

**Request for Proposal GSV07PD0003
Amendment-A001**

Answers to Vendor Questions

Q.1.1 Reference: RFP Section B, P-4 - Price Tables – Will the Government allow offerors to further divide CLINS into Sub-CLINs in certain circumstances in order to accurately reflect the cost of specific services requested. As an example, under CLIN 7100 IVR Service, can Sub-CLINs be added to provide cost for each additional language that has been requested? This ability would allow offerors to propose CLIN prices that more accurately reflect the cost of providing that language, rather than simply using the cost of the highest-priced language.

A.1.1 No. Offerors shall respond only to CLINS identified in Section B – Price Tables. Offerors should provide ceiling prices for the CLINS identified in the price tables. Offerors may offer discounts to the ceiling prices when responding to task requirements.

Q.1.2 Reference: Section B.2.1.1, P-4 - Base Facility and Equipment – a) - Can GSA provide definition as to what they require around Enhanced Quality Monitoring Solution? b). Are the CLINS for Enhanced Quality Monitoring Solution cumulative with the prior CLIN (Phone, TTY, FAX and E-mail, Web Chat Services)? Or should the vendor price out the services for just this option?

A.1.2 As part of the base service solution, contractors are required to provide a solution for Service Monitoring and Quality Control that meets the requirements specified in Section C.6.9 of the Performance Work Statement. The Enhanced Quality Monitoring Solution CLIN refers to solutions that provide additional capabilities that may be needed to meet more stringent service monitoring and quality control requirements that are task specific. b). The Enhanced Quality Monitoring Solution CLINS are incremental to the CLINS for Phone, TTY, FAX and E-Mail, Web Chat Services).

Q.1.3 Reference: Section C.2.1.6, P-25 – Rapid Ramp-Up/Ramp-Down - Is the assumption that the 48 hour ramp-up requirement will only apply to those task orders issued in response to emergency? If yes, will the Government please provide the expected ramp-up period for normal task orders outside of these crisis situations?

A.1.3 The 48 hour ramp-up requirement only applies to task orders issued in response to emergency or crisis situations. Ramp-up period for normal task order will vary depending on program requirements and will be specified on individual task order basis. Also see response to Q.3.2.

Q.1.4 Reference: Section C.3.1.1, P-32 – Automated Voice Response Services - Is it the Government's expectation that the IVR provides information using Speech Recognition menus and Text to Speech translation in all the languages listed? Can the

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IVR be used to route to individuals who will provide support using the language required?

A.1.4 The Government expects that all automated voice response solutions, including IVR, Voice/Speech Recognition, and Text-to-Speech, support the languages identified in Section C.3.1.1. If support for specific language is required for the automated voice response service, that support has to be provided within the automated voice response service application, not via routing to an external language support service.

Q.1.5 Reference: Section C.4.3.3, P-58 - Skills Categories - Section C.4.3.3 provides IS agent requirements, but does not elaborate on IS supervisory requirements. Please provide the years of experience and educational requirements along with the level of responsibility for each of the five supervisory levels.

A.1.5 A new Section C.4.3.3.5 is being added to identify the minimum qualification requirements for Supervisors.

“C.4.3.3.5 Minimum Qualifications Requirements for Supervisory Information Specialists

In addition to meeting minimum education and/or experience requirements specified for Information Specialists specified above for the respective skill category, Supervisory Information Specialists shall meet the following minimum requirements:

- **Two or more years experience serving as an Information Specialist at the respective skill level, or one or more years of experience supervising Information Specialists at the respective skill level.**
- **Excellent oral and written communications skills**
- **Strong organizational skills**
- **Skilled at oral and written reviews as well as coaching to improve performance**
- **Must be positive and self-motivated with the ability to change priorities on demand**
- **Solid understanding of computer basics (Windows, Excel, Word, Operating Systems and Internet applications, such as web, email, chat).”**

Q.1.6 Reference: Section C.4.3.4, P-59 – Multi-language Support - Does the Government have a volume threshold to determine when staffing for a specific language is required and that training, QM, Supervisors and automated services must be provided in that language? For example, if the call volume for German is greater than 5% of the overall call volume, this will trigger the need for the contractor to provide support for this language.

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A.1.6 There is no pre-established volume threshold for triggering support for a specific language. Staffing requirements for specific languages will be task specific and will be identified at a task order level.

Q.1.7 Reference: Section C.2.1.5 – This section states a language line may be used to support various language needs. Are we to assume that unless that threshold is reached, the language line option would be appropriate?

A.1.7 Language support is task specific. Support for other languages, including the use of language line, if appropriate, will be specified at a task order level. Also see response to Q.1.6 above.

Q.1.8 Reference: Sections H.8, L.7.2.1.8 and M 2.15 - Special Hiring Requirements – Will the Government provide a clarification regarding the Special Hiring Requirement in sections H.8, L.7.2.1.8, and M.2.15. The language in these sections refers to staffing as well as hiring. Hiring would define an employee/employer relationship whereas staffing could be either subcontracting and/or hiring of employees.

A.1.8 The Special Hiring Requirements can be met either by employing through a direct employee/employer relationship or through a prime/subcontractor relationship. Also see response to Q.2.3 below.

Q.1.9 Reference: Sections C.4.1, H.7 and L.7.2: Key Personnel - Are submission of key personnel resumes (Program Manager, Project Manager, Site Manager and Information Systems Security Manager) required at this Master Contract Level; or, when responding to RFQs at the Task Order level? Given the uncertainty surrounding the exact scope and complexity of individual task orders, it would be a challenge to ascertain the appropriate skill level and caliber of personnel to select and propose.

A.1.9 No. Submission of key personnel resumes is not required in response to this solicitation. Submission of resumes of key personnel, if required, will be addressed in individual task orders.

Q.1.10 Reference: Section L.7.2, P154 - Technical Proposal Submission Requirements - In order that all of the requested information and requirements are addressed to the level of detail required by the RFP, will the Government consider increasing the maximum page limitation by an additional 100 pages for a total maximum of 225 pages?

A.1.10 The 125-page limit will remain. However, the section ~~has been~~ is being amended to permit the use of single-spacing for text.

Q.1.11 Reference: Section L.7.2, P-154 - Technical Proposal Submission Requirements. The RFP requires using double-spacing. Recommend vendors are permitted to use single-spacing for text within tables and graphics.

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A.1.11 See response to Q.1.10 above.

Q.1.12 Upon review of GSA Solicitation Number GSV07PD0003, for the Contractor Operated and Managed Multi-Channel Contact Center Services it is believed that this acquisition will be conducted under the authority of FAR Part 8.4. Is this a correct assumption?

A.1.12 No. This acquisition is conducted under authority of FAR Part 15 – Contracting by Negotiation.

Q.2.1 Will the Government provide Section B.2 Price Tables in Excel (preferably) or Word format?

A.2.1 No. Offerors are encouraged to provide their own price tables based on the format identified in Section B of the solicitation.

Q.2.2 Will the Government provide Section K Representations and Certifications in Word format, or will the Government accept a printout of those we have already completed on-line at <https://orca.bpn.gov/>?

A.2.2 The Government will accept a printout as long as it provides, at a minimum, all of the information required by this solicitation.

Q.2.3 a) Reference: Sections H.8 - Special Hiring Requirement, L.7.2.1.8 - Plan for Special Hiring, and M.2.1.5 - Plan for Special Hiring (Factor 5) – a).If task order awardees subcontract to organizations affiliated with NIB or NISH, will the labor hours charged to their subcontracts be applicable toward achieving the 5 percent goal (Section L.7.2.1.8)?

b).If task order awardees directly hire employees through or from organizations affiliated with NIB or NISH, will the labor hours charged by such employees be applicable toward achieving the 5 percent goal (Section L.7.2.1.8)? c). Similarly, related to questions a and b above, if team members act accordingly in their performance of contract tasks, will such labor hours charged to their subcontracts be applicable toward achieving the 5 percent goal (Section L.7.2.1.8)?

A.2.3 Labor hours charged under all three of the above scenarios can be applied to satisfy the 5 percent Special Hiring goal.

Q.2.4 Reference: Section C.6.13, P-68 - What methods of payment are the online ordering system required to support?

A.2.4 At a minimum, the online ordering system shall support payments by commercial credit cards. Section C.6.13 is being amended to reflect this requirement.

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Q.2.5 Reference: Section C.3.5.3.5, line 1385-88 – This section specifies key-code access as the only acceptable physical security measure. Are security card readers (such as DataWatch) an acceptable alternative to or considered key-code devices? If not, is there a list of approved key-code devices?

A.2.5 The correct reference is Section C.3.5.5.3. This section is being amended to permit the use of equivalent access technology.

