QUESTIONS AND GSA RESPONSES 2
February 21, 2006

SECTION B:

24. In the pricing tables for Design, Engineering, and Maintenance Support Services it is requested that the Customer Care and Help Desk Support should not be separately priced. If the Bidder's commercial practice is to not include help desk support in its offering price how should that be handled?

    GSA RESPONSE: The RFP remains as stated.

Section C:

Introduction:

25. What is meant by "pricing being equal to or better than offered commercially"?

    GSA RESPONSE: As stated in Section L.9.1. Prices offered are those at or below those offered to preferred commercial customers.

Service Type I - Fixed Satellite Service (FSS)

26. What is the breakdown between C-band and Ku-band?

    GSA RESPONSE: There are no specific usage requirements for any particular satellite band.

27. Besides "VSAT", can other satellite terminals be included for FSS?

    GSA RESPONSE: Yes. The offeror may propose any commercial terminals that have the capability to support the proposed Satellite transport service.

28. What are the requirements for a VSAT terminal?

    GSA RESPONSE: Any proposed commercial VSAT terminal must have the capability to support the proposed Satellite Transport service.

29. What qualifies as a small aperture terminal?

GSA RESPONSE: Newton's Telecom Dictionary defines VSAT as "a relatively small satellite antenna typically 1.5 – 3 meters in diameter".

30. Would Digital Satellite Receiver be considered a very small aperture terminal?

GSA RESPONSE: The offeror may propose any commercial terminals that have the capability to support the proposed Satellite transport service.

31. Will other mobile receivers be considered for FSS?

GSA RESPONSE: The offeror may propose any commercial terminals that have the capability to support the proposed Satellite transport service.

32. Are government agencies looking to use the L-Band/S-Band as a commercial satellite service?

GSA RESPONSE: Section C.3. of the RFP states "The service may use any available satellites operating in C-band, Ku-band, Ka-band, *and other commercial bands*." Therefore L-Band or S-Band is not precluded. Specific usage of these services will depend on user agencies' requirements on a task order basis.

33. Is there a need for commercial L-Band and S-Band usage?

GSA RESPONSE: Government users will define specific satellite band requirements on a task order basis.

34. In SATCOM I, there were no coverage for L-Band and S-Band does this mean you will not add a provider that provides L-Band coverage?

GSA RESPONSE: No.

35. Why wasn't the L-Band used in SATCOM I?

GSA RESPONSE: This question is outside the scope of this procurement.

36. Do all contracts require two way transmissions? If so, why?

GSA RESPONSE: No. The RFP states in C.3.1.2.1 that "The Offeror shall provide full-duplex, half-duplex, and simplex transmission service of voice, data, and video traffic for point-to-point and point-to-multipoint configurations." Simplex transmissions can be one-way transmissions.

37. Can you explain "worldwide" given the coverage requirement is focused on CONUS & DC? What other regions are desired by GSA?

> **GSA RESPONSE: The RFP states the minimum geographic coverage requirements. The offeror may propose additional geographic coverage areas.**

38. Do companies that only require simplex transmission have to pay for half/full duplex services?

> **GSA RESPONSE: The offeror shall price each level of service separately.**

39. How many agencies require both full-duplex and half duplex? If an agency only requires simplex transmission, must they pay for two-way transmissions? Why must they absorb the additional cost?

> **GSA RESPONSE: Specific usage of these services depends on user agencies' requirements on a task order basis.**
> **The offeror shall price each level of service separately.**

Service Type II – Satellite Applications Services

40. What is video write-over capability?

> **GSA RESPONSE: RFP Section C.3.2.1 identifies video write over as a capability in Distance Learning. This is the ability to add text in real time "written over" a video picture or stream.**

41. Has audio broadcasting being considered for BSS?

> **GSA RESPONSE: Yes.**

42. Can BSS include audio broadcasting such as the VOA, AFN-Radio, Psyops, etc.?

> **GSA RESPONSE: Yes.**

43. Do you specify DIRECTV and DISH Network as examples under "Broadcast Satellite Services" because you are interested in commercial programming or just as a platform for delivering internal broadcasts to agency networks?

> **GSA RESPONSE: Specific usage of these services will be defined by user agencies on a task order basis.**

44. For Type II (applications), the minimum requirement is to bid on one (i.e., telemedicine, streaming, etc.). If we propose the minimum (let's say telemedicine), will

we be able to bid on Task Orders requiring other applications (e.g., emergency response or BSS)?

