



HOUSTON-GALVESTON AREA COUNCIL

Date 4/26/21

SUBJECT: Letter of Clarification No. 1
All Hazards Preparedness, Planning, Consulting and Recovery Services

REF: Solicitation No.: HP08-21

TO: All Prospective Respondents

This Letter of Clarification is issued for the following reasons:

To provide a response to potential respondent(s) questions. The following questions and H-GAC responses are hereby incorporated and made part of the Solicitation:

Question 1: Since H-GAC has stated that the scope description is not meant to be limiting and H-GAC is interested in securing Contractors that can provide a broad range of services related to the general scope will you please consider adding “post-disaster environmental services” to the general scope description? Environmental services are a unique category that are required for most FEMA projects under the Public Assistance and Hazard Mitigation Grant Programs, and it would greatly benefit H-GAC’s potential end users to include them within this scope if possible. If H-GAC is not willing to update the scope description could a firm still submit and be considered for a contract for environmental services specifically related to post-disaster grant funding?

Answer: Respondents are encouraged to include these details in their proposal as they fall under the “Recovery” aspect of the specifications. Project Background, Page 7 of the RFP, mentions services related to FEMA.

Question 2: Please clarify if Form 1295 must be notarized with our submittal.

Answer: Please refer to the Texas Ethics Commission website for instructions on completing the form (RFP page 23, Section MM).

Question 3: If we are not anticipating any subcontractors on our projects, should we still fill out Section B (No Subcontracting Statement) of the Small and Minority Business Form? This portion of the form says to complete this section only if subcontracts are not applicable.

Answer: If your firm does not intend to utilize subcontractors, yes, complete Section B.

Question 4: Do we need to submit the Drug-Free Workplace Certification Form along with all other forms? It is not included on the Proposal Checklist.

Answer: Yes, please include this form with your submission. If awarded a contract, it will be required.



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Question 5: Is it acceptable to respond to certain forms, using additional pages in our company format? (For example, Form H and the Geographic Areas Served Form). Or do our responses have to be included on each PDF form using duplicate copies of that form?

Answer: Please duplicate the forms on the website.

Question 6: On the Geographic Areas Served Form, can you please clarify the requirement for including an “approval letter from each manufacturer” as it relates to professional services firms? This requirement also mentions that “authorization letters” must include the regions in which equipment may be sold or serviced. If our firm is only engaged in professional services, can this requirement be waived?

Answer: The form is submitted if applicable – if you are not selling or servicing products then there are no manufacturer approvals required.

Question 7: a) Part VIII of the RFP states that Forms D and E should only be submitted if applicable. If our firm is only responding to supply professional services, do these apply?

b) If our firm only provides professional services, how does H-GAC wish us to complete the Catalog, Manufacturer, and Product Code columns of Form D on both tabs?

c) Is it acceptable to include/attach separate PDFs to our response to better illustrate professional services that our company provides?

Answer: a) No, Forms D and E would not apply. A fee schedule of offered services can be submitted instead.

b) Please state “N/A” for non-applicable items.

c) Yes.

Question 8: As a professional services firm, we do not use any retailers/distributors/dealers. Please clarify if on the Planned Authorized Retailers Form, we should only complete with our own company information (the Respondent).

Answer: If no authorized retailers are planned, please write N/A on the form.

Question 9: Regarding Section J of the RFP, can we list the applicable licenses and/or certificates relevant to this solicitation, or do you require a physical copy of each license/certificate??

Answer: Please provide a digital copy of each relevant license/certificate.



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Question 10: Does H-GAC wish any resumes to be provided for key staff identified in Section M of the RFP, Project Organization and Management Plan?

Answer: Resumes may be submitted if desired.

Question 11: For Section H of the RFP, Service Facilities and Personnel, several items appear to be non-applicable to a professional services firm. For example, we do not have factory and service center locations or warranties for handling problems and returns. Please clarify how you would like us to respond.

Answer: Please state "N/A" for non-applicable items.

Question 12: In HP08-21, All Hazards Preparedness, Planning, Consulting and Recovery Services, it states below that we must file online with the TEC –

"Conflict of Interest Questionnaire: Form CIQ – must be filled out electronically with the Texas Ethics Commission's online filing Application, printed out, signed, and attached to proposal in the response. Section TAB A."

However, at its November 30, 2015, meeting, the Texas Ethics Commission adopted amendments to Forms CIS and CIQ, that had been previously adopted on August 7, 2015. The Commission adopted these forms as required by H.B. 23, 84th Leg., Regular Session, which became effective September 1, 2015. Please note that the commission does NOT have jurisdiction to interpret or enforce Chapter 176 of the Local Government Code. Prior to H.B. 23, the Office of the Attorney General issued the following advisory opinion: Opinion No. GA-0446.

Also, please note that these forms are NOT filed with the Texas Ethics Commission.

