

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
CUSTOMER SERVICE CENTER
OS/CSC-22-001-S**

QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES #9

Question 351: How many monthly calls require communication other than English and Spanish. Can the Contractor deploy an interpreter service to support these calls?

Response: All readily available information or statistics has been provided. Per Section 2.3.5.B. Contractor must ensure that at least ten percent (10%) of the CSRs in the CSC are fluent in Spanish. Language line interpreter service may be used for all other languages except Spanish.

Question 352: Can DHS share a copy of the various application forms for the Consultant to see what information is requested?

Response: Please see link:

<https://mymdthink.maryland.gov/home/#/verificationForms> .

Question 353: Could the mail that requires secure handling be outsourced if the subcontractor agrees to follow specific security guidelines?

Response: Offerors can propose subcontracting and must also meet our MBE and VSBE goals.

Question 354: In regard to F. Technical response to RFP Requirements #8 on Page 81, If an offeror is not supplying software please confirm that a VPAT is not required?

Response: A Voluntary Product Accessibility Template (VPAT) is required containing a comprehensive analysis of the Offeror's conformance to accessibility standards in Code of Maryland Regulations 14.33.02 (See RFP §4.33). Failure to supply a VPAT may result in the Offeror's Proposal being deemed not reasonably susceptible for award.

Question 355: 29.1 (Attachment M) Regarding provision 29.1 (c) Limitation of Liability, would you please identify whether this is an IT contract or non-IT contract?

Response: This Contract is IT.

Question 356: 29.2 (Attachment M) 29.2 Contractor's indemnification obligations for Third party claims arising under Section 10 ("Indemnification") of this Contract are included in this limitation of liability only if the State is immune from liability. Is the State immune from liability?

Response: The State has general immunity under the Tort Claims Act, but it depends on the nature of the claim.

Question 357: Section 7, Table 1; Section 3.7.2.A; Appendix 6 Table 1 of Section 7. RFP Attachments and Appendices indicates that Appendix 6, Criminal Background Check Affidavit, must be submitted with the proposal. The text of Appendix 6 indicates that an authorized representative of the contractor affirms that the contractor, "...has provided the Department of Human Services with a summary of the security clearance results for all the candidates that will be working on the Customer Service Center Contract and all of these candidates have successfully passed all of the background checks required under Section 3.7.2. of the RFP."

Section 3.7.2.A of the RFP states that, "A criminal background check for each Contractor Personnel providing any services that may require access or possible access to DHS data under the Contract shall be completed prior to each Contractor Personnel providing any services under the Contract or within four (4) months of Contract award."

Since an award has not yet occurred any bidding contractor is compliant with Section per 3.7.2.A. However, Appendix 6 requires contractors to affirm in writing that they have submitted a summary of security clearance results for all candidates that will work on the project, with no exception for recently added candidates needed to support the change in scope presented by Amendments 4 and 5.

Can contractors responding to the proposal affirm that they will comply with the background check requirements in section 3.7.2 without affirming that they have provided a summary of clearance results for all candidates that will be working on the contract?

Response: Yes, but all available clearances should be submitted with the Proposal if possible.

Question 358: 3.6.1 Insurance Requirements, C. Crime Insurance/Employee Theft Insurance - Crime is a first party coverage which would be paid to the contractor. This is a first party coverage for the Contractor and not typically a policy that a loss payee

would be added to. Losses would be managed between the Contractor, and the State and Contractor would subsequently recover from the insurance carrier.

Is the State of Maryland and the Department requiring to be added as a “loss payee.” even though we currently have blanket coverage on client property?

Response: Yes.

Question 359: 3.6.3 Insurance Requirements Insurance certificates are prepared by our brokers/insurers after contract signing and renewals are completed. Since brokers are large global insurers, they often are still negotiating the large programs within that 30 day period. Broker would maintain at all times standard insurance coverage, however they may not have insurance certificates available until up to 5 days after contract signing or renewal. Many of their programs have multiple insurers on the tower and sending notice of any change or non renewal to the large programs where various participants on the program may change year over year would be administratively burdensome.

As an additional insured the State would receive automatic notice from our insurer if any notice of cancellation due to non-payment were to ever be issued on our policies that you are additional insured under. Since the timing of insurance policies and certificates is an external administrative requirement outside of the control of Contractor, will the State hold the contractor as not compliant for the inability to meet the stated 30, 5 and, 15 days requirements?