Q.3.1 Reference: Section B.2 - Price Tables, P-3-21, Section J, List of Attachments, P-123-139 - To ensure standardization across all submitted proposals, will the Government provide the attachments in Section B and Section J as Microsoft Word and/or Microsoft Excel as appropriate?. This will allow GSA to receive similar documents from all offerors and negate any deviations that may occur as offerors try to reconstruct the attachments that are currently in .pdf.

A.3.1 See response to Q.2.1.

Q.3.2 Reference: Section C.2.1.6 - Rapid Ramp-Up/Ramp-Down, P-25 - In an effort to provide a solution that best meets GSA's requirements, we are interested in understanding the requirements associated with rapid ramp-up described in Section C.2.1.6, Rapid Ramp-Up/Ramp-Down. Specifically, to what volumes and interaction channels does GSA need in a 48-hour ramp-up (i.e., "what constitutes a "fully operational status within forty-eight (48) hours?").

A.3.2 The 48-hour ramp-up requirement is for automated and attended telephone service only. "Fully operational status within forty-eight (48) hours" means that the contractor must have the required facility, technology, and staff in place to start taking calls within 48 hours of task award. The 48-hour requirement is for solutions involving the provision of up to 250 seats. The RFP is being amended to clarify this requirement. Also see response to Q.1.3.

Q.3.3 Reference: Section C.2.2 - Sample Workflow, P-26 – This section states "The Government reserves the right to change the workflow requirements at any time after task order issuance to accommodate changes in program requirements on an as-needed basis." Does a governmental change in workflow requirements constitute a start-up clause?

A.3.3 No.

Q.3.4 Reference: Section C.2.2.3 - Facsimile Inquiry Workflow, P-29-30 - Will the Government define the security requirements for record keeping with regard to facsimile inquiry workflow described in Section C.2.2.3?

A.3.4 The workflow descriptions provided in Section C are for illustration purposes only. Actual workflow and associated security requirements will be identify in individual task orders.

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Q.3.5 Reference: Section C.2.2.4 - Postal Mail Inquiry Workflow, P-30 – This section states “The Contractor shall retain a copy of the original inquiries and all responses for record keeping. Is the electronic copy created sufficient and if hardcopy mail storage is required, is there a retention period for the destruction of those items?”

A.3.5 The workflow descriptions provided in Section C are for illustration purposes only. Actual workflow and record retention and storage requirements will be identified in individual task orders.

Q.3.6 Reference: Section C.3.4 - Directory Listing Services, P-43-44 - Will GSA provide access to the Government-wide Blue Pages project described in Section C.3.4, Directory Listing Services?

A.3.6 When a task requires access to the Government-wide Blue Pages project to satisfy the performance of the Directory Listing Services requirement, the Government will provide such access as part of the task requirement.

Q.3.7 Reference: Section C.4 - Staff to Be Provided, P-55 - Will the Government define what constitutes a “satisfactory history of credit” as stated in Section C.4, Staff to be provided?

A.3.7 The Government will defer to the “satisfaction” definition used by the credit industry for rating individuals’ credit history and the acceptance of such a rating by contact center service industry for employment purposes.

Q.3.8 Reference: Section C.4.1 - Key Personnel, P-55-56 - Will the Government define the resumes that are required to be submitted for the prime contract versus those for task orders. In addition, the numbering skips from C.4.1.3 to C.4.1.5. Shall the offeror assume there is missing key personnel (C.4.1.4) or that this was an inadvertent numbering issue?

A.3.8 See response to Q1.9 for resume requirements. Section C.4.1.5 is incorrectly numbered. The correct number is C.4.1.4. The solicitation is being amended to reflect this correction.

Q.3.9 Reference: Section C.6 - Technology Infrastructure, P-62 - Will the Government define the term “customization” as it appears in Section C.6, line 1951 of the Performance Work Statement (PWS)

A.3.9. This term is being removed from this section.

Q.3.10 Reference: Section C.6.1.4 - Accounting and Management, P-63 - In Section C.6.1.4, Accounting and Management, what type of accounting and management capabilities are desired for the multi-channel inquiries to be received?

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A.3.10 The term “accounting and management capabilities” as used in this section refers to the necessary capabilities of the contractor-provided call processing technology and services to account for and manage the inquiry processes and workload for all inquiry types, and to provide operation and management information as required in Section C.11 of the Performance Work Statement (PWS).

Q.3.11 Reference: C.8.2.3 - Instructor and Classroom Criteria, P-73 - Section C.8.2.3 indicates “the contractor shall provide certified instructors to deliver all training.” Please describe the certifications required of trainers for this contract.

A.3.11 Certification of instructors will be the responsibility of the contractor. The Contractor will determine the type of certification that is required for its instructors.

Q.3.12 Reference: Section C.13.3.7 - Human Resources Management Plan, P-80-81 - The PWS numbering and text in Section C.13.3.7, indicate the knowledge/case management plan, operations management plan, performance management plan, phase-in plan, program management plan, project plan, quality assurance plan, security plan, service level management plan, test and acceptance plan, and value engineering/process improvement plan are components of the Human Resources Management Plan. We believe these items are stand alone plans separate of the Human Resources Management Plan; please confirm.

A.3.12 The plans identified above are not part of the Human Resources Management Plan. The RFP sections associated with these plans are being renumbered to read as follows:

C.13.3.8	Knowledge/Case Management Plan
C.13.3.9	Operations Management Plan
C.13.3.10	Performance Management Plan
C.13.3.11	Phase-In Plan
C.13.3.12	Project Management Plan
C.13.3.13	Project Plan
C.13.3.14	Quality Assurance/Quality Improvement Program Plan
C.13.3.15	Security Plan
C.13.3.16	Service Level Management Plan
C.13.3.17	Test and Acceptance Plan
C.13.3.18	Value Engineering/Process Improvement Plan

Q.3.13 Reference: Section G.2 - Service Ordering, P-90 - Section G.2, Service Ordering, can task orders be other than Fixed Price or Time and Materials based on task requirements?

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A.3.13. Only the following type of task orders will be allowable under the resultant contracts: Fixed-Price, Time and Materials, and Labor Hour. Section G.2.7.2 is being amended to reflect the addition of Labor Hour tasks.

Q.3.14 Reference: Section G.2 - Service Ordering, P-90 - In Section G.2, Service Ordering, does the statement “Copies of all task orders shall be maintained by the Contractor for the duration of the contract through final closeout” mean: a). All task orders awarded to said contractor or all task orders awarded to all contractors? b). The duration of the base contract or all options periods including the additional 5 year period?

A.3.14. Section G.2.2 requires each contractor to maintain copies of all task orders awarded to that contractor for the duration of the contract through final closeout, including copies of task order modifications issued in the extended performance period.

Q.3.15 Reference: G.2.2, Task Order Request for Quotation, pp. 92-93 - In reference to Section G.2.2, under a task order, describe how the user agency may be allowed to increase or remove any of the special contract clauses created by the base contract vehicle (if at all)?

A.3.15. All task order requirements must remain within the framework of the contracts awarded pursuant to this solicitation. User agencies will not be allowed to add to or remove any of the special contract clauses contained in contracts awarded as a result of this solicitation, unless there has been a subsequent modification to the underlying contracts.

Q.3.16 Reference: Section G.5.3 - Reports on Special Hiring, P-98 - How will contractors who have not been awarded any task orders be compensated for developing and delivering the Special Hiring Report as noted in Section G.5.3, Reports on Special Hiring.

A.3.16 The overall Contract Minimum Amount identified in Section H.2 of the solicitation serves multiple purposes. It represents consideration from the Government to the contractor for entering into an indefinite-delivery, indefinite-quantity contract (IDIQ), but it also serves as consideration from the Government to the contractor for providing the reports identified herein. Text is being added to Section G.5 to clarify this requirement.

Q.3.17 Reference: Section G.5.4 - Cost Recovery Report (CRR), P-98 - How will contractors who are not performing on any awarded task orders be compensated for developing and delivering the Cost Recovery Report as described in Section G.5.4, Cost Recovery Report (CRR).

A.3.17 See response to Q.3.1.6.

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Q.3.18 Reference: Section G.6.1 - Marketing Calls, P-99 - Section G.6.1, Marketing Calls, states “the contractor shall coordinate marketing efforts...to keep him/her apprised of planned client visits.” Is it USA Service’s intent to coordinate interaction concerning planned visits for all opportunities or just those that “may” possibly use the USA Contact vehicle?

A.3.18 USA Services will coordinate interaction concerning planned visits for those clients that may use the USA Contact contract.

