



Ministry  
of Defence

**Surface Finish Amalgamation Project**  
**RFI DSP Ref: (insert)**  
**Market Engagement Information Pack**  
**March 2023**

## **Foreword**

Thank you for your interest in the Surface Finish Amalgamation at RAF Coningsby and for your participation in the EMES. The final procurement strategy has not yet been chosen, but our intention is to collate all information gathered from industry and use it to help inform any decision made by the Authority on its options for the formation of a scope of requirements that will be issued at the Invitation to Tender (ITT) stage of the procurement process.

The information shared is available on the Defence Sourcing Portal. This document collates; the presentation, questions answered during the EMES Session on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2023 and a summary of further questions clarifying the content of the Request for Information received from Industry during 1-1 on-line sessions together with the Authority's response. All questions have been anonymised to ensure the author is not disclosed and to preserve confidentiality and to ensure a fair competition. The following document content and the reference material annexed to it are for information purposes only and carries with it no intent to create any legal obligation(s). All information provided or any discussions held are conducted on that basis and are 'subject to contract'.

The 4 Sections of the document are:

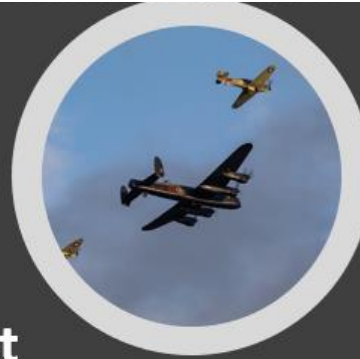
1. Early Market Engagement Session – All Supplier Brief.
2. Early Market Engagement Session Supplier Q&A.
3. Supplier one to one Sessions took place between the 14<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> March.
4. Supporting Information Pack Reference Document



# **Market Engagement Session Overview Presentation**

# WELCOME

- Surface Finish Amalgamation Project
- Market Engagement Day
- RAF Coningsby
- Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> March 2023



# Agenda

- **0800 – 0900 Arrive RAF Coningsby Main Gate (Postcode LN4 4SY) – Check in at the guardroom to be escorted to venue**
- **0900 – Arrive TDF – Wratten Suite (Refreshments)**
- **0915 – Welcome - Safety & Domestics**
- **0920 – Opening Address & Scene Setting**
- **1000 – Facility Visit – 1<sup>st</sup> Group (5 min walk to Surface Finish Facility)**
- **1045 – Facility Visit – 2<sup>nd</sup> Group**
- **1130 – Return to Wratten Suite**
- **1145 – (Lunch) – TDF Atrium**
- **1230 – Return to Wratten Suite**
- **1235 – Open Forum Market Session**
- **1400 – (Refreshments)**
- **1525 – AOB**
- **1530 – Wash Up - Follow Up Actions**





# Safety & Domestics

- **Access & Parking**
- **Building Fire Exits**
- **Actions in the event of a Fire alarms –  
Check no drills planned on the day(s)**
- **Assembly point – car park left of the ATC  
tower**
- **First aid kits – nearest FPTF Admin room**
- **Mobile phones (on silent please)**
- **Refreshments**
- **Facilities**



# Important Considerations

Please consider the following during this briefing and remainder of Early Market Engagement (EME) activity:

- **The Purpose of today's Early Market Engagement Sessions (EMES) is to seek information from the market to support development of a new Surface Finish contract, its requirement and the most appropriate Procurement Strategy.**
- **Further development of the Request For Information (RFI) questions published 6 Feb 23.**
- **Early Market Engagement activity is intended for information purposes only with no intent to create any legal obligation(s).**
- **All information and discussion shall be conducted on a 'subject to contract' basis.**
- **It is the Authority's intent to compete any potential requirement that may result in an anticipated contract.**





# Important Considerations

Please consider the following during this briefing and remainder of Early Market Engagement (EME) activity:

- **A summary of this presentation and questions and answers will be shared with all attendees post-Early Market Engagement to ensure transparency and the viability of future competition.**
- **Information considered commercially sensitive or intellectual property should be clearly marked / identified in advance (expected to be limited at this stage) - this information will not be shared.**
- **Any questions that cannot be answered at the time, will be captured and a full answer will be included, where possible, in the information shared with all attendees post-Early Market Engagement.**
- **Followed up by possible 1-2-1 online sessions if required**



