Title Page

Technical Proposal

to provide a

Parallel Call Center

for the

Federal Retirement

Thrift Investment Board

in response to No. RFP-TIB-04-02

Disclosure Statement

This data, furnished in connection with Request for Proposal No. RFP-TIB-04-02, shall not be disclosed outside the Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board (the Agency) and shall not be duplicated, used, or disclosed in whole or in part for any purpose other than to evaluate the proposal; provided that, if a contract is awarded to this Offeror as a result of or in connection with the submission of this data, the Agency shall have the right to duplicate, use, or disclose the data to the extent provided in the contract. This restriction does not limit the Agency's right to use the information contained in the data if it is obtained from another source without restriction. The data subject to this restriction is contained in the sheets. (Please refer to footer at bottom of pages.)

Table of Contents

Table of Figures

Executive Summary

Introduction

Spherix Incorporated is a stable, publicly traded company[1] that has designed and operated complex, high-volume financial services call centers and other information programs for Federal and State agencies since 1968. Many of those have been comparable or greater in scope and complexity to the FRTIB's proposed Parallel Call Center project. In fact, the Retirement Information Service call center we now operate for the U.S. Office of Personnel Management, ████████████████████████████████████ ███████████████████████████, is a virtual mirror of, and pattern for, the FRTIB project. Our proposed Project Manager has an M.B.A. and extensive financial services call center management experience. Many of the other call centers we operate deal with financial transactions and money management, as well as customer services for child support, disease management, and other challenging areas that require intensive subject matter training and quality assurance. A few of our relevant company highlights include:

Comment: Proprietary type # 1

> Business started in 1967

> Government information management services since 1968

> Government call center and informational services since 1974

> Major Federal call center and database consolidation (FIC) 1989

> State of Maryland *Business Partner of the Year* award winner 1996

> State of Maryland preferred toll-free call center contractor since 1998

> Dual, interconnected call centers

> Experts in customer service training, operation, and quality assurance

> Disaster recovery specialists

Spherix incorporates industry and Government best practices and standards into all of our work. We employ Call Center Institute and the Gartner Group's Customer Service Capability Maturity Model (CMM) practices to continually measure our call center service level capability and maturity. We incorporate customer relationship management (CRM) people, processes, and tools to elevate our call center performance to the level of best practice leadership. Our agent training and certification meet the standards of PhonePro, Help Desk 2000, and others.

OPM/RIS Call Center – a perfect pattern for FRTIB: In support of the Retirement and Insurance Service (RIS) of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM), Spherix distributes calls ████████████████████████████████████

---

[1] NASDAQ/SPEX

█████████████████████████████, from Federal annuitants and their family members. As with the FRTIB project, Spherix's role is to maintain readiness to manage the entire RIS call volume of nearly 100,000 calls per month on a parallel or emergency basis, should the RIS telephone equipment become non-operational due to a disaster. ███████████ the calls we receive require making changes or updates to annuitants' accounts; therefore, contract personnel must undergo rigorous security clearance and background and financial investigation prior to serving on the contract. As part of our contract responsibilities, Spherix personnel perform a diverse range of call center actions as they relate to annuitants and survivors covered under the Civil Service Retirement and Federal Employees Retirement Systems.

Providing callers with complex tax law information is our role in a new call center we are building for the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). Under this contract, Spherix will operate a Toll-free Tax Law Call Center from February 1, 2004 through April 16, 2004 to answer an estimated 260,000 financial and tax-law-related calls during the six-week project. ███. This call center is part of an A-76 study to determine the feasibility and effectiveness of private sector partnership in serving IRS's demanding constituencies in the critical arena of personal tax liability reporting and management.

Financial services and information have been the subject of many of our major Government projects for over three decades. From 1976 to 1994, Spherix operated the Federal Student Aid Information Center (FSAIC) for the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Student Financial Assistance. This project had several components: a telephone information hotline service, customized and form-letter written responses, and daily mailing of student aid applications, guides, and other publications. ██████████ highly trained and experienced Information Specialists took up to 150,000 calls per month and responded to more than 10 million inquiries over the 18-year span of this project.

We also managed the Federal Information Center (FIC) for the General Services Administration and set the standard for treating members of the public like prized customers. Spherix, formerly Biospherics, began operating the FIC in March 1990, when it consolidated the functions of 25 separate information centers. This toll-free telephone service provided 2.25 million Americans annually with the information they needed about the Government and its services. This project, which ended in October 2000, was supported by leading-edge telecommunications and computer technology.

As the State of Maryland's primary call center contractor, Spherix provides financial information to some of society's most distressed citizens, indigent single mothers with child support payment problems. This requires both an expertise in the financial and regulatory process of child support enforcement, and an extraordinarily sensitive, "high touch" approach to customer service in an atmosphere where callers are often upset and under a tremendous amount of stress. But the Maryland Toll-Free Call Center project also requires an extraordinary degree of contractor flexibility to provide a wealth of customer contact services any State agency that needs them, from West Nile Virus crisis management to processing camping reservations at State parks. Our focus on improving customer service standards through agent training using PhonePro and Help Desk 2000 standards, innovative project management approaches, and enabling call center technolo-

Comment: Proprietary type # 1

Comment: Proprietary type # 1

Comment: Proprietary type # 2

Comment: Proprietary type # 1

gies has earned us accolades from all of the State agencies we serve. Under our management, that contract has exemplified what's best about outsourcing government customer service projects.

Synopsis of our solution: Our proposed Parallel Call Center for FRTIB will be built around the Agency's central mission of rendering dependable, professional service to Federal employees with regard to their accounts in the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP). This means knowledgeable, courteous service to callers at all levels of call volume, and responsive, expert support to the Agency in responding to call spikes, disasters, and program changes. We have the most knowledgeable, energetic, and inspiring agent trainers in the business who will assimilate FRTIB's subject matter and quickly create a level of customer service in ████████, Maryland, that equals or exceeds that provided by the National Finance Center in New Orleans.

- **Site – ████████, Maryland:** Our proposed site is ████████████████ ██████, an easy ██████ drive from Washington, DC. This site, which is far enough from New Orleans for disaster recovery, but close enough to FRTIB's Washington headquarters to allow close monitoring, houses an excellent call center infrastructure and training and meeting facilities.

- **Project Manager – ████████:** Professional project management will be key to the success of the Parallel Call Center. That's why we are assigning our best financial services call center manager to the job. ████████████████████ ████████████████████████████████████ will bring a fresh approach, an enthusiasm for proactive client support, and an attention to detail to this key position. Before that, she had six years of experience at Spherix as a Line Supervisor, then Operations Manager. She will ensure that FRTIB receives the kind of project reporting and consulting attention it needs to make the most of the Parallel Call Center.

- **Call handling staff – experience and training:** Led by our veteran supervisory staff, our Customer Service Representatives (CSRs) will comprise the most knowledgeable and courteous staff available. Using new workforce scheduling tools and a dynamic team of CSRs who are dedicated to this critical support role, Spherix will accommodate the project's most challenging call volume surges, fully and efficiently.

- **Technology – expertise on hand:** With our ████████ telecom systems, as well as our flexible and highly scalable information management systems, we can give the Parallel Call Center extremely reliable technical footing. ████████ ████████████████, so accessing and using the application information via the Web is mostly a matter of properly training and evaluating our CSRs. But with our in-house IT staff, we can also provide any level of support – planning, design, development, implementation, operation – that FRTIB might need to enhance its customer service systems, communication channels, and data management processes.

- **Quality Assurance – new tools and methodologies:** With the implementation of several innovative technologies—████████████████████████████

Comment: Proprietary type # 1

Comment: Proprietary type # 1
Comment: Proprietary type # 1
Comment: Proprietary type # 1

Comment: Proprietary type # 3

Comment: Proprietary type # 3

Comment: Proprietary type # 4

Comment: Proprietary type # 4

████████████████████████████████ we can ensure that the Parallel Call Center will surpass FRTIB's most demanding performance standards.

Comment: Proprietary type # 4

These qualifications combine to form the crux of our proposal to provide the best and most competitive call center services available to support FRTIB in its mission to enhance service to Federal employees.

In this proposal

In this proposal, we demonstrate that Spherix will provide FRTIB with the best service and the best value to the Government for the support of this call center project. We understand that operating a professional, dependable Parallel Call Center is paramount and we guarantee we will provide just that. State-of-the-art technology can be purchased, but customer service that meets the exacting needs of a client and responds effectively to a customer can only come through experience. In our 36 years of call center experience with Federal Government projects, we have developed operations methodologies that accentuate the role of the customer. This shows in the responsiveness of our client support strategies.

In **Section J: Questionnaire,** we address each question with a specific answer that shows we not only understand the requirements, but also have the know-how and experience to fulfill them.

In **Section M.5: Minimal Technical Factors for Award,** we demonstrate and certify compliance with each of the four minimum criteria set forth by FRTIB.

In **Section M.6: Technical Evaluation**, we provide a concise reiteration of how our proposal addresses each evaluation point, and a Compliance Matrix to guide your evaluators to the specific sections and pages of the Questionnaire in which we more thoroughly address each topic.

In the **Appendices**, we provide additional information that supports the solution we describe in our proposal. In most cases, we have placed this information in the Appendices to allow for greater continuity and simplicity in the reading the body of the proposal.

> **NOTE: In this proposal**, we have adopted a format for easy reading and a straightforward way to compare our proposed solutions with the RFP requirements. We include verbatim RFP passages in **blue highlight** to distinguish them from our responses.

Exceptions to Solicitation Requirements

Spherix takes no exceptions to the solicitation requirements set forth in the RFP.

Section J: Questionnaire

Introduction

☑ **Spherix compliance:** Spherix fully understands, and can implement, the requirements of the RFP. In this section, we highlight specific, relevant experiences in our Federal and State contracts as we detail how we will meet every requirement of the procurement—from a fully equipped call center facility to highly trained customer service professionals. We are confident that this experience and know-how equip us to operate FRTIB's Parallel Call Center better than any other provider in the market.

★ **Spherix advantage:** It is important to note that Spherix specifically located its ███████████ call center in ████████████ for immediate access to low cost, high quality human resources and services. We maintain a large labor pool of ███ CRM-trained and certified full- and part-time CSRs from which to draw upon for support of call center projects.

> **Comment:** Proprietary type # 1
> **Comment:** Proprietary type # 1
> **Comment:** Proprietary type # 3

General and Administrative

1. **Confirm that you are prepared to work within all the parameters outline in this RFP. If any present a problem, please explain.**

   ☑ **Spherix compliance:** Spherix is fully prepared to work within all of the parameters outlined in the RFP.

   ★ **Spherix advantage:** Because of our extensive experience in Federal contracts, financial services projects, and disaster recovery, we can exceed the performance expectations FRTIB has set forth in this requirement. Spherix's human and technological resources will drive this project from pre-launch to conclusion of the contract in a manner that guarantees world-class service to the user.

2. **Due to the unique culture provided by the Agency to its participants, confirm that you will provide a dedicated customer services unit for the Agency account (i.e., a unit servicing only the Agency account). If not, please explain why or give the minimum number of representatives required to provide a dedicated customer services unit.**

   ☑ **Spherix compliance:** Spherix will provide a dedicated customer services unit for the Agency account.

   ★ **Spherix advantage:** Dedicated staffing has *always* been our specialty and this project will be no exception. Our project CSRs will handle only incoming calls from FRTIB's participants for account maintenance, loan repayments, service requests, and loan information. We estimate the staffing requirements to provide the current level of service to participants to be initially ████████████████, although the staffing levels will fluctuate from month to month from the base year onward.

   > **Comment:** Proprietary type # 1

   ◁ **Also see:** Please refer to our response to *Question 14* (page 26) for more detailed information regarding staffing of the center on a month-by-month basis for the base year.

Spherix understands the unique culture provided by the Agency to its participants. Our success with OPM's Retirement and Insurance Service call center shows that we know how to discreetly handle sensitive personal information for Federal annuitants. Federal employees expect prompt, courteous, and well-informed assistance, and we will provide it to them.

3. **Indicate the address(es) of the site(s) you plan to use for this project. If you plan to use more than one site, indicate the percentage of total phone traffic to be handled by site. Confirm that all operators will be located at this site(s).**

☑ **Spherix compliance:** Spherix has two facilities: a corporate headquarters in Beltsville, Maryland, and a field office in Cumberland, Maryland. Each site serves as a backup call center to the other. The two have fully compatible IT/telecom systems connected via a Virtual Private Network (VPN) connection. We operate all of our National and State park reservations projects in ██████. Our ██████ facility will serve as the primary location for this project while our ██████ site will be the backup in case of disaster recovery.

Cumberland Field Office	Beltsville Headquarters
Spherix	Spherix
12501 Willow Brook Road	12051 Indian Creek Court
Cumberland, Maryland 21502	Beltsville, Maryland 20705

■ **Spherix advantage:** An important point to consider with regard to the location of the call center is the center's disaster recovery capability (See *Question 26*). We maintain a comprehensive disaster recovery plan which we test annually to ensure call center continuity. Our two sites are far enough apart so that a single disaster would not affect both facilities, and yet close enough that we could set up a duplicate operation in ██████ and transport the trained agents from ██████ to minimize the interruption and maximize disaster recovery. Please see *Figure 1* below for a diagram showing our dual site configuration.

Figure 1: Dual Site Configuration
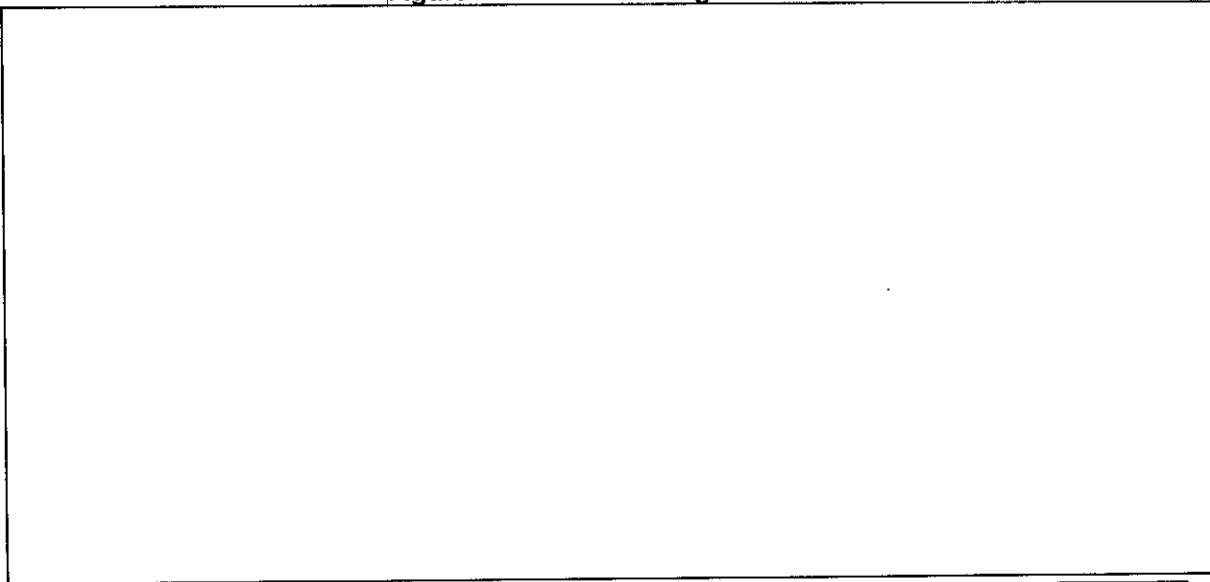
New facility in ▮▮▮▮▮▮: Our ▮▮▮▮▮▮ operation occupies a new ▮▮▮ square-foot facility, which greatly expands our capacity by increasing our seats from ▮▮▮. We will handle 100% of this project's call volume using a project-dedicated staff at our ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ facility. Only in the event of a significant business interruption in ▮▮▮ would we switch operations to our ▮▮▮ location.

Location requirement: Our ▮▮▮▮▮ center meets the RFP requirements that the site and all associates assigned to the telephones be within the United States, not co-located with the current facility in New Orleans, Louisiana, and that the site be far enough away to function as a disaster recovery option if the New Orleans site is for any reason incapacitated.

Comment: Proprietary type # 1	
Comment: Proprietary type # 1	
Comment: Proprietary type # 4	
Comment: Proprietary type # 4	
Comment: Proprietary type # 1	
Comment: Proprietary type # 1	
Comment: Proprietary type # 1	

4. **Provide resumes of the key staff you expect to use for this project.**

☑ **Spherix compliance:** To manage the Thrift Savings Plan project, we will draw on our experts from both Operations and IT. Our designated Project Manager will be the key individual working in the Parallel Call Center and she will be supported by seasoned professionals who bring decades of combined experience to this effort. Several of our proposed project staff have extensive experience in financial services. Please see *Appendix 1* for resumes of these project support professionals.

