

**Department of Homeland Security
Transportation Security Administration
Acquisition Program Management
Request for Information # 70T04019I9NSTD040**

Facilitation Support Industry Provider for Third Party Testing

Subject: Request for Information (RFI) for the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Transportation Security Administration (TSA), Acquisition Program Management (APM) and Contracting and Procurement (C&P) regarding Facilitation Support for Third Party Testing.

1. BACKGROUND

TSA protects the nation's transportation systems to ensure freedom of movement for people and commerce by providing the most effective transportation security in the most efficient way as a high performing counterterrorism organization. Critical to this mission is the ability to conduct Test and Evaluation (T&E) and qualify and procure Transportation Security Equipment (TSE) in an expedient manner.

TSA acknowledges that the timeline for the acquisition qualification process can be lengthy and as a result, impacts the ability for new entrants into TSA's qualified vendor community because of the investment necessary to follow the process through to award. One of the primary contributing factors for lengthy duration of qualification processes is the iterative cycle of test-fix-retest. This iterative cycle extends timelines and drives up acquisition costs.

TSA initiated the third party testing initiative in July 2014 with an announcement on the Federal Business Operations (FBO) website, which established the initial TSA third party testing policy. To support the implementation of third party testing, TSA approved the Third Party Testing Strategy on April 21, 2015. The strategy provides a high-level overview of the third party testing program and the associated roles and responsibilities for TSA stakeholders.

In January 2018, APM finalized a process that allows TSA to review external data for use in a TSA system evaluation. Traditionally, TSA acquisition decisions has been primarily based on effectiveness, suitability, and cyber resilience test data collected by DHS Science and Technology (S&T) and TSA test teams. The process allows TSA to review and possibly accept data from a variety of external data sources (to include data from third party testing organizations) for use in a system evaluation. The use of data sources external to TSA during review and acceptance of systems helps to expedite T&E timelines, improve the maturity of vendor submitted systems, and/or provide additional test data for demonstrating system performance.

2. OBJECTIVE

TSA is requesting information from industry on potential industry providers' (e.g., organizations, consortiums) innovative approaches, solutions, and mechanisms that will enable effective and efficient third party testing operations.

The following provides a definition of the key entities referenced in this RFI.

- *Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM)*: TSE manufacturer/developer submitting their system to TSA for qualification.
- *Third Party Testing Organization*: Testing entity, specializing in one or more subject matter areas, that verifies designated requirements in support of the OEM qualification.
- *Industry Provider*: Organization responsible for locating, vetting, and providing qualified third party testing organizations to OEMs. Industry providers support OEMs with locating and leveraging appropriate third party testing organizations on an as needed basis.

The high-level concept of operations TSA envisions will proceed as follows:

- 1) TSA releases functional requirements the TSE must meet as an appendix to the Qualification Management Plan (QMP). TSA will state those requirements that can accept third party testing data.
- 2) OEM works with an industry provider to locate third party testing organizations that can perform the verification.
- 3) If OEM utilizes third party testing organizations, the third party test plan shall be included for TSA approval in the Qualification Verification Package (QVP).
- 4) Third party testing organization performs test and evaluation (subject to Government observation) against the TSA designated functional requirements.
- 5) Third party testing results are provided within the Qualification Data Package (QDP) by the OEM.

The following provides additional details of TSA objectives:

- Funding arrangements in support of the above concept of operations are handled between the OEM, industry provider, and third party testing organization with minimal or no TSA involvement.
- TSA is considering all potential industry providers, and approaches, for fulfilling the desired support, to include small business industry providers, a consortium of multiple complementing firms, and consortiums of potential third party testing organizations.
- TSA anticipates the industry provider(s) to have the capability of identifying qualified third party testing organizations in any of the following specific area(s) relevant to the evaluation of TSE. These areas can include but are not limited to:
 - Cybersecurity
 - Human Systems Integration
 - Safety
 - Reliability
 - Maintainability
 - Availability
 - Threat detection
 - System throughput
- TSA anticipates the industry provider(s) to have pre-vetted/qualified third party testing organizations in the areas mentioned in the prior bullet in order to provide

OEMs with an appropriate list of organizations in a manner that will not cause unnecessary delays to the OEMs' QDP submission to TSA. It would be the industry provider(s) responsibility to develop the criteria needed to perform the pre-vetting/qualification of third party testing organizations.