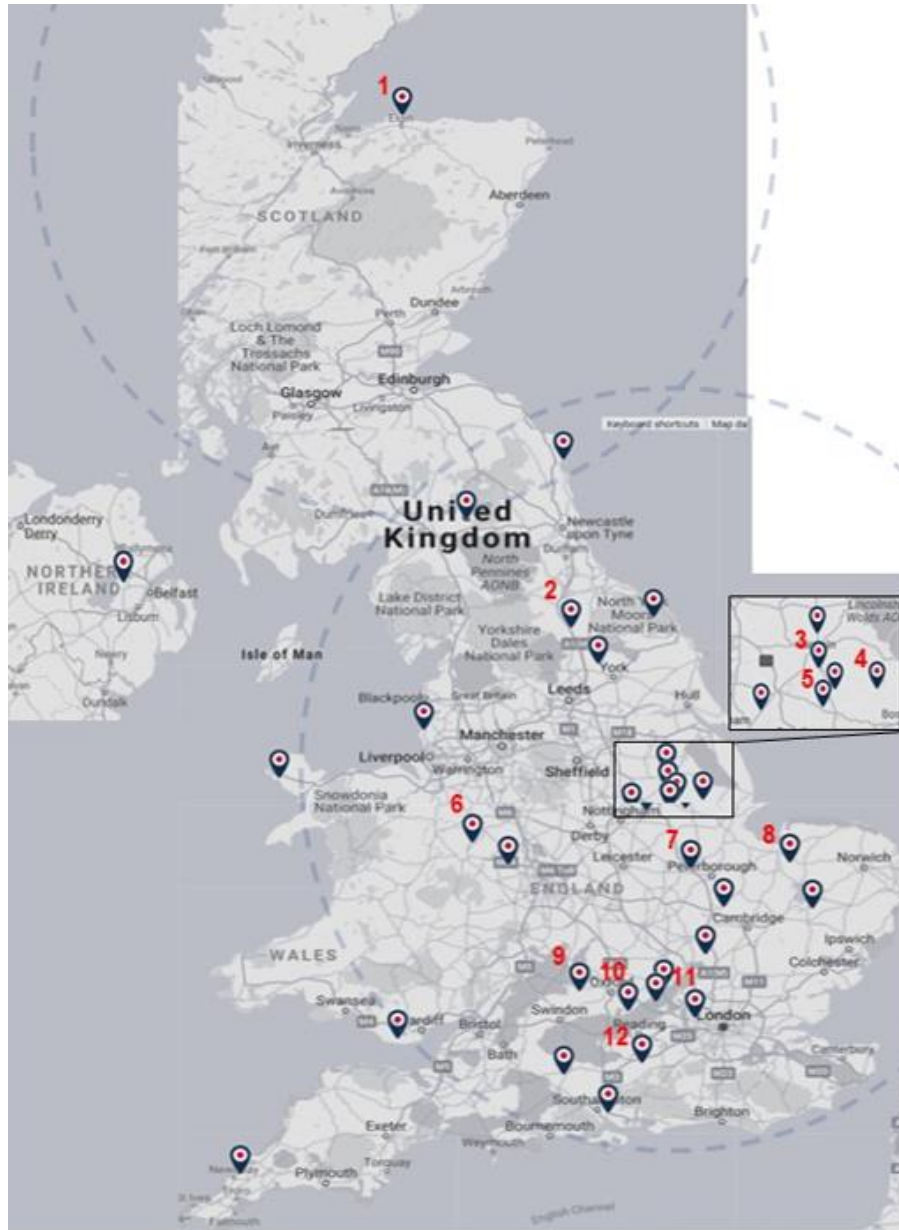


# Wg Cdr Mike Tysome

## Current Arrangement

- 5 main outputs provided to Defence through 2 contracts:
  - A Surface Finish contract that delivers:
    - Whole Aircraft refinishing.
    - On- and Off-Aircraft Component refinishing.
    - Ground Support Equipment and Vehicle refinishing.
    - Station Support tasks (signage etc.).
  - A Paints and Specialist Coatings and Consumables Contract.
- Delivery:
  - Surface Finish outputs currently conducted by contractor staff...
  - using MoD furnished equipment...
  - within MoD provided and maintained facilities on MoD establishments...
  - spread across 13 different Units in the UK and Falkland Islands.





