

SECTION M - EVALUATION FACTORS FOR AWARD

M-1 BASIS FOR AWARD

a. Evaluation Summary

The Government will evaluate each offeror's proposal and use the results in the contracting source selection decision. The source selection process will determine the overall merits of each proposal in terms of its potential to best satisfy the needs of the Government.

b. Award

The Government intends to evaluate proposals and award a contract without discussions. Each Offeror's proposal should contain the Offeror's best cost, price, and technical position. The Government reserves the right to conduct discussions if it is later deemed necessary. Any offeror that is rated below "Acceptable" in any evaluation criteria will not be considered for contract award.

Award will be to the responsive and responsible offeror whose proposal (conforming to the solicitation) represents the best value to the Government considering the areas of Technical, Past Performance, Management, and Price. The Government may award to other than the lowest-priced offeror or to other than the offeror with the highest technical rating if the Contracting Officer determines that to do so would result in the best value to the Government. The Government intends to award a single (1) contract for the TSM program.

- * Whose proposal is technically acceptable;
- * Whose offer is deemed responsive to the solicitation requirements;
- * Whose overall offer represents "Best Value" to the Government.

In making its "Best Value" determination, the Government will consider overall technical merit to be of significantly greater importance than evaluated price. However, the importance of cost as a factor in the final determination will increase with the degree of equality in the overall technical merit of the proposals.

M-2 EVALUATION PROCESS

Following the receipt of proposals, an initial evaluation will be conducted by the Source Selection Evaluation Board (SSEB). Should an award on "initial offer" not be pursued, the government will establish a "competitive range" and notify all offerors of their inclusion or exclusion. Discussions will be held with those offerors in the competitive range for the purpose of clarifying submissions or correcting deficiencies.

M-2 EVALUATION PROCESS (Cont'd)

Offerors eliminated from the competitive range will be promptly notified in writing in accordance with FAR 15.503. Following the conclusion of these activities, Final Proposal Revisions will be requested. Final evaluation will be conducted and award made based upon the criteria set forth in paragraph M-3, Specific Evaluation Criteria.

The Government will evaluate each of the areas and factors identified in M-3 below (except price) in two ways: 1) a proposal rating, and 2) a narrative proposal risk assessment. The proposal rating depicts how well the offeror's proposal meets the evaluation standards and the solicitation requirements. Proposal risk assesses the risk associated with the offeror's proposed approach as it relates to accomplishing the requirements of this solicitation. Paragraph M-3.4 describes the Government methodology for evaluating price.

a. Proposal Evaluation Ratings

The Government shall use the following proposal evaluation ratings:

DESCRIPTION	DEFINITION
Excellent	Exceeds specified requirements and has many significant strengths, no significant weaknesses or risks and offers a distinct benefit to the Government.
Acceptable	Meets specified requirements and has: Few significant strengths and few significant weaknesses or risks; OR No significant strengths and no significant weaknesses or risks.
Marginal	Meets specified requirements and has: No significant strengths and few significant weaknesses or significant risks, OR Many significant strengths and many significant weaknesses or significant risks.
Unacceptable	Fails to meet stated requirements.

The Government will use the following risk adjectives. The Government assigns a subjective proposal risk to risks associated with the offeror's proposed effort in relationship to accomplishing the requirements of this solicitation. Evaluators make an independent judgment of the probability of success, the impact of failure; taking into account the offeror's risk mitigation approaches. The Government will use the following proposal risk definitions when assessing proposal risk.

a. Proposal Evaluation Ratings (Cont'd)

RISK	DEFINITION
LOW	Little potential for schedule disruption, increased cost, or impact on specified performance. Normal contractor effort and routine Government monitoring will likely address difficulties.
Moderate	Some potential for schedule disruption, increased cost, or degradation to specified performance. Special contractor effort and close Government monitoring will probably overcome difficulties.
High	Serious potential for significant schedule disruption, increased cost, or degradation to specified performance. Extraordinary contractor effort and intense Government monitoring may not guarantee problem resolution.

