTA/Joint Venture?

Answer: The joint-venture, as the offering entity, must develop a compensation plan for the Alliant SB contract. At least one member of a conforming joint-venture must have the facility clearance credentials.

Question 172: Must all contractors involved in a CTA meet the small business size standard?

Answer: Yes. Members of a joint-venture must individually qualify to the size standard pursuant to 13 CFR 121.103(h)(3)(i)(B)(1).

Question 173: If GSA does allow for small businesses to enter into a CTA with large businesses, can the large business' past performance be included in the past performance tables?

Answer: To be considered a small business, all parties to a joint-venture must be small businesses. The only exceptions are joint-ventures between a mentor and a protégé under SBA's mentor-protégé program.

Question 174: Reference Section L.12.2 Folder D (d) Pricing for a CTA, if members of a CTA propose on each GSA labor category using their own cost structures, is each

member of the CTA required to use the lead's rates for each of the GSA labor categories or may they use their proposed rates for each the labor categories?

Answer: The RFP is clear on this matter. As stated, “The CTA document should explain how the team members have divided responsibilities for purposes of proposing price/costs”. There is no requirement to use the “lead’s” rates for each labor category.

Question 175: Can a small business be a team member on proposal that involves a CTA and at the same time be the CTA lead on another proposal?

Answer: There is no prohibition on a business being a party in more than one joint-venture.

Question 176: Can a small business submit a proposal as a prime contractor and be a team member of a CTA on another proposal?

Answer: Yes

Question 177: Can a small business team up with large business to submit its bid? Will the Govt. in that case evaluate past performance of the CTA.

Answer: To be considered a small business, all parties to a joint-venture must be small businesses. The only exceptions are joint-ventures between a mentor and a protégé under SBA’s mentor-protégé program.

Question 178: Regarding pricing for a CTA, does the price proposal submitted by the lead have to include everything required of CD-R4 [(1) basis of estimate, (2) DCAA information, (3) Compensation Plan and Policy for Uncompensated Overtime, and (4) Cost/Price Spreadsheets] for each CTA team member that has responsibility for pricing their respective labor categories? If so, it is unlikely the page limitation can be met. Will GSA consider making the page limitation apply to the submission of the lead, and separately applying the page limitation to each CTA team member? For example, if a CTA was formed with four companies, the GSA would allow a maximum of 100 pages total (4 team members X 25 pages each) for the Compensation Plans of the four companies.

Answer: The CTA should develop and submit one Compensation Plan for the joint-venture entity. The page limit remains unchanged.

Question 179: How do CTA's submit past performance as a partnership? Do each of the members fill out a past performance table or simply add their references as a whole without indicating who the partner performing the work is?

Answer: The past performance tables shall be submitted in the name of the joint-venture entity. An amendment will be issued to clarify that the predecessor company (joint-venture member) shall be identified for any past performance example.

Question 180: Page L-11, Folder D: The RFP states that the PCO has determined that the Offerers may form a Contractor Team Arrangement as specified in FAR 9.601(1). That part of the FAR discusses Joint Venture and Partnerships. Partnership is not further defined within the FAR. Partnership is defined within the IRS tax code. To be compliant with the desires of GSA in responding to the Alliant SB procurement, does GSA expect "Partnerships" to meet the requirements of the IRS code, or can the non-Joint Venture Contractor Teaming Arrangement (CTA) be defined along the following lines: A Teaming Arrangement allows for two or more contractors to work together to meet agency requirements. In an attempt to facilitate this process, the following definitions and information are provided with regard to teaming arrangements.

Teaming Arrangement – A Contractor Teaming Arrangement (CTA) means an arrangement in which two or more companies agree to act together as a potential prime contractor without forming a Joint Venture.

Team Lead – The Contractor Teaming Arrangement (CTA) must designate one (1) team member to be the "Team Leader." GSA requires that the Team Leader, at a minimum, be accountable for overall performance, is responsible for coordinating and overseeing the timeliness and quality of work performed under all task orders issued to the various team members, and will coordinate the submission of the proposal under this RFQ.

Teaming Partner – A teaming partner is a firm that is a member of the contractor teaming arrangement (CTA). Each teaming partner must be a Small Business and

Subcontractors – Subcontractors are firms who provide services on behalf of one or more of the contractor teaming partners (CTA). A subcontractor does not have to be a Small Business.

Answer: For purposes of Alliant SB, a partnership between two or more legal entities is a de facto joint-venture and must, as a legal entity, meet small business set-aside joint-venture requirements.

Question 181: Section L, page L-11 Folder D is titled For Contractor Team Arrangements (Joint Venture) AND/OR SBA Mentor Protégé Arrangements. In this the government defines the SBA Mentor Protégé Arrangements for this procurement. In view that the mentor is a large business and a protégé is a small business and as such the protégé will no doubt be on the mentor team for the large ALLIANT and the mentor on the protégé team for small business ALLIANT how does the government intend for small

business to be able to compete against the other since role reversal will result. Does this not defeat the purpose of two separate ALLIANTS and the spirit of Small Business ALLIANT being reserved for small businesses? Further, could this not result in open consideration after award of protest since such a team would already exceed the size standards as discussed under sub paragraph (2) of this section?

Answer: The Small Business Administration establishes, in their regulations, that a mentor and a protégé can form a joint-venture and compete for small business set-asides. Refer to 13 CFR 124.520(d).

Question 182: In a partnership does GSA require the pricing for each partner or the overall pricing rolled under the price sheets for the entire partnership. In the partnership pricing model does GSA require or encourage that the partnership pricing details be sent on separate CD's for the purpose of audit ability?

Answer: Please consider that for purposes of Alliant SB, a partnership between two or more legal entities is a de facto joint-venture and must, as a legal entity, meet small business set-aside joint-venture requirements. To answer the question, pricing details should be submitted on a single CD in the name of the legal entity proposing.

Question 183: How many JV proposal submissions can one company participate in?

Answer: There are no limits as to how many joint-venture proposal submissions one company can participate in.

Question 184: What forms of relationships between companies are allowed in this contract other than JV? Is Prime/Sub allowed?

Answer: The offeror submitting a proposal must be a legal entity with which the Government has privity of contract. Although prime/subcontractor relationships are not being evaluated for award purposes, there is no prohibition against using subcontractors after award.

Question 185: If one member of the proposed Contract Team Arrangement (CTA) has the required DCAA documentation, will this be weighed equally to a prime contractor submitting his DCAA documentation?

Answer: There is no weight assigned to the DCAA documentation. Said another way, you either have it or you don't. That being said, as long as one member of the joint-venture (CTA) has the DCAA documentation, this requirement of the RFP will be met.

Question 186: Given that the FAR states that fixed-price type contracts/task orders are the preferred contract type, why does the RFP view contractors who are pre-qualified to perform cost reimbursement more favorably than those that do not have these DCAA-related qualifications? (M.5.1.3 Evaluation Method states “cost type contracts will be rated more highly”)

Answer: The simple answer is that fixed price contracting is a common type of contract which most (if not all) offerors will have experience in. However, cost reimbursement contracting is a more complex type of contract and is a part of Alliant SB and therefore experience in it is valuable to the government.

Question 187: If we have a teaming agreement (other than a joint venture), can we mention the agreement is in place and the areas of the SOW it would cover, without mentioning the name of the team-mate?

Answer: Please consider that the offeror submitting a proposal must be a legal entity with which the Government has privity of contract. In the Basic Contract Plan, Offerors may show their ability to supplement their core capabilities through subcontracting however; it should not include subcontractor lists or subcontractor qualifications.

Question 188: L.12.2 CD-R1 , Folder D under Additional Instructions on page L-13 specifies additional requirements with respect to CTA.
If a company is an SBA-approved Mentor Protégé Joint Venture with established operating procedures which lay out roles and responsibilities, does the Offeror need to submit the information in items (a)-(g).

Answer: Yes

Question 189: Please confirm or expand on the requirement that specific Prime – Subcontracting relationships for Alliant are not to be identified anywhere in the Alliant proposal.

Answer: The Government is not interested in nor will it evaluate named subcontractors. Per Section L.12.4(a)(2), the Government is interested in such things as methodology for selecting, tracking, and managing subcontractors, and other teaming arrangements as applicable.

Question 190: Would the government consider ensuring that the audit requirement for a Joint Venture bidder is based on the audits of the partner companies in the JV, rather than

the JV (and ultimately, the prime contractor), subject to a post-award of the Joint Venture books which at time of award will show no active contracts and no significant revenue other than minor seed money from the Joint Venture partners?

Answer: If at least one member of the joint-venture (CTA) has the DCAA audit documentation, this requirement of the RFP will be met.

Question 191: May a small business be awarded a contract as a prime contractor for Alliant SB and also be a member of a joint venture for the Alliant SB program?

Answer: Yes.

Question 192: If we create a Joint Venture, can we use the DUNS, CAGE, and CCR from the lead company, or do we need to create new ones for the Joint Venture? Similarly, if we create a Joint Venture, will the Representations and Certifications be for the Joint Venture, for the lead company, or for all parties to the Joint Venture?

Answer: A new DUNS, CAGE, and CCR will have to be created for the joint-venture. The primary Representations and Certifications will be on behalf of the joint-venture offering under Alliant SB. That being said, the government also requires each individual member of the joint-venture to submit it's own Representations and Certifications in Folder B in accordance with Section L.12 Folder D(6).

Question 193: Section L; Page L-13, Paragraph (b): Most team members will not provide a "release" to discuss confidential/privileged information with the Team Lead. Can GSA define specifically what "confidential/privileged information" includes?

Answer: The Government must be able to discuss matters pertaining to contractual issues with the Team Lead that may run the gamut of all the joint-venture team members.

Question 194: Reference Section L.12.2, Folder D
FAR 9.601 subpart 1 allows for a Contractor Team Arrangement where two or more companies form a Partnership or a Joint Venture. Will the government allow a partnership that is neither a prime/sub relationship nor a joint venture; for example, two firms holding a GSA Schedule that form a partnership whereby the Team can use the partnership's qualifications and past performance and count as a single entity very much like a JV?

Answer: Please consider that the offeror submitting a proposal must be a legal entity with which the Government has privity of contract. For the purposes of

Alliant SB, a partnership between two or more legal entities is a de facto joint-venture and must, as a legal entity, meet small business set-aside joint-venture requirements.

Question 195: Reference Section L.12.2, Folder D – SBA Mentor-Protégé Agreements DoD is GSA’s largest customer. Will a DoD Mentor/Protege agreement be acceptable to include in CD 1 Folder D?

Answer: No

Question 196: Under Section L12.2, Folder D, Additional Instructions, please confirm that a team involving two or more small businesses which have NOT created a Joint Venture may nevertheless submit its Contractor Teaming Agreement pursuant to 13 CFR 121.103 (f)(3)(i) and participate in the procurement process without restriction or penalty.

Answer: No. The Government has established its requirements in the RFP. The offeror submitting a proposal must be a legal entity with which the Government has privity of contract.

Question 197: If a particular company is not the “team lead” of a joint venture, can companies participate in more than one CTA/Joint Venture arrangement bidding on Alliant? And if an offeror is a “team lead” of a Joint Venture can they participate as members in one or more other Joint Ventures?

Answer: Yes

Question 198: A company or CTA/JV meeting the small business size standard at time of proposal submission is eligible for award of an Alliant Small Business award. We are assuming that, no matter how successful the small business is, this eligibility continues throughout the life of the contract (base year and all extensions). This is consistent with the underlying socioeconomic intent of the small business set aside program. Is our assumption correct? If not, what are the processes, procedures and frequency for continued self-certification of small business status?

Answer: The contractor will have to recertify itself as a small business before exercising the option period.

Question 199: Section L.12.2 Folder D. If a small business is leading an Alliant effort that includes its mentor (a large business), can the small business capture the past performance of the mentor?

Answer: The mentor and the protégé must enter into a joint-venture to propose under the Alliant SB RFP. As defined in the RFP, past performance of joint-venture members adheres to the joint-venture as the offering entity.

Question 200: Section L.12.2 Folder D. Although the RFP states that offerors do not have to team, there seems to be considerable emphasis placed on teaming. Will a company that submits a proposal on its own be judged less favorably than a company that sets up teaming agreements, all other things being equal?

Answer: No

Question 201: If a DCAA/DCMA Cost Accounting system is a requirement, must the “Lead” entity of the CTA possess the approved accounting system or can any entity of the CTA possess the approved accounting system?

Answer: If at least one member of the joint-venture (CTA) has the DCAA audit documentation, this requirement of the RFP will be met.

Question 202: The Webcast earlier today gave the impression that the only CTA’s that GSA will consider being responsive to the Alliant SB procurement are a Joint Venture and a Mentor Protégé arrangement. Is this true? Since FAR 9.601(1) states –“two or more companies form a partnership or joint venture to act as a potential prime contractor,” why has a Partnership been excluded? Partnership is not defined within the FAR, however, if two or more companies put together an agreement, but not a formal partnership in the eyes of the IRS, which meets the stated requirements of Section L.12.2 CD-R 1, Additional Instructions, will that CTA be recognized as being responsive to the Alliant SB solicitation?

Answer: Please consider that the offeror submitting a proposal must be a legal entity with which the Government has privity of contract. For the purposes of Alliant SB, a partnership between two or more legal entities is a de facto joint-venture and must, as a legal entity, meet small business set-aside joint-venture requirements.

Question 203: Will each entity within the CTA be required to submit individual information for Folders B, C, F, I, and K or can they be a combined submission representing the totality of the CTA?

Answer: A combined submission under the joint-venture name is required. Please consider that there are portions of the RFP that require the individual members of the joint-venture to submit their information. Please refer to the totality of Section L for instructions.

Question 204: Will a Small Business entity within a CTA be able to utilize the individual past performance and experience qualifications of its Officers to meet the requirements of Section L.12.3 CD-R 2, Table 2?

Answer: Please refer to FAR 15.305(a)(2)(iii). Please consider that all past performance information must conform to the requirements of Section L.12.3 of the RFP.

Question 205: Under a Joint Venture, what entity actually receives the contract award? The JV itself or one of the entities within the JV?

Answer: The Joint-Venture

Question 206: If one of the members of a JV exceeds the \$23M size standard from revenues received on orders awarded and executed under the Alliant contract during the base period will they graduate the contract or will the JV graduate the contract?

Answer: The joint-venture must recertify itself as a small business at the option period. If the joint-venture is no longer a small business, it may be off-ramped.

Question 207: In the formation of a JV GSA has indicated in the webcast that an entity of the JV is required to have a DCAA Approved Accounting System with **letter** in order to participate in this procurement? Does this imply that the contract Will be awarded to the JV and if so and the lead entity of the JV is not the holder of the accounting system who is the “responsible entity” by contract law since the accounting system is such an integral part of the JV?

Answer: The DCAA Approved Accounting System held by one of the joint-venture members adheres to the joint-venture itself for evaluation purposes. Cost-reimbursement task orders that require approved cost accounting systems should utilize the tools of the joint-venture member holding those credentials.

Question 208: Page L-11, Folder D: The RFP states that the PCO has determined that the Offerers may form a Contractor Team Arrangement as specified in FAR 9.601(1). That part of the FAR discusses Joint Venture and Partnerships. Partnership is not further defined within the FAR. Partnership is defined within the IRS tax code. To be compliant with the desires of GSA in responding to the Alliant SB procurement, does GSA expect “Partnerships” to meet the requirements of the IRS code

Answer: Please consider that the offeror submitting a proposal must be a legal entity with which the Government has privity of contract. For the purposes of Alliant SB, a partnership between two or more legal entities is a de facto joint-venture and must, as a legal entity, meet small business set-aside joint-venture requirements.

Question 209: How do Contractor Teaming Agreement's (CTA) submit past performance as a partnership? Do each of the members fill out a past performance table or simply add their references as a whole without indicating who the partner performing the work is?

Answer: The joint-venture (CTA) should submit past performance tables for the joint-venture entity only. The joint-venture members performing the work should be identified and an amendment will clarify this matter.

COST AND PRICE

Question 210: Will section B of the RFP provide for "CLINS"?