### UK Surface Finish Facilities

1. RAF Lossiemouth
2. RAF Leeming
3. RAF Waddington
4. RAF Coningsby
5. RAF Cranwell
6. RAF Shawbury
7. RAF Wittering
8. RAF Marham
9. RAF Brize Norton
10. RAF Benson
11. RAF Northolt
12. RAF Odiham

### Overseas Surface Finish Facilities

1. RAF Akrotiri, Cyprus (future option)
2. MPA, Falkland Islands





Platform	Surface Finish Requirement	
	(A) Whole Aircraft	
	(C) Component work only – on or off aircraft	
	Special to Type (STT) ASE	
Hawk T1		A
Typhoon		A
Puma		A
Airseeker (Rivet Joint)		C
A400M		C
BBMF Fleet: Lancaster - Dakota - Spitfire - Hurricane - Chipmunk		C
Chinook		C
C17		C
Juno		C
Jupiter		C
LII (F35) ac + ASE		C & STT ASE
Wedgetail (E7)		STT ASE
Protector		C
Shadow		C
Phenom	C Potential inclusion of aircraft component work prior to contract award	
Dassault Envoy IV	C Potential inclusion of aircraft component work prior to contract award	



**Aircraft Refinishing - Whole aircraft / component only split**

## Future Intent

*We require broadly the same outputs to be delivered but not necessarily in the same way.*

- 5 core outputs remain the same.
- **Opportunities:**
  - Facilities rationalisation.
  - Use of non-MoD facilities and equipment.
  - RAF Akrotiri.
- **Potential Through-Life adjustments**
  - Incorporation of other platforms for whole aircraft refinishing.
  - Aspirationally Air A4 would like to explore a future Large aircraft capability solution but at present this is not funded or a RFI response requirement
- **Considerations:**
  - **Defence facilities investment.**
  - Maintenance Approved Organization Scheme compliance.





# Surface Finish Facility Site Visit

- Health & Safety Brief
- Please leave phones in the TDF
- 10:00hrs - Group 1 (5 min walk to Surface Finish Facility)  
Site Manager Daz Eason  
Escort: Paul Foster/Gary Rogers
- 10:45hrs – Group 2 (5 min walk to Surface Finish Facility)  
Regional Manager Simon Eaglen  
Escort: Neil Plowman



# Surface Finish Facility Site Visit

10:00hrs - Group 1 (5 min walk to Surface Finish Facility)

Site Manager Daz Eason - Escort: Paul Foster/Gary Rogers

Paul Milligan  
Andrew Garner  
Amile Ratnasiri  
Paul Starkey  
Chris Payne  
Simon Cracknell  
Andrew Goodrick  
Angus Trenholme  
Steven Knights  
Chris Marshall  
Paul Sanderson  
ACDT Head Projects  
Project Manager  
TTLS  
Commercial Manager  
Commercial Manager  
Commercial Manager  
SRO Representative

Jennifer Reader  
Angeles Ramon-Camacho  
Warrant Officer Robert McGee  
Charlotte Thompson  
Angela Organ  
Max Board  
Squadron Leader Kev Farrell



# Surface Finish Facility Site Visit

10:45hrs – Group 2 (5 min walk to Surface Finish Facility)

Escort: Neil Plowman

**Christopher Botting**

**Mark Palmer**

**David Best**

**Lyndsey Costello**

**William James Parker**

**ACDT Head Commercial Manager**

**Air Commodities Team Leader**

**SRO Representative**

**Commercial Manager**

**Desk Officer/Requirements Manager**

**Customer (Front Line Command)**

**Richard Bown**

**Robert Hornsby**

**Wing Commander Mike Tysome**

**Joshua Tregaskes**

**Warrant Officer Rob Ringer**

**Flight Lieutenant Stephen Gaskell**







# BREAK



# 1235 – Open Forum Market Session – DE&S Panel

**ACDT Head Commercial Manager**  
**Air Commodities Team Leader**  
**SRO Representative**  
**Desk Officer/Requirements Manager**  
**Customer (Front Line Command)**  
**Commercial Manager**  
**Project Manager**

**Richard Bown**  
**Robert Hornsby**  
**Wing Commander Mike Tysome**  
**Warrant Officer Rob Ringer**  
**Flight Lieutenant Stephen Gaskell**  
**Charlotte Thompson**  
**Simon Hardwick**



