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**Mississippi Department of
Information Technology Services**

David C. Johnson, Executive Director

RFP Questions and Clarifications Memorandum

To: Vendors Responding to RFP Number 4422 for the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)

From: David C. Johnson

Date: November 29, 2023

Subject: Responses to Questions Submitted and Clarifications to Specifications

Contact Name: Solicitations Team

Contact E-mail Address: RFP@its.ms.gov

RFP Number 4422 is hereby amended as follows:

1.   **RFP, Section VII: Technical Specifications, Item 1, Procurement Project Schedule is amended as follows:**

Task	Date
Deadline for Questions Answered and Posted to ITS Web Site	~~10/18/2023~~ 11/29/2023
Open Proposals	~~11/08/2023~~ 12/15/2023
Evaluation of Proposals	~~11/08/2023~~ 12/15/2023
Contract Negotiation	~~December 2023~~ January 2024
Proposed Project Implementation Start-up	~~01/08/2024~~ 02/01/2024
Project Go-Live Deadline	~~03/04/2024~~ 04/01/2024

2.   **Attachment A, Item 85.a is being added:**
       <u>Vendor must provide Web Portal functionality for client access to results and reports and for submission of sampling requests for up to 20 concurrent users.</u>

Vendor must include in their proposal a response to each amended requirement as listed above. Vendor must respond using the same terminology as provided in the original requirements.

The following questions were submitted to ITS and are being presented as they were submitted, except to remove any reference to a specific vendor. This information should assist you in formulating your response.

Question 1:   Attachment A: I C – General Overview and Background Para 1, page 1 - This paragraph indicates the new LIMS must seamlessly integrate with existing MDEQ

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applications. Is there a list of internal and/or external applications with which MDEQ desires to integrate the new LIMS (e.g. Accounting, ERP, SCADA, etc.)?

Response: **The LIMS communicates with the MDEQ Compliant Tracking database which is an Oracle database. The LIMS will not integrate with accounting or other applications at this time.**

Question 2: Attachment A: C – Sample Tracking #102, page 13 - How many concurrent users will require access to the mobile application?

Response: **In the current system, there are 9 concurrent users who have access to the mobile application. In the new system, MDEQ requires that 15 concurrent users will have access to the mobile application.**

Question 3: Attachment A: C – Sample Tracking #107, page 13 - Does MDEQ intend to purchase bar code scanners and printers from the chosen vendor? If so, how many of each would be needed?

Response: **No, MDEQ does not intend to purchase new scanners or printers. MDEQ currently has barcode scanners and barcode printers. MDEQ will not purchase new barcode scanners unless the new system is incompatible with our current scanners. If the current barcode scanner(s) and printer(s) do not work with the new software, MDEQ will purchase three (3) barcode scanners and two (2) barcode printers, and Vendor must include unit costs in its proposal.**

Question 4: Attachment A: J – Reports and Dashboards, page 17 - In addition to the Draft and Final Compliance Reports provided, are there any other custom reports that MDEQ wishes to have delivered with the LIMS implementation? If so, is MDEQ able to provide examples for vendors to review prior to submission of the RFP responses?

Response: **The answer to both questions is No.**

Question 5: Does MDEQ wish to utilize a Customer Web Portal to provide internal and external clients with access to Results and Reports, and for Submission of Sampling Requests? If so, how many concurrent users would need access to the web portal?

Response: **Yes, refer to Amendment Number 2.**

Question 6: Section VII, Technical Specifications, Procurement Project Schedule, Is the implementation expected to take 2 months (8 weeks) from kick-off (start-up) to go-live?

Response: **Yes, from the kick-off, implementation is expected to take two (s) months (8 weeks) while the old system is gradually phased out.**

Question 7: Section IV, Legal and Contractual Information, 27. Americans with Disabilities Act Compliance for Web Development and Portal Related Services, What is the weight of the Section 508 compliance in the evaluation?

Response: **Although Section 508 compliance isn't a weighted or scored item, the State must be compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act for Web Development and Portal Related Services - (for electronics and technologies).**

Question 8: Attachment A, III. Hosting and IT Environment, A. Hosting, 33. Proposed solution must operate under optimal conditions and performance within the MDEQ host environment. Does MDEQ have any specific performance KPIs that need to be considered?

Response: **KPIs to be considered include Average Response Time within 1 hour, Count of critical bugs, and Total System Downtime.**

Question 9: Attachment A, IV. Functional/Technical Requirements, D. Quality control/assurance information, as determined by OPC, authorized users must be able to transfer LIMS data to archive database(s) which will be hosted by MDEQ. authorized LIMS users must be able to view and/or retrieve LIMS data stored in the MDEQ-hosted archives. What is the technology used for archive(s) at MDEQ?

