

NCIA/ACQ/2024/07036
16 July 2024

Market Survey - Request for Information

PORTABLE CIS PLATFORM

NCI Agency Reference: MS-CO-423306-PCP

The NATO Communications and Information Agency is seeking information from Nations and their qualified Industry in order to assess the availability of Portable CIS Platforms within all NATO Nations to support the NCI Academy mobile training offerings.

NCI Agency Point of Contact

Senior Contracting Officer: Sven Schumacher

E-mail: Sven.Schumacher@ncia.nato.int

To : Distribution List (Annex A)

Subject : **NCI Agency Market Survey – Request for Information**
MS-CO-423306-PCP

1. NCI Agency requests the assistance of the Nations and their Industry to identify within all NATO Nations the availability of a Portable CIS Platform that can meet or exceed the Agency's requirements of a mobile training solution.
2. This Market Survey is being issued to identify potential solutions and possible suppliers.
3. The broadest possible dissemination by Nations of this Market Survey Request to their qualified and interested industrial base is requested.
4. A summary of the requirements is set forth in the Annex B and Annex D attached hereto. Respondents are requested to reply via the questionnaire at Annex C. Other supporting information and documentation (technical data sheets, marketing brochures, catalogue price lists, descriptions of existing installations, etc.) are also desired.

5. The reference for this Market Survey - Request for Information is **MS-CO-423306-PCP**, and all correspondence and submissions concerning this matter should reference this number.
6. Responses may be issued to NCI Agency directly from Nations or from their Industry to the Point of Contact indicated at Paragraph 9 below. Respondents are invited to carefully review the requirements in Annex B and Annex D.
7. Responses shall in all cases include the name of the firm, telephone number, e-mail address, designated Point of Contact, and a NATO UNCLASSIFIED description of the capability available and its functionalities. This shall include any restrictions (e.g. export controls) for direct procurement of the various capabilities by NCI Agency. Non-binding pricing information is also requested as called out in Annex C.
8. Responses are due back to NCI Agency no later than **23:59 hours Central European Time (CET) on 16 August 2024.**
9. Please send all responses, via email, referencing **MS-CO-423306-PCP** in the title of the email to: Sven.Schumacher@ncia.nato.int .
10. At this stage, clarification requests or any further questions are not accepted in return. NCI Agency reserves the right to invite respondents to discuss their response. This may include a product demonstration setup for validation purposes. The demonstration/ period shall be mutually agreed between the respondent and the NCI Agency.
11. Respondents are requested to await further instructions after their submissions and are requested not to contact directly any NCI Agency staff other than the POC identified above in Paragraph 9.
12. Any response to this request shall be provided on a cost-free and voluntary basis. Not responding will not prejudice or cause the exclusion of companies from any future procurement that may arise from this Market Survey.
13. Responses to this request, and any information provided within the context of this survey, including but not limited to pricing, quantities, capabilities, functionalities and requirements will be considered as indicative and informational only and will not be considered as binding on the participant or on NATO within the context of any future acquisition.
14. The NCI Agency is not liable for any expenses incurred by firms in conjunction with their participation in this Market Survey and this Survey shall not be regarded as a commitment of any kind concerning future procurement of the items described therein.
15. Your assistance in this Market Survey request is greatly appreciated.

For the Chief of Acquisition:

Sven Schumacher
Senior Contracting Officer



Enclosures:

Annex A (Distribution List)

Annex B (Request for Information - Summary of Requirements)

Annex C (Request for Information - Questionnaire)

Annex D (Request for Information - Requirements Definition)

ANNEX A

Distribution List for Market Survey – Request for Information MS-CO-423306-PCP

All NATO Delegations (Attn: Military Budget Committee or Infrastructure Adviser)

NATO Members Embassies in Brussels (Attn: Commercial Attaché)

NCI Agency – All NATEXs

NCI Agency – (reserved)

ANNEX B

SUMMARY OF REQUIREMENTS

Market Survey – Request for Information MS-CO-423306-PCP

1. Introduction

1.1. NCI Agency

- The NATO Communications and Information Agency (NCI Agency), established on the 01 July 2012, is NATO's provider of IT and Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (C4ISR), including Cyber and Missile Defence. The NCI Agency is part of the NATO Communications and Information Organisation (NCIO).
- The NCI Agency delivers advanced C4ISR technology and communications capabilities in support of Alliance decision-makers and missions. This includes the acquisition of technology, experimentation, the promotion of interoperability, systems and architecture design and engineering, as well as testing, technical support and training.
- The NCI Agency's mission is to lead NATO's digital endeavour. To do so, the NCI Agency has established four Strategic Goals of which one is specifically relevant to this requirement: Strategic Goal #3: Hire, train, and retain the Best;
- All Education and Training (E&T) services provided by the NCI Agency are consolidated under the NATO Communications and Information (NCI) Academy. The Academy directly supports NATO's Digital Endeavour by providing professional and technical E&T, supporting Agency staff involved in the requirements analysis, the design and build phases of cyberspace services.