The combinations of strengths, weaknesses, and risks that could generate a particular rating, based on the definitions given are shown below in the Rating Conceptual Matrix.

Rating Conceptual Matrix

WEAKNESS & RISK/STRENGTHS	MANY SIGNIFICANT STRENGTHS	FEW SIGNIFICANT STRENGTHS	NO SIGNIFICANT STRENGTHS
No Significant Weaknesses or Risks	Excellent	Acceptable	Acceptable
Few Significant Weaknesses or Risks	Acceptable	Acceptable	Marginal
Many Significant Weakness or Risks	Marginal	Marginal	Marginal

Offerors whose proposal fails to meet the requirements of the RFP will be determined to be Unacceptable.

M-3 SPECIFIC EVALUATION CRITERIA

Relative Importance of Evaluation Criteria. Technical factors are more important than the management factors which are more important than past performance. While the price to the Government is a substantial area to be taken into consideration in the integrated assessment of offers, the non-cost factors, collectively, are of significantly greater importance. Therefore, the Government may award to other than lowest price, acceptable offer(s) if it is determined that the superior capability is worth the additional price. However, the Government will not make an award at a significantly higher price to achieve only slightly superior performance capability.

The Government will evaluate each offeror's proposal in the following areas:

T Technical
 M Management
 P Past Performance
 C/P Cost/Price

Exceptions, Deviations, and Waivers

An exception is where an offeror objects to a requirement and will not comply with that requirement. A deviation is where an offeror states it will not comply with a requirement but proposes an alternative to meet the intent of the requirement, usually involving a specification. A waiver is where an offeror requests authorization for the Government to accept an item that will depart from specified requirements, but would nevertheless be considered suitable. Exceptions, deviations, and requests for waivers may cause proposals to be considered unacceptable.

M-3.1 TECHNICAL AREA

There are three factors in the Technical area:

T.1 Technical Approach
 T.2 Integrated Logistics Support
 T.3 Software Program Planning

Factor T.1 is as important as T.2. These are more important than T.3.

M-3.1.a. Factor T.1 - Technical Approach

The offeror will identify and express how it intends to execute the Government's requirements as defined in the TSM Performance Specification (PS). Threshold (minimum) requirements are identified in the PS, as well the Government's objective requirements. The offeror shall describe how many of those objective requirements it intends to meet (if any).

"Meet requirements" reflects the offeror's identification of, assent to, and expression of how the Government's minimum requirements, and (as applicable) objective requirements, will be accomplished. Minimum requirements reflect the offeror's identification of and assent to the Government's minimum performance requirements, including levels of service. "Objectives" reflect the offeror's identification of and commitment to exceed the Government's minimum requirements, up to the levels identified by the Government, for which the Government may view offeror's commitment as potentially providing extra value to the Government. These commitments toward the Government's goals will form the basis of performance measurement should offeror be awarded the contract, and offeror's total proposal, including organization, manning and quality assurance process, must reflect its ability to achieve the objectives to which it commits.

An evaluation will be performed on each proposal based on the factors listed below.

Design/Rack Layout - The offerors proposal demonstrates an appropriate and realistic design and rack layout:

Placement of equipment

Consideration of human factors

Ease of access to equipment for configuration and maintenance

Component selection (i.e. no obvious interoperability issues, modularity, upgradability and commonality to TDN/DTC/JECCS)

Appropriateness of circuit card mix/configuration for Marine Corps communications architecture

Realistic long lead item list

Realistic estimate of weight and center of gravity

Realistic thermal analysis and ventilation plan

Thorough and incremental testing approach

Proposed spares to support the maintenance concept and spares requirements set forth in the SOW

M-3.1.a. Factor T.1 - Technical Approach (Cont'd)

NOTE 1: Innovative approaches, which meet or exceed the system requirements, will receive a higher score.

NOTE 2: COTS/GOTS modification. Excessive modification without justification will result in a lower score.

NOTE 3: Marine Corps Common Hardware Suite (MCHS) - The offeror's design shall use processors found on the MCHS. Compelling technical argument for the selection of alternate processors must be provided.

