



Canada: Government Tendering Opportunity

Secure Online System Upgrade

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BACKGROUND

The Government of Canada (GOC) recently announced its intention to replace its current secure online system, known as "Secure Channel." This decision will create opportunities for U.S. providers of appropriate web-based services. The GOC's plan calls for upgrading the government's online services by 2010 to provide greater flexibility and recognition that not all federal departments require the same level of online security. The External Credential Management (ECM) Service that currently operates "Secure Channel" is used by individuals and businesses to conduct a wide range of activities online, such as paying for federal government services, applying for passports, and accessing personal income tax information. The Information Technology Services Branch of Public Works and Government Services Canada (PWGSC) is developing a strategic plan to implement a new portfolio of credential, authentication, identity and access management services in addition to those services currently available with Secure Channel.

SECURE ONLINE SYSTEM UPGRADE

Secure Channel encompasses many services, including the network that connects federal departments. It gives Canadians "single window" access into government and is more a more secure system than that of the highly secure infrastructure of banks for online banking or ATM services. However, since implementation, technology solutions have advanced and security threats have increased, making evolution of the services necessary. The current system is very slow due to heavy encryption and validation features. The existing service contract for Secure Channel with the BCE consortium expires in 2010. A business case for the next generation of services to be implemented in 2010 is expected to be presented by December 2008.

A Request for Information (RFI) was issued in July 2008 to obtain industry input on how to handle its future security needs. Some of the goals of the RFI were to assess the maturity of the market for these services, to solicit information about current and future credential and authentication products and/or services, and to assess feasibility and the level of interest in responding to one or more formal Request for Proposals (RFPs) from providers of web-based services. The RFI included an invitation to a briefing session in addition to a request for written responses related to materials to be presented at the session.

Several of the responses to this RFI were received from U.S. companies. The RFI closed on September 15, 2008 and the project is approximately six months away from development and release of a Request for Proposal (RFP). Though the RFI is closed, interested U.S. companies can still participate in the development stages of the project. The project team as indicated a willingness to accept ideas and suggestions for the new secure online system. To obtain more information or to provide information and/or ideas to the project team, contact:

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OPPORTUNITIES FOR U.S. COMPANIES

Once a business case and strategic plan is developed, the Secure Channel replacement project will create opportunities for U.S. IT companies to act as a prime contractor, a supplier to a prime contractor, or as one of a group of multiple suppliers to provide system development and related services to the Canadian government. Any firm interested in the opportunities related to this project should monitor [MERX](#), the Government Electronic Tendering System (GETS). Further details regarding this project will be released via this system.

Canada First – Building Bridges to Prosperity

For More Information

The U.S. Commercial Service in Ottawa, Canada can be contacted via e-mail at: lucylatka@mail.doc.gov; Phone: 613-688-5219; Fax: 613-238-5999; or visit our website: www.buyusa.gov/Canada.

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Comments and Suggestions: We welcome your comments and suggestions regarding this market research. You can e-mail us your comments/suggestions to: Customer.Care@mail.doc.gov. Please include the name of the applicable market research in your e-mail. We greatly appreciate your feedback.

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