> **GSA RESPONSE: Awardees will only be able to offer services priced at time of award. In accordance with Section H.15 of the RFP, awardees may propose additional services throughout the life of the contract through the modification process. However, not all modifications will be accepted.**

45. Page C-8, par C.3.2.5 does not address Audio broadcasting, why?

> **GSA RESPONSE: The RFP states the minimum requirement. Offerors may propose additional services.**

46. Is the requirement to provide a reference for each proposed service offering correlated to each satellite application service proposed under Service Type II?

> **GSA RESPONSE: Yes**

47. If a bidder does not initially bid on a section of the RFP, for example, telemedicine, will it be precluded from bidding on telemedicine task orders after award of contract.

> **GSA RESPONSE: A bidder who does not initially bid on a requirement of the RFP, for example, telemedicine, will be precluded from bidding on telemedicine task orders after award of the contract. In accordance with Section H.15 of the RFP, awardees may propose additional services throughout the life of the contract through the modification process. However, not all modification proposals will be accepted.**

Service Type I (MSS & FSS)

48. Bidding one from each category e.g., mobile and fixed can we just bid fixed? There is little value to the government if the principal offerings of the mobile service aren't selected. All others would only add their costs to the principals prices. Please clarify.

> **GSA RESPONSE: Service Type I, Satellite Transport Services, is a mandatory service type. To be considered for award within Service Type I, the Offeror shall propose, at a minimum, one service (Mobile or Fixed Satellite Service) from Service Type I.**

Service Type III - Design, Engineering, and Maintenance Support Services

49. Section C, Page C-8, Para C.3.3—This section includes requirements for Design and Engineering Services; Ongoing Maintenance and Operational Support Services; Customer Care and Helpdesk Support; and Training. Service Type III does not include a requirement for systems integration services. Corresponding portions of Section M also fail to provide for systems integration services. With the continual advance of Satellite based technology, systems, standards, and protocols, it is highly likely that systems integration activities will be required to ensure Government access to these emerging capabilities. We recommend that Systems Integration Services be added by revising the text C.3.3a to read "Design, Engineering, and Systems Integration Services." We further recommend that paragraph C.3.3.1 be expanded to include systems integration and that associated portions of Section M be revised to include systems integration services into the evaluation criteria.

> **GSA RESPONSE: System Integration is typically required in developmental contracts. For SATCOM-II, the Government commercial services include installation, configuration, and implementation as identified in C.3.3. GSA is buying commercial, not developed services.**

50. Service Type III, how can you price the sub-services without defining the nature and scope of the required solution?

> **GSA RESPONSE**: The RFP requires **fixed priced services.**

Service Type IV –

51. Section C, Page C-2, Para C.3d—Service Type IV services are listed as being "Small Business Set-Aside. Are there contractual conditions under which GSA would allow a non-Small Business Prime contractor to bid on Type IV services if those services were allocated solely and entirely to a small business member of the Prime contractor's team? We recommend that GSA allow non-Small Business Prime contractors to submit bids that include Type IV services if those services are allocated solely and entirely to a small business or businesses that are members of the Prime contractor's team. Such an arrangement would result in greater flexibility for teams to provide a full range of SATCOM products and services and would create a larger number of contract vehicles through which work could be funneled to qualified small businesses.

> **GSA RESPONSE: No, these services are reserved for Small Business Primes only.**

SMALL BUSINESS

52. Are there any limitations for a prime bidder in any full and open category or the small business set aside category to also be a sub-contractor to another potential prime?

> **GSA RESPONSE: No limitation except for that given by the FAR—No more than 50 percent of the task order value.**

53. How many of the contracts awarded will go to small disadvantaged minority women owned businesses?

> **GSA RESPONSE: There is no set number of awards. The number of awards depends on the number and quality of proposals received.**

54. How many set-asides will be awarded?

> **GSA RESPONSE: There is no set number of awards. The number of awards depends on the number and quality of proposals received.**

55. Can you define the small business size standards for this solicitation?

> **GSA RESPONSE: The size standard for NAICS 517410 – Satellite Communications is $13.5M (size standards in millions of dollars—based on average annual receipts).**

56. What is the size standard for Service Type IV?

> **GSA RESPONSE: The size standard for NAICS 517410 – Satellite Communications is $13.5M (size standards in millions of dollars—based on average annual receipts).**

57. Will task orders be set-aside for small businesses only?

> **GSA RESPONSE: Task orders will be issued by individual agencies and are to be issued in accordance with FAR 16.505(b) providing each awardee whose service offerings match the agency's requirement a fair opportunity to be considered for each order exceeding $2,500. The Task Order Contracting Officer may exercise broad discretion in developing appropriate order placement procedures. GSA believes the only task orders that will be set-aside for small businesses are those solicited for Service Type IV.**

58. Small Business Plan – what goal percentages apply for SDB, women-owned, Veteran Owned, etc.

GSA RESPONSE: The GSA agency-wide subcontracting goal percentages are:
Small Disadvantaged Business – 6%
Women-Owned – 5%
HUBZone – 3%
Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned – 3%
Veteran-Owned – 5%

59. What is the definition for Small Business, either from an "NAICS", Size, Sales, etc. definition?

GSA RESPONSE: The size standard for NAICS 517410 – Satellite Communications is $13.5M (size standards in millions of dollars—based on average annual receipts).