M-3.1.b. Factor T.2 - Integrated Logistic Support

The Government will evaluate the offeror's approach in addressing Integrated Logistics Support elements. As a minimum, the offeror's training strategy, contractor interim support services, configuration management, warranty performance, technical publications, hazardous materials management program, and reliability and maintainability will be considered. The offeror will identify and express how it intends to execute the Government's requirements as defined in the TSM Statement of Work (SOW). An evaluation will be performed on each proposal based on the factors listed below.

Training Strategy - Offeror demonstrates an approach that is well defined and demonstrates an understanding of the integrated nature of the manpower, personnel and training tasks as defined in the SOW. Offeror's training strategy and recommended training device configuration demonstrates a thorough, realistic and executable approach to supporting the Government's operation and maintenance concept as defined in the SOW.

Contractor Interim Support Services - The offeror's interim support services approach demonstrates a thorough, realistic, and executable plan to support fielded systems until organic support is fully established.

Configuration Management (CM) - The offeror's configuration management approach demonstrates a thorough understanding of the CM program objectives and task as defined in the SOW.

Warranty Performance - The offeror's warranty administration procedures and warranty claims procedures approach demonstrate a thorough understanding of the tasks and requirements. Warranty period meets minimum 3-year requirement as stated in the SOW. Procedures should not create an undue burden for the user.

M-3.1.b. Factor T.2 - Integrated Logistic Support (Cont'd)

Technical Publications - The offeror's experience and approach to developing Technical manuals demonstrates an effective, realistic and timely approach to provide Technical Pubs concurrent with system fielding.

Hazardous Materials Management Program (HMMP) - The offeror's HMMP approach demonstrates a thorough knowledge and analyses of hazardous material identification, management and mitigation.

Reliability and Maintainability - The offeror's reliability and maintainability approach demonstrated a thorough analyses and realistic prediction based on the offeror's proposed design and integration.

NOTE 1: Innovative approaches, which meet or exceed the system logistic support requirements, will receive a higher score.

M-3.1.c. Factor T.3 - Software Program Planning

The Government will evaluate the offeror's approach to Software Program Planning. As a minimum, the offeror's software program plan summary shall demonstrate that the overall software acquisition management and procedures necessary to achieve an effective, efficient software acquisition/development plan, meet or exceed the requirements specified in the TSM Performance Specification. The offeror's strategy will be evaluated specifically based on his ability to accomplish the following:

Software program planning strategy
Software architecture and design strategy
Software test approach
Software transition strategy

Streamlined software documentation alternatives that address all topics required by the SOW and CDRLs will receive a higher score.

M-3.2 MANAGEMENT AREA

There are four factors in the Management area. The four factors are of equal importance.

- M.1 Integrated Master Plan (IMP) and Integrated Master Schedule (IMS)
- M.2 Personnel
- M.3 Teaming Arrangements
- M.4 Business Practices

M-3.2.a. Factor M.1 - IMP and IMS

The Government will evaluate the offeror's IMP to be complete, comprehensive, and executable. The Government will assess the overall management approach to planning, establishing, and implementing all areas of the TSM program in accordance with the requirements in the RFP. The Government will evaluate the integration of tasks, their associated milestones, and entrance/exit criteria, and their interrelationships and traceability to the IMS, WBS, SOW, and PS. The Government will evaluate the ability of the offeror's organization and management processes to support the TSM program, from development through Production. The Government will evaluate the degree to which the offeror's component selection demonstrates sound business and technical judgment.

The Government will evaluate the offeror's proposed IMS resources to be complete, comprehensive, and realistic. The Government will evaluate the integration of these resources with the planned tasks, associated milestones, entrance/exit criteria, their interrelationships, and their traceability to the IMP over the critical path of the proposed program depicted in the charted program layout.

M-3.2.b. Factor M.2 - Personnel

The Government will assess the offeror's ability to perform on this contract with adequately trained and experienced staff.