# RFI

- **Question 1 - Optimal Use of Technology** - Maximum response for this section is ten (10) A4 pages.
- The Authority would like to understand what new or emerging technologies could be employed to deliver the requirement.
- Please provide details of the method or methods that you believe could provide the most efficient solution, with specific reference to:
- The pros and cons of the technologies used.
- How the efficiencies are to be demonstrated when compared to current Surface Finish preparation, for example, chemical stripping, Media Stripping. Or current application methods, for example, hand-held spray guns, rolling and brushing techniques, etc. Efficiencies should be demonstrated in terms of time / cost / workforce / materials.
- When considering wet (paints, varnish, etc) and dry (sanding paper, masking tapes, etc) Surface Finish output support materials, please reflect whether the solution would be optimally served using the current MOD contract solution.
- If an alternative solution is proposed (e.g. Contractor provision) then please provide an explanation of how this can be achieved with clear availability, security, pricing, etc solutions.



# RFI

- **Question 2 - Optimisation of Locations - Maximum response for this section is twenty (20) A4 pages.**
- The Authority would like to understand how the solution could be optimised in terms of locations / infrastructure.
- To bound the question please provide a response to each of the following highlighting any reliance on the technologies outlined in Question 1:
- Efficiencies that could be delivered under the current structure as outlined in this RFI's supporting information [Fig 1, Tables 1&2] and/or how spare capacity could be used for example, third party incentivised gainshare. Can any efficiencies be identified? If not, what further information could be required to identify them?
- If totally unconstrained, for example, provision of the Surface Finish Capability could take place at a location or locations of your choosing on or off the Defence Estate, what might that solution look like?
- How would the solution to this unconstrained provision off the Capability alter if there was a requirement to keep some facilities on the Defence Estate in some fashion for operational resilience purposes? Defence Estate UK Units for consideration would be RAF Brize Norton, RAF Coningsby, RAF Lossiemouth, RAF Waddington, and RAF Odiham. Overseas locations would not be affected.



End





# **Market Engagement Session**

## **Open Forum Market Session Q&A**

# OFFICIAL

<b>Question 1</b>	Is there a particular timeline for the SFA project, and what is the funding confidence?
<b>Response</b>	<p>Current indicative timescales are:</p> <p>ITN Release: Sep 24</p> <p>Contract Award: Nov 25</p> <p>Current Contract Value is £73m as detailed in RFI over a duration of 8 years and is calculated against the in-scope requirements of the contract.</p> <p>The anticipated contract value is estimated and includes SF Government Furnished Assett (GFA/GFX) maintenance, repair and limited replacement costs. It does not include capital funding.</p> <p>Next steps are to assess the RFI responses and use them to inform the options analysis supporting the next project decision gate in October 2023.</p>
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 2</b>	Who supplies the paint used for Coating?
<b>Response</b>	<p>The current Supplier is PPG Industries (UK) Ltd (PPG). The paint demand process for the Surface Finish Contract is currently a “Direct Supply” which means that the Surface Finish Contract current provider demands the paint required directly from PPG. Some paint is not supplied by PPG but is instead supplied directly from the Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM). This OEM paint is supplied when it is part of the OEM requirement under the Aircraft Platform Team Contract.</p>
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 3</b>	If a new Aircraft Platform is added to the requirement what facility would it be allocated?
<b>Response</b>	<p>As with all Air Platforms, there is potential in the future for aircraft to both come into scope of SFA, as well as drop out of it. Table 2 of the Request for Information (page 2) identifies the current in-scope aircraft serviced by the Surface Finish contract and the type of Surface Finish work carried out on each. This is subject to change before contract award and through-life as aircraft are retired and replacement aircraft are brought into scope. Those teams who are delivering projects whose scope may impact this project have been consulted and the extent of the requirement as stated in the Request for Information remain in scope at the start of the planned contracting period.</p>
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 4</b>	Are F35's finished at RAF Coningsby?
<b>Response</b>	No, these are currently finished at RAF Marham.
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 5</b>	Can both hangers at RAF Coningsby perform chemical stripping?
<b>Response</b>	Yes both hangers can do this and wash away the chemical.