Q.3.19 Reference: Section G.6.1 - Marketing Calls, P-99 - As noted in Section G.6.1, Marketing Calls, Will GSA define the scope of marketing efforts that shall be coordinated with the director of USA Services, define the mechanism that will be used to accomplish this coordination, and the time frames concerning this coordination.

A.3.19. The Government cannot provide the details of the marketing strategy and coordination at this time. USA Services will conduct marketing meetings with the contractor(s) after contract award.

Q.3.20 Reference: Section H.1 - Term of Contract, P-100 - Expanding upon Section H.1, Term of Contract, when is the first task order anticipated for this contract?

A.3.20 Based on USA Services marketing activity, the Government anticipates task order requirements shortly after award of the IDIQ contracts. However, the Government cannot provide the exact timing of when the first task order will be issued at this time.

Q.3.21 Reference: Section H.1.2 - North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) 519190, P100 According to the chart of small business size standards published by the Small Business Administration that became effective June 31, 2006 and found at http://www.sba.gov/idc/groups/public/documents/sba_homepage/serv_sstd_tablepdf.pdf the size standard for NAICS Code 519190 is \$6.5 million. Please clarify if GSA prefers that the stated small business size standard, as published, should apply or if the size standard from the RFP should apply as stated in Section H.1.2.

A.3.21 \$6.5 million is the correct small business size standard for NAICS Code 519190. Section H.1.2 is being amended to reflect this change.

Q.3.22 Reference: Section H.8 - Special Hiring Requirement, P-103 - Concerning Section H.8, Special Hiring Requirement, how will the contractor be compensated for compensating the NIB/NISH affiliated organizations for work performed to recruit, hire, train, and retain individuals? Is this requirement based in law?

A.3.22. The Government is not required by law to compensate the contractor separately for work performed under this contract by NIB/NISH affiliated organizations. The contractor is responsible for directly compensating NIB/NISH

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affiliated organizations for any work performed under this contract. The Offerors shall include the recovery of such compensation in their CLIN cost structure where appropriate.

Q.3.23 Reference: Section H.12 - System Requirements, P-104-105 - It is understood that Earned Value Management (EVM) is applicable at the task order levels as described in Section H.12, System Requirements. Is an approved Earned Value Management System (EVMS) or experience with EVM a requirement under USA Contact?

A.3.23. EVMS is generally not a requirement for service oriented tasks that utilize COTS products and services. However, there may be instances when an agency may require the use of an approved EVMS system and demonstrated experience associated with the use of such a system as part of its requirements. Such requirements will be addressed and evaluated on a task order level.

Q.3.24 Reference: Section H.15.1 - Routine Travel, P-105 - Is the intent of the clause in Section H.15.1 to state that Contractor and subcontractor employees will NOT be reimbursed for commuter travel for either start-up or day-to-day performance?

A.3.24. Yes.

Q.3.25 Reference: Section H.28.1 - Marketing Calls, P-110 - How will contractors be compensated for mandatory marketing calls as directed in Section H.28.1, Marketing Calls?

A.3.25 Contractors will not be compensated by the Government for marketing activities performed under this contract, including the preparation and provision of marketing materials and conducting presentations.

Q.3.26 Reference: L.7.2 - Technical Proposal Submission Requirements, P-154 - Throughout the RFP, GSA asks for “comprehensive” or “detailed” descriptions of how the offeror will provide the services required throughout the RFP. We understand that GSA wants to limit the size of the proposals being submitted; however, given the length and detail of the PWS, we recommend GSA consider changing the double space requirement in L.7.2 to single space. This will allow offerors more room to provide GSA with a thorough description of how they will provide quality services to GSA’s customers.

A.3.26. See response to Q.1.10 above.

Q.3.27 Reference: L.7.2 - Technical Proposal Submission Requirements, P-154 Section L.7.2 specifies that figures and tables may use 8-point font. May tables use single-space formatting, or do they also need to be double-spaced as the rest of the text is? Will 11 X 17 pages be allowed and if so will they count as two pages per side?

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A.3.27 See response to Q.1.10 above. The Government will allow the use of 11 x 17 pages for presenting diagrams and charts that are relevant to the offeror's proposal. Each 11 x 17 page will be counted as two pages towards the 125 page limit.

Q.3.28 Reference: Section L.7.2.1 - Technical Proposal, P-154 and Section J.3 - Technical Proposal Index, P-137-139 - Section L is typically the standard offerors use to structure their proposals. However, in the RFP, GSA has also provided a proposal index in Section J.3 which is to serve as the offerors' "outline" for "preparing their technical proposal." In mapping Section L proposal organization requirements to the Proposal Index, it appears there are minor discrepancies. To facilitate ease of proposal evaluation (standard organization among all proposals), we recommend the proposal index directly align with Section L, or vice versa.

A.3.28 See response to Q.4.6 and Q.5.18 below.

Q.3.29 Reference: Section L.7.3 - Business Proposal Submission Requirements, P-162 - Under Section L.7.3, the government requests the cover letter to stipulate the proposal shall remain in effect for 90 days. Does the government intend to award the ID/IQ contracts with in this period of time? If not, for pricing purpose what is the anticipated contract award date.

A.3.29. The Government anticipates award of the contracts during the first or second quarters of FY08. The solicitation is being amended to reflect a proposal acceptance period of 270 days.

Q.3.30 Reference: Section L.7.3 - Business Proposal Submission Requirements, P-162 - In Section L.7.3, the government states, "...all offered rates must be Wage Determination-compliant." This means rates must meet the requirements of the Department of Labor Wage Determination in effect at the time the task quotation is prepared for the location (county and state) where the quoted services are to be performed. Under this definition, are contractors to assume the ceiling direct labor price will include an estimate for economic cost of living escalation built within each contract period price?

A.3.30 Yes.

Q.3.31 Reference: Section L.7.3 - Business Proposal Submission Requirements, P-162 - Under the Government's definition of "fully burden" price, are contractors to assume the cost of IFF is not included in the development of our ceiling price but will be considered as an additional cost in the calculation of each task order proposal?

A.3.31 Yes.

Q.3.32 Reference: Section M.3.1 - Pricing Evaluation Tool, P-169 - Section M.3.1 Pricing Evaluation Tool, states "The Government will evaluate contract line item (CLINs) for all contract years (including Option Years and Extended Periods) in each

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responsive Business Proposal received. This will be accomplished by applying a uniform set of anticipated requirements to a standard USA Contract-developed source selection pricing tool.” To ensure standardization across all submitted proposal, will the Government identify the uniform set of anticipated requirements to be used in the evaluation?

A.3.32 No. The uniform set of anticipated requirements is part of the Government’s pricing model and as such is Source Selection Sensitive. It should be noted that all proposals will be evaluated using the same pricing model information.

Q.4.1 Reference: Sections L.7.3 and L.7.3.1, P162-163 - L.7.3.1 requests as part of the Business Proposal submission “(iv) a completed copy of all terms and conditions of the solicitation, as called for above” (lines 6022–23). Please clarify. Does this statement pertain only to Section K of the solicitation, or is the offeror required to submit Sections B through K?

A.4.1 The Business Proposal will consist of: (i) a cover letter on company stationary acknowledging and accepting all terms and conditions set forth in the solicitation and signed by an individual authorized to financially commit the firm, (ii) a completed copy of the pricing tables in Section B, and (iii) a completed copy of Section K. Also see response to Q.2.2 above.

Q.4.2 Reference: Sections L.7.3.1.2 and L.7.3.2, P164 - L.7.3.1.2, Pricing Tables, and L.7.3.2, Pricing Support Documentation, present seemingly contradictory information. L.7.3.1.2 *requires* supporting documentation: “Failure to provide supporting documentation may render the offerors proposal “non-responsive” (lines 6076–77). However, L.7.3.2 implies supporting documentation *may be required*: “If required by the Government, the offeror shall furnish detailed supporting documentation for any or all of its prices” (lines 6095–96). What is the Government looking for in the way of “supporting documentation”? Also, is “supporting documentation” required for subcontractors?

A.4.2 The intent of Section L.7.3.2 is to alert offerors that if the Government is unable to determine prices to be fair and reasonable through price analysis, it may be necessary to conduct cost analysis.

Q.4.3 Reference: Sections L.7.3, P162 – This section states that “all prices proposed shall be considered to be ceiling rates.” However, L.7.3 subsequently states that “part of the Contractor’s strategy may include offering services at a location(s) . . . different from the location used to prepare this proposal” (lines 6008–10) and that “rates must meet the requirements of the Department of Labor Wage Determination . . .” (lines 6011–13). Does this mean that ceiling rates developed in this proposal must meet the WD requirements at the site we are proposing and that, should we move locations when responding to a particular task order, the rates offered at the new location must meet the WD requirements and stay below the proposed ceiling rates?