Key Personnel - The offeror's Program Manager meets the following minimum requirements:

Program Manager

Experience - Minimum ten years program management experience

Education - Minimum Master Degree

The Offeror's key personnel shall meet the requirements of paragraph 3.1.3.2 of the SOW and that Key Personnel be assigned to the TSM program from contract award through successful completion of all First Article Tests.

Personnel and Facilities - The offeror demonstrates that the facilities and personnel required for completion of this program are available in-house or from qualified subcontractors.

M-3.2.c. Factor M.3 - Teaming Arrangements

The Government will evaluate the strength of the business relationships and commitments of the offeror's technical team, including any teaming arrangements, interdivisional relationships, and relationships with major subcontractors (or anticipated subcontractors). The Government will evaluate the presence of these entities on the offeror's team to demonstrate some clearly defined benefit to program objectives. The extent of participation of small disadvantaged business concerns in performance of the contract shall be evaluated (FAR 15.304(c)(4)).

M-3.2.d. Factor M.4 - Business Practices

The Government will evaluate the offeror's understanding and use of effective IPPD/IPT processes and methods and their affect on achieving program objectives. The Government will evaluate the offeror's knowledge and application of innovative and state of the art design and management tools. The Government will evaluate the offeror's organizational structure and its proposed ability to accomplish program objectives across a wide-variety of functional issues. The Government will evaluate the offeror's understanding of CM within the realm and direction of Government acquisition reform, streamlining, and performance management. The Government will evaluate the strength of key position qualifications and the offeror's ability to satisfy them. The Government will evaluate requirements for unusual or unique facilities or capitol equipment the offeror deems necessary to complete the program. The Government will evaluate the offeror's proposed quality program.

M-3.3 PAST PERFORMANCE AREA

There is one factor in the Past Performance area:

P.1 Relevant Experience**M-3.3.a. Factor P.1 - Relevant Experience**

The Government will focus its inquiry on the past performance of the offeror's and its proposed subcontractors' previous and current experience and performance on efforts which are of the same or similar complexity as effort required by the solicitation for similar/related cost efforts within the last 3 years. For an effort to be considered as "similar/related" it must involve related technologies and be performed by the same organizational entity. The past performance will be reviewed as it relates to all solicitation requirements, such as cost, schedule, and performance.

M-3.3.a. Factor P.1 - Relevant Experience (Cont'd)

The Government will evaluate the offeror's record of actively identifying potential problems, ability to resolve actual problems with minimal impact to contract performance parameters; ability to adhere to contract schedules including the administrative aspects of performance; the history for reasonable and cooperative approach to resolving program risks, commitment to customer satisfaction; and the general business-like concern for the interests of its customers. The Government will evaluate offeror's past performance risk based upon the quality of the offeror's relevant past performance as well as that of its proposed subcontractors. The Government will also use information included in the Contractor Performance Assessment Report (CPAR) database to assess contractor past performance and the past performance questionnaire associated with the TSM effort.

A minimum of three (3) detailed summaries of work similar in size, scope, and/or complexity to the TSM program should be provided. These summaries should identify specific work accomplished during the past three (3) years. The offeror may submit past performance information that is outside the three (3) year timeframe if it is pertinent and relevant to this procurement. Offeror's may use the relevant experience of key personnel that previously worked for other organizations. This section is limited to 20 pages and will not count against the total of 75 pages allotted to the rest of the technical volume. Detailed summaries must address the following:

Technical relevance to work anticipated under the TSM program;

Specific, quantifiable accomplishments or deliverables; and

Previous roles of Key Personnel, teammates, or others, with significant involvement in the offeror's TSM program.

Offerors shall provide a Past Performance Reference Matrix illustrating work similar in size, scope, and/or complexity and are recent and relevant to that defined for this effort, accomplished during the past three (3) years. Offerors shall ensure that accurate and concise information is provided for each reference and indicate whether the data is for the prime or the subcontractor. This information shall include:

(1) Offeror's (or major subcontractor's) CAGE and contractor establishment code (CEC) numbers.

