

**IAC MAC Post-Award Orientation Q&A**  
**24 Oct 2018**

**Q: What databases are searched for STI? Are the BCO's only searching deliverables from the MACs?**

A: The BCO's are searching in the DTIC Technical Library. They augment the library by open collection searching in academic journals and wherever technical documents appear, but for the literature search in particular they go into the DTIC Library. It has in excess of 4M technical documents and it's a pretty robust database. So, they're not just searching deliverables from the MACs, they're searching everything that has gone into that library.

**Q: When is an opportunity put on the APM and can DTIC consider putting on an APM sooner? By doing this, it would give contractors ~30-60 days to consider competing.**

A: We discussed this; it is something that we'll look at, putting new efforts on the APM earlier. The reason why we don't publish new efforts earlier is because sometimes there's flux in those requirements, customers will pull them altogether or they'll change in magnitude; but if you're willing to put up with that fluctuation and the loss of accuracy in the requirement, we're willing to put them out there earlier. Our thinking was we didn't want to get you spun up spending money preparing for something that a customer either substantially changes or goes elsewhere for another contract or the requirement doesn't have funding, so it gets pulled. A lot of those things do happen. So, if you are willing to put up with that greater uncertainty I'm certainly willing to publicize new efforts earlier on the APM. But since we historically see about 20-25% of efforts get pulled away short of solicitation release, you should be prepared to see that level of substantive change in the APM efforts.

**Q: When can Primes expect approved IAC MAC marketing materials?**

A: The State of the IACs, a document that we're putting out once a year, seems appropriate for this need. The one for 2018 is going to be published in November and we will of course distribute that to all of you. It should be a very good hard-copy, slick brochure you can use with customers to familiarize them with our contracts. There is a tri-fold that we used to distribute, we will update that and send it out too. Also, use the Preferred Letter as well as a marketing document. It is on the website, as well.

**Q: What is the impact of ASN RDA change to the Navy Marine Corps Acquisition Supplement (NMCARS) requiring use of SEAPORT E and J&A approval for IAC MAC?**

A: I don't know the impact at this time. It's not first time we've seen contracts mandated for use by a Service or Agency. These mandatory use letters have not impacted the volume of flow through the IAC MAC yet, however. I don't know if this will; time will tell. As you just heard from Brandon McCullough, they are continuing to use the IAC MAC and have all intentions of using it in the future. But there is admittedly some uncertainty there.

**Q: Is the 13% SB Goal at the Task Order level or at MAC level?**

A: It is not at the Task Order, it is at the MAC level annually per your contract, and it is cumulative. This must be reported via the ESRS tool, so we'll see it twice a year minimum, but we can also see that on a monthly basis in the Contracting Tracking Report that is a deliverable.

**Q: Will DTIC/CSC communicate the SB requirement to the ACOR/RA? If so, how?**

A: I assume you mean the sub-contracting requirement. That's an interesting question; we don't keep that requirement a secret. That's something we need to be transparent with our customers about as they come to us, that these primes will have a 13% or 9%, depending on the pool, sub-contracting requirement.

**Q: When will slides be made available?**

A: We'll put the PMO brief on the website tomorrow. However, the contribution from our two customers will not be included.

**Q: The IAC MAC Contract CDRLs have increase administrative reporting requirements (e.g., FTE staffing charts w/the DI-MGMT-81991). What is driving the increase?**

A: I'm not 100% sure what their asking there, but I don't think our CDRLs have increased; I actually think they've decreased on this contract. We only have 13 of them and I don't see how it's increased. We tried to streamline some of the Excel spreadsheets, so I actually think it's reduced some, but I'm not a 100% sure what they're talking about there. All of our CDRLs are designed to fill some information need. We try not to introduce CDRLs that provide unnecessary information. If there's a particular CDRL that you think is unnecessary or just plain useless, our communication lines are wide open. Let us know and we'll examine it.

**Q: How will the award's technical domain (DS, CS, or HD) be determined, especially given the potential overlapping focus areas?**

A: The determination of what domain the requirement falls into is going to be arrived at by our customer and the CSC working together determining where the majority of the work is; and where the majority of the work is by labor hours is going to determine into which of those domains it falls. Could the work cross over multiple domain areas? Yes. The majority of a requirement could fall into e.g., Cyber, but it may have elements that fall into the HD domain. That could happen. In that case, still the result will go to our Cyber BCO to do a literature search. At this point I don't see a need to start splitting those literature searches between multiple BCO's.