60. The RFP seems to indicate that Small Businesses will be required to respond to all 4 categories in the RFP to prime. Is this correct?

GSA RESPONSE: All businesses regardless of size must meet the mandatory service requirements as stated in RFP Section C.3. Only Small Businesses have the option to propose Service Type IV.

61. What are your concerns related to conflict of interest (COI) issues with small business that provide professional services and then service Type I, II, & III offerings?

GSA RESPONSE: See FAR Subpart 9.5—Organizational and Consultant Conflicts of Interest.

62. There are several small businesses that specialize in providing the Type IV services, but do not offer Types I, II, and III. It appears that to be able to offer Type IV services, a small business must also offer Types I, II, and III. Is this assumption correct? If yes, the Government has placed a significant burden on small businesses.

GSA RESPONSE: Yes, your assumption is correct. As stated in the RFP in Section C.3, all offerors shall comply with the Mandatory Service requirements.

63. How many awards are anticipated for full and open category including Service Types 1 through 3 and the small business set-aside category of Service Type 4? Will there be any small business award allocation for the first three Service Types?

GSA RESPONSE: Awards will be made to offerors whose proposals meet the RFP requirements and are the most advantageous to the Government. There will not be any small business award allocations for Service Types I, II and III. However, large businesses should provide subcontracting opportunities for small businesses.

64. L.7.5 states "offerors shall submit a draft Subcontracting Plan" to be negotiated prior to award. Does this requirement apply to small business offerors?

> **GSA RESPONSE: No. Small businesses are exempt from this requirement.**

SECTION G:

65. Page G-7; Article G.7: Question: Why does the GSA need to review and approve company marketing materials? This would seem to be inappropriate and will only cause potential delays in meeting marketing deadlines, etc.

> **GSA RESPONSE: The Government wants to ensure that the marketing materials being distributed do not differ from requirements of the contract and are within scope.**

66. Where is TOS described and defined?

> **GSA RESPONSE: GSA FEDSIM utilizes the Tracking and Ordering System (TOS) to process procurement requests. The latest version of the system TOS Next, provides an automated workflow processing environment that supports delivery/task orders between GSA/FEDSIM and its internal and external contracting office partners. FEDSIM industry partners utilize TOS Next to receive orders and to generate electronic invoices. Industry partners register in TOS Next at the following website: https://enable.its.gsa.gov. Once on the website, industry partners must click on the "Registration" tab and following the instructions. The TOS help Desk can be reached at (703) 306-7759.**

SECTION H:

67. Page H-5; Article H.15: Question: Does the GSA have a particular format that they would like Contractors to follow when submitting contract modification proposals? How long does the GSA expect it will take to approve and release a modification for new and improved products and services?

> **GSA RESPONSE: Contract modification proposals shall be submitted in the same format as required by this RFP. The length of time to approve and award a modification for new and improved products and services will depend on the complexity of modification proposed. Not all proposals will result in a modification.**

68. After the RFP is awarded, what processes will be used to make modifications to the contract?

> **GSA RESPONSE: Modifications will be made in accordance with H.15 Contract Modifications and New or Improved Services.**

69. Is there opportunity to expand offerings during the life of a contract? Can task order proposals including items not on the contractor's contract? Need flexibility to meet Government's changing requiring?

> **GSA RESPONSE: H.15 Contract Modifications and New or Improved Services provides for changes to the contract based on Government needs, market research, industry trends, or discussions with contractors to incorporate new or enhanced services throughout the life of the contract, provided such modifications are within the scope of the contract. It also states that the Contractor at any time during the life of the contract may also submit proposals for new/services or enhanced services within the scope of the contract for the Government's consideration. Task/delivery order proposals can not include items that are not priced on the contractors current contract.**

70. Will security clearances be required/desired?

> **GSA RESPONSE: Section H.13.2 Personnel Security Considerations state "Personnel security requirements will be dictated by agency specific requirements on a task/service order basis. Personnel may be required to possess security clearances to meet particular task order classification requirements."**

SECTION I:

71. Page I-1; Article I.1.1: Question: Does the GSA intend FAR clause 552.230-2 (possible typo should be 52.230-2) Cost Account Standards (CAS) to be a part of the solicitation while also including FAR Part 52.212-4. This would seem to be contradictory. Should the CAS clause apply to Service Type IV only?