Answer: The Basic Contract itself does not provide for CLINS since there is no funding under the Basic Contract; however, Orders do provide for CLINS in accordance with Section B of the Basic Contract and the Ordering agency's requirements.

Question 211: B-1 General. If facility locations, size, and other requirements are unknown at this time, please clarify facility costs? Is this only an issue at the Task Order level vs. the Basic contract level?

Answer: The term "Facilities" used in Section B.1 as defined in FAR 45.301 is not to be confused with "Facilities Contract" as defined in FAR 45.301. Unless Government furnished property is provided on an individual Order, Offerors must have all the resources necessary to perform Orders issued under the Basic Contract.

Question 212: B.5 Contract Access Fee; B.7.4.1 Subcontracting Payments on T&M and L-H Orders; B.7.4.3 Indirect Costs Under T&M Orders; B.8 Travel Pricing. The B.5 clause indicates that CAF is to be billed on all invoiced costs; however, the B.7 and B.8 clauses identified are specific on what will be reimbursed (amounts paid to subcontractors, actual travel cost, plus G&A, etc.), and do not identify that CAF shall be added to these costs. Consistency on reimbursement, to include CAF, should be added to B.7 and B.8 clauses, if CAF is to be added to travel, subcontracts and other materials. If not, then these items should be excluded from the B.5 clause.

Answer: CAF is applied to all invoiced costs in accordance with Section B.5. Subcontracting payments, Materials, Indirect Costs, and Travel are invoiced costs; therefore, there is no need to repeat it in other Sections.

Question 213: Reference B.6 - Time and Materials and Labor Hour. How will fully loaded labor rates be established for task order work that extends beyond the period of performance of the Basic Contract?

Answer: For T&M and Labor-Hour Orders, Contractors will propose their Loaded Hourly Labor rates in accordance with Order requirements and OCOs will determine their reasonableness in accordance with FAR 15.4.

Question 214: Reference B.7.4. The Basic Contract does not provide for rates beyond year 10. What will offerors use for pricing years 11– 15?

Answer: For T&M and Labor-Hour Orders, Contractors will propose their Loaded Hourly Labor rates in accordance with their accounting system and OCOs will determine their reasonableness in accordance with FAR 15.4.

Question 215: Reference B.7.4.1 - Subcontracting Payments on T&M and L-H Orders. GSA has taken the position that Prime Contractors may only bill and be paid the actual amount the subcontractor bills them on T&M and L-H orders. This position is at odds and in conflict with the industry practice of billing subcontractor effort using the appropriate prime contract labor categories and rates. Why is GSA advocating this position especially when there is an outstanding FAR case on this clause? Also, how will GSA implement the revisions to 52.232-7 in the Alliant SB contract and task orders when it is released?

Answer: The position for Alliant and Alliant SB is consistent with FAR 52.232-7 Payments under Time-and-Materials and Labor-Hour Contracts (AUG 2005). If FAR 52.232-7 changes, GSA will consider modifying the basic contract with the revised clause for new Orders issued after the change.

Question 216: B.7.4 Time and Materials and Labor-Hour, Incorporation of future changes to the 52.232-7 Payment under Time-and-Material and Labor-Hour-Contract clause into the Basic Contract. Changes to this clause could impact the way in which labor rates may be established vis-à-vis fee on subcontract labor, and could occur either pre-award or post-award. Will the Government allow adjustments to labor rates if the 52.232-7 clause impacts labor rate/pricing?

Answer: All Loaded Hourly Labor Rates proposed under T&M and L-H Orders may be adjusted from the Basic Contract's rates to reflect specific T&M and L-H

Order requirements (See Amendment, Section B.7.4) If a revised FAR 52.232-7 is incorporated into the Basic Contract at award or anytime thereafter and it changes how profit is established, it will only affect new Orders issued from the date of the revision.

Question 217: Please confirm whether the government will allow/require adjustments to labor rates as a result of any change which may occur to the clause. If yes, will this be allowed pre-award; i.e., the change is incorporated as a solicitation amendment?

Answer: For the purposes of Alliant and Alliant SB, the Offeror should take into consideration FAR 52.232-7 Payments under Time-and-Materials and Labor-Hour Contracts (AUG 2005) as currently stated. All Loaded Hourly Labor Rates proposed under T&M and L-H Orders may be adjusted from the Basic Contract's rates to reflect specific T&M and L-H Order requirements (See Amendment, Section B.7.4)

Question 218: B.7.4 Time and Materials and Labor-Hour. Pg. B-4, B.7.4.1 Subcontracting Payments on T&M and L-H Orders. This paragraph states that: "The Government will limit reimbursable costs in connection with subcontracts to the amounts paid for supplies and services purchased directly for the Order."It is requested that the Government consider allowing Prime Contractors to be reimbursed for Subcontractor labor charges at the fixed hourly rates prescribed in Section B when the work performed qualifies as labor in accordance with the Labor Category Descriptions defined in the Basic Contract. Subcontractor efforts that do not qualify as labor in accordance with the defined Labor Category Descriptions will be reimbursed based on amounts paid (as noted in B.7.4.1).

Answer: GSA has considered this suggestion, but Section B.7.4.1 remains unchanged.

Question 219: Section B.7.4.1, Page B-4. The RFP states: The Government will limit reimbursable costs in connection with subcontracts to the amounts paid for supplies and services purchased directly for the Order when the Contractor has made or will make payments determined due of cash, checks, or other forms of payment to the subcontractor in accordance with the terms and conditions of a subcontract or invoice, and ordinarily within 30 days of the submission of the Contractor's payment request to the Government. Please clarify the Government's intent in this section. It is unclear if the rates proposed are intended to be composite rates used by the prime and subcontractors since subcontractor rates are expected to be billed at actual rates?

Answer: For T&M and/or Labor-Hour type Orders, GSA will reimburse a Prime Contractor the amount the Prime Contractor paid its Subcontractor and any allowable indirect costs in accordance with Section B.7.4.3.

Question 220: Section B.7.4.1 states “The Government will limit reimbursable costs in connection with subcontracts to the amounts paid for supplies and services purchased directly for the Order when the Contractor has made or will make payments determined due of cash, checks, or other forms of payment to the subcontractor in accordance with the terms and conditions of a subcontract or invoice, and ordinarily within 30 days of the submission of the Contractor’s payment request to the Government.” We assume that the “reimbursable costs” will also allow a Contractor to include profit on subcontracted supplies and services. Otherwise, this requirement, when coupled with the high subcontracting goals, will have an adverse effect on overall profit margins for the mid-size companies. Can the Government please confirm that profit will be allowed on Subcontractor costs?

Answer: For T&M and/or Labor-Hour type Orders, GSA will reimburse a Prime Contractor the amount the Prime Contractor paid its Subcontractor and any allowable indirect costs in accordance with Section B.7.4.3. Subcontracting goals only apply when a Prime decides to subcontract.

Question 221: B.7.4.1, Subcontracting Payments on T&M and L-H Orders states “The Government will limit reimbursable costs in connection with subcontracts to the amounts paid for supplies and services purchased directly for the Order when the Contractor has made or will make payments determined due of cash, checks, or other forms of payment to the subcontractor in accordance with the terms and conditions of a subcontract or invoice, and ordinarily within 30 days of the submission of the Contractor’s payment request to the Government.” Para B.7.4.3, Indirect Costs Under T&M Orders states “For direct materials and subcontracts for supplies and services, the Prime Contractor may include reasonable and allocable indirect costs (e.g., G&A, material handling, or subcontracting handling as applicable) to the extent they are clearly excluded from the prime Contractor’s loaded hourly labor rates in accordance with the prime Contractor’s usual accounting practices consistent with FAR 31.2.” We are uncertain of the intent of para B.7.4.1 since B.7.4.3 states that the Contractor will be reimbursed for the indirect load on subcontractor costs. Please clarify the meaning/intent of B.7.4.1.

Answer: For T&M and/or Labor-Hour type Orders, GSA will reimburse a Prime Contractor the amount the Prime Contractor paid its Subcontractor and any allowable indirect costs in accordance with Section B.7.4.3.

Question 222: B.7.4 Time and Materials and Labor-Hour; B.7.4.1 Subcontracting Payments on T&M and L-H Orders; G.9.4 Subcontractors; Though many changes have been made to the solicitation relative to T&M contracts, it is not clear whether the Government will allow fee/profit on subcontract labor services. We request that the Government confirm whether it will allow fee/profit to be added to subcontract labor.

Answer: Profit is a measurement of risk, not total dollar amount of subcontracts. Profit on T&M and Labor-Hour type contracts is accounted for under the Prime Contractor's Loaded Hourly Labor Rate in accordance with FAR 52.232-7 (AUG 2005).

Question 223: B.7.4 Time and Materials and Labor – Hour. In the second draft RFP, it was stated that new labor categories could be added at a task order level if it was deemed a requirement to fulfill the Statement of Work. It appears this statement has been removed from the final RFP. Can new labor categories be added at the task level?

Answer: See Amendment 1's Section H.3 (newly inserted).

Question 224: Reference Section B.7.4. Is it the Government's intent of this section to also authorize task order specific labor categories (other than those established in Section J) under orders involving "considerations such as complexity of work, geographic locations, and security clearances"?

Answer: See Amendment 1's Section H.3 (newly inserted).

Question 225: B.7.4.1 – Subcontracting Payments on T&M and L-H Orders. This section limits reimbursement by the government for subcontract costs only with no G&A, fee etc for the prime contractor. This issue is currently being discussed and reviewed as a change to the FAR however no final determination has been made. Therefore recommend eliminating this requirement until final resolution.

Answer: The position for Alliant and Alliant SB is not inconsistent with FAR 52.232-7 Payments under Time-and-Materials and Labor-Hour Contracts (AUG 2005). If FAR 52.232-7 changes, GSA will consider implementing the revised clause for new Orders issued after the change. For T&M and/or Labor-Hour type Orders, GSA will reimburse a Prime Contractor the amount the Prime Contractor paid its Subcontractor and any allowable indirect costs in accordance with Section B.7.4.3.

Question 226: Section B.7.4.1 states that the Government will limit reimbursable costs in connection with subcontracts to the amounts paid for supplies and services. Does this mean that the prime contractor will not be allowed any G&A?

Answer: See Section B.7.4.3.

Question 227: Regarding B.7.4 Time and Materials and Labor Hour, please note that the definition of Loaded Hourly Labor Rate did not include Fringe Benefits. Please confirm that this is an oversight.

Answer: Fringe Benefits are a type of Overhead and can be included in the Loaded Hourly Labor Rate. See Amendment, Section B.

Question 228: B.7.4 Time and Materials and Labor-Hour; B.7.4.1 Subcontracting Payments on T&M and L-H Orders; G.9.4 Subcontractors and Attachments J-1 and J-2. The ability for vendors to “blend” their own, and subcontractor, labor rates into the T&M rates proposed is unclear. Can T&M prices proposed contain a “blending” of both the prime’s and potential subcontractor’s labor rates?

Answer: For Alliant and Alliant SB, GSA is only evaluating Prime Contractor prices for each labor category whether they are the Offeror’s employees or not. All rates in the rates tables under Section J, Attachment (2) and (3) must be filled in. If an Offeror does not currently have employees to fulfill the duties under a labor category or labor categories, the Offeror must explain its methodology for establishing Prime rates for such categories in accordance with Section L.12.5.

Question 229: If a bidder's standard commercial practice is to leverage partners as part of the hourly rate structure, may the bidder continue to leverage its partner labor rates for purposes of completing the labor tables?

Answer: For Alliant and Alliant SB, GSA is only evaluating Prime Contractor prices for each labor category whether they are the Offeror’s employees or not. All rates in the rates tables under Section J, Attachment (2) and (3) must be filled in. If an Offeror does not currently have employees to fulfill the duties under a labor category or labor categories, the Offeror must explain its methodology for establishing Prime rates for such categories in accordance with Section L.12.5.

Question 230: Folder L J Attach 2-3. Are the loaded hourly rates developed in Folder L (Cost/Price) spreadsheet for the offeror only, offeror and other business segments within the offeror’s company, or offeror, other business segments within the offeror’s company and subcontractors?

Answer: The Offeror only; however, if the offeror’s company has a practice of blending its internal business segments when submitting proposals for Orders, then the offeror can do that as well. If an Offeror is blending rates from internal business segments, the Offeror must explain in the Basis of Estimate its methodology and include all audit reports from its business segments. If an Offeror does not currently have employees to fulfill the duties under a labor category or labor categories, the Offeror must separately identify and explain its methodology for establishing Prime rates for such categories in the Basis of Estimate.

Question 231: To provide a price for all performing entities within a corporation, could each offeror provide a separate set of spreadsheets for each individual performing entity, and summarize all performing entities on a single set of spreadsheets for the total, corporate bidding entity?

Answer: The Government wants pricing from one Offeror only. If an Offeror is blending rates from internal business segments, the Offeror must explain in the Basis of Estimate its methodology and include all audit reports from its business segments.

Question 232: Justification: The Cost/Price Spreadsheets are not open to accept offeror cost or pricing data, flexible enough to include all performing entities within a corporate bidding entity, or inclusive enough to address all costs that may be included in individual entity disclosure statements

Answer: The Government wants pricing from one Offeror only. If an Offeror is blending rates from internal business segments, the Offeror must explain in the Basis of Estimate its methodology and include all audit reports from its business segments.

Question 233: If the prime intends to include a subcontractor in it's proposal to satisfy the SOW requirements, would the prime be required to submit a separate rate table for the subcontractor labor, and if so, is the subcontractor also required to bid all labor categories in the schedule?"

Answer: Do not submit a separate rate table for subcontract labor. GSA is only evaluating Prime Contractor prices for each labor category whether they are the Offeror's employees or not. If an Offeror does not currently have employees to fulfill the duties under a labor category or labor categories, the Offeror must separately identify and explain its methodology for establishing Prime rates for such categories in the Basis of Estimate.

Question 234: In Section J, Attachments 2, 3, and 4 lists 80 different labor categories. Many small companies do not currently have 80 approved labor categories. How should we correlate to labor categories for which we simply do not have similar labor categories?

Answer: For those labor categories that an Offeror cannot correlate, the Offeror must separately identify and explain its methodology for establishing Prime rates for such categories in accordance with Section L.12.5. All rates in the rates tables under Section J, Attachment (2) and (3) must be filled in.

Question 235: Section B.11, The RFP states: It is anticipated that there may be Orders for work OCONUS. The U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Administration, Office of Allowances, (<http://www.state.gov/m/a/als/>), publishes quarterly report indexes of living costs abroad, per-diem rate maximums, quarter's allowances, hardship differentials, and danger pay allowances for Contractors to follow when proposing on OCONUS efforts. No allowances, other than those listed by the U. S. Department of State, shall be allowed on Orders. Due to the large amount of OCONUS work anticipated under the Alliant SB GWAC, we recommend the language in this section be revised to require the contractor to disclose their methodology for calculating OCONUS cost. This method has been used successfully, for evaluation purposes, in other GWAC contracts where cost cannot be specifically identified until task order requirements are defined and task order based RFP's issued. As an alternative, revise the language to flow the requirement on a task order basis.

Answer: Section B.11 remains unchanged. Section B.11 refers only to indexes of living costs abroad, per-diem rate maximums, quarter's allowances, hardship differentials, and danger pay allowances for Contractors to follow when proposing on OCONUS efforts. If there are other costs not explicitly listed by the U.S. Department of State but, necessary for performance, the OCO will determine allowable costs at the Order level.

Question 236: Section B.11 references "Labor Outside the Continental US (OCONUS)", however, the labor rate spreadsheets do not reference OCONUS rates. Is the reference in B.11 simply intended to establish when OCONUS work occurs how the appropriate load factor will be established?

Answer: Section B.11 is intended to establish rates when work is OCONUS.

Question 237: Is the Contractor expected to provide OCONUS labor rates and categories as part of their proposal submission or will this be handled on an individual Order basis? There are no instructions provided for OCONUS pricing in Section B, L or Attachments 2&3.

Answer: Labor rates for OCONUS work will be determined on an individual Order basis in accordance with Section B.11. Labor rates for OCONUS work are not to be provided in the Offeror's proposal submission.