Response: The stated timeframes are reasonable and will not be changed.

Question 360: Is SMS text message included for outgoing communication blasts, messaging with a live CSR or self-service messages sent from the IVR?

Response: The Offeror shall propose how text messaging shall be implemented.

Question 361: Virtual Agents that operate using text function similarly to chatbots, but typically include better natural language processing and AI components for more human-like interactions and more specific results. Since the term Virtual Agent and Chatbot have overlap, does this definition match DHS' understanding?

Response: DHS understands virtual agent refers to conversational voice bots and chatbots are refers to conversational chatbots. (Both using natural language processing).

Question 362: Amendment 5, 9.I The Contractor shall also provide that the IVRS is an industry standard product that allows for transferability of the IVRS data and system to MDTHINK (or be host-able by MDTHINK) or to another vendor at the end of the Contract. - Please confirm that an industry standard product is defined as a configurable COTS product?

Response: The industry standard product is not limited to be a COTS product.

Question 363: Amendment 5, 11. The Contractor shall also provide that the CRM is an industry standard product that allows for transferability of the CRM data and system to MDTHINK (or be host-able by MDTHINK) or to another vendor during the Transition-Out period. Please confirm that an industry standard product is defined as a configurable COTS product?

Response: The industry standard product is not limited to be a COTS product.

Question 364: Amendment 5, 8 The Contractor shall provide the IVRS for this Contract. The IVRS shall be both traditional and conversational / dynamic. With the contractor now responsible for furnishing the IVRS, assuming IVR calls are now billable, we suggest DHS modify the Financial Proposal Form to break out IVR calls so offerors can price those calls separately.

Response: DHS is not interested in that option. The IVR cost should be included in the Monthly Cost for technology solution.

Question 365: Amendment 5, 8 The Contractor shall provide the IVRS for this Contract. The IVRS shall be both traditional and conversational / dynamic. With the contractor now responsible for furnishing the IVRS, please confirm that IVR calls are now billable, and offerors should propose a blended rate per call to include both IVR and CSR calls.

Response: The IVR cost should be included in the Monthly Cost for technology solution.

Question 366: Amendment 5 The Contractor shall provide as an optional service to be accepted at DHS' discretion the ability to provide Short Messaging Service (SMS), a Chatbot and Digital Assistant Virtual Agent to assist Customers across multiple

platforms and be available 24 hours a day and 7 days a week. Please describe your definition and differences between a Chatbot and Virtual Agent.

Response: DHS understands virtual agent refers to conversational voice bots and chatbots are refers to conversational chatbots. (Both using natural language processing).

Question 367: Amendment 5 The Contractor shall provide as an optional service to be accepted at DHS' discretion the ability to provide Short Messaging Service (SMS), a Chatbot and Digital Assistant Virtual Agent to assist Customers across multiple platforms and be available 24 hours a day and 7 days a week. - Recognizing you may not have historical context for SMS volumes, can you please provide an estimate of the SMS messages that will be sent on average per month for all offerors to be able to provide consistent pricing? Frequently, SMS message costs are based on a volume tier structure.

Response: That information is not available. SMS would be a new service.

Question 368: Amendment 5 The Contractor shall provide as an optional service to be accepted at DHS' discretion the ability to provide Short Messaging Service (SMS), a Chatbot and Digital Assistant Virtual Agent to assist Customers across multiple platforms and be available 24 hours a day and 7 days a week. - Recognizing you may not have historical context for chatbot volumes, can you please provide an estimate of the chatbot messages that will be sent on average per month for all offerors to be able to provide consistent pricing? Frequently, chatbot message costs are based on a volume tier structure.

Response: That information is not available. This is a new service.

Question 369: Amendment 5 The Contractor shall provide as an optional service to be accepted at DHS' discretion the ability to provide Short Messaging Service (SMS), a Chatbot and Digital Assistant Virtual Agent to assist Customers across multiple platforms and be available 24 hours a day and 7 days a week - Recognizing you may not have historical context for virtual agent volumes, can you please provide an estimate of the virtual agent volumes that will be sent on average per month for all offerors to be able to provide consistent pricing? Frequently, virtual agent costs are based on a volume tier structure.

Response: That information is not available. This is a new service.

Question 370: Amendment 6, Financial Proposal Form - Please confirm the 130,000 calls presented in the financial form are representative of CSR managed calls only.

