USDA FOREST SERVICE

PRE-PROPOSAL BIDDER'S CONFERENCE

THURSDAY, AUGUST 16, 2007
1:00 – 5:00 P.M.

GRAND HYATT WASHINGTON
WASHINGTON, D.C.

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BONNIE GILBERT: Can I have your attention, please? My name is Bonnie Gilbert. I'm the contracting officer for the USDA Forest Service handling this contract. Today's bidder's conference is scheduled from 1:00 to 5:00 (p.m.). We'll take one or two breaks depending on how antsy we get as we go through the presentations. There is a sign-up sheet out front which we'd like to have all of you sign. If you haven't signed it already, maybe you can do that during the break. There's a couple of tables out front where those sign-up sheets are.

The restrooms are located just out the door to the right and across from the escalators. Emergency exits are just out the corridor to either opposite corner and then follow the signs to the stairways. We are providing sign language interpretation and anyone who needs assistance who is hearing disabled, we invite you to sit in the front row. We have seats held for you up here. There's a coffee shop and gift shop on the street level of the hotel if you want to get refreshments during the break. Parking is at the bidder's expense.

And to allow for the deliberative process that we want to follow and gather in this information in using it for the solicitation, we will not answer any questions today. However, we do encourage you to ask questions through putting them on index cards. There are index cards on your chairs; there are also index cards out front on the tables and there's boxes in the back of the room where you can place those questions or comments and then we'll consider those. We may choose to answer some of those questions through a fedbizopps posting within 10 business days after today's conference. Some of those may only be answered through issuance of the solicitation and changes that we may make in the solicitation.

Okay, the agenda for today's meeting is we'll have a welcome and opening remarks from our deputy chief information officer. We'll have a section that talks generally about the bidder's conference, the objectives of our new customer contact center, formerly called the end user's support center or help desk, an overview of the Forest Service IT environment, the information solutions organization and how it interfaces with the customer contact center, statistics on the contacts that we get under the current contract, a requirements overview, the performance basis for the contract, the format for the proposals that will be submitted in response to the solicitation, the evaluation factors, and the next steps.

And now I'd like to introduce Joan Golden. She's the deputy chief information officer for the Forest Service.

JOAN GOLDEN: Thank you, Bonnie. Welcome everyone. Glad to see everyone out here on this hot day in August, at least it wasn't as hot as last week. I'm Joan Golden. I'm the deputy chief information officer for the Forest Service. And one remark I want to make at the very beginning as all of our slides refer to our organization

as Information Resources Management, IRM, as of yesterday, the chief of the Forest Service changed our name to the Chief Information Office. So when Bonnie sends out a change about that, it's not a different organization. It's us; we just had a name change as of yesterday, so that's not in our slides.

The Forest Service is probably best known to all of you as a land management agency. We have stewardship responsibility over 193 million acres of public lands and that's called our National Forest System, in 44 states, Puerto Rico, and in the Virgin Islands. We have a workforce that we say – you know, for the purposes of this contract, we say 42,000 people, but I want you all to know that that varies because we do have a field season when we bring on a lot of temps so our employment varies. The base of end users that this contract would be supporting varies from about 35,000 at a low point to about 45,000 on average at the high point. And our people have a lot of diverse skills.

Our mission is much more than just the land management. We have the nine regions. We also have research and development stations. Research has stations in the Virgin Islands. They also have one in Hawaii, so we have quite a diversity there. We also deal with state and private forestry and this is the part of our organization that is probably the best known because the firefighting arm of our organization is in state and private forestry. I mentioned the Institute for Tropical Forestry that's part of research; it's in Puerto Rico. And, of course, we have our national headquarters, which is here in the Washington area, in Southwest, and then we have buildings in Rosslyn.

One of the things that you need to know in this centralized point of contact help desk is that we have many, many offices that we'll talk about, but a lot of them have fewer than 45 people, so we have some small offices pretty well dispersed. We are the largest agency in the Department of Agriculture and yes we are not in Interior, we are in Agriculture Department.

And this slide says we have a fire season that ranges from March to October. That's kind of the (additional ?) fire season, but I would say that we do do a lot of what we call incident support. We worked on Hurricane Katrina. We work on a lot of different things: clean-up after disasters in the space shuttle. So we have – our incident command really could be occurring at any time in the year.

On the next slide, we have some focus – I wanted to step back a minute and talk a little bit about my history with this contract or the previous contract. When I – I've been involved since the beginning. When Forest Service did all of this work in house and we had a lot of local support, we were just at the point where everybody was kind of going to an automated help desk and we had the concept that we could have a single national point of contact and that we could do it in the commercially viable way.

I will tell you, I stood many years ago – probably about six or seven years ago – in front of a Forest Service audience probably twice this size and explained to them the contract and how it would work. And I was literally booed off the stage, that this would not work, there was no way that a vendor could provide this kind of support, no way we

could centralize, because we're a very decentralized organization. So I say that in that one of the things we're going for in this recompete that we couldn't have gone for the first time – because the first time we really had to get people used to the way of doing this, calling in to the help desk, we had to get people to call, we had to get people to understand that way of doing business, we had to understand it ourselves – we now have that experience under our belt and we're kicking it up a notch.

We're really looking for a vendor who will come to us giving the very top range of customer service resolution of calls. And so that's where I say focusing on the customers. We want somebody who can optimize the IT support experience for our customers and emphasize that contact resolution on the first call. And I know that involves a lot of knowledge documents and a lot of upfront knowledge for the customer service representatives, but that's what people are looking for.

The other factors are timely, professional, effective response. You all, I'm sure, in the business of this help desk support, the way a person responds, their professionalism is very important as well as being able to fix the problem, that customer care kind of approach. We also, as I said, we deal with incidents. We are a firefighting agency. We are expected to change on the dime in some things, so we need a vendor to work with us who is agile, who can adjust to changes that might come on fairly short notice, in many instances, but we work with you, but we don't – it's not an agency that's static. It's an agency that's very dynamic and very – new things are happening every day and our workforce keeps up with them and so our partners need to keep up with us as well.

Another factor is the technology that the vendor would bring. We have – the first thing we did was we did this help desk contract. Since then, during the course of this first contract, we did go through an A-76 process. Our in-house service provider is called the Information Solutions Organization, so our end-user support, customer care contractor would be working with this Information Solutions Organization and we'll have a representative from there talking. In terms of the call resolution starts with the first call to the vendor, but then moves through our organization through our operational arm, which is called the Information Solutions Organization. So we're looking for a partner that would work in collaboration with our in-house support.