Response: **MDEQ does not have an archive for LIMS. If a new vendor/solution is selected as a result of the RFP, and the existing data cannot be migrated into the vendor's new solution, MDEQ will want that data loaded into an archive database that will be hosted by MDEQ.**

Question 10: As vendor and implementor, the LIMS provider will conduct Verification/Functional Testing, also called in some instances Unit Testing or even Factory Acceptance Testing, which includes testing of configurations, instruments interfaces and integrations which were withing the scope undertaken by the by Vendor as part of the overall implementation. It is expected, per ISO and industry standard that MDEQ (Customer) will conduct Validation (sometimes called UAT and includes IQ, OQ, PQ and when requested Parallel Testing) before taking the system in production use. The Vendor will provide support in addressing any issue that arises during the time MDEQ will conduct Validation. Does MDEQ has a similar understanding?

Response: **Yes.**

Question 11: What are the envisioned roles and level of resources from MDEQ that will be involved in the implementation and validation process, outside of the roles and resources that will be provided by the vendor?

Response: **For on-prem, MDEQ will be responsible for servers and database administration. MDEQ will have a team that consists of Lab and IT personnel to be involved in the implementation and validation process.**

Question 12: Attachment A, IV. Functional/Technical Requirements, A. General, 82. The software shall be licensed to accommodate up to fifteen users at two separate locations at startup. Vendor must provide per user costs in Section VIII Cost Information Submission of RFP 4422 in the event MDEQ needs to add new users in the future. Please describe the nature of the two separate laboratories - geographic location, analytical capabilities, and how they interact with each other.

Response: **The main lab - CRO (Central Reginal Office) is located in Pearl, Mississippi. The SRO (Southern Reginal Office) is located on the coast and has 2 employees that log in samples via a web client that is connected to the Pearl, Mississippi lab. CRO has both biology and chemistry labs.**

Question 13: Attachment A, V. Implementation, G. User Training and Documentation, 220. Prior to go-live, vendor must agree to adequately train up to 15 MDEQ staff users and administrators in how to use the system to successfully perform their respective tasks and workflows. Vendor must use a train-the-trainer approach. If on-site training is not included in the base offering, vendor must submit a fully loaded daily rate as a separate line item on Section VIII, Cost Information Submission of RFP No. 4422. How many users will routinely access the LIMS directly? Item 220 specifies 15 users to be trained - is this the total number of routine, full-access users? How many concurrent users is the legacy LABWORKS system licensed for?

Response: **MDEQ currently has 7 licenses. Only 7 users can log on at one time. If more than 7 users need to access the system concurrently, at least one user must log out. MDEQ therefore requests licenses for 15 concurrent users in the new system.**

Question 14: Attachment A, IV. Functional/Technical Requirements, C. Sample Tracking, 102. Proposed solution must integrate with portable field collection devices that utilize windows mobile technology, allowing field collectors to collect field data and upload that data from any location that provides internet access. Are there any legacy field devices to be integrated with the new solution?

Response: **See Attachment B – Legacy Field Devices for list of Legacy field devices to be integrated/not integrated with the new LIMS.**

Question 15: Please provide the number of 3rd Party Integrations needed (reference labs, interpretation vendors, state reporting, EMR's, etc.)

Response: **MDEQ doesn't currently have any 3rd party integrations. We have a compliance tracking database that will need to be integrated with an Oracle database.**

Question 16: Do you have any third-party tools that will need to be connected to the Database? i.e., analytics tools

Response: **MDEQ uses Crystal Reports that will need to connect to the database.**

Question 17: Page 2, ITS RFP Response Checklist – page 2 - A point-by-point response to Technical Specifications Attachment A is listed twice in number 6) and 9) – confirming this is a repeat and not two separate Technical Specifications?

Response: **Section VII Technical Specifications, Items 1-4 are included for informational purposes and responding Vendors should respond to these statements. The**

"Functional and Technical Specifications" in which Vendors are expected to provide a point-by-point response are in Attachment A, beginning with Item 10.

RFP responses are due 12/15/23, at 3:00 p.m. (Central Time).

If you have any questions concerning the information above or if we can be of further assistance, please contact Solicitations Team via email at RFP@its.ms.gov. Vendors must include the RFP number in the email's subject line.

cc: ITS Project File Number 46675

Attachment: Attachment B – Legacy Field Devices