Question 238: B.11 Labor outside the Continental United States (OCONUS). Please confirm that the Government does not want OCONUS labor rates included in the Section J, Attachments 2 and 3.

Answer: Labor rates for OCONUS work are not to be provided in the Offeror's proposal submission.

Question 239: Section G.1, Page G-1. The RFP states: “Additional contract administration requirements may be specified in each Order. Costs associated with these requirements shall not be billed as a direct cost to the Government.” These two sentences constitute undefined requirements that are impossible to price. Suggest the second sentence be changed to the following: “Costs associated with these additional requirements shall be proposed in each Order.”

Answer: Although these costs may be allowable as a Direct cost under an approved Cost Accounting System Disclosure Statement, for the purposes of Alliant and Alliant SB, administration costs associated to Alliant and Alliant SB, including Orders issued, shall only be allowable under a General and Administrative (G&A) Indirect cost.

Question 239: H.14.1 Defense Base Act Insurance. Pg. H-9, 3rd Paragraph. This paragraph states: “DBA insurance shall be at no direct cost to the Government and shall be furnished to the OCO within 30 days of award of an Order.” It is requested that this paragraph be deleted as the cost of this statutorily required insurance is an allowable expense as provided for in Part 31 of the FAR.

Answer: For Alliant and Alliant SB, Defense Base Act (DBA) insurance coverage shall only be allowable as a General and Administrative (G&A) Indirect cost. If required and approved by an OCO under an individual Order, additional DBA riders may be charged as a Direct cost to the Government. See Amendment Section H.15.1 (formerly Section H.14.1).

Question 240: Section H.14.1, The RFP states: “DBA insurance shall be at no direct cost to the Government and shall be furnished to the OCO within 30 days of award of an Order.” Defense Base Insurance coverage is provided to employees and subcontractors in accordance with FAR 28.305. This insurance is identified with a single task order/cost objective and routinely treated as allowable cost. FAR Part 31.205-19 provides that insurance is an allowable cost if required by contract. We would therefore request the Government delete the text “DBA insurance shall be at no direct cost to the Government.” in the third paragraph of Section H.14.1

Answer: For Alliant and Alliant SB, Defense Base Act (DBA) insurance coverage shall only be allowable as a General and Administrative (G&A) Indirect cost. If required and approved by an OCO under an individual Order, additional DBA riders may be charged as a Direct cost to the Government. See Amendment Section H.15.1 (formerly Section H.14.1).

Question 241: H.14.1 Defense Base Act Insurance. The Contractor understands that employees who work internationally are protected by the Defense Base Act. The contractor carries the coverage as required; however, should an employee go into a war zone there are additional riders to the policy that must be put in place. Can the cost of the riders be billed to the task as an ODC?

Answer: **The cost of the riders can be billed to the task as an Other Direct Cost (ODC).**

Question 242: Per Clause H.14.1, DBA insurance is only applicable to work performed outside the US and cannot be charged as a direct cost to the Government. May offerors factor this cost into the build-up of their labor rates as part of the completion of the cost/price spreadsheets? Will the Government consider expanding the Attachments to the solicitation to include cost/price spreadsheets for use in staffing labor category positions at a Contractor and Government sites located outside the US separate from the cost/price spreadsheets for staffing positions at locations within the US?

Answer: **For Alliant and Alliant SB, Defense Base Act (DBA) insurance coverage shall only be allowable as a General and Administrative (G&A) Indirect cost. If required and approved by an OCO under an individual Order, additional DBA riders may be charged as a Direct cost to the Government. See Section H.15.1 (formerly Section H.14.1). All pricing under this solicitation shall be within the Continental United States. See Amendment Sections B.7.4, H.15.1 (formerly Section H.14.1), L.12.5 Folder I and Folder L.**

Question 243: Section J-Attachment 6: Column F - Please provide additional guidance on what is meant by the Total Estimated Dollar Amount Including Options. Should an Offeror extrapolate current the Level-of-Effort out through the options years? Or can a contract ceiling amount be entered?

Answer: **Each Order depending on contract type should include a total estimate; a total ceiling; or a total fixed price. If options are included in the Order, include option pricing for an overall total. See Amendment, Section L.12.3(d) Table 2, Column F.**

Question 244: For the purpose of pricing data, what start date should we use for the Basic Contract?

Answer: **July 1, 2007.**

Question 245: What is the assumed start date of the contract for pricing purposes?

Answer: July 1, 2007.

Question 246: Section L Cost/Price Spreadsheets (Attachments 2 & 3). For pricing purposes what effective date should bidders use for the contract period of performance?

Answer: July 1, 2007.

Question 247: Reference Section J, Attachments 2 and 3. Please identify the anticipated contract award/start date for pricing purposes.

Answer: July 1, 2007.

Question 248: For price evaluation purposes, what is the anticipated start date for Alliant SB?

Answer: July 1, 2007.

Question 249: During the web conference, it was stated that July 2007 should be used as the start date for labor rates. Does this mean that pricing for year 1 labor rates would run from July 1st to June 30th for each contract year OR that year 1 labor rates should run from July 1, 2007 to September 30, 2007, then continue on a October 1st to September 30th schedule for the out years?

Answer: Starting in 2007, July 1st through the following June 30th for each contract year.

Question 250: Reference RFP Section J, Attachments 2 and 3, Cost/Price. These spreadsheets are to be completed for “years” 1 through 10. In this context does “year” pertain to contract year, Government Fiscal Year or calendar year? If contract year, we can not find an estimated start date for contract activities. Please advise.

Answer: Starting in 2007, July 1st through the following June 30th for each contract year.

Question 251: Based on the given Excel spreadsheet, an escalation is provided for in the base year. Please explain the need for an escalation in the base year.

Answer: Based on the anticipated start date of July 1, 2007 and an offeror’s fiscal year, an offeror may have a partial year escalation factor to consider. If not, Offerors can propose a 0% escalation factor for the base year.

Question 252: When we add subcontractors later, how will they be priced since no cost information related to subcontractors or subcontractor burdens are required to be submitted?

Answer: This will depends on the future Order requirements, contract type, applicable clauses, and competition.

Question 253: Section J, Attachments 2 and 3, provide a specified number of estimated hours per labor category. Is it the government's intent to use costing based on this data only for purposes of evaluation and to allow the hours to vary from these specified numbers once the contract is awarded?

Answer: The hours in Attachments 2 and 3 are based on a Government estimate and are used for evaluation purposes and will be deleted upon contract award. Orders will reflect actual hours in accordance with Order requirements.

Question 254: Schedule J Attachments 2 and 3 for every Labor Category estimated hours have been provided in the last column. What is the significance of those hours?

Answer: GSA prepared an Independent Government Estimate of labor hours by labor category that considered historical usage, anticipated usage, and the Information Technology market, for the purposes of weighting each labor category to evaluate a more realistic labor category distribution.

Question 255: Can you clarify the hours listed for each labor category in Attachment J-2? For example, you have listed 22 hours for the Administration/Clerical (Entry Level) and you have listed 15 hours for the Administration/Clerical (Journeyman). Can you explain the discrepancy?

Answer: GSA prepared an Independent Government Estimate of labor hours by labor category that considered historical usage, anticipated usage, and the Information Technology market, for the purposes of weighting each labor category to evaluate a more realistic labor category distribution.

Question 256: Attachments J-2 and J-3 list estimated hours for each labor category. Can GSA explain how these estimated hours were determined?

Answer: GSA prepared an Independent Government Estimate of labor hours by labor category that considered historical usage, anticipated usage, and the

Information Technology market, for the purposes of weighting each labor category to evaluate a more realistic labor category distribution.

Question 257: The estimated hours in Attachment 3 are approximately three times greater than the estimated hours in Attachment 2. Is this simply for evaluation purposes and/or is it an indication that GSA anticipates the majority of work performed under Alliant SB will be executed in Contractor facilities?

Answer: GSA prepared an Independent Government Estimate of labor hours by labor category that considered historical usage, anticipated usage, and the Information Technology market, for the purposes of weighting each labor category to evaluate a more realistic labor category distribution for both Government and Contractor Site Work.

Question 258: Section J, Attachments 2 and 3 -- What is the intent of the hours included in these Attachments?

Answer: GSA prepared an Independent Government Estimate of labor hours by labor category that considered historical usage, anticipated usage, and the Information Technology market, for the purposes of weighting each labor category to evaluate a more realistic labor category distribution.

Question 259: Section J, Attachments 2 and 3 -- The hours included in the Attachments indicate the equivalent of one full-time employee and one part-time employee. Many Offerors have different fringe benefits for full-time employees and for part-time employees. Additionally, Offerors generally derive their fringe benefits and their overhead rates based upon the total number of employees expected to be in that "pool." Without a "baseline level of effort," it is difficult to estimate the number of employees in such a "pool" and; therefore, it is difficult to derive realistic fringe and overhead rates. Will the Government please consider providing a baseline level of effort for Offerors to use in deriving their fringe and overhead rates?

Answer: This is a Multiple Award Indefinite Delivery, Indefinite Quantity type contract. There is no actual baseline level of effort for unknown requirements over a 10 year period for each Contract awardee. Each Offeror must anticipate and develop its own baseline level of effort for proposing fringe and overhead rates.

Question 260: Section L.12.5 CD-R-4. Folder I – Basis of Estimate. The RFP indicates the award is expected to be made on the basis of price competition, yet the schedules in Section J, Attachments 2 & 3 require detailed cost data for each labor category. How does the government intend on using the cost data if the award is competitive?

Answer: The Alliant and Alliant SB GWACs are a 10 year, Multi-Billion, Multiple Award Indefinite Delivery, Indefinite Quantity type contract. GSA is requiring contractors to have an adequate accounting system to be able to do Cost Reimbursable type contracts. It is GSA's responsibility to evaluate the offeror's rationale and ability in estimating their costs for prospective Orders issued under this Basic Contract.

Question 261: Section L.12.5 CD-R-4. Folder I – Basis of Estimate. Wouldn't it be easier for the government to evaluate the rates of the various offerors, for cost reimbursement purposes, by simply using the information contained in Folder J (i.e. provisional billing rates and forward pricing rate agreements) or are the loaded hourly labor rates intended to be used for evaluating overall cost/price in addition to establishing labor category ceiling rates for T&M/L-H work?

Answer: Price and Cost analysis techniques will encompass all of Section L.12.5., Folders I, J, K, and L in accordance Section M.6.1.

Question 262: Section J, Attachments 2 and 3 have a cost to price build up, but don't include a column for the Contract Access Fee (CAF) of 3/4 of a percent (.0075). Should the CAF be included within this proposal pricing and if so, where should it be included within the Attachment 2 and 3 spreadsheets OR should it be omitted from this proposal pricing for the overall Alliant SB contract, but then subsequently added on and included when we are pricing proposal responses to individual task order RFPs issued under Alliant SB?

Answer: Contract Access Fee (CAF) shall not be included into a fully burdened labor rate on the Basic Contract or Orders issued under the Basic Contract. CAF is to be estimated under a separate CLIN and applied to all invoiced costs. See Section B.5.

Question 263: Reference: Section J, Attachments 2 and 3. The cost/price worksheets have several areas of the worksheets that are currently protected. For ease of completion, will the Government consider making the following changes to the worksheets? (1) Unprotect rows 8 and 66 in order to permit the offeror to input percentage values; (2) Unprotect header rows 7 and 65 in order to permit the offeror to re-label indirect columns; (3) Unprotect the worksheet to permit the offeror to add or delete indirect columns to reflect a different indirect rate structure; (4) Provide a total of hours to be bid or provide access to a row to permit the creation of a sum for the given hours.

Answer: The cost and price worksheets will be unprotected where offerors are to submit data and modify the indirect columns to reflect the offeror's accounting system. See Amendment, Section L.12.5, Folder L and Section J, Attachments (2) and (3).

Question 264: Section L.12.5, CD-R 4. Folder L. The RFP states the following: “However, companies with a different indirect rate structure than that identified in Columns E through G may adjust their columns accordingly.” The spreadsheets are locked such that Columns E through G cannot be adjusted to accommodate a different rate structure than identified. Also, cells identifying indirect percentages are locked, preventing the offerors from inserting their applicable percentages. Additionally, rows cannot be inserted under the column titles row to accommodate multiple percentages being entered for a specific indirect application (ex. OH) where multiple pools may be utilized. Request locking only Columns A, B, J, and K (Labor ID#, Labor Category, Estimated Hours, and Total Costs) of year-by-year workbooks to allow offerors to adjust and insert applicable rates and indirect structure.

Answer: The cost and price worksheets will be unprotected where offerors are to submit data and modify the indirect columns to reflect the offeror’s accounting system. See Amendment, Section L.12.5, Folder L and Section J, Attachments (2) and (3).

Question 265: Reference RFP Section J, Attachments 2 and 3, Cost/Price. This offeror uses in some cost structures indirect rates not represented by columns on these spreadsheets. However, we appear to be unable to add columns between columns E and G. How should we proceed to display all elements of indirect cost included in proposed rates?

Answer: The cost and price worksheets will be unprotected where offerors are to submit data and modify the indirect columns to reflect the offeror’s accounting system. See Amendment, Section L.12.5, Folder L and Section J, Attachments (2) and (3).

Question 266: Reference Section J, Attachments 2 & 3. The spreadsheets provided with the RFP include protected columns and cells that require data entry per the solicitation instructions. Could revised spreadsheet files be provided?

Answer: The cost and price worksheets will be unprotected where offerors are to submit data and modify the indirect columns to reflect the offeror’s accounting system. See Amendment, Section L.12.5, Folder L and Section J, Attachments (2) and (3).

Question 267: Reference: RFP Section J, Attachments 2 and 3, and Section L.12.5 “CD-R 4”, Folder L “Cost/Price Spreadsheets.” The instructions in the L.12.5 Folder L table indicate that percentages for Labor Escalation, Fringe Benefits, Overhead, G&A and Profit are to be entered, “under Column D, Row 7”, “under Column E, Row 7”,

“under Column F, Row 7”, “under Column G, Row 7”, and “under Column H, Row 7”, respectively. All cells in Rows 7 and 8 (which is “under Row 7”) are locked/protected. Are the instructions incorrect? Please clarify.

Answer: The cost and price worksheets will be unprotected where offerors are to submit data and modify the indirect columns to reflect the offeror’s accounting system. See Amendment, Section L.12.5, Folder L and Section J, Attachments (2) and (3).

Question 268: Reference RFP Section J, Attachments 2 and 3, Cost/Price. Cells within row 8 where we would expect to enter indirect rates under columns E through G appear to be “locked” and are not accepting entries. Please advise.

Answer: The cost and price worksheets will be unprotected where offerors are to submit data and modify the indirect columns to reflect the offeror’s accounting system. See Amendment, Section L.12.5, Folder L and Section J, Attachments (2) and (3).

Question 269: We need to add columns to the cost spreadsheets to account for all items within our indirect rate structure; however, the spreadsheet will not allow us to do so. Please advise.

Answer: The cost and price worksheets will be unprotected where offerors are to submit data and modify the indirect columns to reflect the offeror’s accounting system. See Amendment, Section L.12.5, Folder L and Section J, Attachments (2) and (3).

Question 270: Section L Cost/Price Spreadsheets (Attachments 2 & 3). Request the Government provide instructions on how Attachment 2 and 3 Cost/Price Spreadsheets can be modified in order to match our indirect rate structure.

Answer: The cost and price worksheets will be unprotected where offerors are to submit data and modify the indirect columns to reflect the offeror’s accounting system. See Amendment, Section L.12.5, Folder L and Section J, Attachments (2) and (3).

Question 271: Section J Attachment 2 and 3 does not allow plugging in numbers in the % of Labor Escalation, Fringe Benefits, Overhead and GA (Columns D9, E9, F9 etc) because the cells are locked. Do we need to indicate these percentages anywhere, as an addendum?

Answer: The cost and price worksheets will be unprotected. See Amendment, Section L.12.5, Folder L and Section J, Attachments (2) and (3).

Question 272: The instructions under Folder L indicate that information should be entered in Row 7 of both Attachments 2 and 3. Should this be Row 8 instead? If so, the Row 8 cells are protected and no percentages may be entered. Could the Government provide revised Attachments 2 and 3 with unprotected cells in Row 8?