> **GSA RESPONSE: All cost accounting standards clauses will be removed by an amendment to the RFP.**

SECTION J:

72. How should the chart on J-18 be completed?

GSA RESPONSE: See attached examples.

73. How is the Chart to be filled out on J-18?

GSA RESPONSE: See attached examples.

74. In Section J, page J-10 should "Danger Pay" be included in addition to "Hazard Pay"?

GSA RESPONSE: Prices shall conform to applicable DOL wage determinations. If wage determination provides for both than both shall be priced.

SECTION L:

75. In Section L.8.3, page L-9, will the past performances of subcontractors qualify as past performance inputs for the prime?

GSA RESPONSE: No. See Section M.3. Offerors without Past Performance information, shall receive a neutral rating.

76. Section L.7.3 states that "offerors shall submit all (if any) assumptions, conditions, or exceptions upon which the Management, Technical, and Price Proposals are based" as part of TAB C. Can pricing assumptions be included in volume III of the proposal instead of in TAB C of Volume I?

GSA RESPONSE: No. All assumptions, conditions, or exceptions are to be explained in Volume I, TAB C.

77. Page L-8; Article L.8.2 Technical Information – Question: When "Appropriate Commercial Technical Documentation" is requested as in Para L.8.2 (12th bullet), what does this include? Can we provide glossy product brochures which are typically 1-2 pages and do these count towards the overall page count?

GSA RESPONSE: Provide your commercial technical documents. They do not count toward the page limitation.

78. Section L, Page L-8, Para L.8—List of required Tabs A through E. No location is specified for the placement and inclusion of Commercial Technical Documentation. Recommend that an additional Tab be required, labeled Tab F – Commercial Technical Documentation.

GSA RESPONSE: Technical documentation is included in Tab B, Volume II, 12th bullet.

79. Para L.8.3 states: "The offeror shall submit a "Past Performance Information Sheet" for each Service Type offered and each type of service within a service type." It is assumed that a Past Performance is not required for the overall Service Type, but rather only for type of service within each of the overall Service Types. Is this a correct assumption?

> **GSA RESPONSE: The Offeror's assumption is correct for Service Types I and II. For Service Types III and IV, Past Performance references/information sheets may combine past performance for services within the Service Type.**

80. Can Representations & Certifications be moved to the Pricing Volume? This is where they are normally found.

> **GSA RESPONSE: Representations & Certifications are to be placed in the Volume and Tab specified in Section L.6, Table L.1 as part of the Management Proposal, Volume 1.**

81. Do Volumes 1, 2 and 3 need to be provided for each service type? In other words, a separate 3 volume response per service type?

> **GSA RESPONSE: No, only one set of proposal volumes is necessary per offeror regardless of how many services are offered.**

SECTION M:

82. In Section M.3, page M-3, does a particular past performance that receives an unsatisfactory rating for one type of service within a Service Type disqualify the bidder for that type of service, Service Type, or for the entire bid? How does an unsatisfactory rating for one type of service affect the rating on another service offering or the proposal as a whole?

> **GSA RESPONSE: An unacceptable rating for any past performance experience submitted for evaluation *MAY* result in an unacceptable rating for the overall Past Performance evaluation factor.**

83. If a proposal is evaluated as "Acceptable" in all areas, does this mean an automatic award?

> **GSA RESPONSE: No.**

84. If an all "Acceptable" does not mean an automatic award, what are the other criteria?

GSA RESPONSE: To be considered for award, an Offeror's proposal must be rated acceptable for all factors as defined in M.1. Awards will be made to offerors whose proposals meet the RFP requirements and are the most advantageous to the Government.

85. With technology development in the satellite arena increasing, will the GSA conduct a fair assessment of all satellite technologies available?

GSA RESPONSE: All technologies proposed must be technically feasible and commercially available.

86. Please clarify evaluation criteria. One sentence states that all four criteria are equal. Next sentence then states that first three criteria when totaled are more important than price. This seams to state that price has greater weighting than other three.

GSA RESPONSE: Price does not have greater weight than the other three.

87. Please clarify Section M evaluation criteria. Understand that all 4 criteria are evaluated equally, but what is meant by statement that technical and management are more important than price.

GSA RESPONSE: All four factors are equal.