Response: Correct. The revised Price Sheet has been updated to 175,000 inbound calls per month.

Question 371: Amendment 6, Financial - Please define the difference between the Optional Chatbot service and the Task Order Webchat service

Response: Chatbot is automated. Webchat (Livechat) should be attended by the agents.

Question 372: Amendment 5, 11. Can you please define the type of access and functions the 3,200 DHS CRM users will need? Will all of these users need the same access as a CSR or is the access limited to viewing, tracking, updating and receiving alerts related to work orders in the CRM? Will any percentage of these user simply be view only users? If so, please provide the number of only users.

Response: The DHS users will have varied levels of access and permission based on their roles. All users will need edit access.

Question 373: 4. Call Center RFP per Amendment 5 2.3.1. Will the Department please confirm if it will be responsible for providing the language interpretation service or if the Offeror should include this service as part of their proposal?

Response: The Contractor is responsible for providing language interpretation service.

Question 374: 4. Call Center RFP per Amendment 5 RFP Section 2.3.2.A. indicates that every agent must have a Direct Inward Dial (DID) line-extension number. Will the Department please confirm if it is acceptable for the Offeror to have the flexibility to determine whether one DID is sufficient for multiple agents or if it is necessary to assign a DID to each individual agent, given that operational efficiency and compliance with requirements are maintained?

Response: Yes.

Question 375: 4. Call Center RFP per Amendment 5 2.3.3. With the update to RFP Section 2.3.3., where the Contractor is now responsible for providing a vendor-hosted CRM with user access or licenses for approximately three thousand two hundred (3,200) users as designated by DHS, will the Department please specify the number of users who require access to modify content in the work orders, cases, or tickets, and separately, the number of users who only need read access? This information will assist Offerors in appropriately determining the user license cost.

Response: The DHS users will have varied levels of access and permission based on their roles. All users will need edit access.

Question 376: 4. Call Center RFP per Amendment 5 2.3.10. With the availability of the Maryland Accessible Telecommunications program, which provides TTY service for Maryland residents, will the Department please clarify if the Offeror must still provide an ADA compliant TTY/TDD? If so, is a software solution acceptable?

Response: Yes. The Offeror needs to propose how the requirement will be met.

Question 377: 4. Call Center RFP per Amendment 5 2.3.11.H. If the Offeror is using a cloud-based solution, will the Department please clarify if this requirement needs to be updated or removed?

Response: Section 2.3.11.H has been removed per Amendment 9.

Question 378: 4. Call Center RFP per Amendment 5 2.3.13., 2.4.5. Will the Department please clarify when the Offeror is to submit their initial QA/QC Plan?

Response: Please see Amendment 10.

Question 379: 4. Call Center RFP per Amendment 5 5.3.2.F.8. Will the Department please confirm if a VPAT report needs to be provided for all software included in the Offeror's solution? For example, if the Offeror is using a cloud-based CRM platform, is the VPAT for the cloud-based CRM platform required to be included in the proposal? If so, and it is available online, can a link be provided in the proposal instead of including the VPAT report itself in the proposal?

Response: A Voluntary Product Accessibility Template (VPAT) is required containing a comprehensive analysis of the Offeror's conformance to accessibility standards in Code of Maryland Regulations 14.33.02 (See RFP §4.33). A link is acceptable.

Question 380: 4. Call Center RFP per Amendment 5 Appendix 4. DHS Customer Service Center Volume Historical Data Sample, Attachment B - Financial Proposal Form The Department previously stated in the response to Question #62 that the call history in Appendix 4. DHS Customer Service Center Volume Historical Data Sample encompasses total calls, including live calls and those resolved by the IVRS, resulting in an average monthly call volume of 134,803 for 2022. Attachment B - Financial Proposal Form asks the Offeror to provide a price for the handling of 130,000 calls per month. Considering the SLA requirement stipulating that 75% of calls should be handled by the IVRS and less than 30% by the CSRs, it suggests that approximately 40,000 calls per month would be transferred to the CSRs based on the 2022 average call volume of 134,803; however, the Department's response to Question #107 emphasizes that pricing should be based on calls handled by CSRs, not calls resolved by the IVRS. Based on this information, it seems that Attachment B - Financial Proposal Form should be based on 40,000 calls and not 130,000. Will the Department please consider revising Attachment B - Financial Proposal Form to solicit separate pricing for calls resolved by CSRs and calls resolved by the IVRS? This structure would provide an incentive for the Offeror to optimize IVRS resolutions, aligning pricing with the service approach.

