

ECOS Net DMR Request for Proposals
Frequently Asked Questions
June-21, 2006

Question 1

The RFP refers to the NetDMR project as a *cooperative project with participants from 12 states*. Please identify the 12 states that are participating in this cooperative project.

Answer 1

The 12 states are Texas, Illinois, Indiana, Louisiana, Michigan, Missouri, Montana, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Utah, and West Virginia

Question 2

The RFP states that *TCEQ will be responsible for the technical review of proposals, technical aspects of deliverables and schedules*. The RFP also refers in Section 3.4 to monthly written reports to project managers. How many project managers will be assigned to this project and which organizations do they represent (ECOS, TCEQ, other states)? How many other types of resources will be allocated to the NetDMR project team from ECOS, TCEQ and/or other states?

Answer 2

ECOS is the contracting authority for this work and will be the focal point of interaction for the vendor that is selected.

Question 3

Please explain the pilot and implementation strategy for the NET DMR system. For example, will the 12 participating states serve as pilot states in a phased rollout for the implementation of the NetDMR?

Answer 3

This information is not relevant for responding to this proposal.

Question 4

The RFP does not specify a work location for this project. Does ECOS/TCEQ have a preference for work location? Is it acceptable to assume that the selected vendor will perform development, and system and integration testing in an analogous environment at the contractor location?

Answer 4

To be determined by the selected vendor approach.

Question 5

The RFP states that the resulting contract will be task order driven and deliverables-based. Does ECOS have a preference for fixed price vs. time and materials/not to exceed pricing for each deliverable? Does ECOS have a pricing format or template that specifies required pricing data elements?

Answer 5

ECOS expects the tasks to be fixed price and ECOS does not have a template for the pricing elements.

Question 6

Section 3.2.1 states the need for supporting a high transaction volume. Please provide a best estimate as to the average and maximum number of transactions that are required for a given time period.

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Answer 6

This will be more accurately specified in the requirements documentation phase of the project. Tens of millions of data elements are submitted on paper DMRs every year.

Question 7

Section 3.5 specifies a high-level architecture that lists the 3 required interfaces between NetDMR and ICIS/NPDES: Edit Checks, Permit Data, and DMR Data. What are the specifics of each of these interfaces (real-time/batch, volumes, protocols, formats, etc.)?

Answer 7

To be determined by the selected vendor approach.

Question 8

In Section 6.1, the RFP states that the *contractor shall submit a technical work plan with budget, schedule and detailed budget tracking spreadsheet including personnel, tasks broken down by tasks and subtasks for the development of the entire System described in the Scope of Work*. The RFP also states that the technical work plan should be provided in Microsoft Project format. Other than the work plan format, does ECOS have a recommended format or template that should be utilized for budget information, budget tracking, personnel, hours, etc.?

Answer 8

No, ECOS does not.

Question 9

Task Order 1 states that the selected contractor will generate Deliverable 2-the *Software Requirement Specification by interviewing relevant US EPA and state agency staff and by reviewing requirements documentation for three existing DMR systems*. Please advise the estimated the quantity of US EPA and state agency staff members that will be involved in the interview process for Deliverable 2 and where they are located.

Answer 9

Assume 8 state staff agency members and 8 EPA staff members. The interviews are to take place via email and phone calls so the location of the interviewees is not relevant for responding to this proposal.

Question 10

Task Order 1 specifies that Deliverable 2: Software Requirements Specification. will be developed in part through *review of documentation for three existing DMR systems*. Please advise the names of the three DMR systems.

Answer 10

This information will be provided to the selected vendor.

Question 11

Does ECOS/TCEQ have a preferred approach for the gathering of software requirements and interviewing of EPA state agency staff? Should we assume that this will be a decentralized process with travel to various locations or, can we assume that we will be able to gather all participants in a central location for a kick-off meeting? If central gathering of participants is feasible, please advise the frequency that we can expect this to occur?

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Answer 11

There is insufficient budget in the project for travel for the purposes of requirements documentation. The interviews are to be conducted by email and/or telephone.

Question 12

Does ECOS/TCEQ have any expectation for training of users or system administrators on the NetDMR solution? If so, what approaches may be used: central classroom training? Decentralized classroom training? Web-based training?

Answer 12

Training of users is beyond the scope of this phase of the project. However, development of written documentation for application administrators and users is part of this phase of the project.

Question 13

The RFP specifies that the NetDMR will reside on the Exchange Network. Who will be ultimately responsible for implementation of the system on the Exchange Network, system management and application administration? Does ECOS/TCEQ have an expectation that the selected vendor will provide training to the system management/application administration team?

Answer 13

Providing training to the system management/application team is beyond the scope of this phase of the project.

Question 14

Does ECOS/TCEQ have any security standards that must be adhered to for the design and development of the NetDMR?

Answer 14

Please refer to Exchange Network for some of these standards. They can be found at <http://www.exchangenetwork.net/operations/nob/library.htm>. In addition, the NetDMR front end will have to comply with the EPA's Cross Media Electronic Reporting Rule (CROMERR).

Question 15

Should our response for Section 6.2, Recommended Technical Architecture for the System, include specifications for hardware and software licenses that ECOS/TCEQ will need to procure for this system?