We have no Conflict of Interest and cannot complete the forms on your website.

Please advise regarding the CIQ requirement.

Answer: A Conflict of Interest Questionnaire is only required if awarded a contract.

Question 13: Submission Contents, Section M, Project Organization and Management Plan – Instead of a "general summary of the approach" (we have many different approaches depending on the type of study), should we include a list of services we provide with a description? Or would that information go in Section I. Service Capabilities/Capacity?

Answer: Please submit that information in Section I.

Question 14: a) Authorized Dealers/Distributor form – Technically, we do not have dealers/distributors because we don't sell products. Can I assume this form is not applicable?



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b) Form D – Offered Items Pricing – We are providing job titles and billing rates for pricing on Tab A – Line Items, but we do not have Line Item Reference Numbers, Product Codes, or Manufacturer information. Should I fill out the Item/Product Description column with the job titles/classifications and the Bid Price column with the hourly billing rate ranges?

c) Form E – Published Options Pricing Sheet – Since we are providing billing rates for our pricing (not products), can I assume this form is not applicable?

Answer: a) Please refer to Q8.

b) Please refer to Q7.

c) Please refer to Q7.

Question 15: For respondents whose consulting services and rates are based on staff (e.g., job titles/classifications) and labor rates, Section D – Warranty, Service and Manual Documents and some elements of Section H – Service Facilities and Personnel do not seem to apply (RFP Page 9-10). In this case, can the respondent describe these sections as “Not Applicable” in our proposal?

Answer: Please refer to Q11.

Question 16: a) For respondents whose consulting services and rates are based on staff (e.g., job titles/classifications) and labor rates, Section K – Products and Pricing Forms D and E do not seem to apply as these pertain to products. In this case, how should the respondent use Forms D and E to describe staff and labor-based rates?

b) If Forms D and E should not be used for staff (e.g., job titles/classifications) and labor rates, how should the respondent also address Section L – Catalogs and Price Lists (RFP Page 11)?

c) Alternatively, can the respondent create a custom table in Excel format to describe Job Titles and corresponding Labor Rates to meet requirements for both Section K and Section L (RFP Page 11)?

Answer: a) Please refer to Q7.

b) Please refer to Q7.

c) Yes.

Question 17: Are subcontractors to the prime respondent also required to complete all solicitation forms? Or are subcontractors only required to complete the form described in Section C - Small



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and Minority Businesses, Women's Business Enterprises, and Labor Surplus Area Affirmation Form (RFP Page 9)?

Answer: *Subcontractors are not required to complete all forms, however, in accordance with the RFP, page 28, Section HHH, they are bound by the terms and conditions.*

Question 18: Unless a page limit is explicitly stated for a specific section of the proposal, can the respondent assume that there is no page limit for other sections (e.g., Section I – Service Capabilities/Capacity) of the proposal submission?

Answer: *Correct.*

Question 19: Regarding PART III – SOLICITATION SUBMISSION CONTENTS, N. References: does the "maximum 2 pages" requirement apply to the entire section or is it for each reference?

Answer: *2 pages maximum for the section.*

Question 20: Regarding PART III – SOLICITATION SUBMISSION CONTENTS, N. References: are "letters of endorsement" excluded from the 2-page limit for this section?

Answer: *Yes.*

Question 21: Is it acceptable to submit Supplemental Information and Resumes in an Appendix?

Answer: *Yes.*

Question 22: Part III – Solicitation Submission Contents, B: Signature Page and all Forms as Listed on Last Page of this RFP, states “Submit completed and signed Signature Page (Located on Page 2) and all required forms of the checklist provided on the last page of this solicitation.” However, the following Section C: Small and Minority Business, E: Marketing & Service Plan; F: Geographic Areas Services and K: Products and Pricing Form also ask for specific forms to be inserted into those sections. Can HGAC confirm if all forms shall be included in Section B or should the forms be split up across the multiple sections?

Answer: *The forms can be compiled at the end of the proposal.*

Question 23: Is H-GAC open to negotiating the terms and conditions of the Agreement at the contract stage with awarded Proposers?

Answer: *If awarded a contract, H-GAC may allow a review of exceptions during the contracting phase.*

Question 24: The RFP states that Section M (Project Organization and Management Plan) is limited to three pages. If the Respondent is proposing on more than one service, does this mean that



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the Respondent can use three pages to describe their approach to project organization and management for each service line? Or is all of Section M restricted to three pages total?

Answer: Three pages per service line.

Question 25: Section I (Service Capabilities/Capacity) asks Respondents to submit details, as appropriate, regarding “services being provided to private customers/government.” Can H-GAC please clarify what information is being requested in this section?

Answer: Please submit information regarding relevant services currently provided to other entities.

Question 26: As a current HGACBuy vendor, may we attach our own terms and conditions to the contract specific to the service offering, including the provisions FEMA requires when the contract’s costs are sought for reimbursement?