Finally, I wanted to talk more once again about the customer contact center. We're looking at this being the first person that our customers will call, our internal end users. This is our face to the organization because we are a centralized organization in terms of our internal support. We do not have people at every location and so people are calling in. So you will be the ones they see as the CIO's representatives. So that's really important to us and so you'll see as our folks talk through the different factors in the solicitation that customer care, customer responsiveness, and customer satisfaction are very high in our evaluation criteria.

And that's all I have for today. So who do I turn it over to, Bonnie?

MS. GILBERT: (Off mike.)

MS. GOLDEN: Ron? Or to you?

MS. GILBERT: (Off mike.)

MS. GOLDEN: Bonnie's back. Okay, thank you very much.

MS. GILBERT: So we already heard from Joan Golden. As I told you earlier, I'm Bonnie Gilbert; I'm the contracting officer for this effort. Ron Copstead will be making a presentation. He's the customer contact center project lead. Alan Flesh, deputy chief technology officer, will also be making a presentation. Doug Nash, the director of the Information Solutions Organization that Joan just mentioned, and then Richard Salazar, director of acquisition management and also currently acting director for information resource performance management.

Okay, this bidder's conference is being conducted in accordance with the Federal Acquisitions Regulations, Part 15.201. The information that we're presenting here is a summary of much of the information that's in the current soon-to-be-released Request for Quote. In the event of a discrepancy, however, the final Request for Quote that is issued will take precedence over any information that is presented during this meeting. We are videotaping the conference for the government record. We will have the Power Point briefing that we're going through today and a transcript of the meeting that will be provided, posted on fedbizopps by Monday, August 20th. We'll also post it – do you want to go back a minute, David? – we'll also post it on this website. That should be up and running on Monday and that's where you'll find information related to this solicitation in the future.

Okay, as I said earlier, we encourage you to submit questions and comments today or through email and the email address is shown on the slide here. It's ccc2007@fs.fed.us. Again, this Power Point with that address will be posted by Monday. We don't anticipate responding to any specific questions during or at the end of this event, but we will take the information into consideration and we may answer some questions through a posting or we may just take the information into consideration in the final Request for Quotes that we issue.

I wanted to talk a little bit about the history of the procurement. We issued a request for information back in the spring based on the market research that we gathered from that Request for Information. We determined that the maximum competition could be achieved by issuing a Request for Quotes under the federal supply schedule contracts and we're looking at schedule 70. Also, in accordance with Federal Acquisition Regulations, federal supply schedule is a first source of supply for all federal government agencies if the requirement can be met.

We intend to make a single award blanket purchase agreement under federal supply schedule for this contract. And we anticipate that BPA calls (?) will be issued, the first one for transition management and then after that on a fiscal year basis. The first

BPA call for each fiscal year will include our estimated number of contacts, based on the pricing scheme that we have, and then we'll do modifications to that BPA call through the year if we have special projects or other items that we need to add. The period of performance is 63 months: three months for transition and then 60 months for a full performance period. Evaluation will be best valued considering management approach, technical approach, key personnel, past performance, and then oral presentation and tool demonstrations.

This is a sample of what the – (inaudible) – structure will look like. It's anticipated that we'll have contact bans with a number of contacts per month and payment will be made based on those bandings on a firm fixed-price basis. We also have a firm fixed-price line item for the transition management, so that will be for the transition period, the 90 days before we go into full performance of the contract. And then we have – (inaudible) – for special projects on a time and materials basis, GOTS (ph) training also on time and materials, other direct costs on time and materials, and then travel which would be paid in accordance with the federal travel regulations.

This is a schedule of the key events that we expect. All dates are subject to change, but as it is now, we're expecting to release the RFQ on or about September 10th. We're expecting that questions would be due back by the 17th of September. Answers would be posted a week later on September 21st. Initial proposals would be due October 12th. The competitive range would be established and bidders notified by November 2nd. And then bidders' meetings, which are really oral presentations and demonstrations from those in the competitive range, would be going on between the 26th and 30th of November. And we'd be requesting final revised proposals during that period and then final revised proposals would be due between the 4th and the 12th of December. We anticipate award of the BPA by about December 20th and we look at doing the first call around January 9th, after the holidays.

Okay, I'd like to introduce Ron Copstead. He's the customer contact center project lead and he'll go into his part of the presentation.

RON COPSTEAD: Thanks, Bonnie. Good afternoon folks. I'm excited to see the room filled here and it looks like we have achieved what we want to do with getting folks out here to hear about what we're about with the customer contact center. The objectives of our bidder's conference are to engage you all and all potential bidders, to ensure that we have a better understanding of the Forest Service requirements and the industry capabilities. We want to make sure that we have a level playing field for each and every one of you and make sure that we have a consistent level of information sharing about this solicitation. And we want to maximize the transparency and clarity of our objectives and our requirements, our critical success factors, and the challenges as we go through with the solicitation.

We need to preview our near-final requirements together of your feedback and recommendations for improvement. While we're not entertaining questions for

answering here at this meeting, we do encourage you to provide those questions on the cards that are on your seat and through the other means that we have established.

Other objectives is to make sure that we are engaging the industry and refining our customer contact center requirements through our RFI that Bonnie reviewed. We issued that earlier this spring and have received and digested those comments. Our draft Request for Quote that went out recently and then this bidder's conference and the follow-up from that. We've invested heavily in reviewing the feedback from these various means and we've incorporated much of that input into the RFQ. We believe that – and a strong objective for us is to establish a partnership that is productive and satisfying the Forest Service needs for support of our customers and that is a key objective for me and the rest of the team is to make sure that we have a strong relationship with our contractor.

I want to provide an overview of our requirements. What we're looking for is to provide a multi-channel focused on tier zero and tier one single point of contact customer care – customer contact facility for resolution of our IT radio and telephone incidents. We need to be able to respond to our customer problems and incidents through any channel and resolve those problems on first contact. We need to be able to generate high quality documentation and our incident documentation so that we can effectively make sure that we have the integration between the tier zero, tier one facility and our internal contracted ISO support staff and with our tier two and tier three service providers.

As Joan outlined, we expect we would have professional level customer service representatives and that we would integrate our industry best practices. We'll be striving to shorten the resolution time as much as possible to eliminate our customer problems and utilize the Forest Service provided enterprise management tools to help do that with enterprise-wide monitoring. And finally, for management of the entire effort, we need to have maximum situational awareness and the status of our tier zero and tier one support.