# OFFICIAL

<b>Reference</b>	
<b>Question 6</b>	Are the skills of the Surface Finish staff multi-task?
<b>Response</b>	Yes. Appropriate experience as an Aircraft/Automotive Body shop industry painter and finisher building towards recognised industry competencies or their equivalent (eg): Level 3 NVQ in Aeronautical Engineering (Aircraft Surface Finishing)
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 7</b>	Which is the busiest facility?
<b>Response</b>	RAF Coningsby has approximately 45% of the overall contract throughput hours
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 8</b>	Could the Authority please provide aircraft Surface Finish forward forecasting figures?
<b>Response</b>	It is not possible to provide this data at this time. The Authority feels more confident in releasing this information in a later phase of the project as forecasts would be subject to change as operational commitments change, aircraft maintenance schedules fluctuate and aircraft withdraw from service. Table 2 of the RFI details in-scope aircraft and those with potential inclusion into the contract prior to contract award.
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 9</b>	Is the length of the Contract anticipated for this opportunity determined by the current Forecast of work?
<b>Response</b>	No. The authority invite the market to consider the RFI questions and respond if the 8 year duration is sufficient to develop some of the proposals outcomes or new proposals preferred by the contractor.
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 10</b>	Is this just an Airforce surface finish?
<b>Response</b>	The bulk of the ASE and Stn Support Tasks are delivered at RAF units. The Aircraft work is also predominantly RAF with the exception of some Joint Helicopter Command rotary assets that serve the Army and Navy requirement.
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 11</b>	What is the maximum contract duration that would be necessary to bring current innovative techniques and process to this requirement?
<b>Response</b>	Enough to maximise the Return on Investment necessary In providing their response to the Request for Information Questions 1& 2, Industry is requested to provide feedback in the context of their approach on whether an eight (8) year contract period would be a suitable vehicle to fully realise innovative proposals,

<b>Reference</b>	
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<b>Question 12</b>	Are Multi Activity Contract Units included in this contract?
<b>Response</b>	No
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 13</b>	What is the strategic intent for components surface finish?
<b>Response</b>	A clear strategy will be informed by responses to this RFI
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 14</b>	Is there a list of all the SF facilities and all those that might be included in the future into the scope of this requirement? Also, what the extent of the scope of responsibility and current staffing is?
<b>Response</b>	SF Facility Data is provided in Figure 1 of the RFI. The number of contracted personnel engaged in the current contract inclusive of operators and management shall be provided a later stage in the process following this information being provided to the Authority.
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 15</b>	What is the future aircraft acquisition Plan?
<b>Response</b>	As with all Air Platforms, there is potential in the future for aircraft to both come into scope of SFA, as well as drop out of it. Table 2 of the Request for Information (page 2) identifies the current in-scope aircraft serviced by the Surface Finish contract and the type of Surface Finish work carried out on each. This is subject to change before contract award and through-life as aircraft are retired and replacement aircraft are brought into scope. Those teams who are delivering projects whose scope may impact this project have been consulted and the extent of the requirement as stated in the Request for Information remain in scope at the start of the planned contracting period.
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 16</b>	For the movement of aircraft and equipment assets have you spoken to Equipment Range Managers?
<b>Response</b>	All equipment is moved by MOD fleet. Two levels of fleet assistance are available. One is by the unit (what's called the 'early bird route') via a truck which does a route around the Airforce. The other is Joint Aircraft Recovery and Transportation Squadron (JARTS), a specialist military aircraft movement organisation. Aircraft Delivery Teams are consulted before every move.



# OFFICIAL

<b>Reference</b>	
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<b>Question 17</b>	Are the full Defence Lines Of Development (DLOD) and key stakeholder engagement in the project.
<b>Response</b>	The Authority responded that there was and that Defence Infrastructure Organisation, in particular, are engaged and informed in the project's development.
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 18</b>	Who built the hanger (at RAF Coningsby) that the contractors were shown around on the market engagement day?
<b>Response</b>	Airblast (with Spraybooth Technology Limited as sub-contractors)
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 19</b>	Could the Authority please provide Airfield Support Equipment Surface Finish forward forecasting figures?
<b>Response</b>	It is not possible to provide this data at this time. The Authority feels more confident in releasing this information in a later phase of the project as forecasts would be subject to change as operational commitments change, aircraft maintenance schedules fluctuate and aircraft withdraw from service. Table 2 of the RFI details in-scope aircraft and those with potential inclusion into the contract prior to contract award.
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 20</b>	Could the Authority please provide Equipment laydowns for each in-scope surface finish facility location and include images of the facilities exterior, interior and key equipment?
<b>Response</b>	See Supporting Information Pack Reference Document. Images of the facilities exterior, interior and key equipment have been requested but will not be available in time for this information pack
<b>Reference</b>	Supporting Information Pack Reference Document - <b>SF Support Equipment Tab</b>