Answer: H-GAC incorporates appropriate provisions if awarded a contract. Alternate agreements may be established directly with Customers if applicable to the sale.

Question 27: Under Part I – General Information, the RFP includes a provision stating that “HGACBuy will be the primary government contracting vehicle when offering services/products awarded from this solicitation to eligible Customers nationwide.” This provision is new. Can you please clarify what “primary government contracting vehicle” means?

Answer: If a Respondent holds multiple contracts with other cooperative purchasing programs, they will utilize HGACBuy as the primary option when offering services/products awarded from this solicitation to eligible customers.

Question 28: Part I – General Information includes a provision stating that vendors under this agreement will make a commitment to “aggressively” market this program. This provision is new. In the prior agreement, vendors were expected to “proactively” market the program. Can H-GAC please clarify if this constitutes a substantive change and/or a specific commitment from vendors?

Answer: This does not constitute a substantive change nor specific commitment.

Question 29: We are also a vendor on GSA Schedule 84 and are required to offer buyers our lowest prices through that vehicle, including its administrative fee. Is the 1.5% H-GAC administrative fee at all negotiable since it is higher than GSA’s fee?

Answer: No.

Question 30: If a contract is awarded there is a 1.5% Order Processing Charge based on the contract price. Is the 1.5% fee collected at the contract execution? Plus a 1.5% fee for each billable activity performed?



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Answer: Please refer to the RFP, page 6, Item No. 7.

Question 31: a) Please confirm this solicitation does not pertain to debris removal services.
b) Will another solicitation be released for those services?

Answer: a) Correct.
b) Not at this time.

Question 32: The Signature form on p.2 and p. 36 appear to be identical. Are both required with our proposal submittal?

Answer: There is not a page 36.

Question 33: P.4 includes a link to a Drug Free Workplace form, which is not listed in the required forms on p.35. Is the Drug Free Workplace Form to be included in the proposal?

Answer: Please refer to Q4.

Question 34: P.9 Section D Warranty, Service and Manual Documents requires that we submit detailed Warranty, Service, Technical Manual, or other relevant information or booklets with the Response.

P. 11 Section K Products and Pricing Forms D and E require an excel copy of the price forms in catalogue form.

P.11 Section L Catalogs and Price Lists requires an excel copy including all catalogs bid in coordination with Form D Offered Items Pricing & Form E Published Options Pricing

What are the differences between these sections?

Answer: Each section requires a different item. K is actual pricing being submitted; L is any relevant electronic catalog to accompany the pricing being submitted by respondent. D does not pertain to pricing.

Question 35: The Forms listed on p.23 say they are required if awarded the contract. They are also listed in the required forms on p.35. Are the following required with our proposal submittal?

- Conflict of interest questionnaire
- Form 1295
- No Excluded Nation or Terrorist Organization Certification



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Answer: The listed forms are not required at proposal submission but will be required if awarded a contract.

Question 36: Page 35, Part VIII – Required Forms to Submit with Response includes a form for ‘Conflict of Interest’. In the link provided, there was no Conflict of Interest form. Will you be providing a form for this or should we respond with our own statement?

Answer: Please refer to the RFP, page 23, section LL. Conflict of Interest Questionnaire.

Question 37: General

- a) What is the budget for this effort?
- b) What is the funding source?

Answer: H-GAC does not determine budget or funding sources since items are purchased by various customers nationwide.

Question 38: Planning

- a) What agencies/organizations would be on the planning teams?
- b) Would H-GAC prefer monthly meetings or some other cadence?
- c) Would H-GAC prefer that formal meetings be held in-person, virtually or a mix of the two?
- d) Are there predecessor documents that will be significantly leveraged, or will planning efforts be for wholly or mostly new plans?

Answer: These items would be determined by the HGACBuy Customer.

Question 39: Training

- a) Would H-GAC prefer a classroom style training or online training or a mix of the two?
- b) Would H-GAC like to have a hands-on demonstration component to the training?
- c) If an online format is requested, would H-GAC prefer options of video, voice overs or other interactive segments?
- d) What duration is desired for the training?



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- e) If an online format is requested, is there a specific platform that the training will be hosted on? If so, what is it?

Answer: Same as Q38.

Question 40: Exercise

- a) What agencies/organizations will be on the planning teams?
- b) Would H-GAC prefer monthly meetings or some other cadence?
- c) Would H-GAC prefer that formal meetings be held in-person, virtually or a mix of the two?
- d) Are there specific plans that would be tested?
- e) Would H-GAC provide the actors/survivors or should the contractor include that in our pricing?
- f) Would the contractor handle the RSVP process for participants?
- g) Should the contractor provide pricing for venue rentals, print materials and other exercise supplies including food? If H-GAC will cover any, please specify which will be covered.