If modifying Attachment B - Financial Proposal Form to separately account for calls resolved by CSRs and calls resolved by the IVRS is not feasible, will the Department please consider including a single price per call that encompasses all calls, providing greater flexibility for the Offeror to optimize resolutions at the IVRS level while still meeting service level requirements?

Response: The 175,000 inbound call volume refers to calls delivered to an agent. It does not include IVR self service. Please see the most current Price Sheet which has been amended.

Question 381: Section 2.3.1.D Would DHS please share the IVRS self-service options that are in place today?

Response: In general, DHS does not intend to comment on the current solution.

Question 382: Section 2.3.3 The new CRM will need to integrate with DHS, does new CRM need to integrate directly with IVR—can they be standalone components or does the IVR need to be embedded in the CRM, for example?

Response: The Offeror will need to propose their technology solution.

Question 383: In regard to F. Technical response to RFP Requirements #8 on Page 81, If an offeror is not supplying software please confirm that a VPAT is not required?

Response: The VPAT is required.

Question 384: Cost Proposal Given the new requirements, would the State consider providing separate pricing components for IVR contained calls versus those handled by a live agent? If not, please specify how/where vendors should price those calls that are fully satisfied by self-service now provided by the Contractor.

Response: The Department intends to use our Price Sheet as specified.

Question 385: Cost Proposal Would the State please allow bidders to separately price licenses for the telephony and CRM systems?

Response: The Department intends to use our Price Sheet as specified. It has been amended recently to include a monthly technology cost per DHS user.

Question 386: Cost Proposal Does the 130,000 inbound calls include only those that are answered by a live agent?

Response: Yes. That number is now 175,000.

Question 387: Section 2.3.9 What is the average time to on-board a Tier 1 agent (including training and State security validations)?

Response: The Offeror will need to propose training of agents.

Question 388: Would DHS please consider lowering the 25% MBE requirement given the increase in the technical scope to deliver the IVRS/ACD/CRM?

Response: DHS cannot lower the MBE goal. If the Offeror cannot meet the MBE goal, it will need to state as such in Attachment D-1A and submit Waiver Documentation if they are the Apparent Awardee.

Question 389: Section 2.6.8 DHS has made a substantial change to two SLA(s). Will it be possible for the selected vendor to hold an SLA workshop to review the definition, calculation, and associated credit value?

Response: The awarded vendor can request a workshop during the Transition-In period.

Question 390: Attachment B Financial Proposal 2nd Revised In order for bidders to provide accurate and responsible quotes for the Price per Call category in the Financial Proposal, please provide an additional column for Tier 2 call pricing. Based on the Tier 2 CSR Call Handling SLA provided in 2.6.9, these calls are significantly longer, and length of calls is a primary driver in cost. In order to assess bidder's cost proposals equitably we ask that the number of Tier 2 calls also be set/locked in the Financial Proposal workbook.

Response: Tier 1 and Tier 2 calls are a new requirement and the State prefers to keep the Price Sheet the same.

Question 391: Section 2.3.3 Can you provide details on the functionalities and workflows you are expecting for the CRM?

Response: The Offeror needs to meet the requirements of the RFP and propose their functionalities and workflows.

Question 392: Section 2.3.3 - How do you want us show the pricing associated with the CRM? Will DHS be providing a new pricing sheet? Alternatively, are you looking for bidders to include the CRM licensing costs and System Integration services into the price per call?

Response: Please see the current Price Sheet.

Question 393: Section 2.3.3 What reports are currently used and expected in the CRM?

Response: The Department prefers not to answer questions about the current solution. Please refer to Section 2.4 for deliverables / reports.

Question 394: Section 2.3.3 Do you have any existing data visualization tool for reporting/dashboarding?

Response: The Department prefers not to answer questions about the current solution, but dashboarding is a requirement.

Question 395: For clarity, should the CRM licenses fees be included in our bid or is the state covering that cost?

Response: The cost of CRM licenses should be included in the Financial Proposal.

Question 396: Section 2.3.3 - Any financial penalties for SLA breach?

Response: Yes. Please refer to Section 2.6.5.