Key Staff:

⭐ **Spherix advantage:** ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ **(Project Manager)**

▮▮▮▮▮▮ is the proposed Project Manager for the FRTIB Parallel Call Center project. Her diverse experience includes supervisory roles in call centers, manufacturing, and financial services. From mid-2003 to the present, she has worked as the OCR Supervisor and Quality Verification Specialist for the ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ and served as Project Analyst for several government and commercial clients. From 2001 to 2003, ▮▮▮▮▮▮ coordinated and administered training programs for ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ as Learning Manager. Prior to that, she gained over four years experience with ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮. From 1990 to late in 1996, ▮▮▮▮▮▮ worked for Spherix, most recently as Operations Manager for ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ projects operated by Spherix. Her specific duties included instructing the staff on technical, administrative, and operational matters; developing training programs; preparing monthly client reports; and implementing methods for maximum productivity. Shortly after earning her ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮

Comment: Proprietary type # 3	
Comment: Proprietary type # 3	
Comment: Proprietary type # 3	
Comment: Proprietary type # 3	
Comment: Proprietary type # 3	
Comment: Proprietary type # 3	
Comment: Proprietary type # 3	
Comment: Proprietary type # 3	
Comment: Proprietary type # 3	

Support Staff:

Roger Downs (Vice President of Operations)

Mr. Downs combines extensive call center experience with financial and quality control management. He came to Spherix with a strong background in financial services call centers,

including several senior level positions in the industry from 1985 to 1995. This background will provide a valuable framework upon which to build excellent customer service. He rose to Vice President of Operations after having directed Business Development in 2000, and previously directing our Commercial Information Services Division, where he concentrated on growth for the Firm. He is expanding the Company's business while directing account management and client relations.

████████ (Director of Information Services)

████████ will provide overall leadership and oversight for FRTIB's Parallel Call Center project. ████████ has worked for Spherix for 27 years and has actively coordinated the Company's Federal and State government information service programs since 1994. For 10 years, she managed the financial aspects of our ████████████████████████ ████████████████████████████████████. She maintains a close working relationship with client contract officers, ensuring that Spherix meets each contract's guidelines. With over 20 years in all aspects of call center operation and management at Spherix, ████████ is the most experienced of Spherix's government program managers. ██ ████ is located in our ████████████████ and maintains daily contact with ████████.

████████ (National Account Manager/Government)

████████ has dual responsibilities for Federal business development as well as serving as Project Director for most Federal contracts operating in the ████████ call center. ██ ████ rose through the ranks to eventually direct the ████████ ████████████████████████. He led the development of the extensive database with millions of items on all aspects of the U.S. Government, including those relating to the Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board, and its periodic technology updates. He managed all aspects of the project with its staff of over ███, ensuring that the work was in compliance with client guidelines. In addition, ████████ serves, or has served, as Project Director on a number of other Federal Call Center projects, such as the Office of Personnel Management, which assists 11 million Federal retirees with their retirement accounts, U.S. Department of Energy, the United States Postal Service, the White House, and the Internal Revenue Service. ████████████████████████████████.

████████ (QA Coordinator)

████████ has two years of experience as the Quality Assurance/Benchmarking Coordinator at Spherix's ████████████████████████. Previously, she was a 10-year veteran of the Federal Information Center, which included work on FRTIB. She rose from Information Specialist through various managerial positions to head the project's quality assurance program. She has shown herself to be studious, well informed, patient with callers and staff alike, and an excellent mentor for trainees. Her proven managerial ability, the breadth and depth of her call center experience, and the energy and intelligence she brings to her work have made her a choice candidate for the position of Quality Assurance Coordinator.

██████████ (QA Coordinator)

██████████ will serve as a Quality Assurance Coordinator for FRTIB's Parallel Call Center project. She has served as QA Manager for Spherix's Cumberland office since October 2001. She is responsible for providing quality assurance to line operators on reservation and government contracts. She coordinates quality assurance schedules for contract supervisors. She compiles weekly and monthly reports for quality assurance content. ████████ handles quality issues and counsels line operators who experience problems when providing customer service. ███ . She is located in our ████████ office.

██████████ (Trainer)

██████████ will be our trainer for the Parallel Call Center project. ████████ has been with Spherix for four years. She began her career at Spherix in Marketing. She was promoted into the position of Cumberland Trainer, where she is responsible for providing training to all employees hired at the Cumberland facility. She has four years of experience in developing and implementing training schedules, setting criteria and performing evaluations. ████████ will work closely with FRTIB to maintain current and accurate training data and ensure that the call center staff are thoroughly prepared to provide outstanding service. ████████ has provided training for new hires for the National Park Reservation Service, and the reservation centers for the states of Michigan, Maryland, Delaware, and Indiana.

██████████ (Director of Information Technology)

██████████ is an experienced manager of information technology teams. For more than 10 years, he has been planning, developing and implementing strategies for effective technology programs. He heads all facets of the Company's Information Technology projects, including the development of new products, enhancements to existing ones as well as the management of computer and telephony infrastructure. Prior to joining Spherix, ██████████ ██ ██

██████████ (Infrastructure Manager)

██████████ serves as the Company's Infrastructure Manager. He possesses excellent reasoning, analytical and troubleshooting skills. He is able to quickly identify, isolate, and resolve technical issues pertaining to servers, desktops, networking infrastructure, and/or end-users. He is proficient with TCP/IP and other network protocols, as well as DHCP, WINS, and RAID configurations. He has experience monitoring system resources using NT and third party monitoring tools to provide informative reports for management and administrators. Mr. Rutledge is able to "debug" and correct NT/W2K system errors and resource constraints. He has implemented security measures to resources as appropriate. He possesses excellent interpersonal communications and language skills that allow him to communicate effectively with both peers and management. ██ ████████████████████████████████████

Comments (right margin):
- **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 3
- **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 3
- **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 3
- **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 3
- **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 3
- **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 3
- **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 3
- **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 3
- **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 3
- **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 3
- **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 3
- **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 3
- **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 3
- **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 3
- **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 3

████████ (Network Administrator/Engineer)

As a vital member of the technology staff at the Cumberland communications center since 1999, ████████ maintains program databases for public information-reservation projects. He designs and updates systems. ██████████████████████████.

████████ (Telecom Engineer)

████████ has eight years of experience in telecommunications support for the Company's Federal information and reservation programs. In March 1996, he received the Spherix Employee-of-the-Month award for his dedicated work in developing and maintaining the telephone systems for the Company's contracted projects in Proprietary Type # 3.

Also, certify your understanding that if replacements to this team are made, the resumes of the incoming staff must be reviewed and approved in advance by the Agency's Contracting Officer.

☑ **Spherix compliance:** Spherix understands the importance of quality and continuity in the staffing resources it applies to client projects. In the event that we replace our Project Manager on our project team for any reason, we will provide a resume of her replacement and obtain approval from the Agency's Contracting Officer.

5. **The Agency anticipates that the coverage hours for this project will be 11:00 a.m. Eastern Time to 9:00 p.m. Eastern Time, Monday through Friday. The Contractor must be prepared, however, to provide coverage from 7:00 a.m. Eastern Time to 9:00 p.m. Eastern Time, Monday through Friday, in the event of reduced call handling capabilities at the New Orleans site. Please confirm that you can maintain this level of phone coverage. Please note that the Agency is closed on [the following] holidays:**

☑ **Spherix compliance:** Spherix will operate the Parallel Call Center from 11 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. ET, and stand ready to cover from 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. ET when needed. We operate our call center on any schedule our clients need, and accommodate 24/7/365 coverage with Live Operators, IVR support or a combination of the two, for clients who have such a need. Our scheduling flexibility accommodates operations in all time zones. We have operated with this kind of schedule (and more expanded ones) with call centers since 1974.

Holidays: Spherix assumes that we will observe the same holidays as those observed by FRTIB and that coverage for those days will not be required (with the exception of Mardi Gras, a holiday for which we will provide full coverage as described below).

■ **Spherix advantage: Managing staffing levels:** The Parallel Call Center project will have its own core of trained, dedicated staff, with fully cross-trained agents ready to assist with call spikes. We use the following tools to determine and manage the staffing levels necessary to maintain our clients' projects:

- ACD statistics and performance measurements
- Historical call data, when available

████████████████████████████

██████████████████████████████████████

---

2 ██████████████████████████████████

██████████████████████████████.

Further, the NFC in New Orleans will be closed on Mardi Gras, and the Contractor will be expected to assume responsibilities for all calls on that day.

☑ **Spherix compliance:** Spherix will be able to assume responsibilities for all calls on Mardi Gras. For this particular day, the call center will be operating from 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. Eastern time. According to data in the RFP, call volume during February is at its lowest. ███

Comment: Proprietary Type # 1

▓ **Spherix advantage:** ██

███

███████████████████████████████████ Spherix is eager to col-

Comment: Proprietary Type # 1

laborate with FRTIB on creative solutions to providing quick, economical, professional support on Mardi Gras and in emergency situations.

6. **Describe how you handle communication with your customers.**

☑ **Spherix compliance: Client communications:** The Spherix Project Manager, ███ ███, as the main point of contact, will represent the company at various meetings, brief-

Comment: Proprietary Type # 3

ings and teleconferences. As needed, other key and support members of our project team, including ███████████████████████████████, and others will attend such meetings and conferences to

Comment: Proprietary Type #3

promptly and efficiently address project issues.

▓ **Spherix advantage:** Spherix requires its managers to establish regular, intensive communication in a team atmosphere with the client. This will be critical to this project's success. Our contract management team will work closely with the Agency's COTR to share data and management strategies on the following areas:

Category	Discussion Areas	Agency Participants	Spherix Participants	Recommended Frequency
███	██████	███	█████	████
███	██████	███	████	██
███	██████	███	█████	██

Comment: Proprietary Type # 2

Comment: Proprietary Type # 2

Comment: Proprietary Type # 2

Other client communications: Spherix's Project Manager will exchange daily telephone calls and emails with the Agency's COTR to ensure a fully coordinated FRTIB-Spherix

team operation. In addition, we will work with the COTR to establish a contact directory and detailed communications protocols with the New Orleans site to address call routing issues that may arise.

Customer communications: The very nature of call centers requires effective communications with customers. Through our extensive training program (see our response to *Question 10* for more detailed information), we ensure that our CSRs are well-equipped to deal with virtually any request or complaint that customers may pose to them. We will ensure that our staff members are thoroughly versed in the TSP applications so that service requests can be efficiently handled. In addition, we train our staff to "speak with the voice of the client," ensuring that every caller is treated politely, respectfully, and professionally. Our training program provides ample opportunity for our call center staff to learn to listen proactively, anticipate the caller's needs, and make sure that the customers' needs are fully met and their expectations exceeded in every call. We will further ensure that our CSRs are communicating effectively through close supervision of call center activities and regular monitoring of calls.

Will there be dedicated account management?

☑ **Spherix compliance:** Yes. This is our standard protocol for providing excellent service to each client, and we will do so for FRTIB. ████████████ will be our dedicated Project Manager.

Comment: Proprietary Type # 3

▓ **Spherix advantage:** To support the Parallel Call Center, we will ensure that *all* staffing resources, from the Project Manager to the Supervisors and Customer Service Representatives, will give their undivided attention to every operational and strategic facet of this important project.

Will the Agency have access to operational contacts?

☑ **Spherix compliance:** Yes. Spherix will provide the Agency with access to all of its operational contacts, with the Project Manager acting as the facilitator. Experience has proven that projects have the greatest degree of success when communications are managed in this manner, since all the issues and their resolution are funneled officially through one designated individual. Spherix can also provide a list of its call site employees to FRTIB as needed.

Other access: Spherix welcomes the Agency to contact us by phone or email whenever it has questions or issues that need to be addressed. We encourage regular contact to update the client regarding Technical Status, Operational Status, and Quality and Performance Status, all of which will help to keep you abreast of, and involved in, the project's progress.

Will we have access to our contact person during all hours that the operation is open?

☑ **Spherix compliance:** Yes. Spherix will ensure that FRTIB has access to its contact person, the Project Manager, during all hours that the operation is open. At times when she is not in the office, she will be available by cell phone. In the event of vacation or illness, we will provide a designated alternate who will be named after contract award. Spherix en-

sures that excellent communications are maintained by establishing clear protocols for status updates and issue resolution.

Will there be a different contact person assigned according to the particular work shift?

☑ **Spherix compliance:** Yes. Spherix will provide FRTIB with the supervisory schedule and their contact information during different shifts. However, the Project Manager will be available by cell phone during all shifts when not on site.

Please identify the individuals by name, title, and phone number.

☑ **Spherix compliance:** Spherix's escalation call list will be as follows. All of these individuals have strong financial services experience. After contract award, we will appoint Supervisors and provide names and contact information for all shifts.

Name	Title	Phone number	Email address
███	███	███	███
███	███	███	███
███	███	███	███

Comment: Proprietary Type # 3
Comment: Proprietary Type # 3
Comment: Proprietary Type # 3

7. **Describe the structure and staffing of your customer service office, and complete the following table:**

☑ **Spherix compliance:** Each customer service project is staffed according to the needs of the client and the type of project. Many of our projects are sensitive to seasonal fluctuations (e.g., camping reservations, seasonal sales of stamps, open season for benefits, and so forth). Customer service staff in our ███ office can reach ███ ███. Each project has its own dedicated Project Manager and, depending on the size of the contract, a corresponding number of supervisors. The supervisor-to-staff ratio also depends on the complexity of the project and can vary from ███ ███ Information included in the chart below provides current staffing statistics and the average supervisor-to-CSR ratio.

Comment: Proprietary Type # 1
Comment: Proprietary Type # 1

Comment: Proprietary Type # 1

Customer Service Requirement	Spherix Compliance
A. Number of customer service representatives.	███
B. Average length of experience with your firm.	███
C. Average turnover	███
D. Expected supervisor and management structure for this requirement.	███
E. Number of representatives per supervisor.	███

Comment: Proprietary Type # 1
Comment: Proprietary Type # 1
Comment: Proprietary Type # 1

Comment: Proprietary Type # 1
Comment: Proprietary Type # 1

Structure and staffing of the project: The organization chart in *Figure 2* shows how our proposed project team will be set up for launch and for day-to-day operations.

Figure 2: Project Organization Chart
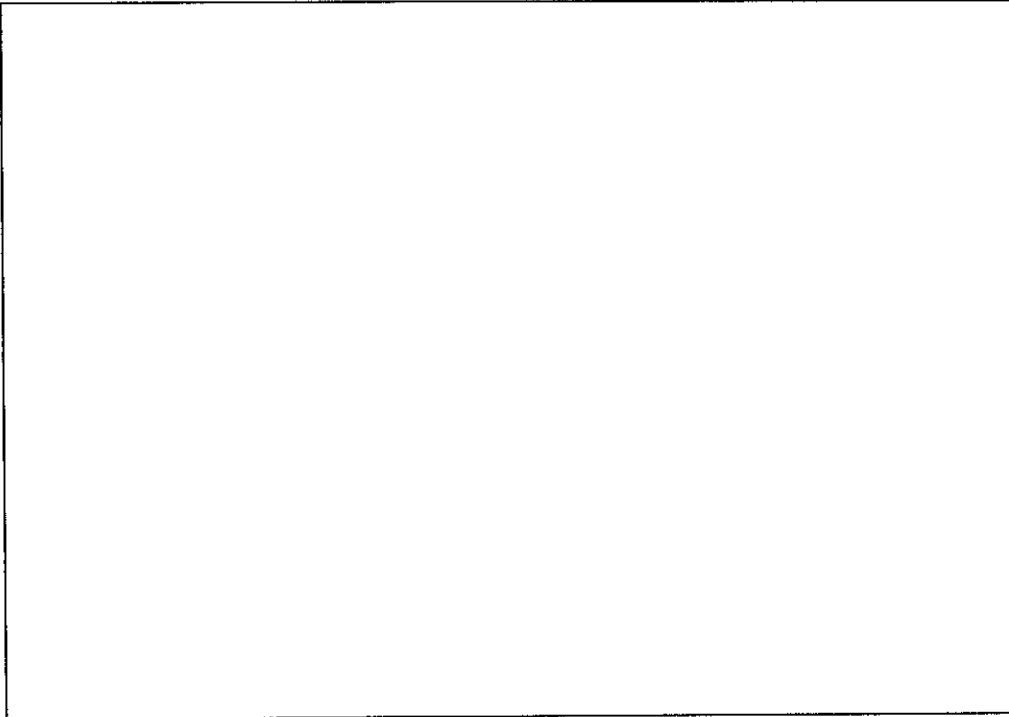
8. Please describe your hiring criteria and hiring process. Include information on the timeframe required to hire representatives for a program like the Agency's, the typical "drop out rate" at the two month mark, and the maximum number of representatives you will be able to hire and train at one time for this program.