Now, further, diving down into some of our customer contact center objectives, in order to maximize the Forest Service community's satisfaction with IRM and with our first response, as Joan indicated, the customer contact center is really the storefront or the first place where folks go for support on IT radio and telephone problems. We need to minimize the amount of time Forest Service customers are impacted by technology outages and failures, of course. We need to focus on solving user problems, minimizing the focus on the process and make sure that we have first call or first contact resolution as a driving focus for us.

Our proactive and helpful single point of contact for all Forest Service customers, whether it be in our computing area, our radio, or telephone infrastructure and we also need to deploy a highly trained customer service representative that is able to address the majority of our customer incidence in that professional and productive manner. We're looking to reduce the total cost of customer support and that means the whole package, whether from tier zero to tier three, plus other direct and indirect costs to the extent

possible. And we want to leverage the alternative – what we call alternative lower-cost channels that our customers use with our customer contact center.

If we can maximize the alignment of an incident with the resources that a customer needs to solve their problem, that's where we want to do that and that's a key goal for us is to make sure that we quickly at first call, first contact, match folks up with where they can get their problems solved. We need to optimize the handling of customer contacts and tickets such that the tickets of various complexity are addressed by a support channel that's best equipped to handle and resolve that problem. The continuous integration of industry best practices, of course, is important and we need to make sure that we are proactively looking at the problem cases that come in so that we understand whether they're systemic problems and we can close the loop on that continuous improvement for our infrastructure. And so that's a key element for us is making sure that we have the root cause analysis capabilities and place to do that.

Next slide. We need to be able to manage – maximize the manageability of this BPA and the BPA calls. And in order to do that, we would make sure that we have standardized, efficient, effective best-practice processes throughout the support organization and the interfaces between service providers is very important, and execution of a flexible and agile contract change-management process that permits effective and rapidly implemented design of changes to the BPA and task orders with a minimum of forest service and contractor effort and cost, we need to be proactive and have a rigorous root-cause analysis system in place, as I mentioned, so that we can quickly focus on the systemic problems that may be indicated by a preponderance of trouble tickets or cases that come in.

And we're of course looking for technologies that speed resolution times and proactively eliminate end-user problems, thus improving our overall productivity within the agency.

So the bottom line there is we need an excellent overall customer computing experience, including our support for our radio and telephone infrastructure at the lowest possible contract management and administration costs.

So with that as our stated objectives, I would like to turn it over to Alan Flesh who is our deputy chief technology officer. And Alan will give us an overview our enterprise IT environment.

ALAN FLESH: Thank you, Ron.

What I am going to try to do is to give you a bit of insight into the complexity, variety, and so on related to the environment that the Forest Service currently has. Let me start by talking about the CIO's office. I know it says IRM, but as Joan said, the name changed yesterday officially.

The CIO is responsible for providing the technology applications, services, governance, and support necessary to support the Forest Service mission. That is a short sentence but it covers a lot of territory. In addition to that, we also manage the service-level agreements to ensure that the products and services are delivered as we agreed.

Now, when you think of SLAs, your mind normally would go to contractors. But as Joan mentioned, we went through an A-76 process several years ago and the result of that was an in-house by our information solution organization. That is a performance-based organization. They have SLAs. And one of the things that you will see in this RFQ is going to be an operating level agreement, which describes the coordination and cooperation between the ISO and the CCC contractor.

So Joan talked a little bit about Forest Service sites, the high-level view of our organization. We have over 900 office locations. They vary from Puerto Rico on the Eastern side all the way to Hawaii on the West side, covering seven different time zones. And if you include all of the various, remote – and some are very remote, by the way – sites that we have that aren't necessarily staffed, things like mountain-top repeaters (?) and things of that nature. We have another 3,000 sites, so we are in a lot of places.

The sites where our employees are vary widely from urban areas – Washington, D.C., areas to major cities, to wilderness areas. You have got to get to by horseback or helicopter. Our user population also varies quite a bit. We mentioned the large offices – there could be hundreds of individuals in some of these large offices. They also go to very small offices. And I'll give you an example of that. I work in region two, which is headquartered in Denver, Colorado. We cover Colorado, Wyoming, South Dakota, Nebraska, and Kansas. At the small end of our offices, what we call the ranger districts, our average unit size is about 15 people. So there are a lot of small offices spread around the organization.

In addition to that, we have individuals under work-at-home agreements and teams working in field locations and on travel. And I'll also mention, when we talk about travel that is not just within the United States. If you remember on Joan's slide, she talked about international forestry. We have international travelers that we support as well.

Our users have a wide range of skills. They range from fairly simple, like someone who just needs e-mail to, on the sophisticated end, maybe a research scientist doing a highly complex analysis and everything in between. So I'm going to talk now on this page and the next a bit about my technology. In fact, that is mostly what I'll talk about today.

We have an enterprise architecture that has in the ballpark a 41 to 42,000 personal computing devices. We're working hard to reduce those numbers. The split is approaching 50/50 desktops and laptops, and we expect that to get closer to 50/50 over time. We have an environment with over a thousand UNIX-base – when we say UNIX, we mean AIX-based assistance – across the country and over 200 Linux-based systems

currently, multiple voice and unit networks, and extensive radio network, and this is one where we think it's – in the civilian side at least one of the more unusual requirements. And we do have that spread all across the country. Those are not centralized.

Our desktop and laptop computers still connect to our legacy environment of distributing computing environment, distributing file systems on AIX. We have a large variety, over 7,000 network devices, most of which are laser printers connected to our networks. In addition to that, you'll see a variety of hardware and software that fall under the category of adaptive aids (?) and you need to know, if you haven't dealt with that, that these are very highly tailored to the individual, and the mix of those aids that you would see on any system are going to be unique to that individual.

And then, like every large organization, the variety of handheld computers, things like Blackberries, pocket PCs, and so on, and some ruggedized equipment that we use outdoors in our field organization. So I hope you are getting the picture that we have a highly complex organization. It's dynamic from the standpoint of the technology that we do. It's dynamic from the mission as well. And what we are looking in our contractor on this engagement is someone who is able to support that who can be responsive and nimble to the changes that we have to deal with.

Now, we all know that IT is a changing environment. So to help you understand at least the major things that we see in the near future, they are what is up on the screen right now. Our server environment is currently primarily UNIX-based – 150 locations spread across the forest service. We are migrating that currently to X-86 server, Linux-base – and Linux-base, pardon me – in two data centers. And as part of that migration, we are also in the middle of a migration to active directory.