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A.4.3 Yes.

Q.4.4 Reference: Section B.2, P-5-6 - There are two sections numbered B.2.1.2: Incremental Facility and Equipment (p. 5) and Initial/Special Training (p. 6). Please clarify.

A.4.4 The RFP is being amended to correct the numbering for the Initial/Special Training section and subsections and associated price tables.

Q.4.5 Reference: Section B.2, P-17 & P-20 - There are two sections numbered B.2.7: Shared or Non-Dedicated Telephone Inquiry Response Solution—Information Specialist (IS) Hourly Rate (p. 17) and Shared or Non-Dedicated E-Mail Inquiry Response Solution—Information Specialist (IS) Hourly Rate (p. 20). Will the Government clarify?.

A.4.5 The section and tables for Shared or Non-Dedicated E-Mail Response Solution are being renumbered to B.2.8.

Q.4.6 Reference: Section J, P-123, and Section L.7.2, P-154-162 - Section J, Attachment 3: Outline for Technical Proposals, line 4566, indicates that “offerors shall use the outline in Attachment 3 in preparing their technical proposals.” However, the proposal organization presented in this outline differs from that specified in Section L.7.2, Technical Proposal Submission Requirements. Please advise offerors regarding which instruction to adhere to in organizing technical proposal responses.

A.4.6 Section J, Attachment 3 is being amended to read as follows:

“Offerors shall use the outline in Attachment 3 in preparing a proposal index referencing the page and paragraph numbers that contain their response on an item by item basis to all requirements of this solicitation.”

Q.4.7 Reference: L.7.2.1.5.1, P-158-159 - As part of the proposal’s Technical Approach section (L.7.2.1.5), the RFP states that the offeror “shall describe its proposed solution or approach for providing each of the services and support specified in Sections C.3 through C.11 of the Performance Work Statement . . . ” (lines 5815–16). Yet, PWS C.3 through C.11 entails several requirements that the offeror’s proposal must address in other sections. For example, C.10, Performance Management, is to be addressed in the Management Plan, per L.7.2.1.6.3; and C.3.5.5, Information Systems Security, is to be addressed in the Security Plan, per L.2.1.6.4. Please clarify.

A.4.7 See response to Q.4.6 and Q.5.18.

Q.4.8 Reference: Sections L.7.2.1.5.3, P-159, L.7.2.1.6.2, P-160-161, L.7.2.1.6.3, P-161, L.7.2.1.6.4, P-161 - The RFP specifies the inclusion of several plans that require detailed descriptions of proposed processes, procedures, and methodologies. With the Government’s page-limit requirement of 125 double-spaced pages, it will be difficult for offerors to provide fully responsive plans. Would it be acceptable for offerors to provide

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an overview of each plan in the proposal, with the complete plan provided following contract award? If not, would the Government allow offerors to include full plans as appendices to the proposal and exclusive of the page count?

A.4.8 See response to A.1.10.

Q.4.9 Reference: Section L.7.2.1.3.1, P-155 - Minimum Experience Qualifications Criteria; Section J, Attachment 1, P-123 - Past Performance Survey Questionnaire - The RFP sections cited above specify four minimum qualifications an offeror must have gained during the past 5 years to be considered for award of the USA Contact contract, and direct the offeror to communicate the requirements to its past performance references. Will the Government clarify whether (1) the criteria can be met by *aggregating* the minimums across more than one program—e.g., a total of “no less than 100,000 telephone inquiries and 7,500 e-mail inquiries” is handled each month across the three different contact centers cited by the offeror—or (2) all four criteria must be met in each individual contact center program cited by the offeror.

A.4.9 Offerors do not need to meet all four minimum experience qualification requirements specified in Section L.7.2.1.3.1 for each of the projects selected. If the selected projects are supported by more than one center, then the work volumes handled at each of the centers supporting the project can be aggregated to meet the minimum experience requirements. However, work volumes of different projects cannot be aggregated to meet the minimum experience requirements.

Q.5.1 Reference: Section B.1.1.1 – Facility and Equipment, P-1 - Would the Government please clarify that the following definitions of the two components of Facilities and Equipment are correct? a). Base Facility and Equipment – Consists of the facilities, telecommunications infrastructure and network infrastructure that is required for project performance. b). Incremental Facility and Equipment – Consists of the individual workstations, telephones, etc., required by each employee to perform on the project.

A.5.1 The Facility and Equipment CLIN is a one-time charge to be paid for all facility, equipment, software, supplies, and services needed at each center to support task requirements. The charge includes a fixed (Base Facility and Equipment) base component and an incremental (Incremental Facility and Equipment) component. It would be up to the offeror to distribute the costs of facility, equipment, software, supplies, and services between the base and incremental components to achieve the optimum price structure for the offeror’s solution for facility and equipment.

Q.5.2 Reference: Section B.1.1.3, P-1, Section B.2.1.2, P-6 – Initial/Special Training - The description for this section explains that this is a one time charge; however, all of the CLINS in Section B.2.1.2 are hourly rates. Would the Government please clarify?

A.5.2 The Initial/Special Training is a one-time charge to be paid for labor and supply costs incurred to develop training materials and train the initial complement

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of Information Specialists or any additional Information Specialists above the initial complement needed to support task requirements. This one-time charge is calculated using the labor rate CLINS identified in this section and the quantity of hours needed to satisfy the training requirements on an individual task order basis.

Q.5.3 Reference: Section B.1.1.3, P-1, Section B.2.1.2.3, P-10 – Knowledge and Content Development - The description for this section explains that this is a one time charge; however, all of the CLINS in Section B.2.1.2.3 are hourly rates. Would the Government please clarify?

A.5.3 The Knowledge and Content Development is a one-time charge to be paid for labor and supply costs incurred to develop the knowledgebase needed to support task requirements. This one-time charge is calculated using the labor rate CLINS identified in this section and the quantity of hours needed to develop the knowledgebase on an individual task order basis.

Q.5.4 Reference: Section B.1.4, P-3, Section B.2.5, P-13 - The description states that supervisors are included in the fully burdened rate as support personnel, while there are also Supervisor tables in the rate tables in Section B.2.5. Should the supervisor be deleted from the description of the fully burdened rate?

A.5.4 Sections B.1.4 is being amended to delete the reference to supervisors. There is currently no reference to supervisors in the description for Section B.2.5.

Q.5.5 Reference: Section B.1.5, P-3 - Attended Services – Shared or Non-Dedicated Solution - The RFP states, “The minimum service charge is calculated based on the minimum daily call volume commitment multiplied by the number of days of the project...” Would the Government clarify that the following example is a correct interpretation of this statement.

Minimum daily volume commitment = 100 calls
Number of project days = 30
Pricing based on hourly rate of \$25
Average Handling Time = 10 minutes

Therefore, the volume commitment is 30,000 minutes, or 500 hours.

If the commitment is for 500 hours at \$25/per hour, the minimum service charge should be \$12,500.

A.5.5 In the above example, the volume commitment should be expressed in hours per day ((100 calls x 10 minutes each)/60 minutes or 16.6610007 hours per day). The nearest minimum volume commitment level below the daily volume for the cited example is at 12 hours/day based on the Section B price table for this service. This will be the logical minimum commitment level that the agency will commit for the task. The hourly rate that is associated with the 12 hour/day

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minimum volume commitment level will be used to calculate the actual usage charge for the service. The minimum service charge for the cited example is 12 hours x 30 days x Hourly rate for the 12 hours/day commitment level. This sample calculation assumes that the same hourly rate applies for all 30 days.

Q.5.6 Reference: Section B.1.5, P-3 - Would security clearances ever be required for the shared solution?

A.5.6 Offerors shall assume no security clearances are required for shared or non-dedicated solutions.

Q.5.7 Reference: Section B.1.5, P-3 - Based on the requirement for Shared or Non-Dedicated Information Specialists to use prepared scripts, etc., are we to assume for pricing purposes that this is the equivalent of an IS Level 1 from the Dedicated solution?

A.5.7 It will be the offerors' responsibility to determine the appropriate skill level of the Information Specialists need to perform the work described for Shared or Non-Dedicated Response Solutions.

Q.5.8 Reference: Section B.1.5, P-3 - It appears that in the shared solution there would be minimal or no project management charges, since it is to be included in the burdened rate. Is this correct?

A.5.8 Yes.

Q.5.9 Reference: Section B.1.5, P-3 - According to Section B.1.5, the price for CLINs 99001 – 99079, CLINS 99101 – 99109, and CLINS 99201 - 99209 needs to include all program management, supervisory, quality, and related labor costs. Does this mean there will not be a Core Project Management Support price associated with a Shared or Non-Dedicated Solution?