☑ **Spherix compliance:** The Beltsville and Cumberland sites maintain Human Resources departments for employment matters such as recruiting, screening, testing, evaluating, and hiring staff (including processing any necessary security/background checks and confidentiality agreements), and managing the employee benefits packages.

Human Resources at both locations also interviews candidates, discusses benefits, and tests data entry skills. For applicants who pass this screening, we check three references, including the current or most recent employer. If the contact gives satisfactory assessments of work performance, attitude, and dependability, a criminal background check is completed. If the background check is satisfactory, an offer of employment is extended.

Our Human Resources professionals focus on the qualities that will ensure not only the success of the job candidates, but also their ability to assimilate the values and qualities that our clients want to impart to the public. They are able to discern and evaluate a job candidate's maturity, ability to speak clearly and type accurately, and capacity to perform well

on the job as a result of prior customer service background. Our goal is to have our representatives "speak with the voice of the client" so that you can be assured that FRTIB's Thrift Savings Plan is professionally and competently presented to your customers.

Hiring Process: Spherix will begin our hiring process shortly after award. We will draw from our large part-time labor pool, some of which are capable of converting to full-time status. We recognize the need for prepared and professional personnel and want to be sure to obtain the best for this project. This process consists of proven recruiting and screening of potential employees.

- **Recruiting:** One of our most successful recruiting methods has been to ████████ ██. We also recruit staff through postings on our website, classified advertisements in local newspapers, notices posted at local universities, local job placement, and Internet resume databases, such as www.monster.com.

  Comment: Proprietary Type # 2

- **Screening:** Spherix requires a thorough screening before employment is offered. We realize that recruiting the right staff is vital to the long-term success of a project. Our screening process starts with a resume review. ██For this project, we will also ensure that all staff having access to sensitive information will be subject to a security check as required by FRTIB.

  Comment: Proprietary Type # 2

Timeframe for hiring qualified staff: In starting this program, we will begin with approximately ██ FTEs, based on the phone volumes given in the RFP. The entire process usually takes ████████████████████ to interview and make selection, ████ for offers and, depending on availability, and ██████ before staff could begin.

Comment: Proprietary Type # 1
Comment: Proprietary Type # 1
Comment: Proprietary Type # 1
Comment: Proprietary Type # 1

Gauging attrition: There really is no "typical" dropout rate at the two-month mark for programs like the Agency's. The rate of attrition depends on the type of program and its requirements. For example, in our Office of Personnel Management (OPM) project, we had ██ dropouts during the first two months. In fact, we have had ████████ people leave the project since its inception in October 2002, ████████████████████████. For a program such as Child Support Enforcement, managed for Maryland's Department of Human Resources, the dropout has been somewhat higher, due to the nature of the calls and the callers. Another factor to consider is that the work ethic of the labor pool in ██████ ██████████████, tends to be very strong and results in a higher tenure of employees. For our FIC, the average tenure was ████████.

Comment: Proprietary Type # 1
Comment: Proprietary Type # 1
Comment: Proprietary Type # 1

Comment: Proprietary Type # 1
Comment: Proprietary Type # 1

Rate of hiring and training: The maximum number of agents we would hire and train at one time would be to handle Mardi Gras in the first year. To accomplish this, we are projecting approximately ████████ ; this number will be less in future years as we add staff due to increasing call volume and utilize already trained staff (from Mardi Gras and other call spikes). With the gradual increase in telephone volume, future training sessions will be more gradual and phased-in.

> Comment: Proprietary Type # 1

★ **Spherix advantage: Staffing up for emergencies:** Our ability to react to staffing needs has been put to the test on occasions. We have experience in staffing up to handle emergency recalls for national pharmaceutical companies. This has, at times, involved adding over 300 operators on very short notice.

9. **Describe your call quality assurance processes, including how you validate and report results, and how you use the information to improve performance.**

☑ **Spherix compliance:** At Spherix, both the contract supervisors and the Quality Assurance Coordinator are responsible for providing QA on call center agents. This is accomplished by remote and live monitoring programs. Overall performance is measured through the ████████████████████ system. At the beginning of each month, the QA Coordinator ██

> Comment: Proprietary Type # 4

> Comment: Proprietary Type # 2

Each call is evaluated in ██████ categories, including information provided to each caller, verification of information, and any needed referrals. We further evaluate the CSRs' accurate use of ████████████. A score of ████ or better is required to maintain an acceptable level of customer service. Those agents who receive a grade of ████ or lower are counseled by a supervisor or the QA Coordinator. In some instances, additional training may be required.

> Comment: Proprietary Type # 2

> Comment: Proprietary Type # 2

> Comment: Proprietary Type # 2

> Comment: Proprietary Type # 2

★ **Spherix advantage: Remote Monitoring:** Spherix will provide the ability to remotely monitor call center activities. Spherix incorporates ████████████████████████ software into its call centers to allow clients to monitor voice and data in an integrated fashion without having to leave their desktops. This web-enabled software toolkit integrates the telephone conversation and computer data at the call center's PBX. ████████████ has three main functionality areas for:

> Comment: Proprietary Type # 4

> Comment: Proprietary Type # 4

- **Call center supervisors,** including ████████████████████████ ████████████████ s.
- **CSRs,** including the ability to ████████████████████████.
- **Clients,** including the ability to ████████████████████████

> Comment: Proprietary Type # 4

> Comment: Proprietary Type # 4

> Comment: Proprietary Type # 4

> Comment: Proprietary Type # 4

Side-by-side monitoring: In addition to our remote and live monitoring programs, the QA reviewer may also do call sharing with a CSR. The reviewer will sit with the representative and listen while the CSR answers calls. This gives the reviewer the ability to offer suggestions as to how the call could have been handled more effectively, if that is the case.

Test calls are another tool that can be used for Quality Assurance. These are calls that are placed by the reviewer to the call center contact. The reviewer goes through the steps of making a request for information, asking the CSR specific questions in order to make sure the proper procedure is followed for that call.

Quality Assurance surveys can also be used. Those agents on the specified customer service line are asked to complete between three and five surveys per week. During a call to a customer service line, the caller is asked by the CSR a series of questions relating to the specific call in which the reservation was made or transaction was accomplished. Responses are graded numerically ███████████████████████████. This system is already in place and used by our ████████████████████████████.

> **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 2
> **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 5

Additionally, contract executives have the option of placing a call to the call center and doing their own monitoring of incoming calls. The ██████████████████████ is currently utilizing this option, in addition to the standard monitoring.

> **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 5

★ **Spherix advantage: Quality assurance as a way of doing business:** Spherix's approach to the call center and financial information services is centered on quality. In a call center environment, quality is in large part defined by the criterion that every call is handled promptly and efficiently with an absolute minimum of wait time, excessive queues, abandons, or busy outs. Since adherence to consistent performance standards is our standard operating procedure, we have established our own internal standards, developed in accordance with industry benchmarks that we apply to all of our projects. We have quality controls and monitoring methods that ensure that those standards are met. Having provided customer contact services for 27 years, Spherix recognizes the need to provide a system that delivers service for our clients that meets or exceeds their expectations for quality.

Regular Review of Call Documentation: Spherix will use call management system software to monitor call center performance. Daily and weekly reports will be created and reviewed for overall performance as well as individual CSR performance. ██████████████ ██████████████████████████ Lead supervisors will review this performance with each CSR, highlighting acceptable performance and/or areas to be improved. Management staff will also review overall call center performance on a regular basis throughout the day and make appropriate staffing adjustments to ensure compliance with contractual performance requirements.

> **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 2

Reporting: Spherix will prepare a detailed account of ████████████████ to submit to the Project Officer ███████████████████████, as a portion of the periodic operations report. In addition, Spherix will provide a project summary at the conclusion of the period of overflow operations. This report will summarize Spherix quality assurance activities, including ██████████████

> **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 2
> **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 2

> **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 2

Figure 3 below shows Spherix's Quality Performance Matrix, including each type of quality activity, the quality standard, assurance procedure, and other facets of the QA process.

Figure 3: Quality Performance Matrix

Activity	Standard of Quality	Assurance Procedure	Frequency	Responsible Party	Corrective Action	
■	■	■	■	■	■	Comment: Proprietary Type # 2
■	■	■	■	■	■	Comment: Proprietary Type # 2
■	■	■	■	■	■	Comment: Proprietary Type # 2
■	■	■	■	■	■	Comment: Proprietary Type # 2
■	■	■	■	■	■	Comment: Proprietary Type # 2

10. Briefly describe your new hire and ongoing training programs.

☑ **Spherix compliance:** Spherix generally ███████████████ customer service training. In addition to ████████████████████████████), we have developed our own customer service training that closely mirrors the topics in the ██████ course outline. We cover the following in our training program:

██████████████

████████████████

Comment: Proprietary Type # 2

Comment: Proprietary Type # 2

Comment: Proprietary Type # 4

[REDACTED]

Comment: Proprietary Type # 2

★ Spherix advantage: Training philosophy: Spherix understands that satisfying customers is the objective of a training program designed to build strong client relationships. The Spherix standard emphasizes the highest level of quality in customer service, telephone etiquette, and project specific knowledge. Customer service, therefore, is not merely a cliché, but a way of life that is recognized and embraced as our bottom line. Spherix's customer service and telephone etiquette training regimen includes:

- [REDACTED]: In this component of training, trainees will learn the general rules of operation for the information program. They are taught to [REDACTED]

  In this section we will incorporate FRTIB procedures for handling prank, suicide or other crisis calls.

- [REDACTED]: General communication and customer service skills include [REDACTED]

  o **Greeting callers:** CSRs are taught how to address each caller as the client requires. This will include any greeting that the Agency desires, such as: "Hello, this is [insert name] speaking on behalf of [the Thrift Savings Plan], how may I help you?"

  o [REDACTED]: CSRs are trained to [REDACTED] find out what the caller truly needs and wants. They also are taught to [REDACTED]

Comment: Proprietary Type # 2

Comment: Proprietary Type # 2

[REDACTED]

).

Comment: Proprietary Type # 2

o **Formulating an appropriate response:** Once the question is clarified, the CSR must determine how to respond. CSRs are trained in the following components of formulating an appropriate response:

[REDACTED]

Comment: Proprietary Type # 2

Referrals: An important part of training is in handling referrals for inquiries that are outside the purview of the CSR's normal responsibilities. This involves teaching trainees to "warm" transfer calls that they are unable to answer satisfactorily to a Supervisor, or referring an item for personal attention by the client's designated contact. For this project, the escalation procedure will be: [REDACTED]

Comment: Proprietary Type # 2

o **Controlling the call:** Trainees are taught to control the conversation tactfully. Because a CSR's only means of communication is his or her voice, trainees are taught how to ask questions or respond to callers' comments tactfully. To prevent problems in communication, trainees are taught to follow these guidelines:

[REDACTED]

Comment: Proprietary Type # 2

To deal with irate callers, we instruct trainees to acknowledge the feelings of the caller before addressing the specific inquiry. They will be taught to respond with comments such as, [REDACTED]

Comment: Proprietary Type # 2

Trainees are taught never to [REDACTED], no matter how aggressive or insistent they become. They will ask the Supervisor to take over the call if they feel the call is getting out of control or they feel themselves becoming angry. Please see *Figure 4* for one of the training handouts for effective communication.

Comment: Proprietary Type # 2

Figure 4: Training Handout – Tactful Phrases

	Do say	Don't say

○ **Ending the call:** When ending a call, CSRs will make sure that the caller: ███ ████████████████████████████████ A simple sentence such as "Do you have any other questions?" lets callers know that they will respond to all queries. For most callers, it is important to know that someone listened and responded to their needs effectively.

• **Absorbing project knowledge:** Trainees will become thoroughly familiar with all project-related topics and FRTIB applications. An important part of this component of training is educating CSRs how to use ████████████████████ to respond to inquiries. They will learn when to adhere closely to scripts and the limits (if any) within which they may change the wording of scripts. CSRs will be taught what to do if a caller does not understand a particular word.

Trainees will review materials and will be tested on their contents. Those who do not demonstrate an acceptable level of competence (████████████████ ███████████) will be required to undergo additional study. Those who do not achieve the criterion level of competence after additional study will be replaced with other CSRs. Trainees also will respond to ██████████████ ██████████. Their responses will be recorded and reviewed for thoroughness and accuracy.

• **Achieving technical proficiency:** The trainees will be given comprehensive training in the use of the desktop workstations to carry out project activities. This will cover basic troubleshooting techniques and how to use the software applications. The trainees will ███ █████████████████████████████████ . It is important that trainees learn how to do this at the beginning of their training so that they can access any type of information quickly when taking calls. The trainees also will be fully trained in the use of the telecommunications equipment, in-

SPHERIX
Use or disclosure of proposal data is subject to the
restriction of the Title Page of this Proposal
21

cluding ███
███
                                                              Comment: Proprietary Type #2

Trainees will practice use of project equipment under close supervision until they can demonstrate competency in all aspects of equipment usage. At the conclusion of training, each trainee will be tested and rated on his or her equipment competency using a standard rating form. Any trainee who does not demonstrate an acceptable level of competency in all equipment uses will be required to undergo additional training until an acceptable level of competency is achieved. Any trainee who cannot attain an acceptable level of competency will not be assigned as a CSR.

- **Observing actual calls** will allow trainees to see how veteran CSRs handle calls. These segments of training show how the skills and techniques they have learned are applied in practice. They will have an opportunity to ask questions to clarify why a phone call was handled in a particular way.

- **Role-playing and call simulation** are important parts of CSR training. In role-playing, the trainees will ███
████████████████████████ Trainees will be assessed on their knowledge and   **Comment:** Proprietary Type #2
computer skills.

In call simulation exercises, ███████████████████████████████, using   **Comment:** Proprietary Type #2
several scenarios. The calls will simulate as closely as possible the program's actual operation. The Supervisor will ████████ during these call simulations. The train-   **Comment:** Proprietary Type #2
ees will determine ████████████████████████████████████   **Comment:** Proprietary Type #2
Following the call simulations, CSRs will answer test calls unassisted to test their ability to handle typical inquiries.

- **Cooperation in training:** As an experienced vendor of Federal Government call centers, Spherix understands the importance of integrating our proven strategies with FRTIB's desired goals and training materials. At contract award, our Project Manager will work closely with the Agency to establish a training plan that ensures the success of this project.

- **Approval by FRTIB:** Prior to implementing our training program that is customized to the needs of the TSP, Spherix will submit the program and curriculum to the Agency for review and approval. Spherix will work cooperatively with FRTIB to ensure that the proposed training program is robust and meets the Agency's expectations.

- **Train-the-trainer follow-up:** As required by the RFP, Spherix will participate in the "Train the Trainer" program provided by FRTIB, and will assume responsibility thereafter for the completion of on-site training of staff assigned to this project.

- **Continuous Training:** Ongoing training is part of Spherix's overall training plan. All CSRs will receive ongoing training to remain up-to-date on computer system operations, policies and procedures, as well as changes in FRTIB applications.

What processes do you have in place to maximize a new representative's performance as quickly as possible?

☑ **Spherix compliance:** Spherix's recruitment, selection, training, and quality assurance processes are designed and conducted to ensure maximum initial performance of CSRs. Recruitment and selection methods have been discussed in response to *Question 8*, while quality assurance activities are detailed in our response to *Question 9*. Spherix makes every effort to assign personnel most ideally suited to the requirements of newly contracted services, based on their experience, education, and capabilities.

Required customer service skills: We will ████████████████ recruit from the
outside, people with ██████ ████ CSR experience. We will accomplish that by ████
██████████████████████. We will also seek individuals who have demonstrated
clear and strong predisposition to customer care. In addition, when Spherix is awarded a
new contract, we attempt to match its knowledge and skill requirements with ████████
████. For example, in selecting personnel to operate FRTIB's Parallel Call Center, our
Human Resources staff will work with the proposed Project Manager to identify ████
█████.
These individuals will serve as the core of the new operation's CSR staff.

> Comment: Proprietary Type # 3
>
> Comment: Proprietary Type # 3
>
> Comment: Proprietary Type # 3
>
> Comment: Proprietary Type # 3
>
> Comment: Proprietary Type # 3

The role of training and monitoring: Beyond personnel selection, Spherix will design its training to permit rapid mastery of the information and procedures that are the focus of the client's customer inquiries. For instance, this may include ████████████████████
████████████. This will provide positive task modeling for the Spherix trainees,
and ensure more rapid success in achieving parallel service performance. An alternative
would be to ████████████████████████████████
██████████. In any case, Spherix will seek close review by
agency staff of any training materials that the company must generate to ensure that they
are pertinent and cogent and sufficiently focused to meet the needs of the agency's customers.