PAST PERFORMANCE

88. Please clarify whether past performance for sub-contractors may be submitted by the prime for their team's service area response?

GSA RESPONSE: No.

89. GSA may likely receive proposals offering a broad array of services. Considering GSA's requirement of providing customer references for each service proposed, it will be a considerable, logistical challenge to submit, complete and return these packages in time for the March due date. We urge GSA to consider that the past performance packages be delivered 2 weeks after the proposed due date or that GSA extend the proposal due date by 2 weeks.

GSA RESPONSE: No extension of the due date for submission of proposals is anticipated.

90. Am I right that a WOSBE can only bid on Part IV, if it also bids on Types I, II, and III?

GSA RESPONSE: Yes.

91. Can a prime not a small business include a small business in its team to address Section IV?

GSA RESPONSE: No.

92. Is it acceptable to use subcontractors past performance references, or must all references be for the prime?

GSA RESPONSE: No, All references must be for the prime.

93. Is there a requirement to identify past performance?

GSA RESPONSE: Yes.

94. Regarding Past Performance, RFP Section M.3: The section is clear in its discussion of the Prime's Past Performance. However, it does not address the Past Performance of the offeror's team. Several bidders have formed teams, to provide the Government with high-quality services. This is because only a very few prospective bidders have the depth to offer the full extent of the services required by the solicitation. In evaluating response to this solicitation, how will the Government assess and weight the Past Performance of subcontractors to the Prime.

GSA RESPONSE: See Section M.3. Offerors without Past Performance information, shall receive a neutral rating.

MISCELLANEOUS:

95. Is it acceptable for a company to be both a prime on one bid and a sub on another?

GSA RESPONSE: Yes.

96. Are signed vendor reseller agreements required?

GSA RESPONSE: No. but acceptable.

97. Do we require letters from the vendor stating that the products offered will be offered for a certain period, say five years.

GSA RESPONSE: This is not a requirement of the contract.

98. How long do you expect the evaluations will take and the contracts awarded?

GSA RESPONSE: The length of time to complete the evaluation and number of awards will be determined by the number and quality of proposals received.

99. Incumbents under the current SATCOM contract(s) enjoy a significant advantage over new entrants since they possess considerable knowledge of customer demand by service type. How will GSA ensure a level playing field?

GSA RESPONSE: GSA has released an RFP that provides fair opportunity for a contract award.

100.How do you square NETWORX and SATCOM-II? SATCOM-II more practical than NETWORX for satellite.

GSA RESPONSE: This question is beyond the scope of this procurement.

101.Who, what agencies or services, do you see as our target market?

GSA RESPONSE: The target market shall be determined by the vendor within the scope of the contract.

102.Fred Schobert mentioned lessons learned from first contract were taken into account in preparing this RFP. What were those lessons learned?

GSA RESPONSE: Lessons learned from SATCOM-I include: Agencies need for end-to-end satellite solutions, continuous competition, full range of satellite technology and services, flexible ordering methods including 'direct order-direct bill', accurate and timely invoicing.

103.How does the Economic Price Adjustment work?

GSA RESPONSE: This solicitation does not include an Economic Price Adjustment.

104.What satellite(s) are you currently using?

GSA RESPONSE: This question is outside the scope of this procurement.

105.Approximately how many hours of satellite time do you currently use on an annual basis?

GSA RESPONSE: This question is outside the scope of this procurement.

106.What satellite receivers do you currently use?

GSA RESPONSE: This question is outside the scope of this procurement.

107. We would like a brief meeting with you (30 minutes) at your offices to help us determine if it would be appropriate for us to submit a bid for SATCOM-II.

GSA RESPONSE: The Contracting Officer will not meet with potential Offerors upon the posting of the RFP.

108. Under company, is this the prime contractor who is submitting the proposal?

GSA RESPONSE: Yes.

109. I was hoping we could receive a Word version of the SATCOM II (TQN-DWS-06-0001) RFP? The Word version gives us the opportunity to use the tables directly from the RFP, rather than trying to recreate them from the PDF file.

GSA RESPONSE: GSA will post the Tables in Word format on FedBizOpps.

[redacted]							Service Type II:					[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]
							Satellite Applications Services							
							COOP	Distance Learning	Telemedicine	Streaming Video	BSS			
XYZ, Inc.	X	X	X					X			X	X		No

Example #1.

							Service Type II:						Service Type IV:	
							Satellite Applications Services						Professional Support Services	
							COOP	Distance Learning	Telemedicine	Streaming Video	BSS			
ABC, Inc.		Yes				Yes	Yes					Yes	Yes	Yes

Example #2.