A.5.9 Yes.

Q.5.10 Reference: Section B.1.5, P-3 - Is it the intent that with the Shared or Non-Dedicated solution that all program costs are included in the price, or could there still be incremental project management support and recurring costs for automated services?

A.5.10 Program support costs are to be included in the fully burdened rate for Shared or Non-Dedicated response solutions. However, if other services are required to support the task, applicable charges may apply.

Q.5.11 Reference: Section B.1.5, P3 – Would the Government clarify if the following example is a proper interpretation of the minimum service charge and the regular billing of the Shared solution?

Shared or Non-Dedicated Solution (Example):

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English only during Normal Business Hours
Government Commitment - 48 hours per month (CLIN 99005)

Scenario #1

If during the month, a total of 45 hours of handle time is expended on the program, the contractor will still invoice for 48 times the CLIN 99005 per hour price.

Scenario #2

If during the month, a total 58 hours of handle time is expended on the program, the contractor will invoice for 58 hours times the CLIN 99005 per hour price.

Scenario #3

If during the month, a total 128 hours of handle time is expended on the program, the contractor will invoice for 128 hours times the CLIN 99005 per hour price. (The higher quantity CLINs will not apply since the minimum commitment was based upon CLIN 99005.)

A.5.11 The use of CLIN 99005 for the above example is not correct. CLIN 99005 is for minimum commitment level of 48 hours/day, not 48 hours/month as stated in the example. Assuming the intention is for a minimum commitment level of 48 hours/day and the example volumes are adjusted to reflect that change, the above interpretation for all three scenarios is correct. Also see response to Q.5.5.

Q.5.12 Reference: Section B.2.1.1, Table B.2.1.1-1, P-4 – Will the Government define the Enhanced Quality Monitoring Solutions and how it relates or differs from the Service Monitoring and Quality Control (Section C.6.9) described on page 67 of the solicitation.

A.5.12 See response to Q.1.2.

Q.5.13 Reference: Section B.2.7, P-17 and P-20 - The solicitation has two sections (and their associated tables) numbered B.2.7. a). Can we assume the second section numbered B.2.7 (and its two tables) should actually be B.2.8 (and the tables should be B.2.8-1 and B.2.8-2)? b). There is no mention of project management being included in the burdened hourly rate in Paragraph B.2.7 – Shared or Non-Dedicated Email Inquiry Response Solution. Will the Government clarify the inconsistency between the two paragraphs?

A.5.13 a). See response to Q.4.5. b). This section is being amended to reflect the inclusion of program and project management support.

Q.5.14 Reference: Section B.2.7, Table B.2.7-1, P-18 – Will the Government explain the Service Description for the Shared or Non-Dedicated Solution CLIN tables? Do the number of hours (e.g., “4 Hours/Day,” 192 Hours/Day”) represent quantity discounts as described below, or are they related to the minimum service charge?

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Example:

Month 1 – Handled seven hours of calls during month; therefore, would bill seven hours times the hourly rate for CLIN 99002. (Since the number of handling time hours is greater than four, but less than or equal to eight)

Month 2 – Handled 14 hours of calls during month, therefore would bill 14 hours time the hourly rate for CLIN 99004 (Since the number of handling time hours is greater than 12, but less than or equal to 14)

A.5.14 The number of Hours/Day in the Service Description column of the price tables in Section B.2.7 represent the minimum daily volume commitment level that an agency would commit for the task. The minimum service charge for each day is calculated by the minimum daily volume commitment level by the hourly rate.

Q.5.15 Reference: Section L.7.2, P-154 - Are the past performance profiles excluded from the page limitation?

A.5.15 No.

Q.5.16 Reference: Section L.7.2, P-154 - Given the double-spaced requirement in the solicitation, would the Government consider increasing the page limitation from 125 pages to 200?

A.5.16 See response to Q.1.10.

Q.5.17 Reference: Section L.7.2, P154 - Are graphics and tables excluded from the double-spacing requirement?

A.5.17 See response to Q.1.10.

Q.5.18 Reference: Section L.7.2.1.5.1 – Services to be Provided, P158 In Section L.7.2.1.5.1, Services to be Provided, the Government has requested we address Sections C.3 through C.11 of the SOW in our proposal response. Additionally, to adequately respond to all of Section L the vendor must repeat our solution to Sections C.4 through C.11 as shown below. As the technical proposal is page limited, and this creates redundant information within the proposal, would the Government modify the requirement for section L.7.2.1.5.1 to only require addressing Section C.3 of the SOW?

Section L	Requirements
L.7.2.1.5.1	Services to be Provided (C.3) Staff to be Provided (C.4) Facilities to be Provided (C.5) Technology Infrastructure to be Provided (C.6) Telecommunications Services to be Provided (C.7) Human Resources Management (C.8)

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	Quality Assurance/Quality Improvement (C.9) Performance Management (C.10) Management Reports (C.11)
L.7.2.1.6.1	Program Management Plan Staff to be Provided (C.4)
L.7.2.1.5.2	Facilities and Technology Infrastructure Facilities to be Provided (C.5) Technology Infrastructure to be Provided (C.6) Telecommunications Services to be Provided (C.7)
L.7.2.1.6.2	Human Resources Management Plan Human Resources Management (C.8)
L.7.2.1.6.4	Quality Control/Quality Improvement Plan Quality Assurance/Quality Improvement (C.9)
L.7.2.1.6.3	Performance Management Plan Performance Management (C.10)
L.7.2.1.6	Management Plan Management Reports (C.11)

A.5.18 Section L.7.2.1.5 is being amended to limit the response to Section C.3 only. In addition, Sections L.7.2.1.6.1, L.7.2.1.6.2, L.7.2.1.6.3, and L.2.1.6.4 are being revised to include references to the deleted sections in the respective plans. Also see response to Q.4.6.

Q.6.1 Support for TTY is understood at the agent level. Is there a specific requirement to support TTY based self-service in the IVR?

A.6.1 No.

Q.6.2 What provisions exist for Teleworking agents? What specific security standards would apply?

A.6.2 As stated in Section C.2.1.3, all inquiry response work shall be performed at contractor managed facilities within the United States unless specifically authorized by the Government. Such authority, as well as support and security requirements for performing the work outside of contractor-managed facility, will be addressed at a task order level.

Q.6.3 What percentage of calls will be recorded? What is the normal retention period for call recordings? Can these be provided to the government for long-term storage? If so, what format is required?

A.6.3 The percentage of calls to be recorded, the retention period and storage for call recordings, and format of such recordings will be identified on individual task orders.

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Q.7.1 Reference: Section B.2.1.1, Tables B.2.1.1-1 through B.2.1.1-5, P-4 - Is the GSA requesting one set of the six tables for each of the offeror's contact centers?

A.7.1 Offerors are required to submit only one set of price tables. The price tables shall contain ceiling rates that cannot be exceeded regardless of where the contact centers are located for the duration of the contract. At the task order level, a contractor may choose to propose a location other than the one it used to develop its ceiling prices provided: (i) prices proposed for that alternate location do not exceed CLIN pricing in their IDIQ contract, and (ii) the pricing complies with wage determination requirements for the location in which the work will be performed.

Q.7.2 Reference: Section B.2.1.2, Tables B.2.1.2-1 through B.2.1.2-5, P-5 - Is the GSA requesting one set of the six tables for each of the offeror's contact centers?

A.7.2 See response to Q.7.1

Q.7.3 Reference: Section B.2.2, Table B.2.2-2 - Incremental Project Management Support (Monthly), P-11 - Should the "Unit of Issue" in column 3 be "Each Month," rather than "Hour"?

A.7.3 The correct "unit of Issue" for Incremental Project Management Support is "Hour". The Incremental Project Management Support cost for each task, if applicable, is calculated by multiplying the unit rate by the quantities of hours needed to support the task.

Q.7.4 Reference: Section C.9.2.4, P-75 - Does the term "employee" refer to an employee of the offeror/contractor or to an employee of a Government agency receiving contracted services from a USA Contact contractor?

A.7.4 The term "Employee", as used in Section C.9.2.4, refers to contractor employee.

Q.7.5 Reference: Section L.7.2.1.4, P-158 - Will the GSA clarify the response difference between--or consider combining--the 4th bullet requirement ("two unanticipated challenges and the corresponding remedial actions...") and the 7th bullet requirement ("any problems or issues that occurred, and the corrective action taken, that may impact the offeror's past performance evaluation by its customer...")?