Answer: See Amendment, Section L.12.5, Folder L and Section J, Attachments (2) and (3).

Question 273: Reference - The instructions for completing the Cost/Price Spreadsheets, Section J, Attachments 2 and 3, contained in table in Section L states:

Column D - Enter the Labor Escalation percentage under Column D Row 7.

Column E - Enter the Fringe Benefits under Column E Row 7.

Column F - Enter the Overhead percentage under Column F Row 7.

Column G - Enter the G&A percentage under Column G Row 7.

Column F - Enter the Profit percentage under Column H Row 7.

All of these cells are protected excluding the ability to enter data. It also appears the spreadsheet structure is set up to enter this data in the corresponding cells in Row 8 in the columns noted which contains the “%” symbol rather than in Row 7 which contains column titles. However, all Row 8 cells are also protected.

Answer: See Amendment, Section L.12.5, Folder L and Section J, Attachments (2) and (3).

Question 274: Reference RFP Section L, Title: Folder L – Cost/Price Spreadsheets, Page number: (Attachments 2 and 3) Comment/Question: Bidders are instructed to enter percentage information under row 7 in various columns, but row 8 is protected. Will GSA re-issue the attachments or provide alternative guidance? Recommendation: GSA re-issue the attachments so the instructions can be followed as stated.

Answer: See Amendment, Section L.12.5, Folder L and Section J, Attachments (2) and (3).

Question 275: There is a table advising contractors how to use the cost/price spreadsheets. Explanations for Columns D, E, F, G, and H, state for the contractor to enter the appropriate percentage on Row 7. Actually, Row 8 is where the percentage would be entered; however, the cells are locked and require a password to unlock these cells. Will the Government provide the password so that contractors can insert the

appropriate percentage as directed by the RFP or will the Government provide a revised form?

Answer: See Amendment, Section L.12.5, Folder L and Section J, Attachments (2) and (3).

Question 276: Will the Government release revised versions of the cost/price spreadsheets attached to the RFP that will permit offeror's to enter the required percentages in Row 8 under the appropriate columns for labor escalation, fringe benefits, overhead, G&A?

Answer: See Amendment, Section L.12.5, Folder L and Section J, Attachments (2) and (3).

Question 277: Per the MS Excel Pricing attachments 2 and 3 (Section J), cells D8 through H8 are reserved for escalation, indirect rate and profit percentages. However the identified cells, in all tabs, are locked and the required information cannot be entered.

Answer: See Amendment, Section L.12.5, Folder L and Section J, Attachments (2) and (3).

Question 278: Reference Section J Attachments 2 and 3. Attachment 2 (Government Site Rates), the "Grand Total" tab references the Labor ID#'s with a "C", for instance 101C-1, 101C-2. Attachment 3 (Contractor Site), each year references the Labor ID# with a "G" rather than a "C." Please clarify that "G" should be on all Government Site spreadsheets and "C" should be on all Contractor Site spreadsheets.

Answer: The "G" represents all Government Site and the "C" represents all Contractor Site. See Amendment, Section J, Attachments (2) and (3).

Question 279: Do we need to provide both on-site and off-site labor rates under this solicitation?

Answer: Offerors must provide both on-site and off-site labor rates under this solicitation.

Question 280: Section J, Attachment 4
The "G" in the labor identification (ID) numbers is to indicate Government-Site Work in Section J, Attachment 2, and the "C" in the labor ID numbers are to indicate Contractor-Site Work in Section J, Attachment 3. It appears that both Attachment 2 and 3 reflect the labor identification "G". Please advise.

Answer: Amendment, Section J, Attachments (2) and (3).

Question 281: In Attachment 3 under the Labor ID # column the letter is listed as “G”. Would the Government revise Attachment 3 to indicate the letter under the Labor ID # column to be “C”?

Answer: See Amendment, Section J, Attachments (2) and (3).

Question 282: REF: Section L, Folder L & Section J, Attachment 3 -- Instructions in Section L indicate the Labor ID field for Section J, Attachment 3 (Contractor-Site work) should be ‘101C through 140C’. The Section J, Attachment 3 file provided with the RFP lists ‘101G through 140G’. Should we modify the Labor ID’s in Section J, Attachment 3 to match Section L instructions?

Answer: See Amendment, Section J, Attachments (2) and (3).

Question 283: 1. Folder L (Cost/Price Spreadsheets): Column C indicates that the direct labor category rates for Column C be rounded to the nearest dollar. Does that mean that all calculations for every other column should be rounded to the nearest dollar, e.g., OH, G&A, etc. calculations?

Answer: Rounding is being revised to two (2) decimal places for all rates. See Amendment, Section L.12.5, Folder L and Section J, Attachments (2) and (3).

Question 284: Section L.12.5 CD-R 4, Folder L, Column C. The RFP states: “Note: Round to nearest dollar (e.g. \$89.99, round to \$90).” Request this note be deleted. Rounding of the labor rate development calculations makes audits by DCAA difficult and can cause increased costs to the Government unnecessarily.

Answer: Rounding is being revised to two (2) decimal places for all rates. See Amendment, Section L.12.5, Folder L and Section J, Attachments (2) and (3).

Question 285: Folder L, column C, it states "Note: Round to nearest dollar", do you really want this rounding?

Answer: Rounding is being revised to two (2) decimal places for all rates. See Amendment, Section L.12.5, Folder L and Section J, Attachments (2) and (3).

Question 286: According to the table in the Cost/Price Instructions in the RFP, Offerors are to enter the percentage for Escalation, Fringe, Overhead, G&A, and Profit under Columns D, E, F, G, and H, Row 7; however, Row 8 which is where it appears the percentages should be entered is locked. Should the percents be entered into each of the cells associated with the respective Categories instead?

Answer: See Amendment, Section L.12.5, Folder L and Section J, Attachments (2) and (3).

Question 287: The cells in this row are locked/protected and therefore rate type data cannot be entered there. Is this an error?

Answer: See Amendment, Section J, Attachments (2) and (3).

Question 288: J, Attachments 2 and 3 - Folder L -- Can a set of “unprotected” spreadsheets be provided so that all offerors may add cost or pricing data to the individual cells?

Answer: See Amendment, Section J, Attachments (2) and (3).

Question 289: Can the spreadsheets be modified to add columns that may be required to include additional cost factors that may not be addressed in the Cost/Price Spreadsheets?

Answer: See Amendment, Section J, Attachments (2) and (3).

Question 290: The underlying rows by labor category are formatted as dollars instead of rates. Is this an error?

Answer: Only the indirect rates are to be entered as percentages in Row 8 for calculation purposes. All other direct and indirect values are to remain formatted as dollars.

Question 291: Does the Government expect the rates to be shown somewhere else on the individual spreadsheets?

Answer: Only the indirect rates are to be entered as percentages in Row 8 for calculation purposes. All other direct and indirect values are to remain formatted as dollars.

Question 292: We already use an Excel spreadsheet with the appropriate columns. Do we have to have a DCAA official review it in order to prove that it's appropriate before we submit our offer?

Answer: Offerors must use the Excel Spreadsheets in Section J, Attachments (2) and Attachment (3). Offerors do not have to have a DCAA official review it.

Question 293: reference section L12.5, folder L Cost spreadsheets, it appears that only the prime provides pricing. No input from proposed subcontractors is required. Correct?

Answer: Correct, only the prime provides pricing. Offerors shall not submit pricing of proposed subcontractors.

Question 294: Ref Section L.12.5, Folder L. Based on the structure of the spreadsheets provided the final submittal will be 40 pages (20 pgs. on-site, 20 off-site) vice the 20 pages referenced in this paragraph. Please clarify.

Answer: The final submittal is limited to 40 pages; however, when an Offeror has to add columns that go beyond the width of the spreadsheet to conform to a different cost accounting system, then more pages are allowed.

Question 295: Reference: RFP Section L.12.1 "TABLE, CD-R 4" This table provides a page count for the Basis of Estimate of 5 Pages. RFP Section L.11.5.(c) & (d) "Format" This section indicates "(c) The font size shall be no less than twelve (12) point except for tables, charts, graphs and figures, which shall be no smaller than (10) point; (d) Top and bottom margins shall be at least one-inch. Side margins shall be at least 3/4-inch;" RFP Section L.12.5.(b).(1).(i) "CD-R 4, Direct Labor" This section states, "Offerors shall provide a list of its labor categories correlated to each of those required by this solicitation. Include the rationale for the correlations. Included the range of direct labor rates that the Offeror currently pays for each of its correlated labor categories." Assuming a single row to respond to each category, a standard MS Word table at 10 point font will only accommodate 45 labor categories per page. This means that the direct labor response in table form for the 80 solicitation provided labor categories would require at least two (2) of the five (5) allotted pages. Including the remainder of the required statements, responses, methodologies, and supporting documentation would appear quite challenging to be provided in an understandable, 3-page 12-point font summation.

Answer: GSA is increasing the page count for the Basis of Estimate from 5 pages to 10 pages. This instruction for labor category correlations has been moved from Section L.12.5, Folder I (b)(1) to Section L.12.5, Folder K. The list of labor categories correlated to each of those required by the solicitation has no page

limitation whereas the rationale for the labor correlations is to be included in the 25 page compensation plan.

Question 296: Reference L.12.5 - Folder I, Basis of Estimate. Does the information requested in (b) (1) Direct Labor, (2) Indirect Costs and (3) Profit have to correlate directly to the information provided in the T&M pricing tables in Section J, Attachments 2 and 3, or is this information “general/generic” in nature and non-specific to any particular contract type?

Answer: There should be a correlation between the information in L.12.5 Folder I, Basis of Estimate and the pricing tables in Section J, Attachments (2) and (3).

Question 297: Reference L.12.5 - Folder I, Basis of Estimate. (b)(3) Profit - does the Government want Offerors to describe their methodology in deriving profit based on multiple contract types, such as CPFF, CPAF, CPIF, T&M, FFP, etc?

Answer: There should be a correlation between the information in L.12.5 Folder I, Basis of Estimate and the pricing tables in Section J, Attachments (2) and (3).

Question 298: FOLDER L – COST/PRICE SPREADSHEETS: “Attachment 2 consists of 10 years of Government-Site Work. Attachment 3 consists of 10 years of Contractor-Site Work.” Will companies in existence for fewer than 10 years be penalized?

Answer: GSA is not evaluating the number of years a company has been in existence.

Question 299: Folder I -- Basis of Estimate – With regards to Paragraph (1)(i), when asking for the range of direct labor rates the Offeror currently pays for each of its correlated labor categories, is it expected that a salary range should be provided for the overall category (i.e. – Labor ID 101G) or for each individual level within the overall category (i.e. – Labor ID’s 101G-1, 101G-2, 101G-3)?

Answer: The overall category (i.e., Labor ID 101 G, etc.). This instruction has been moved from Section L.12.5, Folder I (b)(1) to Section L.12.5, Folder K.

Question 300: Folder I, (b) (1) the RFP states the Offeror shall "include the range of direct labor rates that the Offeror currently pays for each of its correlated labor categories." Is it the Government's intent that the offeror should identify all employees and subcontractors currently (or for some other period of time -- if so, please specify the period) under contract and identify the highest and lowest direct labor rate it is paying within each labor category?

Answer: For each overall labor category (i.e., Labor ID 101G, etc.), the Offeror shall map its proposed list of internal labor categories and salary ranges that directly correlate to those in Section J, Attachment (2) and (3) and explain in writing the rationale for the correlation during the period of proposal submission. Identifying specific subcontractors and separate subcontractor pricing shall not be included in the correlation. If the Offeror does not currently have employees to fulfill the duties under a labor category or labor categories, an Offeror must separately identify and explain its methodology for establishing Prime rates for such categories in the Basis of Estimate. This instruction for labor category correlations has been moved from Section L.12.5, Folder I (b)(1) to Section L.12.5, Folder K. The list of labor categories correlated to each of those required by the solicitation has no page limitation whereas the rationale for the labor correlations is to be included in the 25 page compensation plan.

Question 301: Reference Section L.12.5 (b): “Offerors shall submit supporting documentation for the basis of direct labor, labor escalation, and each indirect cost consistent with their organization’s cost accounting and estimating systems and, if applicable, DCAA provisional billing rates and forward pricing rate agreements” and Section L.12.1 Disks, Folders, Page Limits, File Titles, Table. “CD-R 4 Cost/Price: (1) Basis of Estimate= 5 pages, (2) DCAA Information= No page limitation, (3) Compensation Plan and Policy for Uncompensated Overtime= 25 pages, (4) Cost/Price Spreadsheets= Limited to Table Format. Assuming that it is the Government’s intention for Offerors to include all supporting documentation (basis of direct labor, labor escalation, each indirect rate element, a mapping of labor categories to the RFP labor categories, responses to the questions listed in Section L.12.5 (c), plus the basis of the rate derivation) all within the 5 page limit of the Basis of Estimate, will the Government consider omitting the page limitation for the Basis of Estimate section to enable the inclusion of the necessary detail?”

Answer: The Basis of Estimate is increased to 10 pages. This instruction for labor category correlations has been moved from Section L.12.5, Folder I (b)(1) to Section L.12.5, Folder K. The list of labor categories correlated to each of those required by the solicitation has no page limitation whereas the rationale for the labor correlations is to be included in the 25 page compensation plan.

Question 302: M.8 Compensation Plan for Professional Employees and L.12.5 Folder L Column C. M.8 states, “Supporting information shall include recognized national and regional compensation surveys and studies of professional, public and private organizations...” L.12.5 Folder L Column C states, “Enter organization’s direct labor category rates that best fit the definitions of each labor category listed in Column C to derive a single Direct Labor Rate Composite.” The question is this; will the Offeror be evaluated more favorably if they use survey data instead of their organization’s direct labor category rates when deriving the proposed Direct Labor Rate Composite?”

Answer: Offeror's are to use their own organization's direct labor category rates if available. Only when the Offeror does not currently have employees to fulfill the duties under a labor category or labor categories, the Offeror must separately identify and explain its methodology for establishing Prime rates for such categories in the Basis of Estimate.

Question 303: Regarding Compensation Plan and Policy for Uncompensated Overtime. When submitting supporting information for the total compensation plan, does the Government want to see specific salaries or salary ranges and is salary.com an acceptable source for this information? Also, how many data sources are expected for the supporting information regarding salary?

Answer: The specific surveys and quantity of surveys will be unique to each Offeror's circumstances; therefore, the Government does not require a specific strategy. For each overall labor category (i.e., Labor ID 101G, etc.), the Offeror shall map its proposed list of internal labor categories and salary ranges that directly correlate to those in Section J, Attachment (2) and (3) and explain in writing the rationale for the correlation during the period of proposal submission. This instruction for labor category correlations has been moved from Section L.12.5, Folder I (b)(1) to Section L.12.5, Folder K. The list of labor categories correlated to each of those required by the solicitation has no page limitation whereas the rationale for the labor correlations is to be included in the 25 page compensation plan.

Question 304: Will FTS consider: 1) Excluding either an MS Word Table or an Excel file presented in response to the L.12.5.(b).(1).(i) from the page count limitation, or 2) Increasing the page count limitation of the Basis of Estimate by 2 pages?

Answer: The Government is increasing the page count for the Basis of Estimate from 5 pages to 10 pages. This instruction for labor category correlations has been moved from Section L.12.5, Folder I (b)(1) to Section L.12.5, Folder K. The list of labor categories correlated to each of those required by the solicitation has no page limitation whereas the rationale for the labor correlations is to be included in the 25 page compensation plan.

Question 305: Section L.12.1. Request the Government increase the page count for Folder I the Basis of Estimate (BOE) from 5 pages to 10 pages. This request is being submitted to allow sufficient page count to effectively respond to the RFP BOE.

Answer: The Government is increasing the page count for the Basis of Estimate from 5 pages to 10 pages. This instruction for labor category correlations has been moved from Section L.12.5, Folder I (b)(1) to Section L.12.5, Folder K. The list of

labor categories correlated to each of those required by the solicitation has no page limitation whereas the rationale for the labor correlations is to be included in the 25 page compensation plan.