> Comment: Proprietary Type # 2
>
> Comment: Proprietary Type # 2

Ongoing assessment: Finally, quality assurance staff and project management will continually assess CSR and overall operational success in satisfying, if not surpassing, the requirements of the agency. Spherix will strive to fine tune its operation even prior to the launch date in order to rapidly earn the confidence of the agency and its customers.

Also, provide information on any training or leadership programs you will utilize for your front-line supervisory/management team.

☑ **Spherix compliance – mentoring program:** Before hiring supervisors and/or managers from outside the firm, we identify potential management talent from within our own workforce. We have the leadership candidate work with an experienced supervisor or manager to gain knowledge and experience before being promoted to a supervisory or management position (in the manner of a mentoring program). Supervisors with little or no previous experience are sent to outside training seminars that provide instruction on developing supervisory skills.

Documentation: We also provide managers with a Manager/Supervisor Handbook that addresses the management issues related to the Employee Manual. Spherix Operations also

has a Project Managers Manual to provide new managers with guidelines and resources necessary for project managers to be successful in their job. Some broad topics covered in the manual include:

Copies of forms, contracts, reports will be attached as appendices for reference purposes in this manual.

11. Describe your performance evaluation and coaching programs for customer service representatives.

☑ **Spherix compliance:** Spherix uses several distinct, but mutually supportive, proven techniques to evaluate and track CSR performance. These activities include ███████ ██████████████. These practices provide a comprehensive view of CSR performance. Quality assurance staff record these assessments in a performance progress and achievement electronic folder for the each CSR. ███████████████████████████ ██████████████████████████████████ also appear in the folder, which supervisors, trainers, or managers will review monthly with the CSR.

◁ **Also see:** *Question 10* regarding quality assurance activities.

Performance improvement: Should a recommendation for improved performance from quality assurance personnel be placed in the progress and achievement folder, supervisors and trainers undertake one or more coaching activities to increase the CSR's performance.

⊠ **Spherix advantage:** Call sharing ████████████ has proven to be a valuable coaching technique. Spherix ████████████████████████ ██████████████████████, to learn how calls should be handled with efficiency, accuracy, and superior customer service. We also require such CSRs to participate in a focused continuing training group to sharpen skills and knowledge. Finally, the CSRs will undergo intensive one-on-one training with trainers to master skills.

In addition to these in-service performance evaluation practices, all CSRs also receive annual performance evaluations from their project managers.

Comment: Proprietary Type # 2

Comment: Proprietary Type # 2

Comment: Proprietary Type # 2

Comment: Proprietary Type # 2

Comment: Proprietary Type # 2

12. Confirm that 100% of calls will be taped and that the Agency will have full electronic access to taped and live calls from the Agency's offices.

☑ **Spherix compliance:** Spherix will tape 100% of the calls received and will provide FRTIB full electronic access to taped and live calls from the Agency offices.

▓ **Spherix advantage:** In addition to call monitoring of selected taped calls that we will provide through ▓▓▓▓▓▓ (see description in our response to Question 9, "Remote Monitoring" bullet), we will meet the Agency's requirements through the following vendors/technologies:

- ▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓: This simple, yet robust ▓▓▓▓-based tool provides the ability to record every call received through the call center. ▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓

    ▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓

- ▓▓▓▓▓: The ▓▓▓▓▓ is a high-density gateway device that ▓▓▓▓▓▓ permits remote access to live calls. It can support ▓▓▓▓▓ remote users combining both voice and data connectivity. It is a cost-effective solution that ensures security through remote user passwords that prevent unauthorized access to the PBX.

Comment: Proprietary Type # 4
Comment: Proprietary Type # 4
Comment: Proprietary Type # 4
Comment: Proprietary Type # 4
*Comment: Proprietary Type # 4*
Comment: Proprietary Type # 4
Comment: Proprietary Type # 4
Comment: Proprietary Type # 4
Comment: Proprietary Type # 4

Also provide the storage capabilities for these tapes; they must be retained for the length of the contract.

☑ **Spherix compliance:** Based on the data provided in the RFP, approximately 5.24 TB of data storage per year will be needed for recorded voice call storage (approximately 260 tapes per year). This can be accomplished by performing a daily tape backup of each day's calls captured into the voice recording system onto a ▓▓▓▓▓ tape. This will allow for tapes to be archived on a daily basis for ease of data retrieval.

Comment: Proprietary Type # 4

Storage capabilities: Spherix will provide for the storage and retrieval of the call tapes by retaining onsite ▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓ tapes in a fireproof safe. For storage of tapes beyond one year, we will archive them in an offsite secured facility.

Comment: Proprietary Type # 2

13. Describe your processes for managing service levels, efficiency, and cost.

☑ **Spherix compliance:** Spherix uses the reports from the ▓▓▓▓▓▓, as well as our ongoing call monitoring and training, to manage the service levels, call efficiency, and cost (staffing). Using the ACD and Agent reports from our call management software, we are able to determine our staff utilization and make adjustments where necessary (adding staff to peak periods of the day where service levels are not as optimal as desired, or reducing staff or staff hours because of low volume, thereby reducing labor costs. Call monitoring for managing call flow as well as reviewing agent service levels (talk time, not ready time, wait time, etc.) allows us to recognize outstanding staff performance or provide additional

Comment: Proprietary Type # 4

SPHERIX
Use or disclosure of proposal data is subject to the
restriction of the Title Page of this Proposal
25

coaching for those staff not meeting desired service levels. Also refer to our discussion on QA.

Workforce management tools: We also use two software programs to forecast and schedule staffing requirements: ███████████████████████████████████. Using the advanced real-time reporting capabilities of our ████ call center applications allows us to determine quickly when we need more people on the line.

Using Erlang's queuing theory, ████ takes keyed-in call data and calculates ████████. To make these calculations, the Manager or Supervisor enters data such as ██.

ProCost quickly helps to determine staffing needs for projects where no historical trend data is available.

⭐ **Spherix advantage:** ██████████ helps the Manager collect contact volume information directly from the telephone switch. ████████████████████████ yields the most efficient plan for managing a contact center. ██████████ software can provide staffing plans, hiring plans, training plans, and budget plans. It also provides tools to develop shift preferences for CSRs, start-time preferences, custom schedules, and fixed shifts. Its workforce planning module can be used to manage changes in contact volume, service goals, skills requirements, media types or media mix, and for retraining existing staff.

14. Given the workload estimates provided in response to this RFP, how many Full Time Equivalent (FTE) representatives will you have on staff by month for the first year of this contract?

☑ **Spherix compliance:** Based on the workload estimates provided in response to this RFP, Spherix proposes to staff the levels of CSRs and Supervisors to manage daily operations as shown in *Figure 5*.

Figure 5: FTEs Planned by Month

Base Year Month	CSR FTEs	Supervisor FTEs
January 2004	■	▮
February 2004	■	▮
March 2004	■	▮
April 2004	■	▮
May 2004	■	■
June 2004	■	■
July 2004	■	■
August 2004	■	▮
September 2004	■	▮
October 2004	■	■
November 2004	■	■
December 2004	■	▮

How many FTEs will you plan for and staff for in the event of a disaster in New Orleans?

☑ **Spherix compliance:** The number of FTEs we will plan for and staff in the event of a disaster in New Orleans depends entirely on when the disaster occurs. The number could range from ███. These FTE calculations are based on the call volumes provided in the RFP. Please see *Figure 6* below.

> **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 3

Figure 6: FTEs Planned for Disaster Recovery

January	■	▌	■■	■■
February	■	▌	■■	■■
March	■	■	■■	■
April	■	■	■■	■■
May	■	■	■■	■■
June	■	■	■■	■■
July	■	■	■■	■■
August	■	▌	■■	■■
September	■	■	■■	■
October	■	■	■■	■■
November	■	■	■■	■■
December	■	▌	■■	■■

> **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 3
> **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 3
> **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 3
> **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 3
> **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 3
> **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 3
> **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 3
> **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 3
> **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 3
> **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 3
> **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 3
> **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 3

Staffing for a disaster after the base year: Staffing in the option years will be dependent upon the growth rate of the program and the telephone volume. Staffing for the option years for this chart assumes a growth rate of ███ of monthly telephone volume for each option year.

> **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 1

Sources of auxiliary staffing: In the event of a disaster, Spherix will utilize temporary help to supplement the ongoing operation of the project. Our dedicated staffing would be used for the core project, whereas disaster recovery would entail a combination of dedicated (core) staff and temporary staff, until the disaster is over and operations return to normal. In the event the disaster is long-term (e.g., a month or longer), we would make the temporary staff permanent and dedicated to the project. In this case, all training and management processes would be brought to bear on the effort to ensure that the Parallel Call Center functions at the same level as the New Orleans center had prior to the onset of the disaster.

How long will it take you to go from your planned staff size to the number of trained representatives needed in the event of a prolonged disaster?

☑ **Spherix compliance:** All staff would have security clearances conducted previously. Depending on the length of notice provided that a disaster ramp-up is needed, temporary

SPHERIX
Use or disclosure of proposal data is subject to the
restriction of the Title Page of this Proposal
27

staff would be brought in. ███████ additional CSRs could be onsite within █ hours. ███████ CSRs could be onsite within █ hours. Training would target the less complex issues.

Since we do not know specifically the extent of the training program being developed by FRTIB, we are assuming that we can conduct an intense, abbreviated training in two days. Incoming calls during the disaster would triage the basic information calls and less complex calls to the newer staff, making the core staff (permanent and more experienced) available for the more complex calls and those requiring research. If FRTIB does not provide provisional clearances for the temporary staff during this disaster period, the temporary staff would only be available to handle those questions which do not require access to a client's account. Any questions requiring access to the client's account would be referred to the more experienced staff.

Ramp-up efforts for a prolonged disaster: Within the 48 hours designated as a prolonged disaster, we would do the following to ramp up from normal staffing to emergency staffing:

- Increase hours of current part-time staff to full-time hours and make overtime available to staff.

- Bring back currently trained temporary staff used in the response center for the Mardi Gras ramp-up. Refresher training would be conducted. This staff could be online within 48 hours.

- Allocate any cross-trained staff currently working on other projects to FRTIB.

How many working hours per week do you use to calculate an FTE?

☑ **Spherix compliance:** Spherix uses ███████████ to calculate an FTE.

15. Describe how you will verify that call tracking procedures will be followed for all calls.

▓ **Spherix advantage::** Spherix uses ██████████ to verify that CSRs follow proper call tracking procedures for all calls. ██████████ digitally records not only the voice conversation, but the ██████████████████████████████. This works for any application the CSRs use, regardless of where they're hosted. Call tracking will be documented in the Agency's application. We will also use our ██████████ in conjunction with ██████████ and the Agency's call handling application to verify that the number of records match the number of calls answered.

16. Describe your procedures for handling customer complaints.

☑ **Spherix compliance:** Spherix recognizes that the best information about the usefulness and quality of service from the customer's perspective often is unsolicited. In fact, it usually comes when a customer has a problem with the service. Rather than view customer complaints solely as indicators of what is "wrong" with service or performance, Spherix approaches them as opportunities to improve specific areas of operation or technology. We

find that this approach benefits not only our reputation in the minds of our customers and clients, but also our long-term standing in a highly competitive market.

> **First-contact resolution:** Spherix's approach to resolving customer complaints enables a CSR to address and solve the customer's problem on first contact. It also provides our program managers with invaluable information to improve quality and service. Below, we describe our specific procedures for handling and documenting complaints to the customer's full satisfaction.

> **Problem escalation procedures:** All CSRs are trained to follow clear problem escalation procedures, which start with documenting the complaint. If a CSR cannot immediately solve the problem to the customer's satisfaction, he or she will take one of several escalation routes, depending on the nature of the problem and the caller's wishes.

Comment: Proprietary Type # 2

The customer complaint log: Each customer complaint recorded in the database will include complete data on the call, including the CSR's and caller's names and the date, time, and subject of the call. The Project Manager will:

- **Daily:** review the customer complaint log;
- **Weekly:** analyze complaints and their resolutions;
- **Monthly:** summarize complaints and resolutions, trends, and recommendations for changes in services or procedures.

Under the Project Manager's direction and with FRTIB's approval, the QA Coordinators will ██. They also will include those customers as a special group in ███████ to assess customer service needs and satisfaction with quality of service.

Comment: Proprietary Type # 2

Comment: Proprietary Type # 2

Comment: Proprietary Type # 2

17. How flexible are you in accommodating changes to the services you are providing? For example, if the Agency decides to add new products or delete existing ones, what kind of turnaround time is involved in explaining the change to the service representatives and incorporating it into the training?

■ **Spherix advantage:** Our track record demonstrates that Spherix provides unmatched flexibility in accommodating changes to program content. In fact, we are specialists in change management. Depending on how extensive the change is and the priority level of the information, communication to staff of program changes is handled in a variety of ways:

- Minor informational changes that need to be disseminated to staff immediately are
  ██
  ██
  ██████ This type of change can be accommodated immediately.   **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 2

- Information changes that are more extensive in nature and need to be disseminated to staff immediately are provided to each staff member in the ████████████████. **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 2
  Again, supervisors review the information with each CSR to ensure that the material is understood. This information will also be ████████████████
  ██████. This type of change can be accommodated within a few hours.   **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 2

- Informational and/or program changes that are forthcoming, but not immediate, are incorporated into both the initial training for new CSRs and the ongoing training held each month for current CSR staff. If the information needs to be disseminated before the next scheduled training session for current staff, a special training session will be held to train the staff and review the new material before the scheduled release date.

All changes can be accommodated and disseminated to staff within a few hours, given the priority of change. Any training materials developed by Spherix for the update training will be provided to the COTR for review before disseminating to staff.

An example of flexibility in accommodating change: Spherix's approach to accommodating changes in program content is illustrated by the following example of how our OPM Retirement and Insurance Office (RIO) parallel call center team incorporates daily procedure or information updates from the client into ongoing operations.

In this contract, Spherix's RIO call center has the same standing as its government counterpart call centers that serve the same constituency. As such, Spherix managers are on a flash alert email list for information changes. Spherix receives such alerts almost daily.

Here is an example from a sample information update alert:

██
██
██
██
██
██
██
██
██
██

Comment: Proprietary Type # 2

Upon receiving the above message, the RIO managers and supervisors immediately used the following SOP to disseminate the information to CSRs.

- Management team reads the update for understanding. If the message is unclear, the management team contacts designated guidance officers with the agency to clarify the message.

- The message is summarized ████████████████████.

Comment: Proprietary Type # 2

- The management team sends the update as an electronic message to each CSR using an RIO-dedicated email network. When call volume permits, after the next completed call, each CSR reads the update, and sends a formal acknowledgement to the management team. If the CSR requires further clarification of the update, the acknowledgement will include this. A member of the management team visits the questioning CSR to provide individual guidance.

- Finally, when all CSRs have acknowledged understanding of the update, the update message is categorized and archived within the dedicated email system for future reference by CSRs. Usually, the update dissemination is completed within a half hour, and all CSRs are able to incorporate the update into appropriate calls thereafter.

In any contract operation, all changes can be accommodated and disseminated to staff within a few hours at the latest, given the priority of change. Any training materials developed by Spherix for the update training are provided to the COTR for review before disseminating to staff.

18. Describe the implementation process and timelines for call center establishment for a project similar in size and complexity to this one.

⭐ **Spherix advantage: Our successful launch of Indiana DNR.** Spherix's successful launch of our Indiana DNR reservations project in 2002 was considerably more complex than the FRTIB Parallel Call Center project. The FRTIB project is not only simpler, but can be done in less time than the Indiana project. The Indiana start-up plan began with a contract award on August 1, 2002 and ended with a go-live date of November 1, 2002. Spherix's goal was to have, by DNR's planned start date, a fully customized and tested ReserveWorld™ solution in place and ready to accept transactions through all three channels: call center, public website, and remote field stations. This included training of both Spherix's and DNR's project staff, and a project help desk.

The implementation plan was broken into task phases, some of which ran concurrently:

Comment: Proprietary Type # 2

To develop the operational aspects, DNR's involvement was crucial in providing Spherix with detailed inventory data and maps, business rules, DNR policies and procedures, transfer numbers, and various other topics to be used in project development and training. Direct DNR participation was also required in training DNR staff and gaining cooperation in setting up the field sites.

