

S&MOCB/3417 Survey and Assessment of Remaining Hydrocarbons on the Wreck of the RFA ATHELMONARCH – Request for Information

Potential Opportunity

1. The Salvage and Marine Operations (SALMO) Team, part of Defence Equipment and Support (DE&S) within the UK Ministry of Defence (MOD), wish to inform potential suppliers of an intended procurement to acquire the services of a suitably skilled and qualified supplier to undertake a survey of the wreck of the World War Two oil tanker RFA Athelmonarch, located off the coast of Israel, in order to assess the condition of the vessel and quantify any potential hydrocarbons remaining onboard to directly inform its future management.
2. This RFI Notice has been published, as an initial enquiry only, to obtain information from potential suppliers and/ or independent experts to develop a robust requirement and procurement/ commercial strategy. This RFI is not a commitment to launch a formal procurement procedure or to ask potential suppliers to express an interest in the requirement.
3. Link to the Defence Sourcing Portal (DSP) Opportunity Listing and RFI Notice:
<https://contracts.mod.uk/esop/guest/go/opportunity/detail?opportunityId=54506> (Annex A – RFI Questions).

High Level Statement of Need

4. The RFA Athelmonarch is still substantially intact, lying upright on a flat seabed in 180 meters of water. On 15th June 1943 the vessel was hit by a single torpedo and sunk, northwest of Jaffa, Israel. The torpedo hit on the starboard side, in the area of the No.1 and No.2 tanks (plans and archival material relating to the RFA Athelmonarch can be found at: [Athelmonarch | Ships | Archive & Library | Heritage & Education Centre \(lrfoundation.org.uk\)](http://Athelmonarch|Ships|Archive&Library|Heritage&EducationCentre(lrfoundation.org.uk))).
5. A Historic and Environmental Desk-Based Assessment was produced for the wreck of the RFA Athelmonarch, which identified the potential for oil to remain within the vessel. As a consequence, the Authority wish to survey the wreck to assess the condition of the vessel and identify and quantify any potential hydrocarbons remaining onboard. The Authority is keen to minimise damage to the wreck and surrounding marine environment and prevent leakage of hydrocarbons when gaining access to the tanks.
6. For potential suppliers' awareness, the RFA Athelmonarch was carrying the arms listed below when it was sunk.
 - 6.1. 1 x 4.7-inch gun;
 - 6.2. 1 x 3-inch (12-pounder) naval gun;
 - 6.3. 1 x 40mm Bofors anti-aircraft gun;
 - 6.4. 1 x 20mm Oerlikon anti-aircraft gun;
 - 6.5. 2 x twin Marlin machine gun;
 - 6.6. 2 x Lewis machine gun;
 - 6.7. 2 x Hotchkiss machine gun;
 - 6.8. 4 x Parachute and Cable (PAC) launcher; and
 - 6.9. 10 x smoke float.The provision of ammunition for the arms listed above is unknown. It must be assumed that an amount of ammunition will be in the wreck secured in a safe place and/ or will be laying loose in the surrounding marine environment.
7. The Authority wish to engage early with the market with the objective of gathering knowledge in these key areas:
 - 7.1. to engage and gain potential suppliers' opinion of the viability of the concept;
 - 7.2. to gain insight to the market possibilities and potential innovative solutions; and
 - 7.3. to understand risks and issues.

RFI Notice Key Dates

8. RFI responses must be submitted electronically via DESShipsComrcl-SALMO-Multiuser@mod.gov.uk by 12:00 on the 12 August 2022.

Additional Information

9. This RFI will give potential suppliers the opportunity to comment on the proposed requirement and perhaps offer alternative solutions which might produce better value for money.
10. The Authority reserves the right to choose not to approach the market for formal expressions of interest, and if potential suppliers choose to act on any information, it is entirely at their own risk. Any resulting formal procurement procedure will be conducted competitively.
11. Potential suppliers will bear all costs associated with preparing and submitting the RFI responses. The Authority will not be liable for the costs of any work or effort incurred by potential suppliers participating in this RFI, including where the Authority decides not to launch a formal procurement procedure.
12. The Authority reserves the right to seek clarification or additional documents in respect of potential suppliers' responses where necessary.
13. Potential suppliers' responses to an RFI may be marked as commercially sensitive if they include technical, financial or other commercially sensitive information.
14. No RFI responses provided by potential suppliers will be carried forward, used or acknowledged for the purpose of evaluating the potential supplier in any subsequent formal procurement procedure.
15. If a potential supplier does not respond to this RFI, it will not prevent their participation in any subsequent formal procurement procedure.

Annex A – RFI Questions

Please complete the questions below and return via DESShipsComrcl-SALMO-Multiuser@mod.gov.uk.

Ref.	Question	Response
1	To gain insight to the market possibilities, please identify the sampling method (intrusive/ non-intrusive method of extraction) your organisation would use to identify and quantify any potential hydrocarbons (cargo and bunker) remaining onboard. Please also provide a Rough Order of Magnitude (ROM) cost as a benchmarking exercise.	
2	To prevent an unachievable procurement from being formally launched, please comment on how long it would take your organisation to undertake the sampling method, assuming the most favourable tide and current conditions.	
3	To gain opinion on the viability of the procurement, please comment on the practical challenges of undertaking the survey of the wreck considering the wreck's position on the seabed. Please also comment on the practical challenges of undertaking the survey in the territorial waters of another country (notices, permits, approvals required etc.).	
4	To understand issues, please comment on what environmental factors (weather, currents etc.) could influence the efficiency of the sampling method.	
5	To understand issues, please comment on what environmental risks (hydrocarbon spill etc.) your organisation envisages could arise from the sampling method. Please also comment on how your organisation would mitigate the identified risks.	
6	To understand other risks, please provide a risk allocation matrix on the following key areas for your organisation's sampling method: a. Risk identification – identify risks. b. Analysing and evaluating the risk – view on the likelihood and impact of the risks, and the allocation of these between the Authority and your organisation. c. Management of the risk – how best to manage certain risks, including mitigation measures.	

7	<p>To gain insight to the market possibilities, please confirm whether it is feasible to deploy using an ROV and Multibeam Echosounder to collect digital videos/ stills and create a high-resolution photogrammetric model of the wreck (which is approx. 145m in length).</p> <p>Please also comment on how long it would take your organisation to capture the digital videos/ stills, assuming the most favourable tide and current conditions.</p>	
8	<p>To gain a general understanding of the supply base, please identify any other surveys that could be conducted that would support the survey of the wreck and sampling method.</p>	
9	<p>To inform the Authority's strategy, please comment on the types of social value that could be delivered by your organisation.</p>	