Question 306: Section L.12.1 Table, CD-R 4, Folder (I) Basis of Estimate. The requirement in the RFP states a 5 page limitation for this section. Request the page limit for the Basis of Estimate be increased to 20. Five pages are inadequate for the Section L requirements for an explanation of pricing methodology, labor and burden estimating practices, correlation to contractor categories and rationale for the correlation for approximately 80 labor categories as well as support for cost realism as identified in Section M.6.

Answer: The Government is increasing the page count for the Basis of Estimate from 5 pages to 10 pages. This instruction for labor category correlations has been moved from Section L.12.5, Folder I (b)(1) to Section L.12.5, Folder K. The list of labor categories correlated to each of those required by the solicitation has no page limitation whereas the rationale for the labor correlations is to be included in the 25 page compensation plan.

Question 307: The maximum page count specified in the L.12.1 table for Folder I is 5 pages. We recommend that the page limitation be removed for this folder because, depending on the number of the offeror's participating entities and the amount of information requested, the space required to answer the questions for each is unpredictable.

Answer: The Government is increasing the page count for the Basis of Estimate from 5 pages to 10 pages. This instruction for labor category correlations has been moved from Section L.12.5, Folder I (b)(1) to Section L.12.5, Folder K. The list of labor categories correlated to each of those required by the solicitation has no page limitation whereas the rationale for the labor correlations is to be included in the 25 page compensation plan.

Question 308: Reference RFP Section L.12.1 Table. CD-R 4 Folder I, Cost/Price Basis of Estimate is assigned a page limit of five pages. Because of the number of separate cost structures covered by separate forward pricing agreements used to create appropriate market-driven rates for all labor categories it will be very difficult to provide an adequate basis of estimate in just five pages. Given the Government's interest in fully understanding the derivation of proposed rates, we request that the Government consider increasing the page limit to ten or more pages.

Answer: The Government is increasing the page count for the Basis of Estimate from 5 pages to 10 pages. This instruction for labor category correlations has been moved from Section L.12.5, Folder I (b)(1) to Section L.12.5, Folder K. The list of

labor categories correlated to each of those required by the solicitation has no page limitation whereas the rationale for the labor correlations is to be included in the 25 page compensation plan.

Question 309: Reference RFP L.12.1 Table, CD-R 4, K and RFP 12.5, Folder K – Compensation Plan and Policy.... The first reference limits offerors' responses to 25 pages; the second reference requires "a total compensation plan." Our total Compensation Plan exceeds 600 pages. May we extract the information from our "total" plan that addresses the requirements contained in the second reference (above) (and other compensation information) to respond to the RFP's compensation plan requirement?

Answer: A "total compensation plan" in this context is a total compensation plan for the Alliant and/or Alliant SB GWAC only. The Government encourages Offerors to extract information from their corporate plan and tailor it specifically to Alliant and/or Alliant SB.

Question 310: L.12.5 CD-R 4. (2) Indirect Costs. Paragraph (2) (ii) requires offerors to state the methodology used in computing their organization's indirect costs applied to ODCs. It is requested that this paragraph be deleted. There is no requirement in the pricing tables to provide ODC indirect rates. Further, there is no reference to specific ODC indirect costs in the RFP other than the fact that it is stated that Contractors may include reasonable indirect costs to the extent excluded from the Prime's loaded hourly rates in accordance with their usual accounting practices and consistent with FAR Part 31.2.

Answer: The Government wants to know how Offerors derive their indirect rate structure as it applies to Subcontracting, Materials, and Travel. The requirement remains unchanged.

Question 311: L.12.5 Folder I (b)(1)(ii) and L.12.5. Folder L Column C. Please clarify what is meant by the term "direct labor rate composite."

Answer: If an Offeror's organization has several labor categories that meet the definition of a single labor category in Section J, Attachment (4) and/or its organization has labor categories from various internal business units, then the Offeror can blend those rates into a single direct labor rate composite. Offerors must explain their methodology under Section L.12.5, Folder I, Basis of Estimate.

Question 312: In Section J, Attachments 2 and 3, the third column is labeled "Direct Labor Rate Composite". Please clarify the term "composite". From what multiple sources does the Government expect the offeror to propose a direct labor rate for each labor category?

Answer: If an Offeror's organization has several labor categories that meet the definition of a single labor category in Section J, Attachment (4) and/or its organization has labor categories from various internal business units, then the Offeror can blend those rates into a single direct labor rate composite. Offerors must explain their methodology under Section L.12.5, Folder I, Basis of Estimate.

Question 313: Section J, Attachment 3 and 4 -- Is the Contractor to provide pricing for all labor categories and skill levels?

Answer: Offerors must provide pricing for all labor categories and skill levels.

Question 314: In the Cost Pricing Estimate we have to project for five years, However the attachments to Section J 2 and 3 of the spreadsheet are for 10 years. Do we need to project Indirect Rates for the entire 10-year period or just through the fifth year?

Answer: Offerors must project Indirect Rates for the entire 10-year period.

Question 315: Reference Section J, Attachment 3. This Offeror utilizes a separate facility indirect rate to calculate facility cost for work performed in Contractor facilities. The tables/spreadsheets do not contain a column for this indirect rate. Will Offerors be able to add columns in order to properly calculate its fully loaded labor rates?

Answer: The cost and price worksheets will be unprotected where offerors are to submit data and modify the indirect columns to reflect the offeror's accounting system. See Amendment, Section L.12.5, Folder L and Section J, Attachments (2) and (3).

Question 316: If an Offeror has multiple off-site (Contractor site) rates, can it propose multiple off-site rates for each labor category?

Answer: GSA is requiring one blended rate for each labor category across the board. Offerors must explain their methodology for blending rates for such categories in accordance with Section L.12.5 Folder I, Basis of Estimate.

Question 317: Reference RFP Section J, Attachments 2 and 3, Cost/Price. Several of the columns on these spreadsheets appear to apply a single indirect rate entered at the top of the column to each cell in the column. However, because several different cost structures may be used to create market-driven labor rates appropriate for each individual labor category, we anticipate that multiple fringe, overhead, G&A, escalation, etc. rates must be used to price all labor categories. Should we complete a separate spreadsheet for

each individual cost structure proposed providing the appropriate information for all labor categories priced within that cost structure? Please advise.

Answer: GSA is requiring one blended rate for each labor category across the board. Offerors must explain their methodology for blending rates for such categories in accordance with Section L.12.5 Folder I, Basis of Estimate.

Question 318: Reference: Section J, Attachments 2 and 3, and Section L.12.5 “CD-R 4”, Folder L “Cost/Price Spreadsheets.” Please explain the intent of the percentages shown in Row 8 of all annual year worksheets.

Answer: Using a mathematical formula for each cell, Offerors are to multiply their Direct Labor Rate composite across the columns of indirect rate category percentages shown in Row 8 to derive a Total Loaded Hourly Labor Rate.

Question 319: In section “M.6.1 Price Analysis”, subsection (c), we assume that Attachments 2 and 3 are those in Section J. Is this correct?

Answer: See Amendment, Section M.6.1(c).

Question 320: Reference M.6 - Cost/Price Evaluation. With the exception of the fully loaded labor rates in Section J, Attachments 2 and 3, it appears there is no other objective, quantitative data being requested by the Government for price evaluation purposes. It is not clear how the Government will evaluate the information provided in Folder I - Basis of Estimate. This folder contains the methodology used to map the Offeror’s internal labor categories to the RFP, how its direct labor rates are derived, how labor escalation was developed, how its indirect rates are developed and how its proposed profit rate was derived.

Answer: See Sections M.6., M.6.1., and M.6.2.

Question 321: What standards or sub-factors will the Government utilize to differentiate and substantiate its evaluation of one Offeror’s overhead pool or indirect rates from another Offeror’s as being more beneficial or favorable to the Government?

Answer: The Government will conduct a price analysis before determining the overall best value in accordance with Section M.6.1. The Government will conduct a cost analysis to determine the offeror’s ability to estimate costs in accordance with Section M.6.2.

Question 322: Will Offerors be allowed to discount the fully loaded labor rates in their contract when bidding T&M/L-H task order proposals?

Answer: Offerors will be allowed to discount the fully loaded labor rates in their contracts when bidding T&M/L-H task order proposals.

Question 323: Will Offerors be required to use the fully loaded labor rates when developing their proposed prices for FFP task order proposals?

Answer: It is not a requirement for Offerors to use the fully loaded labor rates when developing their proposed prices for Firm Fixed Price (FFP) task orders issued under the Basic Contract; however, OCOs may request any supplemental information necessary for analyzing firm-fixed prices at the Order level.

CLAUSES

Question 324: Reference E.1 - Clause 52.246-11. Please identify the higher level quality standards the contractor will have to comply with in this clause.

Answer: The Clause 52.246-11 may be applicable at the task order level. If applicable, the Ordering Contracting Officer will identify the higher level quality standards.

Question 325: Reference I.2 - Clauses 52.215-10 and 52.215-12. Since the Alliant SB contract and delivery orders issued under it are expected to be awarded based on adequate price competition, we believe these clauses should be deleted.

Answer: The Clauses 52.215-10 and 52.215-12 may be applicable at the task order level since at least some Orders issued under the Basic Contract and sole source modifications will not be issued pursuant to adequate price competition.

Question 326: Section E.1, 52.211-11 – LIQUIDATED DAMAGES – SUPPLIES, SERVICES OR RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT – SEP 2000: Would GSA consider deleting this clause?

Answer: The Clause 52.211-11 may be applicable at the task order level.

Question 327: Section I.2, 52.211-11 – LIQUIDATED DAMAGES – SUPPLIES, SERVICES OR RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT – SEP 2000: Would GSA consider deleting this clause?

Answer: The Clause 52.211-11 may be applicable at the task order level.

Question 328: Section I: Clauses. 52.216-7, 52.216-8, 52.216-10, 52.216-11. Contract type designation requires correction. These clauses are identified with both T&M and cost contracts. Their prescription clauses in 16.307 identify that they should be applied to only cost reimbursable tasks. Recommend that the “x” in the “TM” column be deleted.

Answer: These clauses are “required when applicable”, per the FAR Matrix in FAR 52.301. There is no change.

Question 329: The draft RFP lacks a Limitation of Liability clause with respect to consequential damages. (Note the 52.246-23, 24 and 25 clauses only deal with loss or damage to government property after acceptance). For all IT procurements, the Federal Information Management Regulations (FIRMR), Section 201-39.5202-6, prescribed in relevant part the following language:

“In no event will the Contractor be liable to the Government for consequential damages as defined in the Uniform Commercial Code, section 2-715, in effect in the District of Columbia as of January 1, 1973, i.e.-Consequential damages resulting from the seller’s breach include –

- (a) Any loss resulting from general or particular requirements and needs of which the seller at the time of contracting had reason to know and which could not reasonably be prevented by cover or otherwise; and
- (b) Injury to person or property proximately resulting from any breach of warranty.”

This language is consistent with today’s standard commercial practice. We believe the Government inadvertently failed to carry this language over to FAR Part 15 when, as part of procurement reform, the FIRMR was terminated in 1996.

Will GSA agree, in its discretion, to add this historically acceptable language to the RFP? Note this language is similar to the waiver of consequential damages included in FAR 52.212-4(p).

Answer: Alliant SB is not a commercial contract.

FORMAT

Question 330: The final RFP, Section L.11.5 Format, states that the font size shall be no less than twelve (12) point except for tables, charts, graphs and figures, which shall be no smaller than ten(10) point; however, the D-RFP allowed for eight (8) point font. Due to the page constraints on the proposal, we ask that GSA reconsider the font size requirements for tables, charts, graphs and figures as follows: (1) Tables, charts, graphs

and figures font size shall be no smaller than eight (8) point; (2) Text in Iconic and screen shot that are intended for representation of the actual item are exempt from font size requirements when there are accompanying text explaining them.

Answer: The font size of eight (8) point is permitted for tables, charts, graphs and figures. See revised Section L.11.5.

Question 331: Please provide the Alliant SB RFP and related attachments in MS Word to facilitate Offeror completion of required fill-ins and proposal submission.

Answer: Section K and MS Excel attachments will be provided in the appropriate format.

Question 332: L.11.1, L.12.2. In Section L.11.1, The RFP says: Offerors shall submit one (1) electronic proposal, according to the specific proposal instructions in Section L.12. All information shall be provided on CD-R (not CD-RW) compact disks, using Microsoft Word 2003 (.doc format) and Microsoft Excel 2003 (.xls format) compatible and/or Adobe Acrobat 7.0 format. Pricing shall be submitted in Microsoft Excel 2003 (.xls format). However on page L-14, the RFP calls for a “Readme.txt” file and illustrates data to be provide in a tabular format.

Answer: Offerors’ proposals, other than pricing inserted on the Microsoft Excel 2003 (.xls), shall be submitted in Adobe Acrobat 7.0 (.pdf) format.

Question 333: L.12.2. May offerors provide the readme file as a “.doc” file so that the table format stays intact or does the Government want a .txt file without any table formatting?

Answer: The Readme file shall be submitted in Adobe Acrobat 7.0 (.pdf) format.

Question 334: L.12.1. May offerors supply covers, title pages, and an executive summary as part of the submission?

Answer: Offerors may choose to submit title pages and covers, but they will be included in the page count. An Executive Summary (2 page limit) has been added to the Basic Contract Plan (BCP) and is not included in the 30-page count of the BCP.

Question 335: Request for Proposal (RFP) reference: Section L, paragraph L.12.2, CD-R 1 Folder A, (a) Readme File. The GSA specifies a “Readme.txt” file for listing CD-R documents, which we believe is likely in MS Notepad format. Is it acceptable for offerors to use MS Excel or Word without converting to .pdf?

Answer: The Readme file shall be submitted in Adobe Acrobat 7.0 (.pdf) format.

Question 336: Section L.11.1. The RFP states: “Offerors shall submit one (1) electronic proposal, according to the specific proposal instructions in Section L. 12. All information shall be provided on CD-R (not CD-RW) compact disks, using Microsoft Word 2003 (.doc format) and Microsoft Excel 2003 (.xls format) compatible and/or Adobe Acrobat 7.0 format. Pricing shall be submitted in Microsoft Excel 2003 (.xls format).”

Answer: Offerors’ proposals, other than pricing inserted on the Microsoft Excel 2003 (.xls), shall be submitted in Adobe Acrobat 7.0 (.pdf) format.

Question 337: There seems to be conflicting information on file submission types. Please confirm that all files are to be submitted in .pdf format with the exception of the Excel spreadsheets and the readme file

Answer: Offerors’ proposals, other than pricing inserted on the Microsoft Excel 2003, shall be submitted in Adobe Acrobat 7.0 (.pdf) format.

Question 338: Section L.11.5 (c). The RFP states: “The font size shall be no less than twelve (12) point except for tables, charts, graphs and figures, which shall be no smaller than ten (10) point.” Would the Government consider changing the font size on graphics to 8 point?

Answer: The font size of eight (8) point is permitted for tables, charts, graphs and figures.

Question 339: Can you please confirm whether or not the Government has color printing capability?

Answer: The Government has color printing capabilities. Evaluators will have color monitors; however, evaluators may choose to print or not print copies of proposals, and may or may not have access to color printers.

Question 340: Section L.11.5 (e). The RFP states: “All pages shall be numbered sequentially; and” For clarity, we suggest the following wording to permit each folder to be numbered sequentially with a set of unique numbers: “All pages within each folder shall be numbered sequentially beginning with the letter of the folder; and”

Answer: Pages within each file (regardless of placement within a folder) shall be numbered sequentially starting with page 1.

Question 341: Section L.12.4 CD-R 3, Folder H and Section L.12.1, Disks, Folders, Page Limits, File Titles, Section L.12.1 Table. Under Alliant SB Basic Contract Plan, paragraph (b) Program Management, the last sentence reads: “The Offeror shall indicate evidence of an approved Earned Value Management System (EVMS), if applicable.” Suggest including a requirement in L.12.1, CD-R 3, Section L.12.1 Table, Folder H (b) Program Management System, to add “(1D) Earned Value Management System (EVMS) Documentation (if available)”, as an attachment to the Alliant SB Basic Contract Plan, exclusive of the 30 page limitation.

