**Description of the Procurement**

**I. The Services**

The Contracting Authority is seeking to select a single supplier who can make available the following Services under the Framework Agreement as included below:

1. Implementation Services - the requirements for the implementation of the Supplier's solution.

2. Operational Services -

2a. Elective Services: the requirements that the Supplier shall provide across the Customer ICT environment(s) as part of its technical solution, and which shall be available for consumption by the Customer via optional call offs within the Call Off Contract.

2a (1) Network Platform - Providing the Customer with a resilient network traffic management capability using next generation networking technologies.

2a (2). Global Connectivity Services - Multi-Protocol Label Switching (MPLS) connectivity, providing the Customer with the ability to route network traffic over MPLS links from overseas Sites to the UK and between overseas Sites with guaranteed capacity and performance levels.
Very Small Aperture Terminal for Sites where the provision of other forms of connectivity are not available or a backup connection is required.

2a (3). Secure Internet Gateway - Providing the Customer with outbound access to enable End Users to securely consume services hosted on the internet.

2a (4). Software Defined Perimeter - Providing the Customer with secure remote connectivity enabling access to its data and applications through a network security framework that dynamically creates one-to-one network connections between each user and the resources that they access.

2a (5). Next Generation Firewall - Providing the Customer with next generation firewall technologies, enhancing and complementing the traditional stateful inspection firewall with other network device filtering functions, such as but not limited to, in-line deep packet inspection, Intrusion Prevention System and application awareness.

2a (6). Encryption Devices - Providing the Customer with encryption services for OFFICIAL tier data in transit.

2b. Service Management: the on-going service management requirements to support the technical solution, which form part of the Services that the Supplier shall provide, including obligations in respect of the Supplier's service desk, incident resolution, change management, configuration management, release processes and reporting.

3. Optional services- Services such as session border control service may be called off by a Customer through a Call Off Contract.

3a. Session Border Controllers - Support Public Switched Telephone Network and cloud Unified Communications integration to the Customer's Voice Over IP platforms, migrating from legacy in country PSTN solutions.

3b. ITSM Toolset Technical Integration: technical integration of the Supplier's ITSM toolset with the ITSM toolsets of the Customers' for selected support activities.

The successful Supplier will be required to complete transition and cutover to new arrangements prior to the expiry of the existing contract on 30 September 2023.

II. Common services and collaborative Call Off Contracts

The Partners intend to work closely together in relation to the Services provided under the Call Off Contracts. There are a number of requirements which the Partners anticipates will need to be built in common across all Call Off Contracts.

III. Subsequent stages

It is anticipated that a maximum of four (4) Potential Suppliers will receive the ISIT following the Selection Questionnaire ('SQ') stage. Following the evaluation of the Initial Tenders, the Contracting Authority reserves the right to award the Framework Agreement on the basis of the Initial Tender submitted, or invite a maximum of four (4) Tenderers to participate in negotiation of the Initial Tenders.

The Contracting Authority reserves the right to publish an Invitation to Submit Subsequent Tender, negotiate the Subsequent Tenders, followed by the Invitation to Submit Final Tender submission.

**Additional Information (1)**

Call Off Contracts will be for an initial term of up to 5 years, with options to extend for 2 additional periods of 1 year each. Customers may vary a Call Off Contract to include optional services during the Call Off Contract term. The supplier shall identify new or potential improvements to the Services and, if a Customer wishes to proceed, the Supplier may benefit from a gain share.

**Additional Information (2)**

The Procurement shall be conducted following a multiple stage process as described in the ISIT. The Contracting Authority reserves the right to award the Framework Agreement to a single successful Supplier at the conclusion of the Initial Tender stage or the Subsequent Tender stage without further negotiation.

Customers receiving services through the Framework Agreement may be subject to UK Government security requirements. As such, the Contracting Authority, where required, will apply such measures throughout the Procurement as necessary in accordance with Regulation 15(2) of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015, to protect the essential security interests of the UK.

During delivery of the Services, some supplier staff may be required to hold a security clearance recognised by the UK Government. This may be required for access to certain classified material and to certain sites. The Contracting Authority will offer reasonable assistance to Tenderers in obtaining security clearances.

The Contracting Authority reserves the right to cancel, withdraw or discontinue this Procurement and, to the extent permissible by law, to make changes to the scope or procedure of this Procurement. The Contracting Authority shall not be liable for any costs, expenses or liabilities incurred by any economic operator directly or indirectly as a result of such withdrawal, discontinuance or change. The Contracting Authority reserves the right at any time to: i) reject any or all responses; ii) change the basis, the procedure and timescales set out or referred to within the Procurement documents; iii) require a Potential Supplier to clarify any submissions in writing and/or provide additional information (failure to respond adequately may result in disqualification); iv) terminate the Procurement; and v) amend the terms and conditions of the tender other than the Minimum Requirements.

Initially, in accordance with the ability for the Contracting Authority to impose requirements aimed at protecting the confidential nature of the information in the procurement documents, access to certain procurement documents (other than the SQ) is restricted to those Potential Suppliers who are invited to the next stage of the Procurement following the evaluation of all responses to the SQ.

Following evaluation of the responses to the SQ, the Contracting Authority intends to shortlist up to a maximum of four (4) Tenderers who have submitted the Initial Tender to the subsequent stages of the Procurement as described in the ISIT. The Contracting Authority reserves the right to shortlist Tenderers during the negotiation stage.

Important Information for all Potential Suppliers

— all documentation can be found on the FCO's eProcurement portal Jaggaer ONE. URL: <https://fco.bravosolution.co.uk/web/login.html>

—in order to participate in this Procurement, Potential Suppliers should register on the portal.

— following registration, Potential Suppliers should navigate the portal and search for project\_4466

— the Contracting Authority requires interested suppliers to download, sign and return a Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA) to gain access to the Descriptive Document and Market Engagement synopsis report. An Ethical Walls Agreement (EWA) is required before access is granted to the main SQ and associated documentation. The NDA and EWA can be found at SQ\_4466. Failure to complete the required NDA and EWA will prevent Potential Suppliers from participating further in the Procurement.

— once you have uploaded the signed NDA and EWA, the Authority will receive a notification and automatically transfer your supplier details to SQ\_4466, which contains the main SQ and associated documents. Once you have access, you should then review the documentation and complete the SQ by the deadline specified.

Following the SQ shortlisting process, Potential Suppliers shall submit a signed Security Aspects Letter via Jaggaer ONE to gain access to the ISIT.