Question 397: Section 2.2.3.E. - What is the duration and timeline of the State's initial training?

Response: The specific training schedule will be discussed at the Kick-Off meeting. Total training is expected to last approximately 3 weeks.

Question 398: Section 2.6.9 - It is critical for accurate staff and cost modeling to understand the current real handle times. Please provide the Average Call Handling Time for Tier 1 calls for the last year, broken down by Agency or Call Type.

Response: The Department does not have information for the current contract. Please refer to SLA's for the new Contract.

Question 399: Section 2.6.9.5 - It is critical for accurate staff and cost modeling to understand the current real handle times. Please provide the Average Call Handling Time for Tier 2 calls for the last year, broken down by Agency or Call Type

Response: The Department does not have information for the current contract. Please refer to SLA's for the new Contract.

Question 400: Please provide current performance metrics that have been used over the period of performance.

Response: DHS prefers not to answer questions about the current performance. The SLA's are different for the new Contract.

Question 401: Please provide the historical AHT for all contact types and channels including tiers (e.g. inbound/outbound call, email, fax, document fulfillment, etc.)?

Response: Please see Section 2.6 Service Level Agreements for information on the new Contract.

Question 402: Please provide historical performance service level results for prior 12 months (inbound calls, outbound calls, emails, fax and mail)

Response: DHS prefers not to answer questions about the current performance. The SLA's are different for the new Contract.

Question 403: What technology platform is utilized today for the IVRS?

Response: DHS prefers not to answer questions about the current solution.

Question 404: Please clarify the monthly call volume of 200K? The document in 2.2 says 200K and then in Appendix 4 & 8 and in Attachment B other numbers are referenced (~148K).

Response: The Call Volumes estimated for this new Contract are included in the Price Sheet.

Question 405: The call volume shared, is this post IVR or does this include volumes contained in the IVR?

Response: The Inbound Call Volume in the Price Sheet includes agent-managed calls.

Question 406: Please share the monthly call volume currently contained today in the IVR?

Response: This information is unavailable.

Question 407: Please provide the hourly volume arrival pattern for inbound contact channels (call, email, etc.)?

Response: The Information provided in Appendix 3, Appendix 8 and the price sheet should be sufficient.

Question 408: Does the State of Maryland have phone numbers from participants already within programs?

Response: The State does not understand this question.

Question 409: Section 2.2, Appendix 3 What are the call volumes for top 10 intents across agencies from the listing in Appendix 3?

Response: Please see Appendix 4 for call volumes. All readily available statistics have been provided.

Question 410: Section 2.3.1 – Item F: Since the contractor is using an Internet VPN tunnel to access the State’s IVR, ACD and CDM, is this item still applicable?

1. Item I: Is this built into the ACD and State software? If not, how would the contractor get a service into the State’s system?

Response: This question no longer applies. Contractor will need to provide the technology solution and all telephone lines.

Question 411: Section 2.3.10 – Item E: Are the surveys handled through the State’s CRM and ACD currently?

Response: There are currently surveys. DHS prefers not to answer questions about the current Contract.

Question 412: Section 2.3.11 – Item B: Is this section referring to the items in Item A in the same section?

1. Item D: Is this a part of DHS's current system and how would it link to DHS?
2. Item E, F, G, H, I, J, L & M: Since we are on the State's systems, these section seems not to be applicable, please confirm this finding? If they are applicable, please explain how so?

Response: Per Amendment 5, this question is no longer applicable.

Question 413: What are the Call delivery patterns / distribution?

Response: Please refer to Appendix 3.

Question 414: How long does the State intend for training to last? a. Total length
b. Classroom Training length c. Nesting length

Response: The length of State training is expected to be three weeks. The Contractor will need to determine how long they will train their own agents.

Question 415: Please provide a list of what software is required for each part of the Scope of Work, and confirm whether the State will provide the software or if Vendor needs to provide it. Also please clarify who is responsible for the maintenance of required software.

Response: Please refer to Amendment 5.

Question 416: What is the Occupancy % you are currently running in the call center? What is the Occupancy goal?

Response: Please refer to the occupancy goal in Section 2.6.9. In general, the State will not answer questions about the current solution.

Question 417: Paragraph 2.3.2 and 2.3.4 - Does client want the contractor to utilize their own DIDs to forward calls from the client platform to the contractor telephony ?