**Q: Proposal Pricing – We are often asked how you will control price realism to avoid unrealistic pricing-to-win strategies. Is there a threshold below the Government estimated value to control low bids?**

A: Well, first of all, it is 99.99% a tradeoff. So, if someone underbids and thinks they're going to win just because they got the lowest price, this is not an LTPA. It is Cost Plus Fixed Fee tradeoff. So first, you tell the customer, it's not an LTPA and that solves some of that. Second, we do we verify their indirect rates, we verify for their direct rates, we even validate all of that pricing to make sure it's a fair and reasonable price. We do not award to anybody who does not have a fair and reasonable price. I'll add that the LBOE, how the customer wants to see how you're going to do everything for them, that is the snapshot of how you're going to do everything with skill sets, number of hours, etc. The Technical Team reviews that and part of that is to help us make the realism assessment. If for whatever reason, they say, "Nope isn't right. This doesn't look good here, there's not enough hours, there's not enough experience, they're using the wrong skill sets, whatever it may be. Those are the things that would go into, do we have to ask questions, do we have to make adjustments, but that look at the BOE is what helps us make sure that the pricing that matches that BOE is realistic. Also, we don't have very many performances issues; that's another thing you can tell your customers. If we were awarding something that was unrealistic, you would likely have performance issues because they wouldn't be able to perform the contract at what they bid it at. We have very little performance issues. Right now, we have over 250 open Task Orders and we have no real issues that interrupt performance.

**Q: DTIC STI types included numeric datasets. What means/tools does DTIC use to store and disseminate numeric datasets?**

A: DTIC does not have the means to store every possible form of STI that you could generate. At the present time, DTIC cannot store datasets. So in those cases where datasets are and STI deliverable, we wouldn't expect it to be provided. Instead, we would expect that metadata on the STI is generated and added to the DTIC Library so that the dataset could be identified and retrieved from the originating agency. Very recently, DTIC was tasked by Congress in NDAA FY19 to begin storing datasets and making them searchable and discoverable to qualified users. In the near future, we expect a DoD Instruction to be published which will mandate the preservation and storage of datasets by DTIC for all research work done under DoD auspices. What you will see in the next several years is DTIC implementing that mandate on IAC contracts – making STI datasets deliverable items which must be provided to DTIC for storage.

**Q: Do tradeoff competitions have threshold/limits for awarding to a higher rated bidder (technically acceptable offer and the higher rated bid is over 10% higher)?**

A: I'm going to give you the typical contracting answer, it depends. There is no magic number, 2%, 5%, 12%. There's nothing defined as far as what limits there are on a tradeoff. It really depends on each individual proposal and each individual acquisition. There's a difference, e.g., 10% of a \$10M requirement vs. 10% of a \$70M effort, as far as how much room there is for a tradeoff. It really depends on what the Technical Team comes back and tells us on why one proposal is better than another proposal when they're doing they're individual evaluations against the criteria and the strengths that there may be in one proposal vs. what they're not seeing in another proposal. Again, no magic number. It varies.

**Q: Can you clarify the distribution of IAC funding by customer? The slides showed 85% COCOMS but presenter said that was attributed to PEO/PM, both were blue.**

A: I'm sorry, I was told there was a mistake in the colors. 85% are the PEOs/PM's and the Combatant Commands are the smallest wedge of that pie. We'll fix that before we post the slides.

**Q: Are there any changes being considered that will permit the primes to execute less than the mandates 30% of the task order?**

A: I think Stan answered that question during his presentation, but you can do less than 30% but you're going to have to tell us and the CO has to agree to and approve less than 30% because by regulation we have to look at what value then you are adding as a prime. So, as long as you can provide that information and with that when it's the initial proposal if the proposed dollar amounts are going to show and indicate that you're doing less than 30% provide that right away as part of the proposal, so that we don't have to come back and ask for it, because we're going to ask for it anyway. On the Cost Model in the Grand Total tab, it automatically calculates prime and sub work and if that's below 30% on a task order, you should have a letter explaining or justifying it, otherwise you could be found non-responsive.

**Q: Are you considering potential changes that require bidders to bid exact amount listed as TO ceiling and modify section M to support?**

A: I think I understand the question and I'm going to summarize it a different way: if we go out and say on the Advance Planning Matrix and publish as part of the FOPR package that the work is estimated to be \$25M regardless of who wins, they would get a \$25M task order. If I'm understanding the question correctly. If anybody has seen that done before, please contact me. I want to see an example of that because that is a question we have discussed internally ourselves and not quite figured it out, yet. Another thing

with that, what does competition drive? It's supposed to drive exactly that, competition and fair and reasonable pricing. Just because government comes up with an estimate, doesn't mean we're right. You guys have a whole lot more knowledge and insight into what you can do and for how much than we do. And that's why I ask the first question, if anybody's ever seen that done, please let me know because I'm not aware of it.

**Q: Can we still engage the RA once draft FOPR is release; prior to the release of the final FOPR?**

A: Yes

**Q: After initial Lit search, can we request an updated search for new search terms? On DS we were told it will only be done if work has taken a new direction.**

A: Unfortunately no, because our BCO's have fiscal limits. Remember we're paying for these searches to be done and doing a lot of subsequent follow on Lit searches for a task order would multiply those searches quite a bit and would take away funding their activity in just about every other area; it would consume almost everything and so it's something I'm hesitant to initiate as a policy. I think there may be one-offs where a totally new direction is found, and in that case we might consider asking the BCO to go ahead and do that, but not as a matter of routine.