Our e-mail system is about to undergo significant change as well. Currently we have Lotus notes with Domino on the back end. We have both mail and databases, so team rooms, collaboration tools, things of that nature, and that is going to be moving into the Microsoft environment: Exchange, Outlook, SharePoint, and so on. And we're looking that that is likely by the end of fiscal year 2000 – by October 2008, pardon me.

Our operating systems, our desktop PCs are currently almost entirely Windows 2000. But we are moving to Windows XP. That is ongoing, but as move to XP and we install things like the next version of the Office software, including Outlook, that that migration is also tied back to the move of our e-mail system.

What we are trying to do here is to give you a bit of a flavor of our plans for the future so you understand what is coming up. And we'll continue that with whoever the winning contractor is. We try to give you as much headlights into the future as we can and be transparent on what those changes are going to be.

Now we are going to get even a little more complex. (Chuckles.) This page and the next three is something of an eye chart, but keep in mind, it's going to be on the web so there is no test later on this – but to give you an idea of the variety of the software

technology that we support. So we have commercial off-the-shelf software. Some of the major players that you'll see are Cisco for our security agent and VPN client; ESRI for our GIS technology. We have quite a bit of technology from both Lotus, as we mentioned, for our e-mail system and collaboration tools, a lot from Microsoft, as you see here, and continues even onto the next page. Probably not too different from your companies I would imagine.

Oracle is our main database technology. And we also have our anti-virus software from Symantec and Tivoli is used widely in the organization for managing our invoice. So as I mentioned, don't try to read the eye charts. You can get this off of our website in a couple of days.

Now, that covers the commercial off-the-shelf side – let's go back a slide – but the intent here is we are expecting that the CCC contractor is going to be able to resolve most of the questions that you get related to this software. So, again, transparent – open – we're trying to give you a full picture as we can on what our environment looks like.

But in addition to that, we also have some commercial off-the-shelf software where we are providing and intend to provide some knowledge documents for that. And that includes things like what you see here. Now, why would the government be providing knowledge documents? Well, our documents are going to be specific to how these technologies are employed within the Forest Service. So you may, for example, know in general how to support active directory, but you aren't going to know, for example, what are the individual setting within the active directory and why we've done things that way. So that is where our knowledge documents add value to what you have.

And the intent is you have a knowledge document for these. When the call comes in, we expect you to solve those as best you can. And if you can't, they would be escalated to the Forest Service tier two organization.

Now, like any large, complex organization, we have a bunch of internal application. There is a list on this page and the next one. These cover things like our natural resource applications, our administrative applications. And that is not just forest service but it also includes USDA administrative applications as well as system tools. Now, I fully appreciate that you sit here and you look at a list like this, and you say, what the holy heck is that stuff. You are not going to know from the list. We are trying to give you at least an idea of the broad scope of the type of things that we do have to support.

So overtime, the knowledge documents that we will be providing you are going to evolve. No application is static, not if it is going to survive. But our intent and our desire is to work with a CCC contractor to help improve these documents. And what I mean by that is two-fold. On our side, it's fairly obvious. You can say, well, as new versions come out or we find fixes, we update the knowledge documents. Yeah, that is expected. But the other side of it, as your support agents are taking a look at these documents and

trying to help users, as you find recommendations from making the knowledge documents better, to be more effective, we expect to have that interaction.

So if you have a knowledge document, we expect it to be solved based on those knowledge documents, and if not, then it's going to be escalated up to the tier two. Now, one of the things that you'll see here explicitly is we're saying that the government off-the-shelf software is supported by the ISO at application-specific health desk. But please don't take that to mean that users are going to be going around the CCC directly as those help desks.

One of the words that you saw earlier was a single point of contact. The users are going to come here first. If you have the knowledge document, you solve the problem; if you don't, you will have instructions on where to refer the users. But the first point of contact is going to be the CCC.

Let's talk a little bit more about our hardware. We would like to give you a representative idea of the type of technology we have. So the key word here is representative, not exhaustive. But you'll see that we have multiple manufacturers, a variety of devices in the desktop world, laptop world and the high-end workstations. It's certainly a lot more narrow than that, but sort of normal evolution, and the result of the competitive process over time is typical of government agencies. You don't stick with one vender necessarily. You don't stick with one model.

The same is true of servers, although to a lesser degree. It's a bit more homogenous environment currently. But when you look at our printers and those devices, there is a lot. And especially jumping out at me there is about 15 percent of our inventory is "other devices." Well, that is some of the legacy that we deal with in a complex organization like this.

Let me chat a little bit about servers. You should not expect to be receiving help calls from systems administrators asking you to solve server problems. That is not part of what we are doing here. They are going to be going right to our tier three vendors to get that level of support. But you will be getting calls from a server administrator reporting things like system outages so that you are aware of it and we can keep our customers aware.

A little bit more on our hardware: We have mentioned that we have an extensive radio network. And it is – it's all across the Forest Service. It's at every Forest Service location just about, at least as far as our National Forest Systems. By probably the thing that is most important I think to realize is the criticality of this network to our employees.

Now, one of Joan's slides, when she was talking about the radio network, talked about that there is actually a relationship between the viability, the operability, the availability of our radio network to our employee health and safety, and that can't be over emphasized because when you're an employee out in the field, the only lifeline connection you have, both for doing your business but in case something goes wrong, is

that radio you have in your hand or in your vehicle back to that office. So something highly important to us and something that we take very seriously.

On the telecommunications and network side, I don't think there is much of anything unusual there, but just from a status check, we currently have a large legacy PBX infrastructure. We're migrating that to voice over IP. We're about 30-percent done with that. It's going to take several more years to get there. But that – there is quite a large variety out in the field, to be kind (?) and we talked about PBXs.

On our data networks, it's a Cisco-based data network. We are using the USDA – if you heard the term UTN, that is their universal telecommunications network as our data network background. However, one of the things that you may run into as you're troubleshooting problems is what we call some of our last-mile issues. That is the – if go from the large office to a small office out to a smaller office, those last-mile connections quite often are local telecommunications companies, the local carriers. So you can't just assume that it's all one big magic cloud and it goes away. As your agents are asking and try to get to the bottom of these things, you're going to run into those issues.

Sort of another eye chart, something to maybe take a look at in some more detail later. The key message here is that the forest service does have enterprise awareness of what is going on in our environment. We have tools, people, processes in place to do that monitoring. So we have things like – and I'll start from the bottom here – we have an enterprise operations center, and that is the umbrella on monitoring the health of our organization, the technology organization.

And within that overall umbrella, we also have things like security operations. And we all have to deal with that today – that gets more and more press and more and more important to us – as well as our network operation.