- The industry provider(s) may further support TSA in providing collaborative research and development and piloting capabilities germane to the transportation security domain.

3. RESPONSES TO THIS RFI

The following sections provide a recommended outline for a response to this RFI. This outline is intended to minimize the effort of the vendor and structure the responses for ease of analysis by the Government.

Response Section 1 – Corporate Expertise

Briefly describe the company, core capabilities/services, relevant past projects, and other relevant information to the RFI subject matter. Include any past projects supporting the TSA and a description of tasks performed. Discuss the company's ability to identify third party testing organizations that specialize in the areas listed in RFI Section 2. Clearly denote the proposed role of the company (e.g., industry provider, third party testing organization, OEM, etc.) as it relates to RFI objectives.

Response Section 2 – Approach

Describe your company's understanding of TSA's requirements under this notice. Provide an explanation/description as to how you plan to meet the objectives listed in RFI Section 2. Discuss the criteria to be used to pre-vet/qualify third party testing organizations. Provide any potential improvements or alternatives to the approach listed in RFI Section 2 that may improve the overall success of TSA efforts.

Response Section 3 – Estimated Costs

To the degree practicable, provide estimated costs to meet the industry provider objectives. Also, discuss the drivers and components for the estimated costs to include any initial, one-time costs as well as recurring costs. Provide a cost framework/structure for funding these efforts between the OEM, third party testing organization, and industry provider.

4. REVIEW OF VENDOR RESPONSES

The Government will review vendor responses for market research purposes only. The Government does not intend to provide a response to white papers submitted for this RFI, but based on vendor submissions; the Government may potentially arrange a technical information exchange, schedule an industry day, and/or adjust its future third party testing strategies. The Government will not return responses to the RFI.

5. VENDOR SUBMISSION OF RESPONSES AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Information provided in response to this RFI must be submitted **no later than 30 calendar days from the date of posting**. Responses to this RFI shall include all information requested by TSA in Section 3 and a cover letter. The cover letter shall, at a minimum, include the following information:

1. Response to **RFI # 70T04019I9NSTD040**
2. Vendor's Company Name, Address, Contact Person Information
3. Vendor's DUNS Number
4. Vendor's Business Size and Size Standard
5. List of Vendor's North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) codes

TSA requests that the Statement of Qualifications/Capabilities Statement, in response to the information requested in Section 3, not exceed 10 single-spaced pages. Each response should use the following page setup parameters:

- Margins – Top, Bottom, Left, Right - 1"
- Page Size – 8.5"x11"
- Each paragraph shall be separated by at least one blank line.
- A Times New Roman, 12-point font size applies.

All questions must be submitted via email no later than **12:00 PM Eastern Standard Time (EST) on April 29, 2019**, to Sam Heim at Sam.Heim1@tsa.dhs.gov and Siobhan Lawson at Siobhan.Lawson@tsa.dhs.gov.

6. DISCLAIMER

This RFI is issued solely for informational and planning purposes and does not constitute an Invitation for Bids, Request for Proposals, or Request for Quotations. In accordance with Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) 15.201(e), responses to this notice are not offers and cannot be accepted by the Government to form a binding contract, nor do they affect a potential offeror's ability to respond to any future synopsis/solicitation, which may or may not follow or restrict the U.S. Government's eventual acquisition approach. Additionally, the U.S. Government will not provide reimbursement for any information that may be submitted in response to this notice. Respondents are solely responsible for all expenses associated with responding.