Operational aspects of the implementation included:

Comment: Proprietary Type # 2

The technical aspects of this implementation included:

SPHERIX
Use or disclosure of proposal data is subject to the
restriction of the Title Page of this Proposal
32
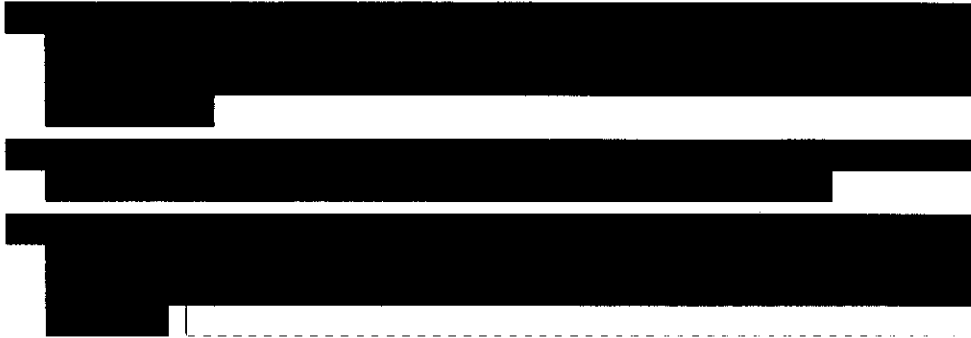
Comment: Proprietary Type # 2

In *Figures 7 and 8* we show the timelines used for the technical and operational aspects of the implementation.

Figure 7: Operational Implementation Plan for Indiana Project

Event	Time	Start	End	Participants

Comment: Proprietary Type # 1

Figure 8: Technical Implementation Plan for Indiana Project

Event	Time	Start	End	Participants

Comment: Proprietary Type # 1

Implementation plan proposed for FRTIB project: Assuming the award of this contract will made in January 2004, we project a start date of ████████ to get the project underway, concluding with a rollout of the program on ████████. Of course, these dates are subject to negotiation and change, but we have used them to identify an implementation plan that we submit for FRTIB's review. Please see *Appendix 2* for our proposed timeline for Operational and Technical implementation of the Parallel Call Center.

Comment: Proprietary Type # 1

Comment: Proprietary Type # 1

Comment: Proprietary Type # 1

19. Please confirm that you will be able to comply with the following customer service levels, and provide the calculation you use to derive the following metrics:

☑ **Spherix compliance:** Spherix will comply with, and exceed, the following service level measurements. Please see the table below for information regarding how each metric is calculated and measured.

Performance Metric	Spherix Compliance	Calculation
80% or more of calls answered within 20 seconds	Yes	
Blocked call percent (includes all internal and external busies) of 2% or less	Yes	

Comment: Proprietary Type # 2

Comment: Proprietary Type # 2

Further metrics such as quality rates, customer satisfaction rates, first call resolution, and others may be added to the requirements later in the project.

☑ **Spherix compliance:** As further quality metrics are added to the requirements of the project, Spherix will be ready and able to meet them. Please see *Figure 3 Quality Performance Matrix* for an explanation of quality metrics we currently manage, who is responsible for managing them, and what corrective actions are taken to ensure that the highest levels of performance are maintained.

Other quality metrics: Spherix currently maintains a QA rating for each CSR as well as each project on a whole. Customer satisfaction rates can be obtained by implementing a customer survey tool. We will work with the COTR to establish the data tracking mechanism required to measure rates of first call resolution in a way that conforms to accepted escalation protocols. Spherix will work with FRTIB to identify those quality measurements that the Agency feels are most important and to develop the methodologies and tools required.

20. Complete the following table with customer services statistics for a similar client in the same office that is proposed to provide service for the agency:

☑ **Spherix compliance:** In *Figure 9* below, we provide customer service statistics for Michigan DNR, one of our large reservations clients. We have modified the table somewhat to allow comparisons between our 2002/2003 standard and actual results for each year.

Figure 9: Customer Services Statistics for Michigan DNR

	2002/2003	2002	2003	
Measure	**Standard**	**Actual Result**	**Actual Result**	
Average speed to answer	■	■	■	**Comment:** Proprietary Type # 2
% of calls answered within 20 seconds	■	■	■	**Comment:** Proprietary Type # 2
Call abandonment rate	■	■	■	**Comment:** Proprietary Type # 2
Percent of calls that receive a busy signal (internal or external)	■	■	■	**Comment:** Proprietary Type # 2

21. Provide references for three (3) clients recently added and two recently lost. References should preferably be companies with call centers of 100 to 500 agents in the financial service sector. Include company name and contact phone number and email address.

☑ **Spherix compliance:** Reference information for **three clients recently added:**

Retirement and Insurance Service Call Center (IS OPM)		
Name and position of Point of Contact	■	**Comment:** Proprietary Type # 5
Phone number of POC	■	**Comment:** Proprietary Type # 5
Fax number of POC	■	**Comment:** Proprietary Type # 5
Email address of POC	■	**Comment:** Proprietary Type # 5
Services rendered	■	**Comment:** Proprietary Type# 5

Central Reservation Service (Maryland DNR)		
Name and position of Point of Contact	■	**Comment:** Proprietary Type # 5
Phone number of POC	■	**Comment:** Proprietary Type # 5
Fax number of POC	■	**Comment:** Proprietary Type # 5
Email address of POC	■	**Comment:** Proprietary Type # 5
Services rendered	■	**Comment:** Proprietary Type # 5

Customer Contact Services (Maryland Department of Human Resources)		
Name and position of Point of Contact	■	**Comment:** Proprietary Type # 5
Phone number	■	**Comment:** Proprietary Type # 5
Fax number of POC	■	**Comment:** Proprietary Type # 5
Email address of POC	■	**Comment:** Proprietary Type # 5
Services rendered	■	**Comment:** Proprietary Type # 5

Reference information for **two clients recently lost:**

Federal Information Center (US General Services Administration)	
Name and position of Point of Contact	███████████████████████████
Phone number of POC	██████████
Fax number of POC	██████████
Email address of POC	████████████████
Services rendered	███████████████████████████

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2" align="center">Caremark, Inc.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Name and position of Point of Contact</td><td>█████████████████</td></tr>
<tr><td>Phone number of POC</td><td>██████████</td></tr>
<tr><td>Fax number of POC</td><td>██████████</td></tr>
<tr><td>Email address of POC</td><td>██████████████</td></tr>
<tr><td>Services rendered</td><td>████████████████████████████</td></tr>
</table>

Comment: Proprietary Type # 5

Comment: Proprietary Type# 5

Comment: Proprietary Type # 5

Comment: Proprietary Type #5

Comment: Proprietary Type # 5

Comment: Proprietary Type # 5

Comment: Proprietary Type # 5

Comment: Proprietary Type # 5

Comment: Proprietary Type # 5

Comment: Proprietary Type # 5

Data Management and Reporting

22. Systems/Data Quality

a. **What policies, procedures, and controls are in place to ensure high quality and security in your systems and data management?**

☑ **Spherix compliance:** Spherix ensures the quality and security of our systems and data management on many levels, including personnel, information system, network, data, and data encryption.

Personnel Security: The Contract Manager works with the Human Resources Department ███████████ to recruit and hire personnel using our established screening protocols. These protocols include a criminal history inquiry and employment verification. Spherix will require that three references be checked for each new hire. All employees are required to ████████████████████
████ Supervisors and QA Coordinators will be trained to identify and respond to apparent lapses in security.

Comment: Proprietary Type # 1

Comment: Proprietary Type # 2

Information System Security: Risks to the data from unauthorized internal and external database access are controlled by safeguards built into the infrastructure and the database itself, as well as by using firewalls, encryption, and other techniques. Risks of hardware and software failure are controlled through the use of redundant architecture ███████████████) and comprehensive backup procedures. Risks arising from user error are controlled by special application coding, user training, and the centralization of data management tasks.

Comment: Proprietary Type # 4

Network Security: We use two levels of security for our network internal infrastructure. ████████████████████████████

████████████████████████████████████

Comment: Proprietary Type # 4

Data Security: Security within the databases is a two-level process. ███

████████████████████████████████████

Comment: Proprietary Type # 4

Data Encryption: We use ████████████████████████ encryption to protect data being transferred over Web and/or FTP connection. In addition, we use advanced tools from ██████ to establish secure storage and transmission of data. To avoid cache issues, our Web software ██████ every time a page is accessed.

Comment: Proprietary Type # 4

Comment: Proprietary Type # 4

Comment: Proprietary Type # 4

Industry standards for security: All systems access and control are under the auspices of the IT department, which ensures that the following industry standards are consistently followed and enforced:

████████████████████████████████████

Comment: Proprietary Type # 2

b. Describe your audit trails, your reconciliation procedures, data protection, etc. How do you maintain data integrity and quality overall?

☑ **Spherix compliance:** Audit trails are maintained on all servers by the use of ███████████████████████████. These provide rolling logs of all activities that pertain to ████████████████████████. They are checked on a daily basis by the network administrator each at site. Any errors and/or suspicious activities are investigated immediately and reported upon to the Network Manager.

Comment: Proprietary Type # 4

Comment: Proprietary Type # 2

Reconciliation procedures: Each day our database file of credit card transactions (e.g., for our reservations business) is compared to the processor database of our transactions. ████████████████████████████████████

Once the changes have been made the file is allowed to post.

Comment: Proprietary Type # 2

Reconciliation of non-financial data is accomplished by following detailed QA procedures we have put in place for each of our projects. Reconciliation procedures depend upon the type of database maintained in support of a given project, whether access is provided, and whether editing is permissible. For example,

███

███████████████████████ The goal, in any case, is to ensure that the data is accurate, up-to-date, and verifiable.

> **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 5

Data protection: Protection of sensitive data is accomplished by several means and at several levels:

████████████████████████████

███████████████████████

██████████████████████████████████

> **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 2

Data protection within the system is accomplished by:

████████████████████

██████████████████████████████

████████████████

███████████████████████████████

█████████████████████████

██████████████████████████

██████████████████

> **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 4

Maintaining data integrity and quality: We maintain data integrity and quality by ensuring that, at the time all data is written to disk, it is ██████████████ ████████████ to ensure its integrity. All data is verified ██████████████ to ensure its quality. The same methodology holds true for the process upon which our tape backups are generated.

> **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 4
>
> **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 4

23. Does your system utilize encryption technology? If so, please describe what level.

☑ **Spherix compliance:** Yes. For e-commerce transactions, Spherix uses █████████ ██████████████████████ encryption to protect financial data being transferred over Web and/or FTP connection. In addition, we use advanced tools from ███████ to establish secure storage and transmission of data. To avoid cache issues, our Web software ██████████ every time a page is accessed.

> **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 4
>
> **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 4
>
> **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 4

Additional encryption technology: Spherix encrypts all emails, files, and other project-related communications using industry-standard encryption technology. This

technology will be used to encrypt and decrypt communications over the Internet and ensures greater assurance of data integrity.

24. How do you respond to technical problems and downtime?

☑ **Spherix compliance:** All technical problems encountered by either the end user or members of the IT staff are entered in a ticket tracking system. The moment a ticket is entered, it is automatically assigned to an appropriate member of the IT staff for resolution. If the ticket is not addressed within the Service Level Agreement (SLA) that has been defined for that ticket "type," the ticket is automatically escalated for immediate, high-level response. Once an issue has been resolved, an email is generated to the end user informing him or her that the ticket has been closed out, and what remediation efforts were undertaken. ███████████████████████ ████████████████

> Comment: Proprietary Type # 2

Dealing with downtime: Downtime may involve two scenarios—planned downtime and unplanned downtime:

- **Planned downtime** involves situations for repairs. The affected department heads are notified ███████████████████ of the planned downtime, and the timeline is mutually agreed upon. Should there be legitimate reason for doing so, the department heads may reschedule the downtime to a period that meets all parties' needs.

> Comment: Proprietary Type # 2

- **Unplanned downtime** situations require immediate emergency remediation. IT immediately notifies the affected department heads ████████████████ of the situation at hand. IT also informs the affected parties of the exact issue of the problem and the of the determination of exact customer impact. The IT Department provides a preliminary repair timeline to the department heads so they can determine whether alternate solutions need to be put into place until the remediation has been completed. Upon failure remediation and full testing, IT notifies the department heads ████████████████ that the affected systems are back in full operation.

> Comment: Proprietary Type # 2

> Comment: Proprietary Type # 2

Describe your technical support.

☑ **Spherix compliance:** All technical support inquires are directed to our internal helpdesk for assistance. At the time a call is received, a ticket will be opened in order to accurately and efficiently track the call. First level assistance will be provided by helpdesk personnel, and if the matter requires additional expertise, it will be assigned to the appropriate level engineer/programmer within the information systems department. All calls have defined SLAs assigned to them to ensure the timely closure of all technical support tickets. The management group, along with the information systems department, is continuously monitoring the ticket logging application to ensure adherence to the SLAs, but, more importantly, the assurance of customer satisfaction.

█ Spherix advantage: Spherix's onsite technical team of certified IT professionals is experienced in all aspects of call center design, development, testing, deployment, operation, and support.

How do you notify clients of downtime and what processes do you use to remedy the problem?

☑ **Spherix compliance:** Spherix will notify FRTIB facilities and offices of any system failures ███████████████. Within ████ of a system failure event, the Project Manager will ensure that all affected entities are notified of the event and given an estimated time for returning to service.

> **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 2
>
> **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 2

Operational Procedures: In case of system failures ████████████ ██, the COTR will be notified immediately ███████████, and any specified FRTIB offices will be notified subsequently by the Project Manager. She will explain the system failure and provide an estimate of service continuation. Once service levels have returned to normal, Spherix staff will again notify the COTR and specified FRTIB offices.

> **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 2
>
> **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 2

System Failure Notification Plan

> **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 2

Technical Procedures: Upon notification or discovery of a system failure, Spherix's IT staff begins an efficient and strictly controlled troubleshooting process to find and eliminate the problem. For commonly occurring problems, we have defined Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) that will guide the troubleshooting and recovery process.

These SOPs are based on information gathered at the help desk and through network monitoring over a period of time and analyzed for patterns of failure events, relevant prevailing conditions, troubleshooting paths attempted, and resolutions. These SOPs help the IT staff to efficiently categorize the problems into major areas such as network, infrastructure, application, and others. Once the problem has been successfully categorized, more detailed problem-topic SOPs guide the response team in pinpointing and resolving the failure.

If a solution to the problem is not quickly found in the existing SOPs, it is escalated along a pre-defined path to the responsible individual or department.

> **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 2

25. What are your back-up procedures?

☑ **Spherix compliance:** Spherix backs up all servers on a nightly basis. The system data is backed up to ███████████████████████████ ████████████████████ systems used for optimizing data storage and retrieval at high speeds and large quantities.

Comment: Proprietary Type # 4

Spherix uses the industry standard GFS (Grandfather-Father-Son) methodology to maintain its data back-up plan. We use ████████ software to manage the backup methodology. The software uses a ██████████ to maintain backup for ██████ and the magazine is replaced ███████.

Comment: Proprietary Type # 2

Comment: Proprietary Type # 2

Comment: Proprietary Type # 2

The usual operational backup methodology includes a ██████ backup running in conjunction with full archive log. This ensures a complete recovery to the last completed transaction, in case of a system crash. Spherix further ensures the integrity of its backups by moving all tapes to offsite storage.

Comment: Proprietary Type # 2

Comment: Proprietary Type # 2

26. Please describe your disaster recovery processes for both telephone and computer systems.

▣ **Spherix advantage:** Spherix has implemented a comprehensive disaster prevention and recovery plan. We accomplish disaster mitigation through fault-tolerant storage, backups, uninterruptible power backup, and redundant servers.

Procedures for computer systems

Dual sites: Spherix's information center facility at ██████████████, uses a ████████████████ backbone that can transfer data to the speeds of 100 Mbps, while our ██████████ facility uses a ████ backbone capable of transferring data at speeds of ██████. Both facilities are connected through ██████████, which results in a fault-tolerant, fail-safe information center layout.

Comment: Proprietary Type # 1

Comment: Proprietary Type # 4

Comment: Proprietary Type # 1

Comment: Proprietary Type # 4

Comment: Proprietary Type # 4

Power supply: We have ██████████████ at both our Beltsville and Cumberland, Maryland, facilities that can the full facility load indefinitely, and can be activated in a matter of minutes in case of power failure. We use ██████████ uninterruptible power supplies (UPS) for protection against loss of power. ████████ ████████████████████████████████████. The UPS levels out power spikes and brown-outs, protects against surges, and can trigger a shutdown of the server, if necessary, in addition to supplying backup power. All of our servers, switches, and routers are protected with UPS systems.

Comment: Proprietary Type # 4

Comment: Proprietary Type # 2

Comment: Proprietary Type # 4

Comment: Proprietary Type # 4

System redundancy: We use redundant systems to protect against hardware and software failures. Each server we purchase comes with built-in hardware RAID (Redundant Array of Inexpensive Disks) capabilities. RAID ensures that a drive failure will not bring down the server. ████████████████████████████ ████████████████████████████████████. RAID only protects the server from a hard drive failure. Other types of failures, such as a software crash, memory failure, or a faulty system board, can still cause a system to fail. We set up redundant servers to handle these types of failures. Our websites are configured in a ████████████████ environment to provide the highest level of redundancy and scalability.