A.7.5 These are two distinct areas of information. The fourth bullet on page 158 relates to unanticipated challenges encountered by the offeror and the corresponding remedial actions taken to address the challenges. These are generally not actions to correct a performance problem but rather actions to enhance or improve the operation and/or management of a project. The seventh bullet on that page relates to problems and issues and the actions taken to correct contract non-performance.

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Q.8.1. Can GSA provide information as to what percentage of the task orders under the First Contact procurement involved 1). Building a new physical call center 2). Using an existing vendor call center or 3) Using an existing government physical call center?

A.8.1 To the best of the Government's knowledge, all of the task orders issued under the FirstContact contracts leveraged the use of existing contractor-provided centers.

Q.8.2 Will there be any additional opportunities to ask questions?

A.8.2 Hopefully, potential offerors have had sufficient time to ask all questions necessary to provide a responsive proposal. From this point until receipt of proposals, the Government will make a best effort to answer any additional questions received.

Q.9.1 Reference: Section C.2.1.7, P-25 - Dedicated and shared or non-dedicated service solution * Also on P 58 Section C 4.3.3 Skill categories - How many work groups are required for the program? If more than one skill, is there opportunity to blend program and create universal agent?

A.9.1 The number of work groups and skill categories and the opportunity to blend programs will, if applicable, be addressed at a task order level. The Government cannot predict how many work groups and skill categories will be required to satisfy the requirements of the USA Contact program.

Q.9.2 Reference: Section C.6.9, P-67 - Service Monitoring and Quality Control -: Is there any dispositioning requirement?

A.9.2 Any inquiry dispositioning requirements, if required, will be addressed at a task order level.

Q.9.3 Reference: Section C.6.9, P-67 -Service Monitoring and Quality Control - Will the Government clarify how many quality monitors are expected to be completed per agent per week or month?

A.9.3 The Government will decide the quantity of quality monitors per agent on a task order by task order basis.

Q.9.4 Reference: Section C.6.9, P-67 -Service Monitoring and Quality Control - Will one group of agents handle all call types (including all Client types) or will there be specialization?

A.9.4 Unless otherwise specified in individual task orders, the Government expects that contractors will be required to provide unique solutions to meet the individual program requirements as specified in the task orders.

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Q.9.5 Reference: Section C.6.9, P-67 - Service Monitoring and Quality Control – Will the Government clarify the expected shrinkage for uptraining & quality?

A.9.5 Contractors are responsible for providing qualified and trained personnel to meet the performance requirements specified in individual task orders. It is the contractor's responsibility to assess the task requirements, including potential shrinkage of personnel due to uptraining and quality processes, and develop an appropriate program for recruiting, training, and retaining sufficient qualified personnel to perform the work.

Q.9.6 Reference: Section C.8.2, P-71 – Training - What is the language % volume breakdown for each workgroup/project type?

A.9.6 Language support and volume breakdown for each workgroup/project are task dependent and will be identified in individual task orders.

Q.9.7 Reference: Section C.2.1.5, P-25 - Language Support - What are the Service Level Agreements that you required?

A.9.7 Applicable performance standards, including but not limited to Service Level Agreements, Occupancy, Average Speed of Answer, and Abandonment Rate, are to be determined at a task order level.

Q.9.8 Reference: Section C.2.1.5, P-25 - Language Support - What are the Occupancy, Average Service Level, Average Speed of Answer and Abandonment Rate?

A.9.8 See response to Q.9.7.

Q.9.9 Reference: Section C.3.2.2, P-39 - Outbound Calling Services - How many outbound quality monitors are required per agent per week or month?

A.9.9 See response to Q.9.3

Q.9.10 Reference: Section C.3.2.2, P-39 - Outbound Calling Services - Could you provide the requirements for outbound call recording and storage?

A.9.10 Other than for quality and training purposes, which is the responsibility of the contractors under this contract, the Government generally does not require the contractor to record the inquiries as a business practice. However, if such recording and storage is a requirement, it will be specified at a task order level.

Q.9.11 Reference: Section C.3.2.2, P-39 - Outbound Calling Services - What are your outbound reporting requirements?

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A.9.11 The contractors are required to provide reports for services rendered under this contract. Specific report requirements, including reports elements and format, and report frequency, will be specified at a task order level.

Q.9.12 Reference: Section C.11, P-76 Management Reports – Will the Government provide any restrictions in calling hours other than the standard regulatory hours?

A.9.12 The Government cannot find any references to restrictions in calling hours in the referenced RFP section and page number. The Government assumes that the question relates to restrictions in calling hours for outbound calling services. Outbound calling hour restrictions are task specific and will be identified in individual task orders.

Q.9.13 Reference: Section C.11, Page 76 - Will the Government provide any specific dialing time requirements (i.e. start at xxxx, end by yyyy).

A.9.13 The Government cannot find any references to restrictions in dialing time requirements in the referenced RFP section and page number. The Government assumes that the question relates to dialing time requirements for outbound dialing services. Dialing time requirements for outbound dialing services are task specific and will be identified in individual task orders.

Q.9.14 Will GSA clarify its marketing strategy for the current First Contact customers to use this vehicle?

A.9.14 This question appears to be a duplicate of Q.9.20. See response to Q.9.20.

Q.9.15 Reference: Section C.1.3, P-23 – Objectives - Can GSA clarify its requirements for promoting opportunities to employ the blind or have severe disabilities with this vehicle?

A.9.15 See Section H.8 of the solicitation.

Q.9.16 Reference: Section C.1.3, P-23 – Objective - Will GSA clarify the term “emergency and crisis situation”?

A.9.16 The term “emergency and crisis” refers to any situation in which the exception to full and open competition based on urgent and compelling circumstances exists. This is defined in the Federal Acquisition Regulation as: “When the agency’s need for the supplies or services is of such an unusual and compelling urgency that the Government would be seriously injured unless the agency is permitted to limit the number of sources from which it solicits bids or proposals, full and open competition need not be provided for.”

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Q.9.17 Reference: Section C.1.1, P-22 – Background - Will agencies using the FirstContact contracts program chose not to provide an option year and instead re-procure thru the contract vehicle this new IDIQ will provide?

A.9.17 The decision to exercise or not exercise an option is always based on the Government assessment of what constitutes its best interest.

Q.9.18 Reference: Section C.2.1.7, P-25-26 - Dedicated and Shared or Non-Dedicated Service Solutions - Will GSA clarify the meaning of “complex projects” in this context?

A.9.18 See Section C.3.5.1 for descriptions on task complexity levels.

Q.9.19 Reference: Section C.2.2.2, P-27 - E-Mail Workflow (Normal) - No timeframes are provided for email responses that are forwarded outside of the contact center and to a government agency. Will GSA acknowledge that this is outside the contracts program vendor’s responsibility?

A.9.19 Unless follow-up actions are required and specified in the task requirements, the contractor is not responsible for responding to email inquiries that have been forwarded to a government agency or a designated individual or organization beyond the control of the contractor.

Q.9.20 Will GSA clarify its marketing strategy for the current First Contact customers to use this vehicle?

A.9.20 GSA is already marketing USA Contact to current FirstContact customers.

Q.9.21 We cannot find anywhere stated the security requirements for the network the government intends to employ for the work. See H.12 for some discussion of system. Can the government provide clarification for network security?

A.9.21 Network security is not addressed as a separate requirement under this contract. Contractor-provided solution under this contract, including the network that the contractor is using to support the task, has to comply with the requirements set forth in Section C.3.5.5 – Information Systems Security Management.

Q.10.1 Reference: Section 2.1.6 - Can the government further define their expectations with regard to contractor's ability to stand up a contact center within 48 hours of notification from the government? Specifically, what are the expectations with regard to the size of the operation - 100 seats, 200 seats, 500 seats, etc? Also, will the government accept a retainer fee to keep a Pseudo hot site available for this purpose?

A.10.1 See response to Q.3.2 above for 48 hour ramp-up expectation. The Government will not establish a Pseudo hot site for this purpose as part of the base contract. However, agencies may issue tasks that require such an arrangement to

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respond to anticipated emergencies. Such requirements will be addressed on a task order by task order basis.

Q.10.2 Since GSA has now awarded Networx that includes among its service offerings Contact Center services, will GSA Public Buildings Service consider an offer based upon using Networx as the service delivery mechanism?

A.10.2 Questions concerning agency acquisition plans at the task order level will not be addressed in this forum.

Q.10.3 Please describe in detail, the different types of IVR application being utilized in your current call center environment. Can you provide any supporting volumetric data specific to each IVR application? Please describe the call routing strategies for different call types inbound into the call center. Describe the requirements for specific feature by agent (for example, skills based routing or CTI integration with data push to the agent desktop.)