Answer: Same as Q38.

Question 41: Is it required to complete both Pricing Forms D & E?

Answer: No, please complete the Form that is applicable to your firm.

Question 42: Which is the preferred form for labor categories?

Answer: Please refer to Q16.

Question 43: Pricing Forms D and E – Do we add the labor categories we propose to use vs product/part?

Answer: Please refer to Q16.

Question 44: Pricing Forms D and E - Do we list hourly rates for the bid price?

Answer: Please refer to Q16.



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Question 45: Clarification requested on Part III - Section B calls for Signature Page and all forms listed on the last page of the RFP. Consecutive sections C through N also call for forms listed in Section B. Is the intent to provide duplicate forms in Sections B, C, E, F, K.

Answer: Please refer to Q22.

Question 46: Clarification Part III – submission instructions. “Please submit the electronic pdf with tabbed navigation reference labels to indicate the submission in the order of the alpha character as listed below (A through N)”. Forms D & E are specified as Excel format only, would you like a PDF too so that the proposal can be combined in a single PDF file?

Answer: Please submit these forms as requested by the specific section.

Question 47: Instructions to upload bid – Shall the uploaded zip file have multiple folders for each section A through N or just 1 compiled PDF file and 2 excel pricing forms D &E?

Answer: Either format is fine.

Question 48: Item D – Warranty, Service and Manual Documents – requests that “respondents submit detailed warranty, service, technical manual, or other relevant information or booklets with response”. Since this solicitation is for services and not goods, warranty and service manuals would not be applicable. What information would, if any, should be provided in this section?

Answer: Please refer to Q15.

Question 49: Item F – Geographic Areas Serviced/Authorized Distributor Form – bullets #2-4 appear to be related to actual goods/products and not services. Please either remove this language or provide clarification regarding what information should be submitted by each respondent.

Answer: Please refer to Q6.

Question 50: Item H – Service Facilities and Personnel - bullets #2-5 appear to be related to actual goods/products and not services. Please either remove this language or provide clarifications regarding what information should be submitted.

Answer: Please refer to Q11.

Question 51: Item K – Products and Pricing Forms D and E - bullet #2 indicates respondents should complete Form D for it’s pricing submission. In reviewing the form, it appears to be more



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in line with goods/products versus services. Is there a separate form for services only? If not, how should respondents provide their pricing information (for example a list of labor categories and rates or some other format)?

Answer: Please refer to Q16.

Question 52: Item L – Catalog and Price List - if providing services only, please clarify what information should be provided. Additionally, bullet #2 under Item K – Products and Pricing Forms D and E also requests pricing (including Form D). Should this information be provided both under Section K and Section L of the proposal? Hourly rates/pricing is also requested in Section M. Please clarify.

Answer: For Item L details must still be outlined in Form D Offered pricing and Form E Published Options Pricing. All Details outlined for pricing coincide. The details listed in Item K indicate (as applicable) and for Item L and Item M, details should also be indicated in Form D and Form E. All sections are an overview of pricing.

Question 53: Item M – Project Organization and Management Plan – requests that “respondents submit a project organization and management plan that includes project staffing with an indication of the personnel to be provided, their respective roles, and a not-to-exceed hourly rate by labor title category”.... “submissions must clearly delineate all individuals, by names and titles that will be working on this plan and their areas of responsibility”. Given the uncertainty of task orders that will be issued under this contract, it’s difficult to anticipate the level of staffing that might be required or the specific individuals that might be involved. Can respondents instead provide a general organization and management plan based on specific labor categories, along with a description about how the work will be accomplished? Additionally, should pricing also be included in this section?

Answer: Item M can provide an overview of personnel details. An organization plan with details indicated is acceptable. Please specify the labor categories and descriptions if “services” are indicated. Also, for pricing, Section K and L should outline pricing as Section M states that “an indication of the personnel to be involved, their respective roles, and a not to exceed hourly rate by labor title category”.

Question 54: Item N – References – please clarify if the listed two-page maximum is per project, or for the entire section.

Answer: Please refer to Q19.



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Question 55: Regarding Part III Solicitation Submission Contents, Section G Business History/Viability (page 10), would H-GAC waive the current capitalization and gross revenue for each of the last three (3) fiscal years requirement?

Answer: No.

Question 56: If H-GAC does not waive that requirement, would it accept a letter of credit in lieu of information regarding current capitalization and gross revenue for each of the last three (3) fiscal years?

Answer: Yes.

When issued, Letter(s) of Clarification shall automatically become a part of the solicitation documents and shall supersede any previous specification(s) and/or provision(s) in conflict with the Letter(s) of Clarification. It is the responsibility of the respondent to ensure that it has obtained all such letter(s). By submitting a proposal on this project, respondents shall be deemed to have received all Letter(s) of Clarification and to have incorporated them into their proposals.