Comment: Proprietary Type # 4

Comment: Proprietary Type # 4

Standard operating procedures: Disasters can happen no matter what is done to prevent them. Spherix has a detailed set of instructions on how to recover from any given failure. These instructions address: 1) Hardware; 2) Database; 3) Applications; 4) Communications; and 5) Personnel.

We periodically have a "fire drill" to practice performing a complete recovery of a system from backups. When a failure happens, a predefined plan goes into action. The appropriate staff members are notified immediately either by an automated pager alert or by telephone call. Then, we diagnose the problem and correct the situation following detailed troubleshooting procedures.

Data backup: The configurations at Spherix's Beltsville and Cumberland sites allow each to act as a backup site for the other. In case of a site catastrophe, the switchover timeframe is variable, depending upon the connectivity complexities. Once the site switchover has taken place, the restoration of the database takes place, the period for which is directly proportional to the size of the database. It can be treated just like a media crash, as explained in the sections following. The recovery tapes are retrieved from our off-site backup storage. We test the site recovery procedure once every year. The extent of the test could vary, depending upon the current projects that we have. The backup site in Beltsville is close enough to Cumberland to transfer staff in an emergency.

The usual operational backup methodology includes a ▮▮▮ backup running in conjunction with a full archive log. This ensures a complete recovery to the last completed transaction, in case of a system crash.

> **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 2

Off-site storage: Spherix uses a third party vendor to store the backup tapes off-site. The vendor provides a fireproof storage vault facility to secure the data tapes.

Simple recoveries: If the system failure is a simple transaction processing crash, it can be recovered ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮. This kind of recovery takes very little time, depending on the length of the failure, the time between the failure and last flush-point, and the rate of data storage. In our experience, the recovery time for this kind of failure is ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮.

> **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 2

> **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 2

Complex recoveries: If the failure is a complicated media crash, it requires a backup to act as the starting point of reference. In this case, the recovery time is directly proportional to the amount of data stored in the backup. The standard transfer rate to recover from an off-line backup media is approximately ▮▮▮▮▮▮. Once the physical file has been recovered from off-line media, ▮▮▮ recovery process takes approximately one hour to set the database back up.

> **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 2

> **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 4

Procedures for communications systems

Trunk lines down: Spherix's local and long distance trunks provide redundancy at the carrier network. We have the ability to manually reroute 800-number services to another location. This rerouting would require involvement of the provider.

Point-to-point line between Spherix and the client down: This failure will result in loss of remote access to the system for the client's users. Spherix will work with the external agencies, namely ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮, to resolve

> **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 4

the connection breakdown. If the problem identified lies within the purview of Spherix, it will be resolved ████████████████████████. For problems outside Spherix's control, no lead-time can be specified.

During any such downtime, Spherix will instruct the operators to redirect certain calls directly to the appropriate office. For client-side operators, Spherix recommends that they take down all the pertinent information from the caller on a hard-copy input form and submit at a later time when contact has been established.

Telephone switch down: Spherix's Private Branch Exchange (PBX) is designed and engineered to provide complete redundancy from the CPU to the card level. All applications running on the voice platform are designed for default treatment if there are errors encountered.

We test data recovery procedures for computer and telecommunications systems every quarter. Please see *Appendix 3* for a copy of our complete Disaster Recovery Plan.

How would you handle a long-term disaster at your site?

▣ **Spherix advantage:** As described above and in our response to Question 3, Spherix has a dual site configuration with call center facilities in Cumberland, Maryland, and Beltsville, Maryland, approximately ██ miles to the east. Our sites are configured in such a way as to provide full operational and systemic redundancy.

As described in our Disaster Recovery Plan (*Appendix 3*), we would initiate steps to replicate in our Beltsville site all call center operations normally supported in Cumberland. This includes all computer systems, telephony, and staffing needed to provide continuous service to FRTIB and its customers. In the unlikely event of the complete destruction of our Cumberland facility by natural or other disaster, Spherix would efficiently manage the complete migration of services including:

████████████████████████

████████████████████████████████

██████████████

████████████████████████████

████████████████████████████████████

How would you handle a long-term disaster at the parallel site in New Orleans?

▣ **Spherix advantage:** In the event of a long-term disaster at the New Orleans site, Spherix will be fully capable of handling all of the call volume normally routed there in addition to its own call volume. Upon notification of such a disaster by FRTIB staff, Spherix will put into effect the following plans:

Operations and staffing: Spherix will procure sufficient temporary help from the local labor force as well as allocate additional cross-trained staff from other ██████

███ projects to the FRTIB project. For a full description of our plans to accommo-
date staffing needs during a long-term disaster, please see our response to *Question
14*. As stated in that response, the actual staffing levels needed to take over the entire
workload from New Orleans will depend in large part on when the disaster occurs.
We have provided a month-by-month analysis of the FTEs required of both CSRs and
Supervisors in that response.

Comment: Proprietary Type # 1

Technical support: Immediately upon notification of the New Orleans disaster,
Spherix's technical staff would be deployed ████████████████████
██
███ They would also reconfigure the requisite number of workstations to enable the
CSRs to handle the callers' inquiries. Assuming that we have set aside the necessary
bandwidth, the telecom engineers would coordinate with the New Orleans staff to re-
route all toll-free calls from New Orleans to our Cumberland site.

Comment: Proprietary Type # 2

Project management: Throughout the entire disaster reporting, recovery, and re-
building process, Spherix will maintain constant communications with FRTIB repre-
sentatives through our Project Manager, who will serve as the single point of contact
between Spherix and FRTIB. This will ensure that both Spherix and FRTIB staff are
kept abreast of the situation and are in a position to direct daily operations in an in-
formed manner.

**Verify that you will have all of the required architecture (lines, ACD ports, PCs, etc.) neces-
sary to function as the single call handling site in the event of a disaster in New Orleans.**

☑ **Spherix compliance:** Spherix will have all of the required systems architecture
necessary to function as the single call handling site in the event of a disaster in New
Orleans, including the following, which would be deployed in ████████:

Comment: Proprietary Type # 1

████████████████████████████████████
████████████████

Comment: Proprietary Type # 1

- Requisite number of Pentium 4 workstations (which meet specs on page 6 of
  the RFP) to provide customer assistance. ████████████████████
  ██
  ████████████████████████████████████ We
  would acquire any workstations beyond this level as needed, depending on
  when the disaster occurs.

Comment: Proprietary Type # 1

Please refer to *Figure 10* below for a list of the infrastructure components at our
████████ facility.

Comment: Proprietary Type # 1

Comment: Proprietary Type # 1

Figure 10: ██████████ Infrastructure Components

Component	Function
████████	████████████████████
████████████████	████████████████████

Component	Function
██████████	████████████
██████████	████████████
██████████	████████████
████	████████████
██████████	████████████
██████████	████████████
██████████	████████████
██████████	████████████
██████████	████████████
██████████	████████████
████████	████████████

NOTE: This is not an exhaustive audit of our infrastructure components, but rather a list of important items used in all our centralized sales and information call center projects.

27. Please describe your system capabilities for tracking and reporting on metrics.

☑ **Spherix compliance:** Spherix uses the ████████████ ████████ for its ACD. This is part of our onsite ████ PBX. The ████ generates report statistics, which can be used by Spherix to create customized reports.

Comment: Proprietary Type # 4
Comment: Proprietary Type # 4

The Project Manager will use Spherix's ████████████ call management system to access call statistics and Agent performance data. Careful monitoring of the key service quality indicators will give early warning of the need for an increase in equipment or staffing capacity. Regarding CSR performance, the Project Manager will be able to determine at any time whether agents' stations are busy, available, unmanned, or engaged in clerical activities, and will be able to see the average length of time each agent spends in each of these categories.

Comment: Proprietary Type # 4

Figure 11 lists the data fields and statistic fields for the two main report statistic groups, which include Destination ACD-DN statistics and ACD Agent Statistics.

Figure 11: ███████████ ACD Report Fields

Destination ACD-DN Data Fields			
████████	████████	██████	██████
██████████	███████████	██████████	████████████
████████	██████████	█████████	██████████
█████████	█████████	██████	██████
█████	███████	████████████	██████████
█████████			

Agent Statistics Data Fields			
█████████	███████	█████████	███████
█████████	███████████	███████████	████████
██████	███████	████████	██████████████
██████████	█████████		

Please refer to *Appendix 4* for a complete table of ███████████ ACD Statistical Fields that gives details of the above fields.

28. Describe the telephony equipment you will use for this contract.

☑ **Spherix compliance:** The ███████████ Center has an expandable digital phone system sized for present and future volume requirements. Calls to the toll-free numbers will be routed to Spherix's ███████████████████ PBX. The ███████████ is a state-of-the-art modular, upgradeable switch that provides comprehensive reports for effective Automatic Call Distribution (ACD) service. The switch performs nightly system backups and provides direct telephone lines for contingency capability. It allows rapid upgrades in software and hardware to remain up-to-date with changes in telecommunication technology. Spherix's Telecommunications Support Group performs all of the in-house telephone wiring for its corporate telephones and commercial information service. We have enhanced our call center telephony solution by integrating IVR and CTI system software ███████████████.

✱ **Spherix advantage:** Our ███████████ call center is already fully functional with all necessary telecommunications equipment to run the FRTIB parallel call center project, as we have similar projects in-house currently.

29. Describe and provide samples of your standard reports.

☑ **Spherix compliance:** The reports we provide our clients are adapted from the reports generated by our ███████████████ (see answer to *Question 27* above) as well as information obtained from the application database. They are usually formatted ██████ and are customized to the individual needs of the client. Please see *Appendix 5* for a sample report generated for Michigan DNR, one of our reservations clients.

These reports contain a wide array of performance metrics that our clients find useful in ascertaining how well their projects are being managed. By benchmarking performance in a variety of ways, e.g., Calls Abandoned, Percent Abandoned, Telephone Service Factor (e.g. percent in less than 20 seconds), Average Talk Time, Average Abandoned Delay, Number Busied Out, and so forth), our clients can easily gauge how well our CSRs are consistently meeting the clients' expectations.

Monthly progress reports: In response to the RFP requirement in *Section F.1 Deliverables*, Spherix will also provide monthly progress reports that summarize significant accomplishments and statistics for each calendar month. These reports will be prepared by our Project Manager and delivered to FRTIB electronically and/or in hard copy as requested. Please see *Appendix 5* for a sample monthly progress report we provided for the Federal Information Center project we operated for the GSA for ten years.

Are there additional costs associated with any of these reports?

☑ **Spherix compliance:** There are no charges for standard reports, but there is a ▇ charge for development of a non-standard report. ▇

> **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 2
>
> **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 2

How frequently are these reports available?

☑ **Spherix compliance:** Spherix will accommodate your reporting needs. We provide reports to clients on a daily, weekly, and monthly schedule. We will set up delivery of reports at whatever interval the Agency finds most useful.

30. Can you provide ad hoc reports?

☑ **Spherix compliance:** Yes. Spherix will provide any ad hoc reports on any of the data collected in the databases as long as we have access to the data. For ACD statistics, this is not an issue since we track that data in-house.

Are there any additional costs? Please explain.

☑ **Spherix compliance:** Yes. There is a ▇ fee (per hour of development) for developing an ad hoc report. ▇

> **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 2
>
> **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 2

31. Are any of the standard reports available electronically?

☑ **Spherix compliance:** Yes. All standard reports are provided in Excel format. We can easily email any and all reports to FRTIB as needed.

▇ **Spherix advantage: Performance statistics monitoring:** Call center performance statistics can be monitored in real time ▇ ▇). For clients who require this, Spherix will permit read-only access to the ACD via Virtual Private Network (VPN) or other secured connection method. To ensure the confidentiality of our clients' data, we partition the

> **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 4

statistical data so that each client can only access the information relevant to its contract.

32. Will the Agency have access to an online ad-hoc query and report-generating tool? If so, please provide a description of the tool and its capabilities.

☑ **Spherix compliance:** Ad hoc reporting will be available for ACD reports only. These reports can be accessed via a VPN connection or via T-1 connection. The VPN connection would be at no cost to FRTIB.

33. Describe any significant hardware or software upgrades to your systems planned to occur over the next two years.

☑ **Spherix compliance:** Spherix has the following systems upgrades planned for 2004:

████████ **Site:** ⟶ **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 1

- ████████████████████████ – Will allow for replacement of ████ ⟶ **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 4
  as reporting platform: ⟶ **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 4

  ✓ Mid-2004, there will be required training of end users on new system.

  ✓ Will provide real-time graphical reporting to almost any output medium e.g., web browser, file, etc.

████████ **Site:** ⟶ **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 1

- Database Servers – Replicate ████████ Infrastructure, i.e., Multi-processor ⟶ **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 1
  systems running on a ████ platform with fail-over capabilities: ⟶ **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 4

  ✓ Mid-2004, transparent to end user, no additional cost to end user.

  ✓ Will provide faster, more reliable database access and recovery.

- ████████████ – Replace current ████████████ with more robust unit, in ⟶ **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 4
  conjunction with migration to ████████████ : ⟶ **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 4
  ⟶ **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 4

  ✓ Mid-2004, transparent to end user, no additional cost to end user.

  ✓ Will provide faster, more reliable, end user authentication to services.

- ██████ Upgrade for ████████ ACD – Will allow for replacement of ████ ⟶ **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 4
  as reporting platform: ⟶ **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 4

  ✓ Mid-2004, there will ████████████████ of reporting capabilities ⟶ **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 4
  along with required training of end users on new system. ⟶ **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 2

  ✓ Will provide ████████████ reporting to almost any output medium, ⟶ **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 2
  e.g., web browser, file, etc.

- ████████████ – Replacement of current ████ system with IP based system ⟶ **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 4
  that will allow access from any authorized PC both internally and externally: ⟶ **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 4

  ✓ Mid-2004, transparent to end users, no additional cost to end user.

✓ Will provide easier and more reliable connectivity to our systems for troubleshooting/maintenance purposes.

███████████████████████████████████

Comment: Proprietary Type # 4

✓ Late 2004, transparent to end users, no additional cost to end user.

✓ Will allow us to provide more cost effective services.

Describe how clients are advised of system upgrades and enhancements. Include timing, fees, and explanation of system impacts.

☑ **Spherix compliance:** Spherix advises its clients well in advance of system upgrades and enhancement via telephone and email notification to our Project Manager, who serves as the POC to the client. This notification will include all essential information such as the timing, impact, and other effects of the change(s). No changes will ever be made without the client's knowledge and consent. We will not charge for upgrades except those specifically requested by FRTIB.

The Agency requires ninety (90) days' notification in writing of system upgrades and enhancements. Please confirm that you can comply with this.

☑ **Spherix compliance:** Spherix will comply with FRTIB's requirement for 90 days' notification of system upgrades and enhancements. As a standard practice, we plan to provide ███ days' notice of these changes.

Comment: Proprietary Type # 2

34. Are system upgrades and fixes included in your standard pricing?

☑ **Spherix compliance:** Yes. As with all of our projects, all system upgrades and fixes are included in our standard pricing.

Federal Retirement
Thrift Investment Board

Parallel NFC Call Center
December 15, 2003

Section M.5: Minimal
Technical Factors for Award

Section M.5: Minimal Technical Factors for Award

The technical proposal must demonstrate compliance with the minimum technical factors listed below to be considered for award. Offerors must demonstrate and certify compliance with the following minimum criteria:

a. That any and all sites (including personnel) used to process the calls by the Contractor be within the continental United States.

☑ **Spherix compliance:** Both of Spherix's call center sites—its primary facility in Cumberland, Maryland, and its backup facility in Beltsville, Maryland—as well as all personnel used to process calls by Spherix are located within the continental United States.

b. That the call center(s) site(s) be sufficiently removed from New Orleans to be considered an acceptable disaster recovery alternative in the event that call processing is suspended for any period of time in New Orleans.

☑ **Spherix compliance:** Both sites are located well over 1,000 miles from New Orleans, and are thereby sufficiently removed from New Orleans to be considered an acceptable disaster recovery alternative in the event of business disruption in New Orleans. They are also both easily accessible from FRTIB's Washington office. Both locations in Maryland enjoy the State's usually mild weather and are typically not subject to natural disasters such as hurricanes, tornados, and earthquakes.

c. That the Contractor has prior experience in operating similar call center programs in the financial services industry.

☑ **Spherix compliance:** Spherix has the requisite experience in operating similar size call center programs that involve financial services. For example, in support of the Retirement and Insurance Service (RIS) of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM), Spherix operates ▮▮ call centers to handle overflow telephone calls, at an estimated volume of ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ calls per month, from Federal annuitants and their family members. Spherix and its stable of subcontracting partners are also prepared to manage the entire volume of ▮▮▮▮ per month on an emergency basis, should the IRS telephone equipment become non-operational due to a disaster.