One of the things that you can expect is that the information about the health of our environment will be available to the agents that you have handling our calls. Now, don't take that, as I say, that we are going to just give you cart blanch access to all of our tools. And the reason for that is some software licensing agreements that is licensed to us for our use, but we will make the information available so that you'll know just as we do what is going on, what is broken, and so on.

So our environment, ever changing is maybe an understatement but it's – (chuckles) – certainly true. And what we're looking on here is that mutually constructive relationship. One of the things that Joan pointed out in her presentation was that the CCC contractor for many of our users is the face of the Forest Service's CIO's office. And for both of us to be successful, we're going to have to work together. So mutually constructive – keywords. We want to work together on this. It's not just throwing things over the – (inaudible).

And we are doing that partially by trying to give you some clear definitions of what our expectations are of you and we are also looking for your expectations of us. So

let's be upfront about what that is. And what we are doing to try to help you understand that is we're spending a lot of time on the specifications for this contract, but in addition, you're going to see something called an operating level agreement, an OLA, and that is there for a key reason.

We mentioned our information-solutions organizations which happens our operations and part of our business. The way you work is going to be primarily with that information solutions organization. So we are trying to make it clear; we are trying to be transparent, and we are expecting and hoping that making that clear up front will make the actually day-to-day operations go a lot clearer.

Flexibility and agility – you can't say that often enough. That is important. But we also recognize that it causes us problems. Like all technology support organizations, we're dealing with a very fluid environment. It's changing constantly, things like new versions for hardware, new software. And there are trends out there that we may have some inklings to but we can't predict yet how that is going to eventually play out.

One example of that might be is what is the convergence of things like voice and video with a desktop or a hand-held device. What is that going to look like in five years? If anybody has the answer here, you'll probably get rich on it. (Chuckles.) But it's one of those very changing environments, but it's real, and it's something that our users want us to pay attention to. And part of the way that we are trying to deal with this as far as the contract is concerned is our pricing strategy and leveraging the knowledge documents.

And what we are trying to get to is a point where all contacts basically are equal. And we don't have – now, there are certainly going to be some priorities to the contact, but fundamentally if I call for a PC problem versus a problem with my handheld device, versus a problem that might be done with the network – I mean, a call is a call is a call; there is nothing fundamentally different there.

But what that means is that we are expecting our contractors to have ongoing training needs to keep up with that, just as we are. We are going to be expecting our contractors to keep up to date with the knowledge documents you bring to the table. That is not just a one-time effort. They need to be kept current. But we also expect to be working together because, again, there is a lot of documentation that the forest service is going to be providing. We want to make that better; we want you to help us catch where there are things that can be done better in that environment.

So flexibility, a key point. We have currently a software environment that we went through in some detail, but let me just pick an example of that. Our current desktop is Windows 2000. We know we are moving to XP. Everybody knows that vista is on the horizon. The intent is to have the support for the current version and one version back in general. And I'll say that in general.

You know, we're a fairly large organization. You don't move that overnight. You will find some cases where it takes several years for us to move from one version to another. So when we say that we're looking at M-1, the current retail version and also the previous version, that is a rule of thumb. It's not hard and fast. And what we will do is we'll work with you to identify the variations on that, either both – in fact, both through the RF-2 (?) process. I think there will be some in there, as well as our day to day working together.

But the idea there is that we are expecting our CCC contractor to be abreast of what is going on in the industry. I mean, again, let's look at that operating system example. If you're talking about our current system, you know we're on Windows 2000, you know we're starting to go to XP but Vista should not come as a surprise to anybody. You ought to be working – thinking ahead on those and how you have the knowledge documents in place in time so that when we do make that change, again, you'll know about our schedule and our approach to making the change, but when that change does get made, that we're ahead of the curve. We have those knowledge documents in place.

On the hardware side, we are trying to standardized basically on the, you know, the industry-standard hardware. But our replacement cycle, and thinking primarily in terms of our desktop and laptop PCs currently is in the four- to six-year range. We are trying to do a little bit better, but that is our reality and you need to realize that. So you could be dealing with the call from a person who has a PC four five or six years old. It is not all necessarily going to be, you know, a current year or a one- or two-year old technology.

In addition to that, we realize on our side that we need to be flexible to allow mechanisms in the pricing of the contract for things like, you know, the transition and training, other direct costs, and so on, and special projects as they come up.

So if I'm going to leave you with one thought – I know I have done a real quick and dirty of what this environment looks like, but it's this rule of thumb that you see on the bottom here, and this is really the principle that we have behind the contract. If you get contacted by a customer, regardless of how you get contact, and you have a knowledge document, we expect you to solve the problem. We're expecting you to troubleshoot it enough to be able to solve the problem, look at those knowledge documents, that when the information gets passed to us, we have enough to be able to take it from there.

So it isn't just simply looking up a document – I'm done; you know, pass it along if it's not there. We are looking for some troubleshooting, we are looking for some expertise. But if there is no knowledge document, what you are going to have is either some instruction from the Forest Service that says, here – where these call goes, or we are going to have a place for you to refer those calls to our tier two and tier three. So when you think in terms of what gets supported, basically when that phone rings, when the e-mail comes in, when the instant messenger chat session starts, we're looking for you to

solve as many of those problems as you can, and to be aggressive as you can on solving those problems.

So thank you for listening to me at least going over a real quick overview of what our technology looks like. What we are going to do at this time is we're going to take a break for about 20 minutes, and then after we come back, after the break, Douglas Nash, who is the director of our information solutions organization is going to tell you some more about his organization.

(Break.)

DOUG NASH: Please take your seats so we can stay on time. Otherwise, take your conversation out in the hallway. Okay, well, welcome back. I'm Doug Nash, the director of the information solutions organization. And you know, it's always challenging doing a meeting like this right after lunch. It's kind of a deadly time when everyone is trying to stay awake through all of the fascinating information and lively topics. But it looks like folks are surviving.

We put this up front here just as an FYI for the presentation transcripts and attendee list, you can get it – (inaudible) – website. If you have any comments or questions, you can send it to that email address; just a reminder.

So what I was going to do is just a few minutes to talk about the information solution organization, which is the – well, actually, I'll hold on just a few minutes to give you a chance to write that down and then we'll continue.

So this ISO, what is it and how does it interact with the CCC? Joan and Ron and Alan have all mentioned a little bit of it. But the ISO, the information solutions organization, is part of the CIO organization. It's the service delivery arm for IT infrastructure support to Forest Service customers. And our Forest Service customers aren't only just Forest Service employees; we also support external partners, BLM, some other organizations that work directly with us. So the help desk, the CCC has to be able to provide and determine entitlement for customers beyond just the standard for-service employee.

