



Managed Information Technology Services RFP, Addendum #1: Questions & Answers

March 18, 2024

Material RFP-related inquiries received on or before March 15 are listed below along with the Authority's response. The deadline for questions has now passed and proposals are due on March 29 as detailed in the RFP.

1. *The RFP states that the Authority currently pays \$35k annually for MSP services. Does that include all of the services described in Sections 3.1 through 3.5?*
 - a. Yes, plus licensing for ThreatLocker.
2. *What are the current SLA expectations for the program?*
 - a. Our current agreement specifies a 2-hour response time Monday-Friday 6am-6pm. Any calls outside of this window are addressed as best effort until the next business day. We are flexible on the response time in the future agreement.
3. *What typically constitutes the 15-20 on-site hours?*
 - a. Any troubleshooting that can't be done remotely such as physical repair or replacement needed to our on-site hardware. We've also used banked hours to offset time required for larger projects such as MSP assistance with review of our IT policies/procedures and our recent server replacement project.
4. *Can we deliver these services from our offshore location to leverage lower project costs?*
 - a. Although there is no requirement to provide an onsite staff member on a regularly scheduled basis, supporting hardware located in our office is within the scope of the RFP. You would need to explain in your proposal (section 6.0 item 7) how you plan to meet the minimum qualification of providing services to our physical location in Richmond, VA (section 5.2).
5. *Can you provide more specific examples of the "after-hours support" mentioned under General Support and Helpdesk? How is the urgency of a request determined, and what is the typical response time?*
 - a. After-hours support is rare but is generally used for significant issues that impact accessibility of resources. For example, we had a UPS failure that powered down our server hardware on a Saturday. VRA rerouted the power to bring the hardware back online, but we needed MSP assistance with restarting servers in VMWare.
6. *Regarding System Upgrades and Maintenance, how does VRA define "routine configuration changes"? Can you provide examples of such changes from the past?*
 - a. There is no specific listing but generally encompasses changes because of software updates, hardware changes, or other changes in the environment. One example is we moved from an on-prem VOIP phone system to a cloud-hosted provider. We had a separate telecom vendor to handle the new VOIP setup, but our MSP was critical in

implementing a VLAN for the new phones and ensuring the new phones could communicate out through our firewall.

7. *Appendix A mentions server and network hardware along with their support expiration dates. Can you detail the process VRA prefers for transitioning or upgrading hardware close to its support expiration?*
 - a. We are proactive in replacing hardware and typically replace equipment before vendor support agreements expire. We rely on our MSP as a partner to make recommendations based on the ability to renew support for existing equipment, new hardware improvements, and general knowledge of our needs and environment.
8. *Given the budget mentioned is around \$35,000 per year for MSP services, how flexible is this budget if a proposal demonstrates significant value above the current level of service?*
 - a. There is budget flexibility if a proposer demonstrates value above the current level of service. The current budget was provided as a reference point.
9. *Could you elaborate on the expectations for software license costs included in the MSP's proposed cost of services? Are there any specific licenses VRA is looking to acquire or renew through this contract?*
 - a. We know that some MSPs bundle software licenses in with their cost of services while others keep it separate; we don't have a preference either way. We asked for clarity in proposals to facilitate comparison. Currently all software licenses mentioned in Appendix A are obtained through our MSP, except for KnowBe4 which we purchased independently.
10. *Can VRA elaborate on its expectations regarding the experience with security frameworks like CIS Critical Security Controls or VITA Information Security Policies? Are there specific compliance challenges VRA is facing?*
 - a. We are not required to follow a formal security framework, but it is a goal of ours and we want to understand our MSP's experience working within these frameworks. We will need our MSP to help us meet this goal.
11. *The RFP mentions the possibility of renewing the contract for up to four additional one-year periods. What criteria does VRA use to decide on contract renewals?*
 - a. There are no specific criteria, but in general VRA decides to renew contracts based on our working experience over the base term and whether we feel the contract still provides value.
12. *Are four engineering hours required for every month or are they used as needed?*
 - a. Used as needed. Note that the monthly hour allowance is not a requirement of this RFP, but we wanted to disclose the details of our current agreement.
13. *It was mentioned in the RFP "supporting business applications and specialized applications". Can you describe the app environment (i.e. are these proprietary applications, third-party applications, etc.)? How many applications will need support?*
 - a. VRA does not have any proprietary applications, all software is third-party. We generally have support agreements in place for specialized applications, but occasionally we

need assistance from our MSP with support for commercial off-the-shelf business applications.

14. *Are offerors strictly required to propose solutions that include ThreatLocker, or if there is flexibility to propose alternative solutions that offer similar or superior features and functionality?*
 - a. ThreatLocker is not a requirement, we were simply listing the current software in use and how VRA currently purchases the license. You can choose to continue using the current security software or propose alternatives.
15. *Could you please clarify if our US Small Business Administration 8(a) certification can be considered in lieu of SWaM certification for the purpose of meeting this qualification criteria, or if there is a process for equating these certifications within the context of the RFP scoring?*
 - a. As described in Attachment C, firms must be SWaM certified by the Virginia Department of Small Business and Supplier Diversity to receive points for the SWaM Qualification evaluation criteria. There are no substitute certifications.
16. *Do any of the Hardware and Software that is listed in Appendix A have any hidden fees (e.g., cancellation fees or vendor lock-ins) for ending services with the vendor?*
 - a. There are no financial or contractual commitments to any hardware or software listed in Appendix A beyond the support expiration dates.
17. *Please provide a list of the standard business applications and specialized applications currently in use by VRA.*
 - a. Standard business applications include Adobe Acrobat, Google Chrome, Microsoft Office Suite, Microsoft Teams, Webex, Zoom. Specialized applications include Commongoals TEA, DBC Finance, Microsoft Dynamics GP.
18. *Is bonding required for off-site contractor employees? How much bonding is required?*
 - a. All MSP employees or contractors who have access to VRA's network or equipment should be covered. There is no minimum requirement.
19. *Please share the historical spend on this contract.*
 - a. For comparable MSP services matching the scope of services in section 3.0, the last three fiscal year totals are \$35,000, \$32,000, and \$31,000.
20. *Are references required to be governmental clients?*
 - a. References for any type of client where comparable services are/were provided are sufficient.
21. *Can we submit our account management team resumes to fulfil the requirement of principal supervisory and management staff or do we need to share candidates' actual resumes?*
 - a. You should submit resumes for your team members that will be assigned to this engagement.