(2) Government contracting activity, address, and telephone number.

(3) Procuring Contacting Officer's name, telephone number, and FAX number.

M-3.3.a. Factor P.1 - Relevant Experience (Cont'd)

(4) Government or commercial contracting activity technical representative or contracting officer representative (COR), telephone number, and FAX number.

(5) Government contract administration activity and the name, telephone number, and FAX number of the administrative contracting officer (ACO) and the Chief of Program and Technical support.

(6) Contract number

(7) Program title

(8) Contractor/subcontractor place of performance

(9) Contract type

(10) Period of performance

(11) Awarded contract price

(12) Final or projected price or cost

(13) Original delivery date

(14) Final or projected delivery date

(15) Program description and relevancy. For each instance of past performance, provide a description of the effort, highlighting similarities and differences between that experience and the effort required under this solicitation.

(16) Technical Performance. Describe how well the product or system was compliant with contract requirements. Highlight and explain any deviations from the system performance requirements and the actions performed to mitigate and resolve these differences. Describe the timeliness and completeness of deliverables under that contract to the original product performance requirements. Identify and explain any cure notices received.

(17) Schedule and Cost Performance. Provide a narrative of the objectives achieved and any cost growth or schedule delays encountered. For any Government contracts that did not meet original requirements with regard to schedule and cost performance, provide a brief explanation for such shortcomings and any demonstrated corrective actions taken to avoid recurrence. Explain those processes now in place to prevent past problems and ensure such problems do not affect future performance on this proposed contract. Identify and explain any cure notices received as a result of schedule or cost performance.

M-3.3.a. Factor P.1 - Relevant Experience (Cont'd)

(18) Provide the above required information for any and all terminated Government contracts with the offeror, in whole or in part, for any reason during the past three (3) years. Include those efforts currently in the process of such termination as well as those that are not similar to the proposed effort.

(19) Provide a statement as to whether any claims or Requests for Equitable Adjustment (REA) against the Government have been made relating to the contract.

(20) New corporate entities may submit data on prior contracts involving its officers and employees. However, in addition to the other requirements in this section, offerors shall discuss in detail the role performed by such persons in the prior contracts.

(21) Offerors shall include in their proposal the written consent of their proposed significant subcontractors to allow the Government to discuss that subcontractor's past performance evaluation with the offeror's during negotiations (Note: Written permission from subcontractors is excluded from the page count).

(22) Offerors should identify other directly pertinent past history which indicates efforts of the same or similar complexity have been performed using the offeror's existing plant capabilities and demonstrate satisfaction of customer requirements.

IN THE CASE OF AN OFFEROR WITHOUT A RECORD OF RELEVANT PAST PERFORMANCE OR FOR WHOM INFORMATION ON PAST PERFORMANCE IS NOT AVAILABLE, THE OFFEROR WILL NOT BE EVALUATED FAVORABLY OR UNFAVORABLY ON PAST PERFORMANCE.

M-3.4 COST/PRICE

Cost/Price will be evaluated, but not rated. Offeror's pricing will be assessed on the basis of reasonableness, predicated upon its proposed solution.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

a. The Government urges offerors to submit their proposals based on the most favorable terms in order to reflect their best possible potential. The Government will view unrealistic proposals in terms of technical or schedule commitments, or lack of cost or price realism, as indicative of a lack of understanding of the complexity and risk in the contract requirements.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS (Cont'd)

b. The Government reminds offerors that unsupported promises to comply with the contractual requirements are not sufficient. Proposals must provide convincing documentary evidence in support of any presumptive statements relating to promises of performance. The offeror shall support all claims by substantiated facts and data or the results of test, simulation, or analyses.

As prescribed by 52.215-1, the government may award on the basis of initial offers received, without discussion. Therefore, each initial offer should contain the offeror's best terms from a cost or price and technical standpoint.

As prescribed in FAR 17.208(c)(1), the Government will evaluate offers for award purposes by adding the total price for all options to the total price for the basic requirement. Evaluation of options will not obligate the Government to exercise the option(s).