A.10.3 IVR application, volume, features, and routing arrangements are all task dependent and will be addressed at a task order level. Quotations provided by contract awardees must however comply with terms and conditions, including price in their IDIQ contract, and must provide a fully responsive technical solution in response to a task requirement's Request for Quotation.

Q.11.1 Reference: Section B.1.1.1, P-1 – Project Startup - The government states that charges shall include one or more of the following (a) Facility and Equipment (b) Initial Special Training (c) Knowledge and Content Development (d) Project Implementation Support as related to Project Start Up. It is assumed that the vendor will allocate costs for all as described in section B.2.1.1-1 in the pricing roll-up and calculate alternative/lower pricing where applicable if only an few of the elements (a) – (d) are used. Is this correct?

A.11.1 Offeror shall provide ceiling prices for each of the CLINS listed in Section B.2 – Price Tables. When responding to specific task requirements upon receipt of a contract award, an offeror may apply the applicable CLINS and quantities to calculate the prices in preparing the price proposal.

Q.11.2 Reference: Section B.1.1.2, P-1 – Initial/Special Training - The one-time charge indicated in this section is calculated on a task order by task order basis or is this to be a one time charge per facility.

A.11.2 See response to Q.5.2 above.

Q.11.3 Reference: Section B.1.5, P-3 – Attended Services – Shared or Non-Dedicated Solutions - The RFP states the charges are to be based on actual handling time including call wrap up time. The vendor assumes that actual handling time and wrap up is to be calculated based on a minute / hourly roll-up inclusive of rounding to the nearest minute?

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A.11.3 As stated in Section B.2.7, “For billing purposes, the actual handle time (including wrap-up time) of all calls during the month shall be totaled and rounded up to the nearest hour.”

Q.11.4 Reference: Section B.2.1.2.2, P-5 – Incremental Facility and Equipment - The pricing tables for IS support (training and Dedicated production) break down into IS and Supervisory components. B.1.4 (Dedicated) and B.1.5 (Non-Dedicated) descriptions specify that the unit rate should be fully burdened, including supervision. Should these components be priced separately or combined?

A.11.4 Section B.1.4 is being amended to remove the “supervisor” reference (see response to Q.5.4). The descriptions in Sections B.1.4 and B.1.5 are for associated with work performed in normal operation. The price tables referenced in the above question are charges for Information Specialists and Supervisory Information Specialists while in training preparing for the task.

Q.11.5 Reference: Section B.2.3.3, P-11 – CLINS 72000 & 82002 - The RFP in general classifies Language Translation services to cover all of the Over-the-Phone Interpretation, On-Demand Email Translation, and Text Translation services we provide. In the pricing pages of the RFP p. 12, there’s a category for Service Initiation/Change Order Charges for Support Services that requests Language Translation Services per Unit, while on pg. 13 there’s a category for Recurring charges for Other Support Services for Language Translation Services that requests price by the hour. Will the government clarify what the difference is between the two?

A.11.5 The Service Initiation /Change Order Charge is the one time charge that the contractor may impose for setting up the language translation service. The Recurring Charge is for the actual use of the language translation service.

Q.11.6 Reference: Section B.2.4.2, P-12, Section C.3.3.3, P-43 – Language Translation Services - CLIN 82002: To avoid any misunderstanding may we suggest using separate CLINs for translation (written) and interpreting (oral). “Language Translation Services” should be used for any written requirements with the “unit of issue” WORD, and a separate CLIN

A.11.6 The Service Description for CLIN 82002 is being revised to read “Language Translation Service – Telephone”. A new CLIN 82003 is being added for “Language Translation Service – Written” and the Unit of Issue is “Each Word”.

Q.11.7 Reference: Section B.2.5, P-13 – Attended Services - The pricing tables for IS support (training and Dedicated production) break down into IS and Supervisory components. B.1.4 (Dedicated) and B.1.5 (Non-Dedicated) descriptions specify that the unit rate should be fully burdened, including supervision. Should these components be priced separately or combined?

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A.11.7 The Information Specialist Hourly Rates for Dedicated and Shared or Non-Dedicated Response solutions shall include all of the stated components.

Q.11.8 Reference: Section B.2.6, P-17 – QA Personnel Multiplier - What is the average number expected by GSA for the ratio of IS to QA personnel?

A.11.8 The average IS to QA Personnel ratio is dependent on the offeror's proposed solution. Offerors are expected to identify the average IS to QA Personnel ratios proposed for the average, high and low requirements.

Q.11.9 Reference: B.2.6, P-17 – QA Personnel Multiplier - Please define and explain the QA Multiplier in greater detail. The vendor understands the potential need for additional or diminished QA resources but anticipates utilizing this calculation on a task order by task order basis.

A.11.9 The QA Personnel Multiplier is intended to provide flexibility to offerors to adjust their solutions in response to specific tasks that may require a higher or lower IS to QA Personnel ratio. Offerors are requested to provide a maximum and minimum multiplier for this contract, which then can be discounted on a task order by task order basis.

Q.11.10 Reference: Sections B.2.6 & B.2.7, P-17, Section H.9 – P-103 – Work Hour Descriptions - These four sections alternately describe the hourly unit rate as a "worked hour" or "actual handling time (including call wrap-up time)". Is H.9 the over-riding definition -- which would include payment for coaching, breaks and meeting time? Sections If so, B.1.5 and B.2.7 contradict this definition

A.11.10 Section H.9 of the RFP is being amended to exclude the following activities from the calculation of "working time" for Information Specialists for Shared or Non-Dedicated Response Solutions:

- **in the available (to respond to a call or inquiry) mode;**
- **while receiving instructions or coaching;**
- **while on breaks; and**
- **while attending task-related meetings.**

Offerors shall account for these activities in establishing the Information Specialist Hourly Rates for Shared or Non-Dedicated Response Solutions.

Q.11.11 Reference: Section B.2.7, P-17 - Is the specific daily work volume commitment a minimum commitment? Is it in hours, calls or minutes?

A.11.11 The specific work volume commitment is the minimum commitment. The minimum commitment is expressed in hours/day as defined in the price tables.

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Q.11.12 Reference: Section C.2.1, p-26 – Dedicated and Shared or Non-Dedicated - When does the “20 Seconds” begin to count? Does this include IVR time?

A.11.12 The count begins when the call is offered to the Information Specialists by the contractor system. This does not include IVR time.

Q.11.13 Reference: Section C.2.1.2, P-24 – Hours of Operation - In providing interfaces to Government Furnished IVR what connectivity elements will be provided by the government? The vendor realizes that this may be configured on a task by task basis but in cognizant that if industry standard elements are not mandated then there is a potential for connectivity “scope creep” and subsequent cost / price issues.

A.11.13 In general, if the Government furnishes its own IVR solution, the Government will be responsible for routing the calls to the contractor designated presence via the appropriate telecommunications connectivity (e.g., contractor’s 800 number, contractor’s 800 or DID telecommunication access circuits, or Government furnished telecommunications access circuits)

Q.11.14 Reference: Section C.2.1.2, P-24 – Hours of Operation - Are the said carriers (Verizon, Sprint, AT&T) leveraged to handle network or cloud based routing for inter and/or intra office/department/agency purposes.

A.11.14. If the Government elects to provide its own automated service via one of its telecommunications service providers, the routing capabilities will be defined in the individual task orders.

Q.11.15 Reference: Section C.2.1.2, P-24 – Hours of Operation - Holiday hours are defined as a 24 hour period beginning at 12:01 am ET of the day of the holiday, if the holiday event happens on a weekend and is extended through to the first official business day how does the scheduling conform?

A.11.15 Federal holidays are defined in Section H.11. If any of the holidays falls on a Saturday, then the preceding Friday is the holiday. If any of the holidays falls on a Sunday, then the following Monday is the holiday. Also see response to Q.11.16.

Q.11.16 Reference: Section C.2.1.2, P-24 - Does the normal ending period for a holiday commence exactly at 12:00 am ET or does the commencement for business begin at 7:00 am ET as part of the normal business hours process?

A.11.16 “Eastern Time” is being replaced by “Local Time” in the definition of Normal Business Hours, Nights, Saturdays, and Sundays to account for time zone differences. Holiday hours are from 12:00 midnight to 12:00 midnight local time on the day of the holiday. Normal business hours begins at 7:00 am local time.

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Q.11.17 Reference: Section C.2.1.6, P-25 – Ramp Up Ramp Down - Is the requirement to ramp-up to fully operational status within 48 hours for dedicated service solutions or for share/non-dedicated solutions or for both?

A.11.17 Both.

Q.11.18 Reference: Section C.2.1.6, P-25 - Ramp Up Ramp Down - Will the government have the communications facilities in place to handle the traffic?