Nearly ▮▮▮ of the telephone calls received by Spherix's RIS call center require making changes or updates to annuitants' accounts via a secure VPN connection to OPM information systems; therefore, contract personnel must undergo a rigorous security clearance, and background and financial investigation, prior to serving on the contract. Spherix personnel perform a wide range of actions as they relate to annuitants and survivors covered under the Civil Service Retirement and Federal Employees Retirement Systems. Such transactions include health and life insurance actions, Federal and State tax changes, reports of death, changes of address, enrollment and sav-

Comment: Proprietary Type # 1

Comment: Proprietary Type # 1

Comment: Proprietary Type # 1

Comment: Proprietary Type # 1

Federal Retirement
Thrift Investment Board

Parallel NFC Call Center
December 15, 2003

Section M.5: Minimal
Technical Factors for Award

ings bond programs, requests for duplicate 1099R forms, in addition to answering other retirement-related questions.

Please see *Appendix 6* for a complete history of achievement for the OPM project.

d. That the contractor provide a dedicated customer service unit with staff working solely on the contract with the Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board.

☑ **Spherix compliance:** Spherix is committed to providing a dedicated customer service unit with staff working solely on the contract. We provide the details of our customer service staff in our responses to *Questions 4* starting on page 7, *and Question 7* starting on page 13.

Section M.6: Technical Evaluation

In this section, we provide, in summary form, our response to each of the evaluation criteria described in Section M.6. In addition to our confirmation that we have addressed each criterion, we provide, where appropriate, references to our responses in Section J: Questionnaire, which provide more detail.

A. Operational Management Capability

The successful Offeror must be able to demonstrate knowledge of best practices for operating call centers and must have experience in applying these practices in the operation of call centers. This experience must include financial programs and must involve call centers of approximately the same size as the proposed call center.

⊠ Spherix advantage: Spherix has over three decades of experience in operating call centers for Federal government agencies and we are a leader in the field. Spherix incorporates industry and government best practices and standards into all of our work, practices such as the Call Center Institute and the Gartner Group's Customer Service Capability Maturity Model, to continually measure our call center service level capabilities. Our experience with financial programs includes contracts with many Federal agencies including the Office of Personnel Management (over 300,000 calls per year), which virtually mirrors the FRTIB project; the U.S. Department of Education (1.8 million calls per year); the General Services Administration's FIC (2.25 million calls per year); and, most recently, the Internal Revenue Service, which is due to launch in February 2004.

ɕ Also see: For more information on our financial services experience and our understanding of industry best practices, please see our Introduction on pages 1 and 2. Please also see our list of references in response to *Question 21* on page 37. In *Appendix 6*, we provide a detailed history of achievement of one of our largest Federal projects, the Retirement and Insurance Service Call Center managed for OPM, through which we provide financial services to 11 million Federal retirees and their families.

1. People Management

a. Hiring:

☑ Spherix compliance: Spherix's Human Resources professionals focus on the qualities which will ensure not only the success of the job candidates, but also their ability to assimilate the values and qualities that FRTIB wants to impart to its Thrift Plan participants. We have in place a mechanism that ensures the recruiting and hiring of the highest caliber candidates for the call center.

- **Recruiting staff:** Spherix's recruiting strategies include word-of-mouth referrals by the Company's current and past employees as well as more conventional methods including website postings, classified ads, advertising at local universities, local job placement and Internet resume databases. The local job market is well known for its strong work ethic and employer loyalty.

- **Selecting staff for the program:** We use a progressive screening method that includes telephone screening, in-person interviews, reference checks, background checks, then final selection. Of paramount importance will be aptitude and experience in financial services.

- ▮ **Spherix advantage:** ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮

▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮

Comment: Proprietary Type # 5

- **Total hiring capabilities:** We project that the largest number of CSRs we will need to hire at one time would be for Mardi Gras in the first year. Based on our experience in emergency ramp-ups for other projects, including the hiring of 300 agents in two days, we guarantee that we will be able to meet staffing requirements on a timely basis.

↰ **Also see:** For more information on hiring, please see our response to *Question 8* starting on page 14.

b. Training:

☑ **Spherix compliance:** Satisfying customers is the objective of Spherix's training program designed to build strong client relationships. We emphasize the highest level of customer service, telephone etiquette, and knowledge of FRTIB's programs. Our training includes all front-line staff.

- **Current training program:** Spherix provides a comprehensive training program for its CSRs and supervisors, which includes setting policies and procedures, managing the call, absorbing project knowledge, achieving technical proficiency, observing actual calls, role –playing, and call simulation.

- **Training program for FRTIB program:** We will provide a training program that exceeds the PhonePro course outline provided in the RFP. Our program will include up to three days of customer service training including two video seminars on professional telephone skills. Our trainer will apply a best-practices "self-certification" methodology to quickly and verifiably assimilate the Agency's train-the-trainer program before assuming full responsibility thereafter for training our staff.

- **Ongoing training:** All CSRs, regardless of their level of experience, receive ongoing training to refine their mastery of computer system operation, FRTIB policies and procedures, as well as changes in FRTIB applications.

- **Training for front line supervisors:** We identify front line supervisors from within our ranks and recruit those who demonstrate the greatest potential. We team them with experienced supervisors or managers to gain on-the-job knowledge. We supplement this with specialized training seminars on developing supervisory skills. We test supervisors on their mastery of the handbook that guides responses to issues they will encounter in the new job responsibilities.

⌐⎤ **Also see:** For more information on training, please see our response to *Question 10* starting on page 18.

c. Coaching and performance evaluation:

☑ **Spherix compliance:** Spherix's proactive approach to assessing CSRs' performance utilizes a package of distinct but mutually supportive techniques to ensure performance exceeds project standards.

- **Evaluating CSRs' performance:** Spherix uses formal call monitoring, silent and recorded monitoring of calls, CSR self-evaluation, call sharing, simulated call profiling, internal test calling, external or agency test calling, and analyses of CSR call data. Spherix Project Managers and supervisors then apply re-training, mentoring, and specific rewards to maintain a constant, upward force on staff performance. One key tool in evaluating call performance is ███████████████
  ██

  > **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 4

- **Coaching CSRs:** If a CSR's performance needs improvement, supervisors and trainers immediately select and implement one or more coaching activities best suited to bringing that particular CSR up to the required performance level. Call sharing and focused continuing training groups sharpen CSR skills and knowledge in a supportive, mentoring atmosphere.

- **Maximizing performance contribution:** ★ **Spherix advantage:** A team led by the Project Manager, assisted by the Trainer, supervisors, QA coordinators, and lead CSRs, follows clear monitoring, tracking, and mentoring protocols to maximize each CSR's personal contribution to overall staff performance. The best performing CSRs are identified and their performance used as the project's internal performance benchmark. The Project Manager then will track overall staff performance and collaborate with the COTR to measure the performance contribution to the overall project performance, including the New Orleans staff. Spherix's Project Manager's goal will be to consistently achieve a superior performance level for her staff that can be used as a benchmark for the overall project.

⌐⎤ **Also see:** For more information on coaching, performance evaluation, and hiring, please see our responses to *Question 9* starting on page 16, *Question 10* starting on page 23, and *Question 11* starting on page 24.

d. Management expertise:

☑ **Spherix compliance:** Spherix presents a project management team with more than 68 combined years of financial services and call center experience to successfully direct the operation and guarantee the achievement of all program objectives.

- **Key staff:** ★ **Spherix advantage:** We present ████████████ as our proposed Project Manager, whose ████████████ experience in the financial services industry and experience in supporting the Federal Student Aid Information Cen-

  > **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 3
  >
  > **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 3

ter, a financial services project at Spherix, provide her with the depth of knowledge and managerial expertise needed to successfully lead this project. ████

████

- **Support staff:** Spherix's onsite operations and information technology experts will ensure that ████████ receives "Level 1" support in her goal to achieve primary benchmark status for her staff within the overall New Orleans and Cumberland project. These include Roger Downs, Vice President of Operations, who has 21 years of experiences in financial services management, ████

- **Resumes:** We provide resumes of our project team leadership in Attachment 1 of our proposal which describe in detail their financial services qualifications.

⊡ **Also see:** For additional information regarding the experience and qualifications of these individuals in managing financial services call centers, please see our response to *Question 4* starting on page 7.

2. Process Management

a. Workforce Management:

☑ **Spherix compliance:** Spherix will manage its dedicated staff to provide full and continuous coverage during the approved hours of operation. The project will be placed close to several of our projects dealing in financial transactions. Fully cross-trained agents will be ready to assist with volume spikes on short notice. We will use the following tools to determine and manage the staffing levels necessary to maintain the FRTIB project:

████████

- ⊡ **Spherix advantage: Planning vs. reacting:** Spherix is fully prepared to ramp up for the project launch with the necessary staff and equipment for normal operations, as well as to handle the entire inbound call volume in the event of a disaster at the New Orleans site. Using the forecasting and scheduling tools mentioned above, we will also manage to the expected service levels with a proactive approach to smoothly accommodate all seasonal and event-related fluctuations.

⊡ **Also see:** For more information about workforce management, please see our responses to *Question 2* starting on page 5, *Question 5* starting on page 10, *Question 13* starting on page 25, and *Question 14* starting on page 26.

b. Quality assurance:

▨ Spherix advantage: Spherix achieves and assures high quality standards in project management and customer service by firmly establishing industry best practices for Project Managers and Trainers to follow, identifying proper metrics for specific tasks, strictly adhering to schedules for QA activities, and verifying achievement through internal and external benchmarking. To achieve world-class customer service, every call must be verifiably handled with an absolute minimum of wait time, excessive queues, abandons, or busy outs. CSRs must provide information and service that is verifiably accurate, appropriate, and delivered with verifiable courtesy, efficiency, and professionalism. We have established internal standards, developed according to financial industry benchmarks that apply to all our projects. Having provided financial services call centers for over 30 years, we have established quality controls and monitoring methods that ensure that those standards are met.

- **Quality assurance practices:** Spherix employs remote monitoring, side-by-side monitoring, and test calls. We use ████████████████████ to remotely monitor call center activities. This web-enabled software toolkit has three main functionality areas for: call center supervisors to record sessions and evaluate CSR/customer contacts in real time; CSRs to record difficult or special calls for self-evaluation; and clients to remotely monitor recorded calls.

> Comment: Proprietary Type # 4

We will also employ two additional technologies for QA: ████████████

████████████████████████████████████

████████████████████████████████████

> Comment: Proprietary Type # 4

- **Measuring effectiveness of QA practices:** We conduct Quality Assurance surveys on specified customer service lines. During a call to a customer service line, callers who agree to take the survey link to either a different CSR than handled the call, or to an IVR survey, to ensure objective responses. In response to performance-related questions, caller rates the CSR's performance numerically, and this information is used to provide feedback and counseling, if appropriate. Any such surveys will be administered only with FRTIB's approval.

▢ Also see: For more information on Quality Assurance, please see our responses to *Question 9* starting on page 16, and *Question 12* starting on page 25.

c. Complaint management:

☑ Spherix compliance: Spherix approaches complaints as opportunities to improve specific operational processes or technologies. This approach benefits our reputation with our customer and improves our long-term standing in a highly competitive market.

- **Handling complaints:** CSRs escalate all caller complaints to supervisors, who first attempt to resolve any outstanding inquiry or request, and then log the complaint on a standard form that links the caller, call type, complaint type, and CSR. If the supervisor cannot resolve the complaint while on the line with the caller, the

supervisor will schedule a callback to be conducted after appropriate research into a solution. The goal is to turn every complaint into a compliment by virtue of how quickly, courteously, and professionally that complaint was handled. The Project Manager tracks first-call resolution rates per CSR and per staff to detect where and when extra training or knowledgebase improvement is needed.

- **Improving processes:** The Project Manager reviews the complaint log ███, analyzes complaints and their resolution ███, and summarizes and reports on resolutions, trends, and recommendations ███. Our QA Coordinators will conduct, with FRTIB's approval, a follow-up survey with customers who have had complaints resolved.

> **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 2
> **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 2
> **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 2

⟳ **Also see:** For more information about complaint management, please see oour response to *Question 16* starting on page 28.

d. Reporting:

☑ **Spherix compliance:** Spherix's call center reports will provide FRTIB with a complete, detailed, and user-friendly assessment of the call center's performance, including monthly quality reports, tracking of monthly ACD metrics, and monthly progress reports.

- **Monthly quality reports:** Spherix will prepare a detailed account of quality measurement activities to submit to the Project Officer monthly or at an interval requested by FRTIB. ███████████████

> **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 2

⟳ **Also see:** For a table of our Quality Performance activities and standards, please see Figure 3.

- **Tracking of key metrics:** Spherix uses the ████████████ ACD, which is part of our onsite ███ PBX. The Project Manager will use the ███ call management system to access call statistics and CSR performance data. Careful monitoring of the key service quality indicators will give early warning of a need for increase in equipment or staffing capacity. Regarding CSR performance, the Project Manager will be able to determine whether the CSRs' stations are busy, available, unmanned, or engaged in call follow-up activities, and will be able to see the average length of time each CSR spends on each category.

> **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 4
> **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 4

- **Standard reports:** The reports we provide to our clients are adapted from the reports generated by our ████████ ACD as well as information obtained from the application database. They are usually formatted in ███ and are customized to the client's needs. By benchmarking performance with statistics for Calls Abandoned, Percent Abandoned, Telephone Service Factor, Average Talk Time, and similar metrics, our clients can easily gauge how well our staff and managers are meeting expectations.

> **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 4
> **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 2

- **Monthly progress reports:** Spherix will provide a monthly progress report that summarizes significant accomplishments and statistics for each calendar month. The Project Manager will prepare this report and deliver it to FRTIB electronically and/or in hard copy as requested.

- **Ad hoc reports:** Spherix will provide any ad hoc reports on any data collected as long as we have access to it. There is a one-time fee for developing such reports, but, once they are developed, they are retained for future request fulfillment at no cost (as long as no changes are made to the format).

⌐ **Also see:** For more information on reporting, please see our responses to *Question 9* starting on page 17, *Question 27* on page 47, *Question 29* on page 48, and *Question 30* on page 49.

3. Technology Management

a. Flexibility:

⌧ **Spherix advantage:** Spherix's ▮▮▮▮▮▮ call handling infrastructure has abundant excess capacity to easily flex with changes in call volume. We have full "contact center" capabilities that allow us to add and integrate all available communications and service channels, including live agents, IVR and voicemail, website and web-chat, email and fax, and postal mail, as may be needed by the client. Our call center buildings have abundant extra space for expanding the number of workstations, and we maintain a list of other call center facilities and partners that we can call into service to accommodate growth. But most importantly, our corporate culture has always been geared to flexibility and customization – this has been shown time and again by our success in an unusually wide variety of business lines, both within and without the call center market. Our in-house Information Technology department is ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ certified, and includes experts in telephony, computer networks and hardware, and the design and development of software applications, databases, and websites.

<!-- Comment: Proprietary Type # 4 -->
<!-- Comment: Proprietary Type # 4 -->

Spherix does not make any upgrades or changes in any technologies that impact a client's program without notifying the client and performing a full risk analysis and mitigation effort. All such changes are fully tested before deployment, in accord with our industry standard software development life cycle.

⌐ **Also see:** For more information regarding our planned upgrades to hardware and software, please see our response to *Question 33* starting on page 50. For a table showing our ▮▮▮▮▮ Infrastructure Components, please see *Figure 10*.

<!-- Comment: Proprietary Type # 1 -->

b. Ease of access:

☑ **Spherix compliance:** Spherix will make it easy for FRTIB to access performance data on the operation of the financial services call center. All standard reports are provided ▮▮▮▮▮▮ and can be emailed to FRTIB as needed. Call center reports can also be monitored in real time using ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮. If you desire this, we can permit read-only access to the ACD via Virtual Private

<!-- Comment: Proprietary Type # 2 -->
<!-- Comment: Proprietary Type # 4 -->

Network (VPN) or other secured connection method. We partition the statistical data so that you will only have access to your data. The VPN connection will be provided as not cost.

⌐ **Also see:** For more information on ease of access to performance data, please see our responses to *Questions 31* on page 49, and *32* on page 50.

c. Telephony capabilities and expertise:

☑ **Spherix compliance:** The ▮▮▮▮▮ Center has an expandable digital phone system sized for present and future call volume requirements. ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ PBX is a state-of-the-art modular, upgradeable switch that provides comprehensive reports to effective ACD service. The switch performs nightly system backups and provides direct telephone lines for contingency capability and it allows rapid upgrades in software and hardware to remain up to date in telecommunications technology. Spherix's Telecommunications Support Group performs all of the in-house wiring for its corporate telephones and commercial information service.