Answer: File document ABC-EVMS.pdf will be added to Section L.12.1 Table. This document will be marked “if applicable”.

Question 342: Reference RFP L.11.5 (c) which limits font size for tables, charts, graphs and figures to no smaller than ten (10) point. However, RFP Section J-Attachment 6, Past Performance, Tables 1 and 2, are formatted in Trebuchet MS, 8-point type. How would the Government prefer we remit these completed tables – in 8-point or in 10-point?

Answer: Offerors cannot change the font of the Past Performance, Tables 1 and 2. The RFP will be amended to allow an 8-point font size for tables, charts, graphs and figures.

Question 343: Section L.11.4 allows for a legend regarding proprietary information to be included on a Title Page. However, the proposal instructions in Section L.12.1 or L.12.2-L.12.5 make no provision for a Title Page. May offerors include a Title Page as part of CD-R 1?

Answer: Offerors must submit a title page per Section L.11.4, Proprietary Data. The title page is not included in the page count and will not be evaluated.

Question 344: Are contractors permitted to participate on more than one team for the Alliant SB Full and Open bid?

Answer: An Offeror may participate in more than one Contractor Team Arrangement, but the Government reserves the right to limit awards so that the same legal entity receives only one award.

Question 345: Reference: RFP Section L.11.1 “Electronic Copy of Proposal (No Paper)” This paragraph states: “All information shall be provided on CD-R (not CD-RW) compact disks, using Microsoft Word 2003 (.doc format) and Microsoft Excel 2003 (.xls format) compatible and/or Adobe Acrobat 7.0 format.” However, Table L.12.1

(page L-12) defines the File Names of extension .txt (for readme.txt only), .pdf (for documents) and .xls (for past performance and pricing spreadsheets). Which would the Government prefer for proposal documents other than past performance and pricing spreadsheets – Adobe Acrobat files or Microsoft Word files?

Answer: Offerors' proposals, other than pricing inserted on the Microsoft Excel 2003 (.xls), shall be submitted in Adobe Acrobat 7.0 (.pdf) format. Refer to the amendment.

Question 346: We recommend the minimum font size for graphics be reduced to 8 point font.

Answer: The font size of eight (8) point is permitted for tables, charts, graphs and figures.

Question 347: Reference RFP, Section L.11.1, Electronic Copy of Proposal (No Paper). Does the GSA plan to print copies of the proposal for evaluation and, if so, will these copies be in color?

Answer: Evaluators may choose to print or not print copies of proposals, and may or may not have access to color printers.

Question 348: Reference RFP, Section L.11.1, Electronic Copy of Proposal (No Paper). Given the need for signatures on some of the requested documents, e.g., the SF33, and the requirement for a “no paper” proposal submittal, is a scan of a signed hardcopy for submission as a pdf file acceptable as a legal document, or does the GSA require some other form of submittal?

Answer: A scan of a signed hardcopy for submission as Adobe Acrobat 7.0 (.pdf) format is acceptable.

Question 349: Reference: RFP, Section L.11.5, paragraph (c) “The font size shall be no less than twelve (12) point except for tables, charts, graphs and figures, which shall be no smaller than ten (10) point;” Can graphics, such as screen shots, which have font sizes less than 10 point, be utilized if the information to be evaluated is presented in 10 point font and pointed to the graphic, i.e., a call-out box?

Answer: The font size of eight (8) point is permitted for tables, charts, graphs and figures. Refer to the amendment.

Question 350: Section J-Attachment 6 has password-protected formats that do not currently allow wrapped text. The information required often exceeds the column width,

obscuring the data. Would the government consider one of the following: Provide the password so that Offerors may modify the format to allow text to wrap within a cell.

Answer: The cells for Section J-Attachment 6 will be unprotected to allow for contractor formatting.

Question 351: Can an Offeror include a 2-page Executive Summary on CD-R 1? An Executive Summary is useful in providing an overview of the Offerors capabilities.

Answer: An Executive Summary (2 page limit, not included in BCP 30 page count) will be added to CDR-3, Folder H (Alliant SB Basic Contract Plan) per the amendment.

Question 352: Please confirm that the government wishes to receive just ONE set of CD-Rs (CD-R 1, 2, 3, and 4). Can an Offeror submit a second, clearly-labeled backup set in case a CD-R becomes corrupted or damaged in transit?

Answer: As described in Section L.11.1, one electronic proposal shall be submitted. The Government has not instructed Offerors to submit copies.

Question 353: Folder H -- Alliant SB Basic Contract Plan - Can the Offeror include a file to introduce the Basic Contract Plan section? This file could be named ABC-BCP.pdf or similar. In this section the Offeror could provide an overview of their Basic Contract Plan, demonstrating how the major components (Resources, Program Management and Corporate Commitment) integrate. The file would count towards the 30 page limit.

Answer: An Executive Summary (2 page limit, not included in BCP 30 page count) will be added to CDR-3, Folder H (Alliant SB Basic Contract Plan) per the amendment.

Question 354: L.11.7 Proposal Revisions Requested by the Government. The paragraph states that revised proposal pages are to be submitted using a different color for revision. Since the proposal is being submitted softcopy only, how would GSA like any revisions to be presented?

Answer: The Offeror will not be required to submit "colored pages" indicating proposal revisions.

Question 355: L.12.1 Disks, Folders, Page Limits, File Titles. The Basis of Estimate is limited to five (5) pages. Can the page limit for this section be eliminated or at a minimum increased to 10 pages?

Answer: The page limit for this section has been revised. Please see amendment revision in Section L.

Question 356: Reference RFP Section L.12.1 Table. CD-R 1 Folder A includes a Readme File that must be provided as a “.txt” file. However, the table format provided in paragraph L.12.1 (a) as an example of a Readme file may not be provided within a text file. Should offerors provide the data shown within the table in a text only file or would the Government prefer a “.doc” file with the data provided within the table format?

Answer: The Readme file shall be submitted in Adobe Acrobat 7.0 (.pdf) format.

Question 357: Reference RFP Section L.12.1 Table. No provisions are made for a table of contents, table of exhibits, etc although some of the folders might benefit from provision of such front matter. Does the Government desire such front matter for more extensive folders such as H?

Answer: Offerors may choose to submit title pages and covers, but they will be included in the page count.

Question 358: Section L.11.5 Format, states that the font size shall be no less than twelve (12) point except for tables, charts, graphs and figures, which shall be no smaller than ten (10) point; however the draft allowed for eight (8) point font. Due to the page constraints on the proposal, we ask that GSA reconsider the font size for requirements for tables, charts, graphs and figures as follows: (1) Tables, charts, graphs and figures font size shall be no smaller than eight (8) point; (2) Text in Iconic and screen shot that are intended for representation of the actual item are exempt from font size requirements when there are accompanying text explaining them.

Answer: The font size of eight (8) point is permitted for tables, charts, graphs and figures. Text in “screen shot”, intended for representation of the actual item, are exempt from font size requirements when there is accompanying text explaining them.

Question 359: In paragraph L.11.1 GSA states that "All information shall be provided on CD-R compact disks, using Microsoft Word 2003(.doc format) and Microsoft Excel 2003 (.xls format) compatible and/or Adobe Acrobat 7.0 format.." However, in the Section L.12.1 table, the file name column shows only the PDF file type. Please clarify.

Answer: Offerors' proposals, other than pricing inserted on the Microsoft Excel 2003 (.xls), shall be submitted in Adobe Acrobat 7.0 (.pdf) format.

Question 360: As the submission is electronic only, where does the government require the "Title Page" (L.11.4a) to be placed?

Answer: Offerors may choose to submit title pages and covers, but they will be included in the page count.

Question 361: Is it possible to get the SF33 and Section K issued as a Word document?

Answer: Section K and Attachments will be provided in the appropriate format.

Question 362: Section L.11.5, Format, states that the font size shall be no less than 12 point except for tables, charts, graphs and figures, which shall be no smaller than ten (10) point; however, the draft RFP allowed for eight (8) point font. Due to the page constraints on the proposal, we ask that GSA reconsider the font size requirements for tables, charts, graphs and figures as follows: (1) Tables, charts, graphs and figures font size shall be no smaller than eight (8) point; (2) Text in Iconic and screen shot that are intended for representation of the actual item are exempt from font size requirements when there are accompanying text explaining them.

Answer: The font size of eight (8) point is permitted for tables, charts, graphs and figures. Refer to the amendment.

Question 363: L.11.1. Table Row #2 & (a) Readme File. Offerors are instructed to use .doc, .xls and Adobe Acrobat 7.0 format. The Government requires that the Readme file be provided as "ABC-README.txt." The Government provides further elaboration and requests the Readme file contents to be provided in table format. It would be easiest to comply with the table formatting requirement, if GSA would allow Offerors to provide the Readme file in a .doc format, rather than a .txt. Would the Government allow the Readme File to be provided as a .doc (Word) file, in order to fulfill the requirement to provide the contents of the Readme file in a table format?

Answer: The Readme file shall be submitted in Adobe Acrobat 7.0 (.pdf) format.

Question 364: Reference L.11.5 (c) Format. Due to 30 page restriction, request this requirement be changed to "(c) The font size shall be no less than eleven (11) point except for tables, charts, graphs and figures, which shall be no smaller than eight (8) point."

Answer: The font size of eight (8) point is permitted for tables, charts, graphs and figures.

Question 365: L.11.5 (c). The requirement from GSA is to provide graphics/tables/charts/figures in no less than 10 point font. With the limited page requirements, we will rely on graphics to provide a complete response. Would the Government allow the Offerors to use 8 or 9 point font in those graphics in which the information would otherwise not fit?

Answer: The font size of eight (8) point is permitted for tables, charts, graphs and figures.

Question 366: L.11.5 (d). The requirement from GSA is to have a 1” top and bottom margin. It’s standard policy in industry to paginate each page, as well as provide the disclaimer re: proprietary information in the footer and provide corporate logos in the header. Would the Government allow Offerors to include this information within the 1” margins (e.g., set margins at .5 top and bottom?)

Answer: Margins may contain a disclaimer regarding proprietary information in the footer and provide corporate logos in the header within the one-inch top and bottom margins.

Question 367: Reference L.11.7, Proposal Revisions Requested by the Government. Revised proposal pages are to be submitted using a different color for each set of revisions. Does this mean that if proposal revisions are required they will be submitted via paper copy vs. electronic/CD-R as the original submission?

Recommendation: Please explain/clarify.

Answer: The Offeror will not be required to submit “colored pages” indicating proposal revisions.

Question 368: Section L.11.5, Format -- The font size shall be no less than twelve (12) point. Considering the vast amount of information that the RFP requires for inclusion in the page-restricted portions of the proposal, we request that the font size for textual data be changed to 11 point, as was specified in the Second Draft RFP.

Answer: The font size, as described above, remains twelve (12) point; however, the font size of eight (8) point is permitted for tables, charts, graphs and figures.

Question 369: Section L.11.5, Format: ...tables, charts, graphs, and figures, which shall be no smaller than ten (10) point. Please allow font size to be no smaller than 8 points for figures (graphics). Requiring 10-point font for figures will require them to be so large as to assume an inordinate amount of page space, considering the stringent page restrictions.

Answer: The font size of eight (8) point is permitted for tables, charts, graphs and figures.

Question 370: Section L.11.4 (a). The RFP states: "Mark the title page with the following legend: It is unclear where the title page should go. Does the Government want a title page for each of the four CD-Rs or is one sufficient and if so where should the title page go?"

Answer: Offerors must submit a title page per Section L.11.4, Proprietary Data. The title page is not included in the page count and will not be evaluated.

Question 371: RFP L.11.5 -- We believe that 8 point font for proposal graphics is legible and will also allow us to enhance the quality of our proposal response. Therefore, we request that the Government consider easing the font restriction on graphics to 8 point font.

Answer: The font size of eight (8) point is permitted for tables, charts, graphs and figures.

Question 372: Section L.12.1 defines the page limitation. Is the offeror correct to assume that a title page, table of content, compliance matrix, and tabs do not count towards the page limitations established in the solicitation? If the offerors assumption is incorrect, please clarify.

Answer: Offerors may choose to submit title pages and covers, but they will be included in the page count.

Question 373: Reference Section L.11.4a. As the submission is electronic only, where does the government require the "Title Page" to be placed?

Answer: Offerors may choose to submit title pages and covers, but they will be included in the page count.

Question 374: Reference Section L.12.2a. Does the government require the "Read Me" file on every CD or only on CD 1?

Answer: The "Read Me" file is contained on CD 1. The purpose of the "Read Me" file is to inventory all the electronic files submitted by the Offeror.

Question 375: Reference Compliance with General Proposal Instructions, Paragraph Number(s):Section L.11.5 and Section J Attachment 6. The RFP states that the font size for tables, charts, graphs, and figures be no smaller than ten (10) points. The tables in

Attachment 6 have a font size of eight (8) points. At the pre-proposal conference, the Government indicated that these tables will be updated. Is font size also being addressed?

Answer: The font size of eight (8) point is permitted for tables, charts, graphs and figures. Refer to the amendment.

Question 376: Section L.11.5 indicates “all pages shall be numbered sequentially”. Please confirm that GSA would like files within a folder to be numbered sequentially (i.e., file 1 starts at page 1, file 2 starts where file 1 leaves off), rather than to continue pagination across all proposal files or have each file (regardless of placement within a folder) start at page 1.

Answer: Pages within each file (regardless of placement within a folder) shall be numbered sequentially starting with page 1.

Question 377: Section L.11.5.c states “The font size shall be no less than twelve (12) point except for tables, charts, graphs and figures, which shall be no smaller than ten (10) point;”. Please verify the preformatted eight (8) point font in Section J, Attachment 6 is acceptable.

Answer: Offerors cannot change the font of the Past Performance, Tables 1 and 2. The RFP will be amended to allow, an 8-point font size for tables, charts, graphs and figures.

Question 378: Section L.11.4 requires inclusion of standard FAR proprietary data language on a “title page”. However, the proposal instructions in Section L.12.1 do not specify file or naming conventions for general materials, such as the title page, cover, or individual section table of contents. So that GSA can be presented with standard proposal formatting from all offerors, please indicate how the offeror shall account for these items.

Answer: Offerors may choose to submit title pages and covers, but they will be included in the page count. Margins may contain a disclaimer regarding proprietary information in the footer and provide corporate logos in the header within the one-inch top and bottom margins.

Question 379: Reference: Section L.12.1, Disks, Folders, Page Limits, File Titles. The Section L.12.1 Table provides the file names for each of the files for each referenced folder. There is a 30-page limit for Folder H, yet several files comprise this folder and it may be difficult to measure the page count. For example, if the response to Resources ends on a half- or quarter-page, it may be hard to ensure that the page count is accurate. Will the Government consider allowing Offerors the option of submitting one file for Folder H, exclusive of the Purchasing System Documentation and resumes?

Answer: This concern has been addressed in the revised Folder H.

Question 380: Reference: Section L.11.5, Format. Since this is an electronic submission, will the Government be printing the proposals in color? If not, will the Government be reviewing any of the documents electronically versus printing it? This Offeror is concerned that if graphics are depicted in color, the Government may not be able to view or appreciate the graphics as intended if the proposal is printed in black-and-white. Please clarify.

Answer: Evaluators will have color monitors. Evaluators may choose to print or not print proposals. Evaluators who choose to print proposals may or may not have access to color printers.

DCAA

Question 381: L.12.5 (Folder J). – DCAA has determined that it is not cost beneficial to the government to approve cost accounting and estimating systems for businesses of a size that qualify for the NAICS code assigned to Alliant SB. As such, no qualified small business prime will have an approved cost accounting system. However, DCAA will issue a statement of adequacy for businesses of a size that qualify for the NAICS code assigned to Alliant SB. Will the government change the language in the solicitation from approved cost accounting system to adequate cost accounting system?

Answer: In reference to the Government's use of the term "approved", what it means is that DCAA/DCMA has reviewed and determined that the offeror's cost accounting system is adequate. An amendment will clarify this matter.