Answer 15

No. The RFP indicates that "The NetDMR system will utilize open standards and the infrastructure of the Exchange Network to maximize opportunities for reuse among states and other Exchange Network partners." We will not accept a solution that requires the licensing of additional software beyond what is specified in the target deployment environment. And, the engineering required to develop the hardware requirements are outside the scope of this phase of the project.

Question 16

Does ECOS/TCEQ have an expectation that the selected vendor will provide a period of warranty for the NetDMR solution? If so, please advise the terms.

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Answer 16

The vendor will be required to fix any defects to the solution for a period of two calendar years after the delivery of the final product.

Question 17

Does ECOS/TCEQ have an expectation that the selected vendor will provide any maintenance and support for the NetDMR solution? If so, please advise the terms.

Answer 17

It is expected that the vendor will fix any defects, as described in answer 16. Other than that, maintenance and support is outside the scope of this phase of the project.

Question 18

Does ECOS/TCEQ have a progressive monthly estimate of number of users for the Net DMR system through Year 1 and Year 2?

Answer 18

This will be determined in the requirements documentation phase of the project

Question 19

Please advise whether ECOS has an anticipated start date for the project that encompasses Task Order 1. We would like to use that start date as the project start date for our work plan.

Answer 19

For the purposes of the work plan, the vendor may assume a start date of July 24, 2006.

Question 20

Can ECOS provide a sample copy of the contract document that will result from this RFP? This contract document is referred to in RFP Section 8 where it states that the contract will be *subject to any renewal provisions set forth in the Special Terms and Conditions in the contract document*. We would like to review the all of the Terms and Conditions that apply to this contract.

Answer 20

ECOS contract template contains general terms and conditions. Special conditions are contract specific and will be negotiated with the selected vendor.

Question 21

The RFP did not provide information regarding the weighting of evaluation criteria listed in Section 5. Please provide clarification on the relative importance of each criteria of staff qualifications and personnel qualifications on scoring.

Answer 21

Staff qualifications will be very important in the evaluation of the responses.

Question 22

Section 6 indicates the response to the RFP is not to exceed 50 pages. Does this refer to 50 pages, 2 sides = 100 pages, or 50 pages, 1 side?

Answer 22

The proposal should be 50 single sided pages

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Question 23

The resume response instructions include a row for "5 years of experience in the health/education/environmental field, implementing data management/decision support tools." This requirement was not listed in Section 5. Should it be in both sections?

Answer 23

Yes, it should be in both sections.

Question 24

In Section 6.1, a detailed budget tracking sheet is requested. Is this spreadsheet included in the page count?

Answer 24

Yes, the spreadsheet is part of the 50 pages.

Question 25

Is travel anticipated for the requirements and other activities?

How should travel costs be included in the pricing? Is there a certain amount that should be used for planning purposes?

Answer 25

Travel should be minimized.

Question 26

Will the resulting contract contain terms and conditions normally found in TCEQ contracts or similar to the contracts of any of the member states? Would you provide a draft contract for review? The administrative and legal requirements may affect the way the work is performed and/or the pricing.

Answer 26

The contract will be issued by the Environmental Council of the States, not TCEQ. ECOS contract template contains general terms and conditions. Special conditions are contract specific and will be negotiated with the selected vendor.

Question 27

The contract did not list or require specific labor categories and descriptions. Please clarify if our response should include a list of labor categories and rates? Is so, would we need to provide labor category descriptions? If descriptions are needed, would they be included in the page count?

Answer 27

To be determined by the selected vendor approach.

Question 28

The Key Personnel template resume template in Attachment B seems to request that client references be provided for all projects listed for each key personnel for each requirement. It also requests a minimum of 3 projects. Please clarify whether you are requesting a minimum of 3 projects per requirement per key personnel, or 3 projects per requirement?

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Answer 28

The response should be a minimum of 3 projects per requirement per key personnel.

Question 29

Can you provide any information on how closely the published OECA NPDES schema corresponds to the NetDMR schema?

Answer 29

The published OECA NPDES Schema is a draft. The schedule for a final schema is not available at this time.

Question 30

Can you provide additional detail on the typical target platform for most of states?

Answer 30

This information is not relevant for responding to this proposal.

Question 31

Section 3.1 states that open source libraries and frameworks are encouraged where appropriate. Numerous open source framework and libraries are listed under Section 3.3 Target Deployment Environment. Are these examples, or is it expected that the software will use all of these frameworks and libraries?

Answer 31

They are examples of libraries and frameworks already in use in the target deployment environment at EPA's Central Data Exchange. The use of these frameworks and libraries is encouraged for consistency with applications already in place in that environment. However, it is not required that all of these will be used.

Question 32

Are there any on-site requirements for the development work? If so, where?

Answer 32

No.

Question 33

Can an example open-source license that is acceptable to ECOS be provided?

Answer 33

The gnu General Public License (GPL) appears to meet ECOS and US EPA's requirements. But ECOS would consider other commonly understood open source licenses. The license must protect US EPA's rights to use the code for federal purposes.

Question 34

Would ECOS consider extending the RFP response due date by one week?

Answer 34

No.