A.11.18 The Rapid Ramp-up requires the Contractor to provide telecommunications solutions as part of the ramp-up process.

Q.11.19 Reference: Section 2.1.6, P-25 – Ramp Up Ramp Down - In ramping down in 24 hours, the contractor may incur obligations under employment law to pay employees in lieu of notice. Will the government cover those costs?

A.11.19 Section C.2.1.6 is being amended to include such provision. Also see response to Q.3.2.

Q.11.20 Reference: Section C.2.1.7, P-26 – Dedicated and Shared or Non-Dedicated Service - The stated service level is 70% in 20 seconds, what is the service level for abandonment rate for support calls?

A.11.20 For pricing purposes, offerors shall assume a 3% abandonment rate and a service level of 70% with 20 seconds for Shared and Non-Dedicated Response Solutions. The RFP is being amended to reflect this requirement.

Q.11.21 Reference: Section C.2.2.1, P-26 – Sample Call Flow - Define the term “system work”?

A.11.21 The term “system work” refers to the retrieval, review, and capture of information during the inquiry response process.

Q.11.22 Reference: Section C.2.2.2.2, P-28 – Email Response Options - Where is the escalation procedure for inter and intra agency escalations located?

A.11.22 As stated in Section C.2.2, the workflow descriptions provided are for illustrative purposes only. Actual workflow, including escalation procedures for inter and intra agency escalations, will be described in individual task orders.

Q.11.23 Reference: Section C.2.2.4, P-30 – Postal Mail Inquiry Workflow - The vendor has a great deal of experience in handling postal mail inquiries and requests for information but is unclear within the scope of this RFP if the government, under this contract will require standardized mail handling methods currently deployed by a number of agencies that include biometric and chemical analysis of packages entering a facility. If this level of mail support is expected by the government under the terms of this

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contract can the vendor configure and price the mail handling activity on a task order by task order basis?

A.11.23 Yes, providing the system is priced using existing contract CLINs.

Q.11.24 Reference: Section C.3.1.1, P-33 – Automated Voice Response Services - The government may elect to furnish their own automated voice response service. It is understood that the government may contract with the vendor to provide a myriad of services in support of this government environment. Will the vendor be responsible for language translation services for this government furnished solution and subsequently be permitted to access the various subsets required in order to accurately provide complete translated services.

A.11.24 IVR Support requirements are task dependent. Specific support requirements will be addressed in individual task orders.

Q.11.25 Reference: Section C.3.1.1.2, P-33 – Voice/Speech Recognition - Does the government require voice-recognition in languages other than English?

A.11.25 The degree of consistency between services offered in different languages will be task specific and will be specified in individual task orders. The technology supporting text-to-speech and voice recognition must support the languages listed in Section C.3.1.1.

Q.11.26 Reference: Section C.3.1.1.3, P-33 – Text to Speech - Does the government require Text-to-Speech in languages other than English?

A.11.26 See response to Q.11.25 above.

Q.11.27 Reference: Section C.3.1.11, P-36 – Hosted FAQ Services - It is assumed that the FAQ service must be made available in all languages specified in Section 2.1.5. Is this a correct assumption?

A.11.27 Hosted FAQ Services must support multiple languages. At a minimum, the service shall support English, Spanish and Chinese. Section C.3.11 is being amended to clarify this requirement.

Q.11.28 Reference: Section C.3.1.11, P-38 – Hosted FAQ Services - It is recognized by the vendor that all interfaces must be Section 508 compliant, multilingual capable and XML compliant. It is also understood that in order to display and integrate a number of rarer languages for display the user of the FAQ environment must load a specific language pack to the user's browser. The vendor assumes that the acquisition and loading of this pack is the responsibility of the end user. Is this a correct assumption?

A.11.28 Yes.

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Q.11.29 Reference: Section C.3.2, P-38 – Attended Services - Does ‘virtual solution’ mean shared/non-dedicated services?

A.11.29 Yes. The RFP is being amended to reflect “shared or non-dedicated solutions.”

Q.11.30 Reference: Section C.3.2.2, P-39 – Outbound Calling Services - The vendor currently provides a great deal of outbound calling services and would like clarification that the scope of the outbound calling in this RFP is consistent with outbound call to US states and territories. Is this correct?

A.11.30 Yes, if the Outbound Calling Service requires the support of automated dialing equipment. There is no such restriction if the service is performed manually.

Q.11.31 Reference: Section C.3.2.6, P-42 – Interactive Web-Based Services - Does the government require on-line translation of web-chat into languages other than English?

A.11.31 No. Not at the present time. However, the Government may modify the contract to add such a service at a later date if agency requirements for such a service become known.

Q.11.32 Reference: Section C.3.2.6, P-42 – Interactive Web-Based Services - Does the CLIN for Start-Up also cover on-going services or is there a separate CLIN?

A.11.32 No. The CLIN for start-up covers only the one-time charge associated with setting up the service. Charges for ongoing services are cover by the Recurring Charges for Automated Services and Attended Services as provided for in the Section B price tables.

Q.11.33 Reference: Section C.3.3.3, P-43 – Language Translation Services - What data would be collected by this tool?

A.11.33 Language translation requirements are task dependent. Specific data collection requirements to facilitate the evaluation of the need and use of the service will be specified on a task order level.

Q.11.34 Reference: Section C.3.5.5, P-47 – Information System Security Management - There are references to both the FIPS Publications and later on to the FISMA compliance process. Most of the FIPS requirements are addressed in the FISMA compliance issues, including the NIST publications. Is there some special reason why FIPS is addressed separately when most, if not all of these issues are addressed in the FISMA compliance regulations?

A.11.34 No.

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Q.11.35 Reference: Section C.3.5.5.3, P-50 – Process Management. - Does the requirement for "a physically secure facility for people..." preclude the utilization of a virtual IS solution e.g. visually impaired or other disabled persons remotely housed?

A.11.35 See response to Q.6.2.

Q.11.36 Reference: Section C.3.5.6, P-53 – Content & Knowledge Management - If transition to a new vendor(s) occurs, how will knowledge and/or systems be migrated into the new environment (websites, FAQs, IVR, etc.)?

A.11.36 Migration of any knowledge and systems, if required, will be addressed at a task order level.

Q.11.37 Reference: Section C.4, P-55 – Staff to be Provided - Does "All work performed shall be at contractor-managed facilities" preclude virtual IS solutions? Similar to preceding question for C.3.5.5.3.

A.11.37 See response to Q.6.2

Q.11.38 Reference: Section C.4.3.1, P-57 – Information Specialists - Please further define English language proficiency with reference to the ILR scale. What assessment methods of language proficiency will be accepted as proof?

A.11.38 With reference to the Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR) scale, the language proficiency requirement for information specialists would be equivalent to a ILR Level 5 or S-5 - Native or bilingual proficiency. An individual at this level is described as follows:

- **has a speaking proficiency equivalent to that of an educated native speaker**
- **has complete fluency in the language, such that speech on all levels is fully accepted by educated native speakers in all of its features, including breadth of vocabulary and idiom, colloquialisms, and pertinent cultural references.**

Section C.4.3.1 of the RFP is being amended to reflect the inclusion of ILR Level-5 language proficiency requirement.

Q.11.39 Reference: Section 4.3.4, P-59 – Multi-Language Support - Please further define language proficiency with reference to the ILR scale. What assessment methods of language proficiency will be accepted as proof?

A.11.39 See response to Q.11.38.

Q.11.40 Reference: Section C.7.3, P-70 – Network Design - Is there a minimum bandwidth requirement for voice and data access?

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A.11.40 Voice and data access requirements will be task dependent. It will be the contractor's responsibility to provide sufficient network and access bandwidth to satisfy the performance requirements of the specific tasks to which it chooses to respond to.

Q.12.1 For purposes of completing the Minimum Experience Qualifications Criteria Section (Section L.7.1.3.1) of the RFP, is it acceptable for a wholly owned subsidiary dedicated to the Government to use the qualifications of its parent corporation? Thus can the subsidiary be the offeror and use its Parent's qualifications?

A.12.1 Yes, but only if the offeror clearly demonstrates that a symbiotic relationship has existed in the past whereby the wholly owned subsidiary was fully involved in the services it proposes to provide under a USA Contact contract; the parent corporation provided the subsidiary with essential resources, skills and support; and that this relationship and level of commitment will continue for the duration of the USA Contact contract.

Q.13.1 Reference: P-100 of RFP – Will the Government clarify the Size standard for this procurement? Page 100 of the RFP states it is \$6M with NAICS Code 519190. Is this right? If not, does GSA plan to release a USA Contact Multichannel Contract Center Services Small Business?

A.13.1 See response to Q.3.21 above.