We provide, of course, the tier two support for our Forest Service customers. We also provide operational back office support for the infrastructure. We do technical architecture, engineering and solutions, and I'm getting big-time feedback up here. (off mike.) Can you hear me okay? All right, and so we provide the technical architecture support; we do make recommendations to the CCO, engineering solutions, and then we've got a project management office of managed projects.

As you would expect, the CCC is critical to the ISO, and is the primary interface to the customers. So we have to have tight integration between the ISO and the CCC to ensure that we're getting end-to-end and effective customer service. Next slide.

The ISO – we're about two and a half years old. We came about as part of the A76 process. We're a most efficient organization designation, so to speak. And we are a single organization, so we cover the entire Forest Service. We have a single management group that manages the ISO. We are also kind of unique to government, or there's certainly not a lot of organizations that do this.

We are governed very strictly by performance indicators. We have an external group – external to the ISO, but part of the CIO organization – that measures ISO performance. We have 11 performance indicators. Those are negotiated each year and adjusted based on CIO and Forest Service business priorities. And so, we look forward every quarter to our performance meetings and getting graded on those PIs. I'm sure many of you that work in that environment know what that's like. But the fact is, it's an incentivizer. It focuses the work in the right area. And I think it's helped us become a better organization as a result of it.

Of course, the performance indicators that the ISO has should be and would be complementary to what the CCC has. And of course, that would be reflected in the RFQ. The ISO provides 24 by 7 support, just and again complementary with the CCC. So everything from the customer perspective, when the customer looks at getting support through the CIO organization, they shouldn't really have to worry about all the things going behind the scenes. And so, the CCC and what is specified in that contract complements what's in the ISO, and so, within the ISO, we provide 24 by 7, 366 support and do that across all the various service areas.

We also have in our operating environment a customer board that is in addition to the group that I mentioned that manages or monitors our SLAs. And that customer board is at the executive level that represents various stakeholders from across Forest Service management and the customer base. And they look at not only ISO performance, but also the CIO's performance as well, and then brings customers' concerns and interests to CIO management so that those can be addressed.

While the ISO does support IT infrastructure, we do not directly support business applications. Alan, I think, had mentioned the GOTS (ph) earlier. There are various application help desk that provide tier two support. We, of course, support the infrastructure for the most part for the business applications and work closely with those. But again, the application software itself is something that we don't support directly.

As far as how the ISO is broken out and what our individual areas of expertise or organization are, so to speak, I won't go over that complete list there, but it's the areas of infrastructure you would expect. Alan mentioned that the radio network in particular is something that you don't typically or always see in an IT organization. It is a very large part of what we do. About one-third of my staff is dedicated to radio support. And some of the other things that are up there reflects the fact that we are a kind of a wholly owned entity within the CIO's organization is that we have a SLA attainment group within the ISO. We also have a business and investment group, and then various types of administrative support.

One other thing I wanted to mention that I forgot on the last slide about the operating environment. It's typical, I think, for any IT organization to support users in an office environment. We also though, because of our fire and emergency support role, we support employees that are working out on fires, that are supporting various types of emergencies, so it's critical that the CCC is able to manage what we call severity one issues that come through and are referred to the appropriate group that can work on them in a timely and reliable manner, because literally, people's lives can be counting on it, depending on what the issue is. We support a highly mobile workforce. And literally, folks are working out in the field or in the national forests where we do a lot of the work.

And then, just one other point on this slide is that the way that we work within the ISO and the way the CCC would complement what we do within the ISO, at the bottom is three-key principles that we have organized under – specialization, where prior to our reorganization, we had kind of jack of all trades. We have now, as driven by industry best practices, where we have people that are expert in different areas of technology. We've standardized across not only our technology, but also our processes, using i-tool (ph) methodology, working on continually trying to improve our business processes workflow that starts through the CCC and then goes all the way through how we get customers supported or software delivered or projects started and managed.

And then the final thing – and I mentioned this a minute ago – is that we are truly centralized, that we've got one desktop group that supports the entire country, one network group, one voice group, et cetera. And then the final thing I wanted to cover is to talk just a little bit more about the workflow and the relationship between the CCC, the ISO, and tier three, and then ultimately how all of that is brought together to be an effective integrated whole.

The customer, of course, can make a request through multiple channels as Ron had talked about earlier. And I show here that they would go through the tier one contact center. They could also go through – in fact, we'd like to maximize tier zero support through some sort of a web-based solution. And so, either way, the customer interacts through either of those mechanisms. If they can't get a resolution there, then it goes onto the tier two, which is the ISO in virtually all cases. And it's dealt with there.

Hopefully, the maximum number, the highest number of problems are resolved at tier one, and we don't see as much in tier two. But then, what's left over, we would resolve at tier two. The most complex things are the standard tier three group that is identified there.

What bridges these different functions together are the SLAs. So SLAs that are specified in the RFQ for the CCC ensures that we get the consistent service from the service provider there. I mentioned the SLAS are performance indicators we have on the ISO. And you know, some of our government organizations talk about having performance indicators in place, but they're really just shelf ware, because nobody enforces them. But I guarantee you, they are real. They have big impacts if we don't

pass those. So it is a reliable way to ensure service for the ISO. And then, we have SLAs for tier three.

And then, to manage and codify the relationship between the various tier one, tier two, and tier three is we would have operational level agreements in place that describes how that functions. The ISO ultimately owns the – has the ultimate accountability for making sure that the end-to-end processes work there so that we don't end up finger pointing, and the customer doesn't get lost in the mix.

And then finally, if the customer does somehow have a problem where they call the CCC or it takes a while for a problem to get resolved, we have a customer care team where it's an escape valve basically for the customers where they can contact this customer care team who would then serve as an advocate to find out why their problem is taking longer than normal to get resolved.

We're going to go back to Ron Copstead now, and he is going to talk a little more detail about the CCC strategy and requirements.

RON COPSTEAD: Thanks, Doug. Yeah, I want to delve a little more into our tour of the RFQ. And to do that I'll talk about our support strategy, provide some contact statistics, a little bit of our requirements overview, and the performance basis and metrics for the contract.

So to review, to maximize our customer satisfaction and minimize cost, what we're trying to do here is have an integrated customer experience, meaning that all parts work together seamlessly. And from the customer's point of view, they don't necessarily know whether their problem has been resolved due to the results of CSR one, level two work, and so forth. It really needs to look like a seamless operation to our customers, focused on first contact resolution to resolve their problem.