<b>Question 21</b>	Compared to RAF Coningsby what is the condition of the rest of the Surface Finish facility estate?
<b>Response</b>	The estate has been maintained for the last 40 years to the current legislative standard. Most of the estate was built in the late 90's and early 2000's. Coningsby was built in 2012. Some are showing their age.
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 22</b>	Do you have all the current Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH) controls in place?
<b>Response</b>	Yes all are covered and registered with the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 23</b>	Are there supply chain impacts currently for consumable demands. Does this affect consumables such as masking tape and chemicals?
<b>Response</b>	Platform specific paint materials are provided by the respective aircraft platform teams. PPG supply other paints through the Stores Demand system (Surface Finish Paint List). Consumables to support equipment are supplied by ACDT. There are no obvious supply chain issues identified
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 24</b>	Contractors asked generally about the impact of other Air Force strategic projects which intend to provide efficiencies or other amalgamated capability support services on the options for the potential scope of this requirement.
<b>Response</b>	As with all Air Platforms, there is potential in the future for aircraft to both come into scope of SFA, as well as drop out of it. Table 2 of the Request for Information (page 2) identifies the current in-scope aircraft serviced by the Surface Finish contract and the type of Surface Finish work carried out on each. This is subject to change before contract award and through-life as aircraft are retired and replacement aircraft are brought into scope. Those teams who are delivering projects whose scope may impact this project have been consulted and the extent of the requirement as stated in the Request for Information remain in scope at the start of the planned contracting period. Multi Activity Contracts are not forecasted to impact the project delivery. It is too early to determine the affect of the Rotary Wing Enterprise project on the delivery of this contract as they firm up their Statement of Requirement over 2023.
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 25</b>	Does the Authority have a Corrosive Aspects and Impacts Register?
<b>Response</b>	The Impact Register is held within the Surface Finish Environmental Feature Matrix All impacts are classed as low.
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 26</b>	Contactors asked about the contractor and Authority responsibilities for the Maintenance and Certification of the in-scope Surface Finish Facility locations.
<b>Response</b>	See Supporting Information Pack Reference Document
<b>Reference</b>	Supporting Information Pack Reference Document Maintenance Responsibilities Tab

<b>Question 27</b>	What is average preparation time duration of Masking for Aircraft?
<b>Response</b>	Depends on the total damage to the surface and timing/priority of the task.
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 28</b>	What is the full paint life cycle for Typhoon currently?
<b>Response</b>	Currently the Full Paint Life Cycle for a Typhoon Aircraft is every 2500 Flying Hours (approx. 8years)
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 29</b>	How is Foreign Object Damage (FOD) managed?
<b>Response</b>	There are controls in place in high risk areas, Site Policies are also implemented within the Surface Finish Facilities at each unit
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 30</b>	What is the average turn-around time for spray finish of an Aircraft?
<b>Response</b>	Typically 2 weeks. However this depends. If the Aircraft surface requires repair this may delay the spray finish task and the repair is completed in situ in the hanger where it will be sprayed. If the Aircraft is required back in service, the repair may be identified but delayed until a future date and the spray finished within the typically 2 week turnaround time.
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 31</b>	Are the 2 hangars [top hanger and a bottom hanger) at Coningsby the same layout?
<b>Response</b>	No.
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 32</b>	In what way is the work prioritised for the 2 hangars?
<b>Response</b>	The work is prioritised by the Forward plan by the RAF. This forward work may take precedence over Depth work, as directed by Air Command. Depth work is scheduled by the Platform Delivery Team Fleet Planners. This Depth work is comprised of Acceptable Deferred Husbandry task Logs which are a summary of the condition and flying hours of the Aircraft ( i.e. small scuff and surface finish repairs that are needed but can be accepted and held outstanding for a short period of time)). The ADH Log will also vary depending on the Aircraft specific coating.