> Comment: Proprietary Type # 1

> Comment: Proprietary Type # 4

We will provide for taping of 100% of the calls received in the Parallel Call Center through the use of ▮▮▮▮▮ a simple yet robust Windows-based tool that provides the ability to record every call received. All recordings are stamped and searchable by a variety of criteria, such as agent's name and the date/time. Access is controlled via secure password protections.

> Comment: Proprietary Type # 4

⌐ **Also see:** For more information on our telephony capabilities and expertise, please see our response to *Question 28* starting on page 48. For more information on our call taping systems, please see our response to *Question 12* starting on page 25.

d. Disaster recovery and backup procedures:

▮ **Spherix advantage:** Disaster recovery is an integral part of Spherix's business plan. For every client project we undertake, we include our disaster recovery plan as an essential element of our total business solution.

- **Disaster recovery at Spherix:** Spherix has a dual site configuration with call center facilities in Cumberland, Maryland, and in Beltsville, Maryland, approximately 120 miles to the east. Our sites are configured to provide full operational and systemic redundancy. In the event of a major business disruption, we would replicate in our ▮▮▮▮▮ site all of the call center operations normally supported in ▮▮▮▮▮ If the ▮▮▮▮▮ facility suffered a complete loss, we would manage the migration of services including: telecommunications switchover, program application and database structure recovery, data migration, transportation of staff, and incorporation of cross-trained staff at ▮▮▮▮▮.

> Comment: Proprietary Type # 1
>
> Comment: Proprietary Type # 1
>
> Comment: Proprietary Type # 1
>
> Comment: Proprietary Type # 1

- **Disaster coverage for the New Orleans site:** In case of a long-term disaster at the New Orleans site, Spherix will put into effect plans for operations and staffing, technical support, and project management. To handle staffing, we will procure temporary CSRs from the local labor force and allocate cross-trained staff from other projects to the FRTIB project.

Our technical team will immediately reconfigure the phone switch to accommodate the additional inbound call volume. They will also reconfigure the requisite number of workstations to enable the CSRs to handle the callers' inquiries. The telecom engineers will coordinate with the New Orleans staff to route all toll-free 800-number calls to our Cumberland site.

The Project Manager will serve as the single point of contact throughout the entire disaster reporting, recovery, and rebuilding process. She will maintain constant communications with the FRTIB staff to ensure that both Spherix and FRTIB are kept current and are able to direct daily operations with the most complete information available.

- **Technical architecture required:** Spherix will have the systems architecture needed to function as the single call handling site, including ███████████ ACD ports, and the requisite number of ████████ workstations to support the additional staff who will be handling the additional inbound call volume.

> **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 4
>
> **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 4

- **Backup procedures:** Spherix backs up all servers on a nightly basis. The system data is backed up ██ This ensures complete recovery to the last completed transaction. We further ensure the integrity of our backups by moving all tapes to offsite storage.

> **Comment:** Proprietary Type # 4

⊡ **Also see:** For more information on our disaster recovery plan, please see our response to *Question 26* starting on page 43. For a complete copy of our disaster recovery plan, please see *Appendix 3*. For information on our staffing for disaster recovery, please see our response to *Question 14* starting on page 45. For information on our backup procedures, please see our response to *Question 25* starting on page 42.

e. System security:

☑ **Spherix compliance:** Spherix ensures the quality and security of its systems and data management on many levels, including personnel, information system, network, applications, and data. All systems access and control are under the auspices of the IT Department which ensures that industry standards are consistently followed and enforced.

- **Personnel security:** Spherix carefully screens applicants by performing a criminal history inquiry and employment verification. We require and check three references and require our employees to sign a confidentiality agreement. Every employee undergoes rigorous training in how to maintain security and confidentiality regarding the information they handle.

- **Information system security:** Risks to the data from unauthorized internal and external data access are controlled by safeguards built into the infrastructure, as

well as by firewalls, encryption, and other techniques. We use redundant architecture (███████████████) to reduce the risk of hardware and software failure. We reduce the risk of user error by special application coding, user training, and centralization of data management tasks.

Comment: Proprietary Type # 4

- **Network security:** We use, as our first level of security, ████████ an industry-standard firewall. Our second level of security involves dividing the LAN into protected segments, allowing access to only a defined group.

Comment: Proprietary Type # 4

- **Data security:** Our first level of security uses ████████████████████ ████████████████ that ensures restricted access to the various modules of the application. The second level employs ████████████████████████ to prevent unauthorized access.

Comment: Proprietary Type # 4

Comment: Proprietary Type # 4

- **Data encryption:** We use Proprietary Type # 4to protect data being transferred over web and/or FTP connection. We also use tools from ██████ to establish secure storage and transmission of data.

Comment: Proprietary Type # 4

- **Audit procedures:** Spherix's network administrators use ████████████ ████████████ to provide rolling logs of all activities that pertain to system events, alerts, and processes running. They check the logs on a daily basis. Any error or suspicious activities are investigated and reported to the Infrastructure Manager. Audits can be run to identify all changes or intrusions, and who was responsible.

Comment: Proprietary Type # 2

- **Maintaining data integrity:** We maintain data integrity and quality by ensuring that, at the time data is written to disk, it is ███████████████████ to ensure its integrity. All data is verified ████████████ to ensure its quality.

Comment: Proprietary Type # 2

Comment: Proprietary Type # 2

⤶ **Also see:** For more information on system security, please see our response to *Question 22* starting on page 38.

B. Account Management Capability

In a call center outsourcing arrangement, the Contractor names an account manager or account management team to act as the interface with the client. This represents a vital communication link, and we will review the following items to gauge the level of account management expertise offered by Offerors.

☑ **Spherix compliance:** Spherix proposes ████████████ as our Project Manager for the FRTIB Parallel Call Center project. ██████████ is our best veteran manager who has an ██ ████████████████████████████████████. She will bring a fresh and enthusiastic approach that will set the tone for success. Prior to her financial experience outside the Company████████████ ████████ experience at Spherix as a Line Supervisor, then Operations Manager. She will give FRTIB the kind of project reporting and consulting attention it needs████████ is supported by a team of seasoned financial services experts who will add depth to the expertise she herself brings to the effort.

Comment: Proprietary Type # 3

Comment: Proprietary Type # 3

Comment: Proprietary Type # 3

Comment: Proprietary Type # 3

Comment: Proprietary Type # 3

1. Communication protocols

☑ **Spherix compliance:** The Project Manager, as the main point of contact, will represent the Company at meetings, briefings, and teleconferences. As needed, other important members of our project team, including ███████████████████ ██████ our Vice President of Operations, will attend such meetings to address any project issues. We feel that regular, intensive team communication will be a critical element in this project's success. Spherix also ensures daily phone calls and email exchanges between our Project Manager and the Agency's COTR to ensure a fully coordinated FRTIB-Spherix team operation. We also will work with the COTR to establish contact and communications protocols with the New Orleans site to address call routing issues that may arise.

Comment: Proprietary Type # 3

⟳ **Also see:** For more information on our communication protocols, please see our response to *Question 6* starting on page 11.

2. Program implementation

☑ **Spherix compliance:** Spherix's team of professionals consists of financial information services veterans. Over the past 30 years, we have launched dozens of projects similar in size to the FRTIB's Parallel Call Center. We understand the criticality of having all the pieces come together at the right time and we understand even more the importance of communicating often and well with the client. We do this by preparing and adhering to an implementation timeline (which is further refined upon contract award), schedule of deliverables, contact list, and other tools that ensure that you, the client, are fully involved and aware as we make progress toward project launch and beyond.

We are experts in the financial services outsourcing market and we can demonstrate that to you. Contact any of the companies we have listed as references and they will attest to our ability to exceed your expectations.

⟳ **Also see:** For more information on program implementation, please see our response to *Question 18* starting on page 31. Also, for our proposed implementation timeline for the Parallel Call Center project, please see *Appendix 2.*

Appendices

Include the following:

- o Resumes
- o Implementation Plan for FRTIB
- o Disaster Recovery Plan
- o Meridian MAX Statistical Fields
- o Sample Reports (Michigan DNR and FIC Monthly Report)
- o History of Achievement for OPM

SPHERIX
Use or disclosure of proposal data is subject to the
restriction of the Title Page of this Proposal
65
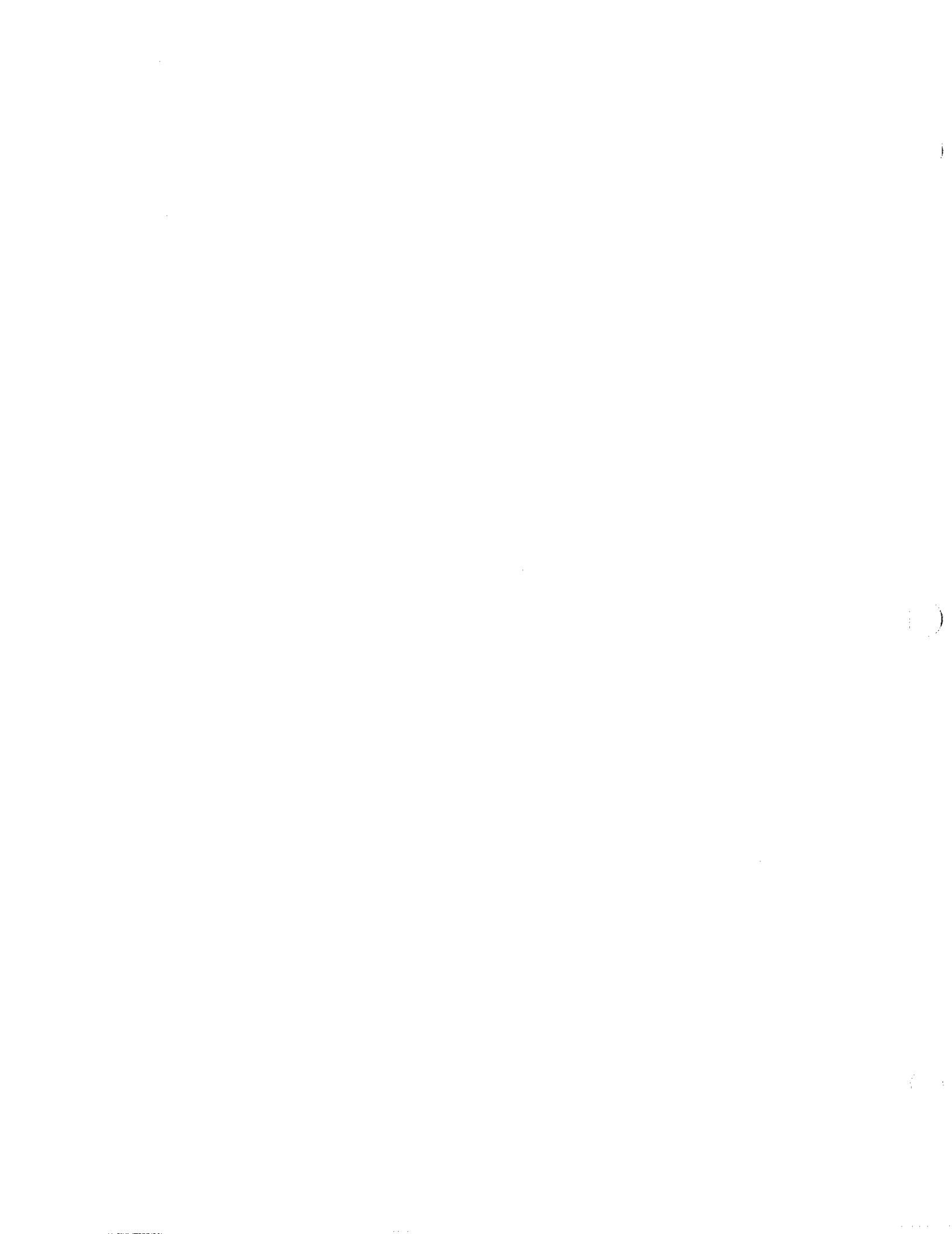
Client: Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board

Project: Parallel Call Center

Call Volume:

Requirements:

Start Up (60 days)

Training

Infrastructure

Project

Direct Labor

ODC

TOTALS								
	Total (not including startup)							$ 2,278,425.00
	Startup							$ 187,517.30
	Total (including startup)							$ 2,465,942.30

Client: Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board

Product: Parallel Call Center

Call Volume:

Requirements:

Direct Labor								
Total / Direct Labor							$	9,947.81

Client: Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board

Product: Parallel Call Center

Call Volume:

Requirements:

Training								
Gen. Clerk 1								

(NOTE: training is for staff added for incremental project growth)

Project

Direct Labor								
ODC								

TOTALS		
Total (not including startup)		$ 3,335,934.39
Startup		$ 40,875.60
Total (including startup)		$ 3,376,809.99

Client: Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board

Product: Parallel Call Center

Call Volume:

Requirements:

Direct Labor									
Total / Direct Labor								$	8,344.44

Client: Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board

Product: Parallel Call Center

Call Volume:

Requirements:

Training								
Gen. Clerk 1								

(NOTE: training is for staff added for incremental project growth)

Project

Direct Labor								
ODC								

TOTALS		
Total (not including startup)	$	3,731,408.24
Startup	$	13,784.00
Total (including startup)	$	3,745,192.24

Client: Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board

Product: Parallel Call Center

Call Volume:

Requirements:

Direct Labor									
								$	9,060.13

Client: Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board

Product: Parallel Call Center

Call Volume:

Requirements:

Training							
Gen. Clerk 1							

(NOTE: training is for staff added for incremental project growth)

Project

Direct Labor							
ODC							

TOTALS		
Total (not including startup)		$ 4,227,922.97
Startup		$ 18,413.66
Total (including startup)		$ 4,246,336.63

Costs include one day coverage for Mardi Gras & one week full disaster-level coverage.

Request Date: 12/03/03

Client: Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board

Product: Parallel Call Center

Call Volume:

Requirements:

Direct Labor									
Total / Direct Labor								$	10,393.46

Client: Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board

Product: Parallel Call Center

Call Volume:

Requirements:

Training								
Gen. Clerk 1								

(NOTE: training is for staff added for incremental project growth)

Project

Direct Labor								
ODC								

TOTALS		
Total (not including startup)		$ 4,669,191.86
Startup		$ 14,627.68
Total (including startup)		$ 4,683,819.54

Client: Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board

Product: Parallel Call Center

Call Volume:

Requirements:

Direct Labor								
							$	11,471.07

Base Year Month	Call Volume	CSR FTEs	Sup. FTEs
January	42,064		
February	35,789		
March	58,733		
April	66,436		
May	95,484		
June	90,479		
July	99,994		
August	84,466		
September	77,605		
October	92,766		
November	99,727		
December	85,819		
	929,362		

Month	Base Year	Calls/Day	FTEs	Supervisor
January	210,322	10,015		
February	178,945	8,521		
March	195,776	9,323		
April	221,452	10,545		
May	238,711	11,367		
June	226,197	10,771		
July	249,986	11,904		
August	211,165	10,055		
September	194,012	9,239		
October	231,914	11,044		
November	249,318	11,872		
December	214,546	10,216		
Total	**2,622,344**	**10,406**		

Month	Option Year 1	Calls/Day	FTEs	Supervisor
January	231,354	11,017		
February	196,840	9,373		
March	215,354	10,255		
April	243,597	11,600		
May	262,582	12,504		
June	248,817	11,848		
July	274,985	13,095		
August	232,282	11,061		
September	213,413	10,163		
October	255,105	12,148		
November	274,250	13,060		
December	236,001	11,238		
Total	2,884,578	11,447		

Month	Option Year 2	Calls/Day	FTEs	Supervisor
January	254,490	12,119		
February	216,523	10,311		
March	236,889	11,280		
April	267,957	12,760		
May	288,840	13,754		
June	273,698	13,033		
July	302,483	14,404		
August	255,510	12,167		
September	234,755	11,179		
October	280,616	13,363		
November	301,675	14,365		
December	259,601	12,362		
Total	3,173,036	12,591		

Month	Option Year 3	Calls/Day	FTEs	Supervisor
January	279,939	13,330		
February	238,176	11,342		
March	260,578	12,408		
April	294,753	14,036		
May	317,724	15,130		
June	301,068	14,337		
July	332,731	15,844		
August	281,061	13,384		
September	258,230	12,297		
October	308,678	14,699		
November	331,842	15,802		
December	285,561	13,598		
Total	3,490,340	13,851		

Month	Option Year 4	Calls/Day	FTEs	Supervisor
January	307,932	14,663		
February	261,993	12,476		
March	286,636	13,649		
April	324,228	15,439		
May	349,497	16,643		
June	331,175	15,770		
July	366,005	17,429		
August	309,167	14,722		
September	284,053	13,526		
October	339,545	16,169		
November	365,026	17,382		
December	314,117	14,958		
Total	3,839,374	15,236		