1.2. NCI Academy

- The NATO Communications and Information (NCI) Academy was established by the NCI Agency in 2019 although it has a legacy of over sixty years providing C4ISR and Cyber Education and Training services to the NATO Command Structure, NATO Force Structure and Nations.
- The mission of the NCI Academy is to deliver essential technical, operational & managerial training.
- The NCI Agency Academy, informed by crucial requirements holders, provides education and training services to NATO Command structure, force structure and Nation as well as internal NCI Agency staff for professional and personal development, including mission and post-specific requirements to ensure the NCI Agency has the necessary skills to meet its customer requirements.

2. Scope

- 2.1. The NCI Agency is seeking to refresh its Mobile Training services as part of its ongoing commitment to providing technical and operational training opportunities to the organisation's staff members.
- 2.2. This Market Survey – Request for Information is the first step in this process in order to identify possible solutions to provide a Portable CIS Platform. At this stage, NCI Agency is willing to evaluate all the available services on the market which can provide technological, robust, capable and cost effective solutions to NATO.
- 2.3. The overall purpose of the Mobile Training service is to provide training and education for our key stakeholders and as such should be able to provide an environment for technical training outside the NCI Academy facility in Oeiras, Portugal.

3. Eligibility

- 3.1. Eligible suppliers must be from Participating NATO Nations (ALBANIA, BELGIUM, BULGARIA, CANADA, CROATIA, THE CZECH REPUBLIC, DENMARK, ESTONIA, FINLAND, FRANCE, GERMANY, GREECE, HUNGARY, ICELAND, ITALY, LATVIA, LITHUANIA, LUXEMBOURG, MONTENEGRO, THE NETHERLANDS, NORTH MACEDONIA, NORWAY, POLAND, PORTUGAL, ROMANIA, SLOVAKIA, SLOVENIA, SPAIN, SWEDEN, REPUBLIC OF TÜRKIYE, THE UNITED KINGDOM and THE UNITED STATES), unless otherwise specifically authorized by the NCI Agency.

4. Requirements for Portable CIS Platform

- 4.1. For the purpose of the present Market Survey – Request for Information, responses from interested suppliers that provide solutions encompassing the following capabilities are sought:
 - Highly mobile and transportable computing environment / compact datacentre;
 - Physically and technologically secure;
 - Independent operation without need for external connectivity;
 - Compatible with latest type 1 bare metal hypervisors from leading technology providers;
 - High Capacity data storage;
 - Built in switching with high-speed capabilities;
 - Scalable Modular Architecture;
 - Enable best practice provisioning and deployment;
 - Ruggedized for high mobility.
- 4.2. Portable CIS Platform will be used:
 - To support NCI Academy staff in the delivery of technical and operational training at customer locations where access to the training system housed at the NCI Academy facility may not be possible, e.g. system administration training, user application training etc.;

- To support any training related activity by NCI Academy staff where demonstration and/or interaction with the NCI Academy core portfolio services is required;
- To support undefined activities that may take place at the NCI Academy (or any other location) that requires dedicated compute capabilities isolated from other networks/systems.

4.3. A non-exhaustive list of prioritised requirements is provided at ANNEX D.

ANNEX C

QUESTIONNAIRE

Market Survey – Request for Information MS-CO-423306-PCP

Organisation name:

Contact name & details within organisation:

Notes:

1. Please DO NOT alter the sequence and numbering of questions. It is recommended to copy the questions into your response and provide your answers under each question. If you need additional space to complete your text then please use the 'Continuation Sheet' at the end of this Annex and reference the question to which the text relates to. A MS Word version of the questionnaire will be made available to interested parties upon request to the NCI Agency point of contact identified in paragraph 9 of the cover letter.
2. Please feel free to make assumptions, *HOWEVER* you must list your assumptions in the spaces provided.
3. Please DO NOT enter any company marketing or sales material as part of your answers within this Request for Information. Such material should be submitted as enclosures with the appropriate references within your replies. If you need additional space, please use the 'Continuation Sheet' at the end of this Annex.
4. Please DO try and answer the relevant questions as comprehensively as possible.
5. All questions within this document should be answered in conjunction with the summary of requirements in ANNEX B and ANNEX D.
6. All questions apply to Commercial or Government responders as appropriate to their Commercial off the Shelf (COTS) or Government off the Shelf (GOTS) products.
7. Cost details required in the questions refer to Rough Order of Magnitude (ROM) Procurement & Life Cycle cost, including all assumptions the estimate is based upon:
 - Advantages & disadvantages of your service/solution/organisation,
 - Any other supporting information you may deem necessary including any assumptions relied upon.