We need to invest Forest Service and contract – we're asking contractor resources and knowledge management tools and documentation in order to bring that about. As Doug just stated and we've all been talking today about trying to drive problem resolutions to tier zero, and knowledge documents are key to that. We need to be able to promote the adoption of lower cost channels, the tier zero channels are a particular interest. Not all of our customers are necessarily comfortable with that, but where we have customers, we want to have that be a channel that entices folks to use those lower-cost channels.

And we need to maximize first call resolution as we've said several times today. We will be looking at strategies to do that. One of the bases for that is to leverage mature idle processes. The tier one feedback to the ISO for infrastructure improvements is a reference back to the need for our root cause analysis function within the CCC contractor brings to the table. That's very important for us. We need to have that closed loop continuous improvement, and it starts with a CCC for us. In general – and Alan I think

had this explicitly on one of his slides, if the KM exists, then we're expecting the customer to have their issue resolved on first contact at tier zero or tier one.

Okay, I want to look at a whole chart full of numbers here, which is truly an eye chart. This will be on the web, of course. We have a fairly good picture of our call volume in this case. And I think it's reflective of our contact – expected contact volume, at least in the beginning of this new BPA. You'll notice the range of contacts per month – or in this case, calls – goes from fairly low – it actually ranges by a factor of almost three – from 16,000 to 44,000 or more calls. And it's somewhat reflected – there is some pattern here – there is a seasonal falloff in October, November, and December. And it picks up and rebounds in January.

We have seasonal variation that typically ramps up in the spring and through the summer. You'll notice some anomalies here and we've been able to relate to rollouts of major revision changes in software, and in this case, I think we had a virus situation that was actually quite a success story for us. So we really learned to leverage the root cause analysis type of a function, and we definitely need to promote the use of that in our new contract. We were able to respond in a way that was much more holistic and responsive to our customers, leveraging the kind of technology that we want you to provide.

Next slide, take another slice at how – at our contacts – and how it's broken down and has typically been broken down by the type of call. And on the whole, this reflects the complexity of our infrastructure. You can see – I mean, we have, I don't know, a dozen, more than a dozen call types. At the top of the list are basically password resets and/or move, add, change related to authentication and userids, followed by call types that are primarily the email chat, collaboration tool, the everyday tools that folks use to get their business work done, followed by personnel type – our government applications and so forth – coming in at third and fourth. And those first four categories total out to about half of the call type, half of the contacts that we've experienced in the past. Doesn't mean that this distribution will follow into the future, but it's probably a pretty good bet for now.

I want to talk about the knowledge documentation. And of course, this is the key to our being able to respond with our first contact resolution figures that we're trying to achieve. We've broken down the knowledge documentation that would be treated in this contract into five or six areas led by our standards COTS (ph), modified COTS – this means on our COTS applications that have a certain amount of customization for our environment, for our business and mission objectives. Examples there might be how we've implemented Lotus Notes or Office for certain internal purposes.

Government software – and Alan touched on this during his presentation – this is the kind of thing that we will be expecting to be able to support. Most of it is the knowledge documents are provided by the government application developers and so forth. So the next slide shows where we have our standard hardware, where we're expecting the knowledge documents to be provided pretty much off the shelf. We have some other categories here where the hardware might not be as common, and/or with our

– we're expecting our contractor to provide basic network connectivity checks and so forth at tier one. And those would be provided. Knowledge documents are fairly standard in that area. Obviously, we would be helping to develop those and improving the tested and embedded versions.

Move on to the technology and tools that we're expecting on this contract. Our overall posture here is that we're not trying to be overly prescriptive. For example, your proposed solution need not be structured as separate tools as may be laid out in the RFQ, as long as they meet the requirements that we have – I'll show you in a moment here – for the purpose that we have for those tools. That will work.

We are expecting that you would propose additional or alternative tools that align with your technical approach, of course, to the benefit of the Forest Service. And in order that we can make sure that we have the proper integration across our multi-sourced support organization, we need to be able to have the leverage of these tools via the various components of our support organization, even in some – obviously in some cases our tier three support folks will need to understand what those tools are and understand how to use them.

So at a minimum, what we like – what we need to have is what we have termed a Forest Service support portal. And basically, that means accessibility to the information that is needed in order to manage the day-to-day operations in an integrated way with our support organizations and for management purposes. And that might include a situational awareness system.

And certainly, we've talked quite a bit today about knowledge management system and ticket management or a case management or a contact management system. The telephony – automatic call distributor and the voice response unit, or integrated voice response unit. We also need to have sufficient capability in the reporting tool category. And to the extent that it aligns with your particular approach, we need a self-generated ticketing system, and/or secure web chat. Obviously, that would depend on your approach to meeting the requirements.

So then, in order for us to effectively use all of this that we're asking for, we will need some sort of training on the various tools and your solution. We would expect the contractor provide training on your solution and on the particular tools that you bring to that solution. The number of folks that we're talking about here is on the order of 500 or so. And at some various levels – some folks are going to require, obviously, more in depth orientation and training, and others may require only sufficient so that we can help in the management areas. And we would expect that training to cross the various tools and the various pieces that you bring to your solution. The acceptable methods would be in live virtual training and interactive classroom training – online methods as appropriate to the various tools.

This next slide we've switched actually to what we need provided in the terms of a change management process for the contract. Just ignore the word training at the top of

this. We kind of ran over from the last slide there. But we do need to have a contract change management process, so that we can effectively manage the contract as we go forward. We need to make sure that it's based on best industry practices and it would include a way for scheduling, planning, distribution, application, and tracking of change, planning, and implementation throughout the contract.

So now, I'm going to switch to the key deliverables that we're looking for. We have a combination of things with respect to – and these are deliverables throughout the life of the contract. There are some up front that would be related to transition plan. But problem report would be a -- potentially a periodic report. But we would expect these to be included in a monthly report at a minimum. And then, we would have a regular monthly array of monthly status reports, operational meeting, and SLA performance reporting on a monthly basis.

I mentioned the transition plan would be something that we would have up front after work started on the contract. We would need to have an exit plan and a final program management plan. So that gives you a sense for some of the main deliverables we're expecting. Of course, you'll be able to see all of this – this all will be in the RFQ.

The next slide will show you a list of what we are looking at right now for attachments to the RFQ. And some of these have been out, I believe, in the draft RFQ. Some of them haven't. When you have a chance to look at, at least the titles here in a couple of days on the web from this presentation, let's make sure that if you – or now, if you have something here that you don't see here that would be helpful for you in preparing a response, please provide it on the cards before you leave, and/or provide some feedback to our mailbox off the website. So we went to make sure and provide sufficient information so that you have the best information with which to prepare a response.