Response: Please see Amendment 5. This question may no longer be relevant. Contractor is responsible for the DIDs.

Question 418: Paragraph 2.3.2 and 2.3.4 - Does the client expect the contractor to perform administrative duties on the clients IVRS/ACD ?

Response: Please see Amendment 5. This question may no longer be relevant.

Question 419: Do you have any seasonality to incoming volumes?

Response: Current data indicates that Monday and Tuesday are high volume days. Changes in regulations, statutes or emergencies will result in higher volumes.

Question 420: Section 2.2 Background Please confirm that the State will incur and pay all charges associated with the toll-free number.

Response: Confirmed.

Question 421: Section 2.2.3 Other State Responsibilities - Please confirm the Contractor is not responsible for developing any materials.

Response: The Contractor is not responsible for developing any materials listed in Section 2.2.3. These are responsibilities of the State.

Question 422: Section 2.3.2 IVRS Is the IVRS cloud-based?

Response: The Contractor will need to provide the IVRS now. Offerors will need to propose whether the IVRS is cloud based.

Question 423: Section 2.3.1.F General Responsibilities If the IVRS/telecommunications system is cloud-based, please explain the purpose of this requirement.

Response: The Contractor will need to provide the IVRS now. Offerors will need to propose whether the IVRS is cloud based.

Question 424: Section 2.3.2 IVRS What IVRS functionality is in place today?

Response: DHS does not intend to provide information on the current system.

Question 425: Section 2.3.2 IVRS Will the Contractor be responsible for any license fees or usage costs associated with the IVRS?

Response: Yes.

Question 426: Section 2.3.2 IVRS Is the Contractor solely responsible for the development, maintenance, and support of all IVRS self-service functionality to support DHS, including the connectivity to state systems to provide case specific information and changes in messaging and menu options?

Response: Please see Amendment 5. This question may no longer be relevant.

Question 427: Section 2.3.3 CRM Are the CRM and IVRS integrated to provide 'screen pop' functionality?

Response: DHS does not intend to provide information on the current system.

Question 428: Section 2.3.3 CRM Is the CRM cloud-based?

Response: DHS does not intend to provide information on the current system.

Question 429: Section 2.3.3 CRM Please confirm the CRM is a salesforce product

Response: DHS does not intend to provide information on the current system.

Question 430: Section 2.3.4 ACD Please provide specific product information for the ACD that is being provided to the Contractor.

Response: Please see Amendment 5. This question may no longer be relevant.

Question 431: Section 2.3.4 ACD Will the Contractor be responsible for any license fees or usage costs associated with the ACD?

Response: Yes.

Question 432: Section 2.3.4 ACD Is DHS or the Contractor responsible for configuring the ACD?

Response: The Contractor.

Question 433: Section 2.3.4 ACD Is the Contractor solely responsible for the maintenance and support of the ACD?

Response: Yes.

Question 434: Section 2.3.2 IVRS Please provide specific telecommunications system product information.

Response: DHS does not intend to provide information on the current system.

Question 435: Section 2.3.3 CRM Will the Contractor be responsible for any license fees associated with the CRM?

Response: Yes.

Question 436: Section 2.3.4 ACD Will DHS be providing the tools and storage associated with call recording requirements?

Response: No.

Question 437: Section 2.3.4 ACD What level of permissions does the Contractor have to make changes in the ACD throughout the day?

Response: Please see Amendment 5. This question may no longer be relevant.

Question 438 : Section 2.3.4 ACD Please confirm the ACD has call-back functionality.

Response: Please see Amendment 5. This question may no longer be relevant.

Question 439: Section 2.2 Background Who is responsible for configuring the CRM?

Response: The Contractor.

Question 440: Section 2.2 Background Who is responsible for maintenance and operations of the CRM?

Response: The Contractor.

Question 441: Section 2.2 Background Who is responsible for configuring the IVRS?

Response: The Contractor.

Question 442: Appendix 4 Historical Data Is DHS able to provide more recent statistics?

Response: Through the week of September 8, 2023, total agent call volume thus far this year is 1,450,417. The Price Sheet will be revised to include the higher call volume.

Question 443: Appendix 4 Historical Data Please provide a breakdown of volumes between self-service IVR contained calls, Tier 1 calls, and Tier 2 calls.

Response: All readily available statistics have been provided.

Question 444: Appendix 4 Historical Data Please provide average handle time, broken down between Tier 1 and Tier 2 if available.