**Q: Can you confirm there is no extra for the RA if an opportunity is worth over 50M? Can you review the extra approvals/steps the FORP must go through?**

A: First of all, the answer to that one is it depends, but more importantly, anything under \$50M stays at Jared's level. If you go over \$50M as long as we're in strict compliance with ordering procedures and we have competition, it can stay with Jared. Anything over \$100M, involves a MIRT and other clearances. So, between 50 and 100 if we have competition and we're staying in strict compliance with the ordering procedures, then we can keep that in house and we can keep it in the same timeline as a \$60M requirement or a \$40M requirement. But I will tell you, anything over \$50M that only has one bidder, one proposal, is going to be huge to us, because then Mr. Dostal's going to have to review it, it's going to have to go through AFICA, and then we're going to have to answer to an SES; who I talked to you earlier about how they're really pushing competition. So, keep that in mind when you're working on these things, because it is going to add a lot of time and we're going to get a lot of questions on our program. We're doing everything we can to increase competition and open the door for fair opportunity. The extra work for the RA may be involvement in a briefing or two with my (Mr. Dostal) boss, because of the fact that it goes above me. The real extra work which they see as time, is on my folks. In fact, getting on an SES calendar, getting the wickets of the additional reviews before it actually gets to her level, is where the work comes from, but most of that is on my folks. It may entail that they have to answer some questions and provide assistance in developing a briefing chart and answering questions or more so they're on the phone to answer questions that we can't answer, but as far as time, a couple months.

**Q: What kind of coaching do you offer to RA's so they understand it's OK to speak to primes until final FOPR?**

A: OK, so your question is, well actually what you're trying to do is suggest to us "will you talk to the customer and let them know that." OK, we'll do that. Paul, if you'd make a note: let's make sure when we meet these folks that we tell them that they can talk to contractors up to final FOPR release. We'll make a point so that the CSC communicates to the customer as well as we'll make a point to the Contracting Officers that when they're pulled in on step 3, they're communicating that to the customer, as well.

**Q: Will you discuss the source selection committee for each FOPR?**

A: When you say source selection committee, I take it you're talking about who looks at the proposals. On that it's the customer that makes up the technical team. We don't tell them who that has to be, because again we're not technical experts; we don't want to drive them to not having the right people look at the information. What we normally do is try to limit the number of people, because the larger the team, the longer it takes for everybody to review to get to consensus, etc., etc. So, technical folks review the technical proposal, contracting reviews costs; at some point we share cost information with the technical folks because as I said at some point they're looking at the LBOE and that plays into cost realism. We assist in making sure we're getting the right documentation from the technical team as far as what supports ultimately what decision will be made. As a team, it's technical and contracting office that reviews the entire package and making sure that we have the right people looking at the right information. For source selection, if I were you, I would look at the definition for a strength, a weakness, and a deficiency, because what happens sometimes is those tech teams send us stuff back and we look at it and we say this does not pass the smell test. We get back with the tech team and we have them rewrite stuff, because a deficiency, a weakness, and a strength has a specific DoD mandatory procedure definition that it has to meet and weakness, so we look at those DoD mandatory procedures. Because just because you have a strength or two does not mean that you're automatically good or outstanding. You're not going to automatically get a blue or purple just because you have some strengths. If you don't identify your strengths and tie them to your pricing or explain why that strength is going to cost us more and we're going to pay for that, it's harder to identify that strength. Not saying you have to do it every penny, but if you got a proposal that the government expert says it takes 40K hours to do and you tell me it was 60K hours, maybe you have a strength that's going to be benefit to the government and you can tie that to why you're bidding more hours to get the work done, because you can make it streamline, you can do it faster, you can get to the projects quicker, whatever, but your strength has to show that and it is part of that definition. We have to evaluate and our lawyer has to evaluate, so if it doesn't pass the smell test just because the tech team wrote it up doesn't mean it's automatically going to go into your post award debrief.

**Q: Why have the phone numbers been removed from APMs?**

A: I'm told that was an oversight on the most recent APMs. We will provide a name, email, and phone number for all customers on the APMs.

**Q: Is it possible to highlight the APM's from week to week in green as it has been done previously? It's very helpful to know what's new/edited/updated.**

A: Yes, we will do that.

**Q (handwritten 3 x 5): Recent draft IAC MAC PWS stated this requirement is a level of effort with an estimated number of projects per year and the nature of the projects are predictable. Does this mean the contract type will level of effort (example: cost plus fixed fee term or fixed price level of effort) rather than cost plus fixed fee completion?**

A: Even a cost-based contract, any kind of cost reimbursement type contract, is essentially a level of effort. So, what this is really driving to is to inform you guys that the requirement is project based. Customers don't necessarily know what the next project's going to be 3-4 years out, but they do know the types of projects that they execute every year. So, it's really trying to inform you that the level of effort is going to be driven by whether or not you end up executing 5 projects or 50 projects and with that not all projects are created equal. One project may be 12 month effort and a small dollar amount, the next project might take 3 years to complete. Technically, everything that we do is somewhat both; we award for a term of X months but it's completion driven based on completing the project and delivering the STI.

**Q (question on the fly from audience): If the customer and the contractor agree to some other MSR format, is that acceptable?**

A: There's not a standard MSR format. So, yeah it's what agreed upon by you and the RA as long as it's providing the cost schedule performance against the projects that are being executed.