Request for Information - Questionnaire

1. GENERAL SOLUTION

- 1.1. Do you have a Portable CIS Platform solution that meets the requirements as detailed in ANNEX B and D?
- 1.2. Please indicate the areas where your solution would not meet either entirely or partially any of the defined requirements.
- 1.3. Please indicate the areas where your solution exceeds the requirements defined in ANNEX B and D or any additional capabilities that your solution provides that are not described in this RFI.
- 1.4. Can you provide detailed examples or case studies where your proposed solution has been employed?
- 1.5. Any other supporting information or differentiator you believe may support our evaluation of your product including any assumptions relied upon.

2. COMPATIBILITY AND INTEGRATION

- 2.1. Please describe the compatibility of your hardware with market leading hypervisor solutions and any forecasted changes to this compatibility in the next 5 years.
- 2.2. Please describe the compatibility and integration of any built in network equipment with market leading network suppliers.

3. MAINTENANCE, UPGRADES, AND SECURITY

- 3.1. Please describe the maintenance requirements for your solution.
- 3.2. Please describe the hardware lifecycle forecast for your solution over the next 5 years.
- 3.3. How often are firmware and software updates, including routine and emergency patches, released and how is notification made to end users?
- 3.4. Please describe the support model for hardware failures including extended warranty options up to 5 years and significant inclusions/exclusions.
- 3.5. What are the future plans/roadmap for the development of your solution including any upcoming features/technologies planned for integration?

3.6. Please describe any built-in security features of the proposed solution.

4. OPERATIONS AND DEPLOYMENT

4.1. Are there any restrictions on the use and deployment of the solution within: NATO; NATO nations or NATO Deployed operations?

4.2. Please describe the portability of your solution including physical dimensions and weight of your solution.

4.3. Please describe a typical deployment and installation process for your solution.

4.4. Are there included or do you offer any native tools for the automation/orchestration of a bare metal environment build for the proposed solution?

4.5. Are there included or do you offer any native tools or procedures for the duplication of virtual resources from a static environment to the proposed solution?

4.6. Please describe the processing specifications of the proposed solution in terms of CPU, RAM, Storage, and Network.

4.7. Are the compute, storage and network components modular in nature to allow scaling up or down as required? Is customization of the solution with modular components a task that the customer can autonomously execute?

4.8. In terms of modularity, what are the limitations for maximum compute, storage and network components?

4.9. How many users and/or devices can be supported simultaneously with your solution?

4.10. Please provide a description of the effort required to setup the proposed solution in a deployed scenario assuming all configuration/testing had been prepared in advance.

5. CONNECTIVITY

5.1. Please describe the physical interfaces and specifications for local area connectivity.

5.2. Does the solution provide capabilities (included or optional) for mobile connectivity i.e. via Wi-Fi, LTE, 4/5G etc.?

6. PRICING

- 6.1.** What is the pricing model for your product (one-time fee, subscription, leasing)?
- 6.2.** Are there any additional costs for installation, maintenance, licensing, or support?

Continuation Sheet Please feel free to add any information you may think that may be of value to NCI Agency in the space provided below. Should you need additional space, please copy this page and continue with the appropriate page numbers.	Page # __ of __

ANNEX D

REQUIREMENTS DEFINITION

Market Survey – Request for Information
MS-CO-423306-PCP

Requirement ID	Description	MoSCoW Priority
MS_ACAD_PCP_01	Highly mobile and transportable, complying with regulations for air, road, land and sea transport.	Must
MS_ACAD_PCP_02	External case/chassis is securable for transportation.	Must
MS_ACAD_PCP_03	All compute, storage and network requirements are provided locally with no requirement for external connectivity.	Must
MS_ACAD_PCP_04	Can be quickly setup in a deployed location by non-Technical personnel.	Must
MS_ACAD_PCP_05	Compatible with leading Hypervisor technologies providers.	Must
MS_ACAD_PCP_06	Compatible with leading network technology providers.	Must
MS_ACAD_PCP_07	Scalable (by customer) compute, RAM, storage, and network to allow variable resource demands to be met.	Must
MS_ACAD_PCP_08	Allows simple troubleshooting (of physical components) by non-Technical staff to support fault diagnosis.	Must
MS_ACAD_PCP_09	Provides capacity for connecting end user devices to access virtual resources deployed on the platform.	Must
MS_ACAD_PCP_10	Manufacturer/Vendor support included for hardware failures for 3-5 years.	Must
MS_ACAD_PCP_11	Manufacturer/Vendor support for product updates, patches and critical security updates for 3 – 5 years.	Must

MS_ACAD_PCP_12	Provides capacity for connecting Wide Area Network components i.e. Wi-Fi, LTE to allow out of band management/secure remote access if required.	Should
MS_ACAD_PCP_13	Incorporates built-in high availability and disaster recovery features.	Should
MS_ACAD_PCP_14	Provides tooling for orchestrated deployments and configuration.	Could