# OFFICIAL

<b>Reference</b>	
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<b>Question 33</b>	What is the largest Aircraft that fits in the 2 hangars at RAF Coningsby?
<b>Response</b>	Typically built as Fast Jet SF facility capable of taking a Tornado with Wings spread The building door entrance is 16 meters wide The surface finish booths are 18 meters wide – both bay one and bay two are 22 meters in length The Ceiling height is 8 meters high.
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 34</b>	Are RAF Coningsby's 2 hangars used for Surface Finish currently the most modern facility?
<b>Response</b>	Yes this was the latest built facility. Equipment Installed 2012 (originally purchased 2005).
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 35</b>	What are the types of stripping techniques in use?
<b>Response</b>	This varies and is dependant on the Technical Data Requirements associated with each Aircraft or item of equipment. However, practices used in the current contract are; Hand abrasion, mechanical abrasion, Chemical Stripping, Plastic & Dry Media Stripping.
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 36</b>	What is the average time to strip the aircraft?
<b>Response</b>	It depends on the type of coating, thickness of paint and stripping requirements (back to substrate or removal of upper layers only) and how effective the softening process is. Some coating is stripped down to the intermediate coating only.
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 37</b>	Is there much grazing of the surface finish of the Aircraft?
<b>Response</b>	Yes, and this depends on the use of the Aircraft and the amount of vibration and twist during use.
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 38</b>	Are the markings and other attributes for surface finish provided?
<b>Response</b>	Yes, these are provided.

<b>Reference</b>	
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<b>Question 39</b>	How is the forecast and priorities managed and can the facility switch the type of Output?
<b>Response</b>	The priority is set by Air Command and, as a preference, this is scheduled rather than forward work plan taking priority. The Forecast is yearly.
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 40</b>	What is the shift pattern at a SF facility?
<b>Response</b>	Typically Monday to Friday single shift daytime operation. Overtime at the weekend and 2-shift pattern may be employed at some Units. Brize Norton has an on call shift pattern
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 41</b>	How is waste dealt with?
<b>Response</b>	It is the Station's responsibility to dispose of waste generated within a Surface Finishing Facility (SFF). Contractors provide Safety Data Sheets, COSHH Sheets and Waste Data Sheets IAW the Unit Waste Management Plan. All Hazardous Waste shall be discarded as hazardous industrial waste in accordance with local regulations. Policy for Hazardous Waste is within the Joint Service Publications 318 - Management of Environmental Protection in Defence.
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 42</b>	What are Signage and Printing provisions?
<b>Response</b>	The current contract provisions for a signage and printing capability. The Authority is keen to read the markets responses to the RFI to understand if new tools, techniques and procedures are available which may generate, for example, an opportunity for the capability to be managed centrally and applied locally as was mentioned at the open session.
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 43</b>	What is the production line arrangement for Ground Service Equipment (GSE) surface finish?
<b>Response</b>	This isn't a pulse line process and there is not a dedicated facility for Motor Transport and GSE. The SF maintenance cycle for equipment is generally 10 years but in extreme environmental conditions (maritime, extreme heat or cold) can be reduced to 5 years.
<b>Reference</b>	