The next thing I wanted to touch on is our transition planning and the performance basis for the contract. We would be expecting a 90-day transition period. And the transition planning – the transition plan – would include how we transition knowledge management, how we transition the infrastructure required for the contract such as the voice response unit, the phone number, all of that sort of thing would be included there.

Communications planning – we are going to be looking at a significant change for refocusing how our users think as we go from the current EUSC facility to a CCC. And we'll have some significant user education situation to go through there. So that would be something that we would be wanting to have in our transition planning.

Some of the elements of the performance basis for the contract include contractor would be required to propose an at-risk percentage, no less than 5 percent, no more than 15 percent of the fixed price in a given period. We would ask him the earnback of the at-risk amount is driven by SlA performance. And I think this is a fairly standard way of structuring these contract, so we would be expecting responses in that manner.

Another feature here is that our SLAs and the service level objectives will be swappable on this contract. We'll have a display of what the SLA and SLOs that we've looked at so far here in a moment. The swapping would occur on – potentially on a quarterly basis as needed in order to effectively manage and change the way we focus the efforts of the contract in order to meet and benefit Forest Service mission accomplishment and support for our customers. The SLAs and SLOs would become effective no late than the 91st calendar day after work start and then the incentives and disincentives we're looking at as post-6th month or 180 day effectivity.

Switch now to a little bit of a display of our – what we're looking at for SLAs on the contract. I believe we have six at this point out of the box, two of them related to customer satisfaction, one of those is customer satisfaction as assessed by the IRM program manager, or OCIO program manager as of yesterday, for this contract. First contact resolution is key for us, so we'll have an SLA there. That's one thing that we're really trying to drive to. Average speed to answer, I think this is pretty standard in the industry.

And then the other – the next SLA on the next slide, if we can flip to that one, we want to make sure that we are measuring the repeat contact incidents and we have an SLA related to that at less than three percent. That's reopened issues and so forth. And then we want to make sure that our problem resolutions are handled in the most efficient means by the folks that can be brought to bear with the expertise to solve customers' problems. So we want to be tracking incorrect escalations to tier two and three and that will start out as an SLA. And we're trying to hold those to – the metric we have is less than five percent, I believe.

And then the last one is the other customer satisfaction SLA and that's where we're asking – we will be measuring our customers' customer satisfaction with the service. And right now we're looking at averaging an annual survey and a transactional survey where we have some sampling or census of customer satisfaction related to each transaction. So that's a summary of our SLA structure at this point.

What we've looked at for service-level objectives is related to different types of contacts, different types of calls and/or interaction with the customer – with the CCC contracted resource. For example, managing user accounts, acceptable time for creation of access authorizations, acceptable times for password resets, et cetera, how we respond to specific types of customer contacts, email tickets, web tickets, so forth. And so that – and as I mentioned, we will be looking at swappable situation where if it looks like we need to have one of these in an SLA position instead of an SLO position, then that could happen as often as quarterly in the contract.

So that pretty much summarizes where I wanted to go with our support strategy or some statistics on our environment as we are supporting it now, our requirements overview, and the performance section. I think we want to go to a short break here or –

MR. : (Off mike.)

MR. COPSTEAD: We're going straight to Bonnie? Okay. All right. So I'll reintroduce then Bonnie Gilbert, our contracting officer for the effort.

MS. GILBERT: Okay, we wanted to talk a little bit about the evaluation process. To start off with, we talked earlier that once we establish the competitive range, those vendor who propose and are susceptible to award, as we put it, this would be a second step that we may or may not do, this would be if we do enter into discussions on the proposals – we reserve the right to award without discussions, but if we do go into discussions, this is the process we'll be using. Discussions will consist of oral presentations by the offerers – and, again, this are the offerers in the competitive range – to present their technical and management approach and their associated quality control plan.

There would also be a demonstration of the tools and technology that the offerer proposes to use for the contract. There would be an opportunity for a technical question and answer by the offerers where they'd be afforded an opportunity to ask specific technical questions and we'd have a panel of selected IRM and ISO representatives to answer those questions. And then discussions between the government and the offerers with the intent of allowing those offerers to revise their proposals and that would focus on strengths, weaknesses, and past performance information that was submitted in that proposal.

The proposal is intended to be structured in three volumes. Volume one will include the technical and management information. Section one would be the executive summary. Section two would be management approach. Section three is technical approach. Section four is key personnel and resumes for those folks and then section five would be the quality control plan. Volume two would include past performance references and then volume three would be the cost and business proposal.

The basis of award is best value to the government and that will be on the basis of the capability of the offerer which includes the management approach, the technical approach, key personnel and past performance and then price reasonableness.

Okay, we'll go a little bit more into detail on the evaluation factors. Management approach is looking at addressing the quality assurance, personnel, resource management, business process execution, use of management tools and the team and subcontractor management that will be used by the vendor. We'll be also looking at the organization and management of the offerer's team, the effectiveness of the offerer's proposed transition plans, their corporate capabilities, and then on all of these, the quality comprehensiveness and the specificity of the offerer's response.

On technical approach, the elements we'll be looking at will be things such as the effectiveness, feasibility and sustainability of the approach, the use of innovative best practice, leading-edge technology that would reduce overall cost while maximizing

customer satisfaction, demonstrated thought, leadership, and innovation, and, as I said, the quality comprehensiveness specificity of the response.

With regard to key personnel, we're looking for quality, experience, and expertise and engagement, but also for the continuity of key personnel during the first year of the contract and we see this as demonstrating the vendor's commitment to the Forest Service and to the knowledge transfer and the expense of that that we're going to be going through.

The last one is past performance and we're going to be looking at past performance of the offerer and major subcontractors. And I want to highlight here that we have a list here and in the solicitation of the kinds of references we'll be looking for, but we want to highlight that we're looking for contracts of similar size, scope, and complexity when we're looking at past performance information to evaluate.

The next steps are that we'll take your questions and comments. Again, if you have any questions or comments today, please put them on the cards and put them in the boxes in the back of the room. If you don't have anything to share with us today, we hope that you'll go back and send an email to the email box that we gave you. We'll post all the information – the transcript, the Power Point presentation, and also a list of attendees at today's session on that website and then fedbizopps by Monday. And right now, we're anticipating that the final RFQ will be issued on September 10th and that proposals will be due about October 12th. If you haven't signed in yet, please do that and we want to thank you all for coming. Thanks very much. (Applause.)

(END)