Question 382: With respect to Section L of subject RFP, specifically L.12.2, Folder D (for Contractor Team Arrangements), can a contractor participate as a team member without having a DCAA approved cost accounting system for cost reimbursable type orders? Could the contractor still participate as a team member on all other orders (fixed price, T&M and L-H)?

Answer: The DCAA Approved Accounting System held by one of the joint-venture members adheres to the joint-venture entity for evaluation purposes. Cost-reimbursement task orders that require approved cost accounting systems should utilize the tools of the joint-venture member holding those credentials. Concerning the second question, a member of the joint-venture can participate on all contract types.

Question 383: Our accounting system is DCAA compliant but has not been audited by the agency. Is the DCAA audit is required for us to be qualified to response to the RFP? We are well qualified. You are requested to waive this requirement.

Answer: Offerors are to submit evidence of DCAA/DCMA approval of its cost accounting system with their offer. The Government does not intend to waive this requirement.

Question 384: If our company is in a JV CTA, can our firm leverage the DCAA Cost Accounting system of one of the member companies of the CTA?

Answer: The DCAA Approved Accounting System held by one of the joint-venture members adheres to the joint-venture itself for evaluation purposes. Cost-reimbursement task orders that require approved cost accounting systems should utilize the tools of the joint-venture member holding those credentials.

Question 385: With respect to the DCAA Audit requirement in the RFP. Not many small businesses meet this requirement. Would the government consider changing this requirement to having a DCAA compliant system with the stipulation that the company submitted a letter to the DCAA requesting an audit? Typically it takes more than a year to get an audit after the request is submitted.

Answer: Offerors are to submit evidence of DCAA/DCMA approval of its cost accounting system with their offer. The Government does not intend to waive this requirement.

Question 386: M.6.2 Cost Analysis (b): This paragraph references verification from DCAA/DCMA that the Offeror's cost controls and surveillance systems are adequate. This specifically includes approved provisional billing rates and forward pricing rate agreements from DCAA. Very few, if any, small businesses have approved provisional billing rates and forward pricing rate agreements from DCAA. To impose this requirement would limit competition and eliminate very capable companies from consideration. Is it possible that this requirement was inadvertently carried over from Alliant Large Business and does not apply to the Small Business RFP?

Answer: The requirement for Alliant SB is that offerors must possess an audited DCAA/DCMA approved cost accounting system. M.6.2(b) merely requires that if the offeror has approved provisional billing rates and forward pricing rate agreements from DCAA that they must also be submitted with the offer.

Question 387: Section L page 20 indicates that Folder J “shall include correspondence from DCAA/DCMA, approving their cost accounting and estimating systems” and that offerors shall submit, “all DCAA approved provisional billing rates and forward pricing rate agreements for indirect costs within your organization.” Recognizing that DCAA/DCMA are government entities that potential bidders cannot individually go to and compel an audit, is GSA willing to sponsor interested in bidders in acquiring their DCAA/DCMA audits? If GSA won’t or cannot sponsor the interested bidders and cover the cost of a DCAA/DCMA audit/review is there a mechanism for helping interested bidders who have not had a DCAA/DCMA audit to acquire such an audit in the time period between release of the RFP and the proposal due date?

Answer: GSA will not sponsor contractors in order to receive DCAA/DCMA audits of their accounting systems. Those credentials must exist before offer due date.

Question 388: The RFP asks for information regarding DCAA or DCMA approved purchasing systems. The majority of small businesses in the IT services area do not have purchasing systems approved by DCAA or DCMA, as their approval is associated with firms that routinely participate in large commodity buys (i.e. hardware and software), rather than labor services subcontracts, where accounting systems are more frequently audited and approved. The solicitation also notes that Offerors with approved purchasing systems will be evaluated more favorably. Will the government consider removing this preference in the evaluation, or alternatively giving preference to offerors with accounting systems that are audited and approved by DCAA?

Answer: An Approved Purchasing System is not a requirement; however, it will be evaluated more favorably in the context of Section M.2.5(a)(1). Evidence of an Approved Purchasing System (if available) should be submitted with the offer. The FAR does not preclude small businesses from having an Approved Purchasing System. The requirement flows from FAR Subpart 44.2 “Consent to Subcontracts”, which addresses subcontracting in general, not just supplies.

Question 399: Per RFP Section L12.5 Folder J-DCAA Information: "Offerors shall include the correspondence from DCAA/DCMA, approving their cost accounting and estimating systems in this folder. Offerors shall provide the name, address, phone number, and email of the representative at their Cognizant DCAA and DCMA Offices and submit all approved provisional billing rates and forward pricing rate agreements for indirect costs within your organization".

Due to the types of contracts awarded to the offeror, the offeror has never been audited by DCAA/DCMA. If the offeror does not have correspondence from DCAA/DCMA, approving their rates, cost accounting and estimating systems will the offeror's proposal be rejected?

Answer: Cost Reimbursement is a contract type under Alliant SB. The DCAA documentation is required for cost/price analysis and is directly tied to the cost/price

data required in Section B of the solicitation. Offerors must submit these credentials with their offer.

Question 400: I listened to the web pre-proposal event. We have not had a DCAA audit. I called the DCAA regional office and spoke to the ACO to request an audit. The ACO said that someone (DOD, an agency, GSA, etc.) must request an audit for them to go to a company to have an audit done. How do we get GSA to “request” the audits prior to the due date if this is possible to be compliant?

Answer: GSA will not sponsor contractors in order to receive DCAA/DCMA audits of their accounting systems. Those credentials must exist before offer due date.

Question 401: Section L, L.12.5, Folder J: The government states that offerors shall include correspondence from DCAA/DCMA approving their cost accounting and estimating systems. Are these two (2) different systems that must be approved by DCAA? If we have an approved accounting system but not an approved estimating system, does this preclude us from bidding on the RFP as a prime? We are not considering other types of arrangements e.g., joint ventures.

Answer: The only requirement is that the offeror has an audited DCAA/DCMA approved cost accounting system. However, the Government requires that all credentials related to cost type contracts, i.e., estimating system, purchasing system, etc. be submitted if available.

Question 402: We are a small business who has done a lot of subcontracting to DOD. But we do not have the Accounting system review done by DCAA. Will the contracting officer help initiate this requirement by sending a request to DCAA. We contacted DCAA and they will initiate this only when they get a request from the government. Will GSA ask the DCAA to do a pre-award survey so that we can bid on this one?

Answer: GSA will not sponsor contractors in order to receive DCAA/DCMA audits of their accounting systems. Those credentials must exist before offer due date.

Question 403: During the webcast broadcast, one of the government officials stated companies needed to have both an approved accounting and estimating system in order to be qualified to bid. Please verify this information; our company has a DCAA approved accounting system but we do not have an approved estimating system. We need to know if we are eligible to bid on SB Alliant.

Answer: The only requirement is that the offeror has an audited DCAA/DCMA approved cost accounting system. However, the Government requires that all

credentials related to cost type contracts, i.e., estimating system, purchasing system, etc. be submitted if available.

Question 404: Reference Clause H.15, Cost Accounting System:

During the Web Cast on October 12, 2006 the government's position regarding an approved accounting system was clear that in order to be considered for award under the ALLIANT SB solicitation, the contractor must have a DCAA approved accounting system. Does the system have to be approved at time of proposal submission or prior to award? Please clarify.

Answer: The cost accounting system credentials must be submitted with the offer.

Question 405: According to DCAA, approved cost accounting systems are initiated by a request from a contracting officer or others granted with the appropriate authority. Is this true? If not, who do we specifically contact to have our system approved within the next 30 days?

Answer: It is true that the request to DCAA to audit a contractor's accounting system comes from the Government. Contractors can not request these audits on their own. The Alliant SB requirement is that those cost reimbursement credentials already exist. GSA is not sponsoring audit requests to DCAA regarding Alliant SB.

Question 406: Though we have the experience to compete as a Prime on Alliant Small business, we do not have a formal letter from DCAA nor do we have experience with Cost Reimbursable contracts. Can we participate?

Answer: Cost Reimbursement is a contract type under Alliant SB. The DCAA documentation is required for cost/price analysis and is directly tied to the cost/price data required in Section B of the solicitation. Offerors must submit these credentials with their offer.

Question 407: Will GSA rescind the requirement that prime contractors, under the ALLIANT SB procurement, must have a DCAA approved cost accounting and estimating system?

Answer: No

Question 408: RFP L.12.4, Folder J requires Offerors to provide correspondence from DCAA/DCMA approving their cost accounting and estimating systems. The FAR and DCAA Pamphlet No. 7641.90 states that Accounting Systems Surveys are conducted, either as a Pre-award or Post Award survey at the request of the ACO, not all small

business had had contracts requiring this and, therefore, are eligible for this. Since this requirement appears to be in conflict with FAR 19.202-1, DCAA Regulations, and the Fairness in Competition Act by limiting competition to only large Small Business, will the GSA reconsider this requirement and either: (1) accept a “DCAA Compliant” system that meets a self certification of the SF 1408 evaluation checklist, or (2) request a Pre-award or Post Award survey?

Answer: Cost Reimbursement is a contract type under Alliant SB. The DCAA documentation is required for cost/price analysis and is directly tied to the cost/price data required in Section B of the solicitation (see Section L 12.5(b)). Offerors must submit these credentials with their offer.

Question 409: RFP L.12.4, Folder J requires Offerors to submit all DCAA approved provisional billing rates and forward pricing rate agreements for indirect costs within the Offerors organization. This requires an audit of Forward Pricing Rates [Activity Code 23000] by the examination of a contractor’s (1) direct and indirect rates (generally in support of forward pricing rate agreements, (2) cost or pricing data; information other than cost or pricing data, and (3) is requested by the ACO, and (4) not all small business are eligible for this. Since this requirement appears to be in conflict with FAR 19.202-1, DCAA Regulations, and the Fairness in Competition Act by limiting competition to only large Small Business, will the GSA reconsider this requirement and remove it from the RFP?

Answer: Please review the actual requirement for billing rates and forward pricing rate agreements. With regard to FAR 19.202-1, the established requirements are the agency’s minimum needs for this total small business set-aside.

Question 410: Does the absence of a previously held DCAA/DCMA audit preclude us from bidding as a Prime Small Business Contractor on this Alliant SB Solicitation?

Answer: RFP Sections L and M describe the evaluation methodology and standards. Potential offerors should use their business judgment in determining to propose or not.

Question 411: Reference: Section L, page L-18, the paragraph under Internal Resources states in part that: “The offeror shall...include evidence of an approved purchasing system.” This section further states that: “If applicable, the offeror shall provide an approved purchasing system by submitting the DCAA/DCMA – issued approval letter.” Is this evidence to be from DCAA on an approved accounting system or from DCMA on and approved purchasing system?

Answer: We will accept this evidence from either DCAA or DCMA.

Question 412: If a purchasing system approval is required will GSA make the initial determination for the need of a Contractor Purchasing System Review (CPSR) for the offeror, in accordance with FAR 44.301, and request the CPSR from DCMA?

Answer: Please review the RFP evaluation methodology concerning approved purchasing systems in Section L 12.4.

Question 413: Section M, page M-6, under internal resources, the last paragraph states: “Offerors with an approved purchasing system will be evaluated more favorably.” FAR clause 44.302 states guidelines that a CPSR should be performed “If a contractor’s sales to the Government (excluding competitively awarded firm-fixed-price and competitively awarded fixed-price with economic price adjustment contracts and sales of commercial items pursuant to Part 12) are expected to exceed \$25 million during the next 12 months...” Since the small business size standard is \$23.5M average revenue over last three years, did the Government intend for this approval to be from DCAA on the accounting system?

Answer: The FAR does not preclude small businesses from having approved purchasing systems. The approved cost accounting system and approved purchasing system are two separate issues in the RFP. Please review the RFP carefully for those distinctions.

Question 414: Sections B.7, H.17, L.12.4(a)(1), and M.5.2(a)(1) – refer to “approved purchasing systems”. What is an “approved purchasing system?” Can you give examples of the products or methodologies? If the contractor does not have an approved purchasing system, can they follow FAR compliant processes for purchases (seeking multiple bids, evaluated against documented factors, etc.)?

Answer: Refer to FAR Subpart 44.3 “Contractors’ Purchasing Systems Reviews”.

Question 415: On page L-20 Section L.12.5 Folder J – DCAA Information. Please provide clarification on DCAA correspondence approving an Offerors “estimating systems”. Most small businesses do not have estimating systems. Will small businesses that do not have estimating systems be evaluated lower than those that do? We recommend that the availability of estimating systems not be a matter of review for ALLIANT SB.

Answer: The requirement is that the offeror has an audited DCAA/DCMA approved cost accounting system. However, the Government requires that all credentials related to cost type contracts, i.e., estimating system, purchasing system, etc. be submitted if available.

Question 416: On page L-18, paragraph (a) (1), the fourth paragraph reads: "If applicable, the Offeror shall provide evidence of an approved purchasing system by submitting the DCAA/DCMA-issued approval letter." What does "if applicable" mean? Is an offeror required to have a DCAA/DCMA approved purchasing system to bid on this contract?

Answer: Please refer to the evaluation methodology outlined in Section M.5.2(a)(1) concerning approved purchasing systems.

Question 417: L.12.4 DCAA/DCMA has determined that it is not cost beneficial to the government to approve purchasing systems for businesses of a size that qualify for the NAICS code assigned to Alliant SB. As such, no qualified small business prime may have an approved purchasing system. Will the government eliminate the requirement to submit the DCAA/DCMA-issued approval letter?

Answer: The requirement is that the offeror has an audited DCAA/DCMA approved cost accounting system. Please refer to the evaluation methodology outlined in Section M.5.2(a)(1) concerning approved purchasing systems.

Question 418: M.6.2.(b) DCAA/DCMA will not approve cost accounting and estimating systems as well as provisional billing rates, nor issue forward pricing agreements for businesses of a size that qualify for the NAICS code assigned to Alliant SB. Will the government please remove this evaluation criterion?

Answer: The requirement is the Government's minimum need under the RFP.

Question 419: Section L, page 20 – "Folder J – DCAA Information"
The RFP states that we need a DCAA approval letter. Although our organization's cost accounting is DCAA-compliant and we have actually requested an audit on several occasions to gain an official letter of approval, DCAA has indicated that we cannot make such a request and that DCAA will choose which companies it reviews. Based on this reality, if our organization demonstrates compliance with DCAA requirements and provides contact information for our DCAA representative, can this requirement be relaxed in any way?

Answer: The Government's minimum need under the RFP is that evidence is submitted that DCAA/DCMA has reviewed the contractor's cost accounting system and determined it to be adequate.

Question 420: Section L folder J discusses DCAA. Often small business have a DCAA approved accounting system and a DCAA audit is pending or in progress. If a small business has a DCAA approved accounting system in place and is using this to work government business does this meet this requirement?

Answer: **The Government's minimum need under the RFP is that evidence is submitted that DCAA/DCMA has reviewed the contractor's cost accounting system and determined it to be adequate.**

Question 421: RFP requires "Offerors shall include the correspondence from DCAA/DCMA, approving their cost accounting and estimating systems in this folder". When we contacted DCAA, they said that these reviews will be done once award has been made. Given this, how are we to provide this correspondence?

Answer: **The credentials must exist at the time the offer is submitted.**

Question 422: If our purchasing systems can be shown to comply with DCAA/DCMA standards but has yet to be approved will this satisfy the Government's requirements for an approved purchasing system and thereby allowing us to meet this requirement to bid, or is it the Government's intent to force a Small Business to invest in a DCAA/DCMA approved purchasing system prior to bid submission? As an option, would an award be made to a company who is qualified in all aspects of the solicitation requirement except the Purchasing system and then be allowed a finite time period to implement an approved Purchasing system? In either case, is the existence of a DCAA/DCMA approved Purchasing System and the appropriate approval letter viewed as a "Right to Bid" item?

Answer: **Please refer to Section L and M in reference to approved purchasing system evaluation methodology.**

Question 423: Is it a requirement to bid, that a DCAA audit has been done of the Offeror's accounting system and provisional billing rates and forward rates been approved; or can the Offeror bid Alliant if they have an accounting system which complies by allocating costs in accordance with the requirements of DCAA?

