Request for Information

To:	Vendors Interested in Responding to Request for Information (RFI) Number 4660 for the Mississippi Department of Information Technology Services (ITS)
From:	Craig P. Orgeron, CPM, Ph.D., CPo
Date:	01/07/2025
Subject:	Request for Information
Contact Name:	Roshunda Mitchell
Contact Phone Number:	601-432-8223
Contact E-mail Address:	Roshunda.Mitchell@its.ms.gov

The Mississippi Department of Information Technology Services (ITS) is currently seeking information from vendors specializing in Software as a Service (SaaS) based security border solutions suitable for hybrid cloud environments.

Mississippi Department of Information Technology Services (ITS) is releasing this RFI Number 4660 to seek Vendor interest and capabilities in providing a SaaS based security border solution to the State. Vendors are asked to provide a level of detail to each question that will assist the State in researching what kind of products and services are currently available.

1. RFI SUBMISSIONS INSTRUCTIONS

1.1. Vendors should explain their capabilities to provide and implement the solution at a level of detail to assist the State in determining what features are available in the market. See Attachment A for a scope of requirements. Vendors who cannot fulfill all requirements are still encouraged to provide a submission. Any and all additional information is welcomed.

1.2. Vendor submissions will be accepted at any time prior to Tuesday, January 28, 2025, at 3:00 p.m. Central Time to Roshunda Mitchell at Roshunda.Mitchell@its.ms.gov or at the Mississippi Department of Information Technology Services, 3771 Eastwood Drive, Jackson, Mississippi 39211. Submissions may be delivered by hand, via regular mail, overnight delivery, e-mail or by fax. Fax number is (601) 713-6380. Interested Parties may contact Roshunda Mitchell to verify the receipt of their submission.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Request for Information (RFI) is to identify SaaS based security border solutions suitable for hybrid cloud environments.

THIS IS A REQUEST FOR INFORMATION (RFI) ONLY. This RFI is issued solely for informational purposes – it does not constitute a Request for Proposal (RFP), Invitation for Bid (IFB), Request for Qualification (RFQ) or a promise to issue an RFP, IFB, or RFQ in the future. This request for information does not commit ITS to contract for any supply or service whatsoever. Further, ITS is not at this time seeking proposals, bids, or qualifications and will not accept unsolicited proposals, bids, or qualifications. Respondents are advised that ITS will not pay for any information or administrative costs incurred in response to this RFI; all costs associated with responding to this RFI will be solely at the interested party's expense. Not responding to this RFI does not preclude participation in any future RFP, IFB, or RFQ, if any is issued. If a solicitation is released, it will be available on the ITS website (www.its.ms.gov). It is the responsibility of the potential offerors to monitor this site for additional information pertaining to this requirement.

If you have any questions concerning the information above or if we can be of further assistance, please contact Roshunda Mitchell at (601) 432-8223 or by email at Roshunda.Mitchell@its.ms.gov.

Attachment A: RFI No. 4660 Requirements

cc: ITS Project File Number 48633

Attachment A

RFI No. 4660 Requirements

ITS is currently seeking information from vendors specializing in SaaS security border solutions suitable for hybrid cloud environments. ITS requires a comprehensive security platform that can protect workloads running in both an on-premises private cloud and in various public cloud providers' environments.

ITS is responsible for the establishment of IT policy and planning, IT procurement and contracts, and providing the computing and telecommunications infrastructure for all information systems technologies within Mississippi state government. The Legislature has tasked ITS with providing statewide services that facilitate cost-effective IT and telecommunications solutions that can be shared with all state agencies. In accordance with Mississippi Code Annotated 25-53-201, ITS also provides coordinated oversight of the cybersecurity efforts across all state agencies, including cybersecurity systems, services, and development of policies, standards, and guidelines.

For years, ITS has maintained an on-premises security border to protect agency assets on the enterprise state network. As agencies expressed interest in the public cloud, ITS has implemented enterprise level landing zones in various public cloud providers. Currently this encompasses AWS and Azure with a planned expansion into Google. With the initial implementation of these landing zones, ITS currently hairpins all traffic in and out of the existing enterprise cybersecurity border, but that is not an efficient long-term strategy. ITS plans to move crucial functions of the existing cybersecurity border to a SaaS based product to provide a consistent level of security controls for web-based applications and APIs regardless of where those workloads operate. This move will improve the state's security and reliability by allowing internet traffic directly into the various public cloud landing zones and removing the traffic hair pinning that is currently in place today. Mississippi IT utilizes a federated model, so the ideal product will allow ITS to set minimum security controls at the enterprise level but allow agencies to have more granular control over their assets, so a product that supports multi-tenancy is preferred.