Response: All readily available statistics have been provided.

Question 445: Appendix 4 Historical Data Do volumes provided represent calls received or calls answered?

Response: Calls delivered to an agent.

Question 446: Section 2.3.2 IVRS Please provide specific product information for the IVRS that is being provided to the Contractor.

Response: Please see Amendment 5. This question may no longer be relevant.

Question 447: Section 2.3.11 Technical Operational Requirements Please provide more details on the “communications systems.” Is there any required inbound call center functionality that is not available through DHS’ IVRS or ACD that the Contractor will need to provide? Does this requirement refer to the Contractor’s internal communications systems?

Response: Please see Amendment 5. This question may no longer be relevant.

Question 448: Section 2.3.11.I Technical Operational Requirements We anticipate that as DHS hosts the CRM and IVRS system, these responsibilities would fall to DHS. Please provide more detail on the Contractor’s responsibilities for maintaining the system.

Response: Please see Amendment 5. This question may no longer be relevant.

Question 449: Section 2.6.2 SLA Requirements Who is responsible for fixing problems with the CRM or IVRS?

Response: The Contractor.

Question 450: Section 2.6.7 System Problem Response Definitions and Times Service availability is typically the responsibility of the organization that hosts the system. Given that DHS hosts the CRM and IVRS, please explain how the Contractor can maintain service availability.

Response: Please see Amendment 5. This question may no longer be relevant.

Question 451: Section 2.6.9 Performance Level Measurement Are the SLAs related to AHT for Tier 1 and Tier 2 calls representative of current AHT experience?

Response: The Tier 1 and 2 requirements are new to this Contract.

Question 452: Section 3.7.5 Data Protection and Controls Since DHS owns the IVRS and ACD, what are the Contractor's responsibilities for testing?

Response: Please see Amendment 5. This question may no longer be relevant.

Question 453: Attachment B Will DHS please clarify if the estimated number of calls on Attachment B (130,000) represents the average monthly volume of calls that reach the IVRS?

Response: The inbound estimate refers to calls received by an agent.

Question 454: In order to effectively identify peak call times and ensure accurate staffing level estimations, will DHS please provide the call statistics in Appendix 4 as hourly averages?

Response: All readily available statistics have been provided.

Question 455: Will DHS please provide data on the number of calls and cases that were escalated to Tier 2 support for a specific time period? This information will greatly aid us in understanding the volume and nature of escalated inquiries and help in designing an effective support structure to address such cases efficiently.

Response: All readily available statistics have been provided.

Question 456: To accurately understand the invoicing structure, could the Department please confirm whether the Contractor's invoicing will be based on the total number of calls that successfully reach the Interactive Voice Response System (IVRS) per month, regardless of whether these calls are subsequently transferred to CSRs or not?

Response: The inbound estimates on the Price Sheet refer to calls received by an agent. IVRS calls should not be included in the invoices.

Question 457: Will DHS please provide the current monthly call statistics for calls that are successfully resolved by the Interactive Voice Response System (IVRS) as well as those that are transferred to Customer Service Representatives (CSRs)?

Response: All readily available statistics have been provided.

Question 458: Will DHS please clarify the extent to which work can be performed remotely? Are the remote work arrangements at the discretion of the Contractor, as long as all the specified requirements are met and the economic benefit factors are taken into consideration?

Response: Remote work locations need to be approved by DHS.

Question 459: Section 2.3.11.H To gain a comprehensive understanding of the scope and implications of the infrastructure setup, could the Department kindly provide clarification on whether the requirement in this section (also copied below) implies that the contractor will be tasked with hosting all or a subset of the components within the Customer Service Center (CSC) system? Additionally, information regarding the present hosting location of these components, including the make and versions, would be beneficial in contextualizing the transition. Furthermore, does this requirement also encompass the migration of the existing centralized database from its present hardware to the newly specified infrastructure outlined in the RFP? To facilitate a thorough understanding, it would greatly assist if an architectural diagram could be made available, aiding us in accurately visualizing the current and/or proposed setup.

Requirement: "Establish the CSC infrastructure/system on a server used for the centralized database, which shall include storage (Example RAID-5), provisions for controller redundancy, and mean times between failures of the processors and the disk subsystem. At a minimum, the centralized database shall be able to continue operations if any single storage component fails."

Response: This requirement was removed.