Answer: **The Government's minimum need under the RFP is that evidence is submitted that DCAA/DCMA has reviewed the contractor's cost accounting system and determined it to be adequate.**

Question 424: Reference: H.15 Cost Accounting System:
The RFP states "The Contractor must maintain an approved DCAA/DCMA cost accounting system." If a Small Business has not had a formal DCAA/DCMA review of

its accounting system as a result of no cost reimbursable contracts to date, is it acceptable to address this requirement as “pending upon award of a cost reimbursable contract”?

Answer: No

Question 425: If you have a Deltek Costpoint accounting system is this considered an approved system for the Alliant Small business procurement?

Answer: The Government’s minimum need under the RFP is that evidence is submitted that DCAA/DCMA has reviewed the contractor’s cost accounting system and determined it to be adequate.

Question 426: Pages L-20 and L-21 Folder J and page M-8 M.6.2.(b), please modify to accept correspondence from DCAA or other cognizant audit agency. Some civilian agencies may have auditors other than DCAA.

Answer: The RFP, as amended, is clear.

Question 427: In Section L, under “Folder J – DCAA Information,” it indicates that “Offerors shall include the correspondence from DCAA/DCMA, approving their cost accounting and estimating systems.” Based on this requirement, our company contacted DCAA to request an audit and DCAA approval. DCAA indicated that *an audit for approval of a company’s cost accounting and estimating system can only come as a direct request from GSA, or in other rare cases, from another federal agency.* Usually this occurs when a contractor has a contract through GSA with DOD. Moreover, DCAA indicated that GSA had to pay for that audit. Since our company works almost exclusively in civilian agencies, and since GSA has never requested DCAA to conduct an audit of our cost accounting and estimating system, we do not have the “correspondence from DCAA/DCMA.” In fact, this provision largely excludes all small businesses that have not worked in DOD. Given these facts (1) can you relax this requirement to permit a company to gain DCAA approval after award; (2) request that DCAA conduct an audit of our company to permit us to qualify under this provision, while giving us sufficient time to complete the audit to respond to ALLIANT-SB; or, (3) accept approval from an independent certified public accounting firm to meet the DCAA requirement.

In short, this is not a provision that a company can qualify for without GSA initiating the process. Our company has requested an audit in the past, but has been told that there was “no clear contractual reason for doing so.”

Answer: 1) The Government’s minimum need under the RFP is that evidence is submitted that DCAA/DCMA has reviewed the contractor’s cost accounting system and determined it to be adequate. 2) GSA will not sponsor contractors in order to receive DCAA/DCMA audits of their accounting systems. Those credentials must exist before offer due date. 3) Approval from an independent certified public

accounting firm to meet the DCAA requirement is not acceptable. Please consider that in accordance with FAR Subpart 42.101(b) DCAA is designated as the responsible Government audit agency for the Federal Government.

Question 428: Folder J? We use Deltek GCS Premier (a DCAA approved accounting system) as our cost accounting and estimating system, but have never received a letter from DCAA "approving our cost accounting and estimating system". We do have a letter from DCAA, dated 4/21/06, that states: "This letter sets forth the agreed-upon final indirect cost rates established by auditor determination in accordance with FAR 42.705-2(b)(2)(ii) and DoD FAR Supplement 242.705-2(b)(2)(ii)." Will this 4/21/06 letter from DCAA satisfy the requirement for Folder J?

Answer: At a minimum the Government requires evidence from DCAA/DCMA that the contractor's accounting system has been determined adequate.

Question 429: If an offeror has not yet received certification of compliance for its cost accounting and estimating systems from DCAA prior to submission or response, but has an existing GSA Schedule 70 set of established rates, may they file those rates? Or are they precluded from filing a response?

Answer: At a minimum the Government requires evidence from DCAA/DCMA that the contractor's accounting system has been determined adequate.

Question 430: If we do not have a DCAA certified accounting and cost reimbursement system by the Proposal submission due date (11/17), but intend to have such system in place by award date (Approx 7/07), is the proposal deemed compliant?

Answer: The credentials must exist at the time the offer is submitted.

Question 431: We have an approved cost accounting system (DELTEK), but we are not familiar with a cost "estimating" system. DELTEK does not do estimating. Please explain this requirement. Does the government have a preferred tool for estimating?

Answer: A cost accounting system and a cost estimating system are not the same. The minimum requirement is an accounting system deemed adequate by DCAA.

Question 432: Since DCAA Cost Accounting and Estimating applies primarily to assigning cost to goods (not services), the requirement to have DCAA-audited Cost Accounting System would eliminate many qualified service providers on a services-oriented contract. Will the Government consider extending the deadline for submission

of Folder J – DCAA Information to allow otherwise well-qualified offerors to achieve this status, or alternately, removing this requirement to ensure competition?

Answer: Cost accounting systems are not limited to supplies. Cost accounting systems encompass all components of cost.

Question 433: We (Company A) are in the process of acquiring another company (Company B). If the parties have signed a letter of intent to complete this transaction, will DCAA verification of the Company B cost accounting system apply to Company A's Alliant SB bid, if the purchase closes before the date of award?

Answer: The Government expects offers from bona fide legal entities at time of offer submission.

Question 434: Will evidence of a request for DCAA of the cost accounting and estimating systems verification from a Government contracting officer, and a scheduled date for audit and review, at time of submission be sufficient for the bidder to meet the evaluation criteria under Section M.6.2 (pending successful verification prior to award)?

Answer: The evidence must exist at time of submission.

Question 435: We are a small business. We currently are prime contractor for several government agencies. Our contracts range from cost-type, to FFP, to T&M, to performance-based. We invested heavily in a best in class commercially available accounting system widely used by government contractors. We have been audited by DCAA and other government agencies on numerous occasions. We have passed all DCAA audits and our accounting system and practices have sustained careful scrutiny. However, we do not have an actual letter or certificate from DCAA that says our accounting system is “approved”—even though it must be. Despite your assertion during the web conference that DCAA just issues a “form letter,” we are led to believe that DCAA does not routinely issue such letters, nor is it likely to do so in time for proposal submission. We ask that the Government comment on this situation and consider granting some form of remedy. We doubt if we are the only small business faced with this dilemma.

Answer: The minimum need of the Government is that evidence is included in the proposal that the offeror's accounting systems have been deemed adequate by DCAA.

Question 436: The RFP says that any government agency can use the SB ALLIANT contract for IT Services. If such is the case, why is GSA levying the DoD Approved

Accounting System with letter requirement on Small Business when such a requirement only pertains to one federal agency that can use this contract?

Answer: Please consider that in accordance with FAR Subpart 42.101(b) DCAA is designated as the responsible Government audit agency for the Federal Government.

Question 437: The DoD initiated a DCAA audit for a contractor to award a CPFF contract, A letter of approval to the contractor being audited is seldom an occurrence. In view of the above it is acceptable to GSA that in response the particulars of such a DCAA audit be identified in lieu of a letter if the contractor does not hold such a document? If GSA desires to use a DCAA audit for identification of bidders capable of bidding CPFF Would GSA consider creating a demarcation item for the SB ALLIANT procurement to identify the items which they would be favorable in accepting from a Small Business without a DCAA letter to bid in a JV entity to evaluate for determination of the JV being a good prospect for attaining the required approvals either by GSA, DoD or other agencies and Create a means to assist those agencies in obtaining those approvals?

Answer: The minimum need of the Government is that evidence is included in the proposal that the offeror's accounting systems have been audited and deemed adequate by DCAA. This evidence may take multiple forms and it is the offeror's responsibly to submit the relevant evidence.

PURCHASING SYSTEM

Question 438: Section M - Pg M-6. "This states "Offerors with approved purchasing systems will be evaluated more favorably." Since FAR exempts small businesses from having an approved purchasing system in place, as well as the requirements of Alliant SB are for services rather than commodities, will GSA remove the more favorable evaluation entirely?

Answer: While the FAR does not require a small business from having an approved purchasing system, the FAR does not preclude small businesses from having an approved purchasing system. FAR Subpart 44.2 "Consent to Subcontracts" addresses subcontracting in general, not just supplies.

Question 439: Reference Page L-18, Folder H, ALLIANT SB BASIC CONTRACT PLAN, (a) Resources, (1) Internal Resources: It is/will be extremely difficult for JV to have to have an approved and in place Purchasing System? Would it be acceptable to the Government that an Offeror have a milestone plan containing an approved purchasing system in place by the time the contract is awarded?

Answer: Approved Purchasing System is not a requirement; however, it will be evaluated more favorably in the context of Section M.2.5(a)(1). Evidence of an Approved Purchasing System (if available) should be submitted with the offer.

Question 440: Section B of the Alliant SB solicitation states, “If a Contractor does not have an approved purchasing system, the Contractor shall request and receive OCO consent to subcontract in accordance with FAR 44.2 Consent to Subcontracts, and FAR 52.244-2, Subcontracts.” What would be considered an “approved purchasing system,” and how does one obtain such approval?

Answer: Refer to FAR Subpart 44.3 “Contractors’ Purchasing Systems Reviews”.

BUSINESS SIZE

Question 441: We are interested in competing in the GSA Alliant small business set-aside RFP (TQ2006MCB0002). We are a Woman Owned Small Business at this time, based on our last three year annual revenue average. We will be, however, growing out of this classification at the end of 2006. If awards for the GSA Alliant are not made until 2007 then we will no longer be a small. Must the company be a small at time of award or is it only necessary to be a small at time of submission of offer?

Answer: The company must be small at the time it represents (certifies) itself as being small in connection with a specific solicitation. See Federal Acquisition Regulations (FAR) 19.301(a).

Question 442: It is understood that the small businesses will have to certify their size standard annually, will small businesses be transitioned out when they no longer meet the size standard?

Answer: Businesses will have to recertify themselves as small at the option period.

Question 443: It is our understanding that a small business who wins an Alliant award will have to re-certify its small business status yearly. Should a Small business be awarded an Alliant contract and graduate within the next year will they be grand fathered into the Alliant Large Business contract or will they have to re-compete as a large business during a ramp on period.

Answer: No. The Alliant and Alliant SB contracts are separate contracts.

Question 444: Since the NAICS cap for this solicitation is \$23 million, a joint venture may only be comprised of companies who, individually, meet this cap, thereby excluding

such large companies as CSC, CACI, Lockheed, and similar companies. Please confirm this interpretation.

Answer: Confirmed. All parties to a joint venture under Alliant SB must be small businesses.

Question 445: Please clarify the guideline for certifying as a small business and the action to be taken by GSA if you graduate to a large business before award but one is small business after submittal of the proposal. In other words, can a small business qualify as an awardee if their status changes from small business to large business from the period of proposal submission to award?

Answer: The company must be small at the time it represents (certifies) itself as being small in connection with a specific solicitation. See Federal Acquisition Regulations (FAR) 19.301(a).

SECRET FACILITY CLEARANCE

Question 446: Section L, page L-11, Folder C: Secret Facility Clearance. The paragraph states “If available at the time of offer submission, Offerors shall submit documentation showing that a secret facility clearance, as granted by the Defense Industrial Security Clearance Office (DISCO), has been active for the offeror’s facility(s) sometime within the previous three years (three years from solicitation closing date). The DISCO approval letter states “The fact that your organization has qualified for and has been granted a facility clearance may not be used for advertising nor promotional purposes, nor may this letter be reproduced in any form except for the necessary records of your organization.”

What documentation other than the approval letter is acceptable to meet this requirement?

Answer: This is a Government requirement and is considered necessary in the conduct of Government business.

Question 447: Is facility clearance a requirement to make an Alliant SB proposal?

Answer: Refer to Section L-12.1, Folder C.

Question 448: Would the Government consider ensuring that any requirement for a Facility Security Clearance for the prime contractor includes an option that would make a Joint Venture bidder, with a proposed senior official with an individual security clearance at the appropriate level, an acceptable alternative to actually having the Facility Security Clearance prior to proposal submission or award?

Answer: Individual security clearance is not an acceptable alternative for Facility Security Clearance.

Question 449: The Alliant Small Business Update released on August 31, 2006 states that all “All Offerors must possess, at a minimum, an interim secret facility clearance, as granted by the Defense Industrial Security Clearance Office (DISCO), prior to the solicitation closing date.” However, the RFP released on September 29, 2006 makes no mention of an interim security clearance in the requirements. Can the Government clarify whether an interim security clearance by the solicitation closing date is satisfactory?

Answer: An amendment will correct this oversight. An interim secret facility clearance is acceptable.

Question 450: The requirement for a SECRET Facilities Clearance as addressed in this later reference (Section L, Folder C) would appear to unfairly eliminate any otherwise qualified Small Business (SB) bidders simply because they have yet to require such a clearance. Under this interpretation of the RFP this requirement appears to be the ultimate “Catch 22”; you can not obtain the clearance unless it is required by contract based work requirements and you can’t qualify for contract based work requiring the clearance unless you already have the clearance. It would seem more appropriate to allow otherwise qualified bidders to seek the clearance based either on their being awarded a base Alliant Contract or based on subsequent award of a Task Order that requires a Facility Clearance. Will the Government amend this requirement?

Answer: The Government will not consider further changing this requirement, having already made efforts to accommodate small businesses since the Draft RFP. Refer to Section L.12.2, Folder C.

Question 451: Page, L-11, Folder C established the requirement for a SECRET Facility Clearance. During the Pre-Proposal Conference a question was asked concerning the need for a TOP SECRET storage facility. Please clarify the facility clearance requirement. Is a SECRET or TOP SECRET Clearance Facility required and does such a clearance require the capability to store documentation?

Answer: The RFP establishes the Facility Clearance requirements. Safeguarding requirements will be established at the task order level.

Question 452: Our small business firm has an active (since 2000) Department of Energy Secret facility clearance. Does this DOE Secret clearance suffice for the Folder C: Secret Facility Clearance requirement (DISCO)? In other words, given that we have an active Secret DOE facility clearance (not DOD DISCO), will we be eligible to be selected for an Alliant SB award?

Answer: An amendment will clarify that a facility clearance issued by a Cognizant Security Agency (CSA) as authorized by Executive Order 12829 will be accepted.

Question 453: Folder C (Secret Facility Clearance)? During the pre-proposal webcast the subject of "safeguarding" was discussed as being a requirement with the facility clearance. There is currently no reference for safeguarding on page L-11 under Folder C. In fact, page L-11 states that a bidder doesn't need to have an active facility clearance at the time of proposal submission and therefore would also not have any approval from DISCO to safeguard material. We request that you clarify the requirement for Secret Facility Clearance to not include any requirements for safeguarding materials at the master contract level but state that it may be invoked at the Order level.

Answer: The RFP establishes the Facility Clearance requirements. Safeguarding requirements will be established at the task order level.

Question 454: Are there are personnel security clearances required for work under this contact?

Answer: Not for the basic contract, however; the requirement may exist at the task order level.

Question 455: Instructions under Section L.12.2, Folder C, indicate that "*if available at the time of offer submission*, Offerors shall submit documentation showing that a secret facility clearance..." If such documentation is not available, what impact does this have on proposal evaluation?

Answer: The RFP states a consequence for not providing the required documentation upon Government request. Please refer to Section L.12.2, Folder C.

SECTION C

Question 456: Please clarify bidding on the three components in the Alliant RFP and whether a small business can bid on one component only. If a small business is able to bid on one component, how are they evaluated in light on not bidding on all three, or should they demonstrate an approach to cover all three?

Answer: Offerors should propose to cover the complete scope of work as described in Section C of the RFP. Offerors are afforded an opportunity in Folder H "Alliant SB Basic Contract Plan" to describe the company's capacity building efforts to cover the entire scope utilizing internal and external resources (Section L.12.4)

Question 457: Will GSA make separate awards for: Infrastructure and related services, Applications and related services, and IT Management Services?

Answer: No. Offerors should propose to cover the whole scope of work.

Question 458: Reference Section L.12.3, Folder F (a)(2) -one of three component areas in Section C. Several references are made to the first three component areas in Section C. Does this mean that GSA does not want us to use C.3.4 Ancillary Services as one of the component areas?

Answer: “Ancillary Services” crosses all three component areas

Question 459: Is Wireless Communications part of this solicitation?

Answer: Refer to C.3.4.1 of the solicitation