ITS desires to identify and select a Vendor with specific expertise, experience, and suitable technology solutions to provide a SaaS based cybersecurity product that will provide at a minimum Web Application Firewall (WAF), Distributed Denial of Services (DDoS) protection, and traffic inspection. A conceptual diagram of the future architecture is shown below:
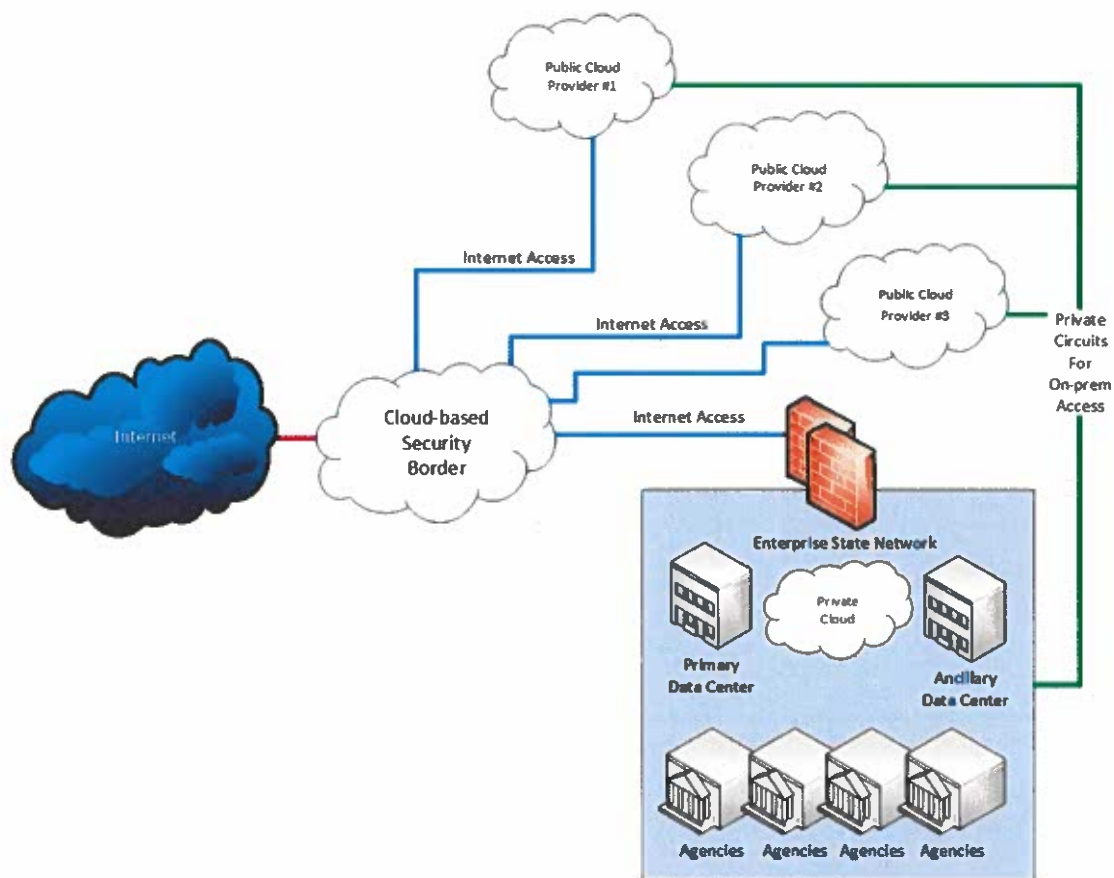
Vendor must demonstrate evidence of technological and strategic solutions through its responses to the below requirements.

1.   Requirements

Please fully describe the capabilities of your proposed solution based upon the following system requirements:

1.1.   Solution Overview:

1.1.1. Provide an overview of how your solution will provide the following features. Also indicate which features can have delegated access via role-based authentication controls to support a federated multi-tenant environment and the type of controls that can be applied.

1.1.1.1.   Firewall

1.1.1.1.1.   Intrusion detection and prevention

1.1.1.1.2.   Blocking specific IP addresses/ranges (including geo-blocking)

      1.1.1.1.3. Blocking specific domains

   1.1.1.2. Supported protocols (e.g., HTTP, HTTPS, SFTP, etc.)

   1.1.1.3. DDoS Protection

   1.1.1.4. Web Application Firewall

      1.1.1.4.1. Specifically, around the OWASP top 10

   1.1.1.5. API Protection

   1.1.1.6. Bot Protection

   1.1.1.7. Load Balancing

   1.1.1.8. Layer 7 routing

   1.1.1.9. SSL client authentication

  1.1.2. Describe how your solution performs decryption/inspection/encryption for all traffic passing through the service.

    1.1.2.1. Detail how SSL certificates are managed.

  1.1.3. Describe how logging is performed in your solution.

    1.1.3.1. How are third party SIEMs supported?

  1.1.4. Detail any reporting that can be done from the service.

    1.1.4.1. How granular can that reporting be performed?

  1.1.5. Describe how your system works with identity management providers.

  1.1.6. Detail any other features or functions that the state could take advantage to support cybersecurity in a hybrid cloud model.

1.2. Describe what cloud security compliance programs that your product is compliant with (e.g., FedRAMP, StateRAMP, etc.).

1.3. Pricing and Licensing:

  1.3.1. Provide general pricing details, including any subscription-based models, licensing options, and associated costs for your solution.

  1.3.2. Outline any additional fees or charges related to ongoing support, maintenance, or future upgrades specific to the solution.

1.4. Services

1.4.1. Provide details on how professional services work in relation to initial onboarding and configuration.

1.4.2. Describe the options for managed services for ongoing support for your product.

1.4.3. Can services be utilized on a per-tenant basis, or do they have to be provided for the entire environment?

1.5. Vendor Qualifications:

1.5.1. Provide evidence of technological and strategic solutions for the requirements listed above, including three (3) public sector references of similar size and scope to ITS.

1.5.2. The State is potentially interested in re-using another public entity award of contract for same services. In order to consider another public entity award for re-use, the State has certain criteria that must be met, e.g. publicly advertised, awarded on cost, etc. If Vendor has been awarded a contract for the services provided herein, the Vendor is requested to provide information for re-use, including public entity name and contact information (name, title, e-mail address, and phone number).