<b>Question 44</b>	Are there new/alternative stripping technologies?
<b>Response</b>	Although the Authority would like the market to respond to the RFI with information about this, the following information may prove useful; Lasers (although not suitable for composites). Robotics are likely to be considered for use on whole aircraft but not on components or ASE owing to their significant purchase cost Intuitive programming of of “cobots” and other new developments around collaborative robotic assistance. Could the market please confirm whether lasers are the only automated way to reliably strip back chromates.
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 45</b>	Will ISO 14001 Certification be required for the Contractor?
<b>Response</b>	Yes, or the equivalent.
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 46</b>	Do you have sustainability targets?
<b>Response</b>	We do have sustainability targets. E.g LED lighting. Regarding Chromates, the sustainability target is influenced by gaining the approval that is required to have a suitable substitute. Targets are within the DE&S Path to Net Zero and the <a href="#">MOD Sustainability and Climate Change Publications</a> . All measures are in place to meet current targets.
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 47</b>	Do you have Carbon Reduction Targets?
<b>Response</b>	There are Government Targets and execution of incorporating these in the future are being considered in . Part of this work will be to understand from Industry if any new or innovative techniques can be introduced to assist in this. Targets within the DE&S Path to Net Zero and the <a href="#">MOD Sustainability and Climate Change Publications</a> . All measures are in place to meet current targets.
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 48</b>	What is the strategic intent of the MOD regarding a Large Aircraft Facility?
<b>Response</b>	This Early Market Engagement is intended to inform that strategy. The information gained will assist in any cost benefit analysis that is needed for this requirement and considered alongside the other centralised contracts for aircraft platforms.
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 49</b>	Will there be a Cyber Security Requirement?
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<b>Response</b>	Yes.
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 50</b>	Is the current Surface Finish contract applying for authority to continue to use its REACH certification?
<b>Response</b>	<p>Tranch 1 (pretreatment processes) has been submitted, Tranch 2 (primers) is being developed and show the strategies being followed through Aerospace and Defence Chromates Reauthorisation (ADCR) for the reauthorisation of chromates under REACH.</p> <p><b>Tranche 1:</b> Formulation, Pre-treatments, Passivation of non-Al metallic coatings, Anodise sealing, Slurry coating, Inorganic finish stripping</p> <p><b>Tranche 2:</b> Primer type-based approach, Use of bonding primers containing strontium chromate in aerospace and defence industry and its supply chains. Use of wash primers containing pentazincchromate octahydroxide, and/or potassium hydroxyoctaoxodizincatedichromate in aerospace and defence industry and its supply chains,</p> <p>Use of primer products (excluding bonding and wash primers) containing strontium chromate, pentazincchromate octahydroxide or potassium hydroxyoctaoxodizincatedichromate in aerospace and defence industry and its supply chains</p>
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 51</b>	How is the responsibility for Health and Safety in terms of maintenance and Statutory Requirement organised?
<b>Response</b>	<p>The Station Commander has overall responsibility for those working within their establishment. However, it's the responsibility of the Contractor to ensure all Health and Safety is adhered to within the Surface Finishing departments IAW Joint Service Publication (JSP) 375 - Management of Health &amp; Safety within Defence, Joint Service Publication (JSP) 569 - Working at Height, Joint Service Publication (JSP) 318 – Management of Environmental Protection in Defence and Unit Health &amp; Safety and Environmental Statements. The equivalent of JSP's will be confirmed as part of the procurement going forward.</p>
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 52</b>	Is the MAOS Certification route a factor in the future contracting?
<b>Response</b>	Yes, the Military Aviation Authority is currently delivering a MAOS, Pt 145 Regulatory Articles for a Surface Finish specialist service and to identify operator competencies against National Standards for surface finish activities.
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 53</b>	For new techniques & new paints to be applied to the aircraft, the design authority or OEM would have to approve new paints and potentially new techniques for specific aircraft types. If the approval wasn't received how would this affect the Capital investment for the new technology?
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<b>Response</b>	In conjunction with the Design Organisation, the Aircraft Type Airworthiness Authority has the responsibility to approve new specialist coatings for surface finish. Regarding innovative application of paint techniques they would need to conform to the Aircraft Technical Documentation requirements or the Surface Finish Digital Air Publication 119A-0601-series documentation.
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 54</b>	Is criticality of GSE an effect as well?
<b>Response</b>	All Surface Finish committed output including GSE are to be met. However, prioritisation of aircraft for Operational duties may take precedence over other planned committed to contract work. This decision would be at Unit level (i.e. Eng Ops) or, A4 Engineering Support team if the requirement affected more than 1 Unit .
<b>Reference</b>	





# **Market Engagement Session**

## **Contractor 1-2-1 Session Q&A**

<b>Question 55</b>	With current Integrated Review (IR) refresh and the flavours around gross domestic product & inflations for the MOD, what affect, if any, will the IR refresh and GDP have on this project and its route to financial clearance?
<b>Response</b>	The Authority can confirm that the in-scope requirements of the project, as articulated in the RFI, are fully funded on current market values with future inflationary measures taken into account. It is too early to say if or how future GDP/IR would impact the project.
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 56</b>	What dependencies on different MOD agencies & the demarcations between them are significant in the context of SF Contract moving to a capability output basis? What process is currently understood regarding these dependencies that the Authority would follow if SF moved to a capability output, for practical implementation? This is in the context of modernising the facilities (e.g. use of robotics, paint stripping methodologies).
<b>Response</b>	At this RFI stage of the procurement process this process of engagement with MOD agencies is not known but will be confirmed at a later stage if this becomes relevant to the procurement strategy that is formed.
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 57</b>	What are the focus areas either for the introduction or promotion of social value with the future Surface finish opportunity?
<b>Response</b>	Social value impacts on the delivery of the future requirement will be addressed later in the project
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 58</b>	Looking at the remainder of the ACDT / Airfield Support Capability portfolio, for example focusing on equipment procurement through life support rather than say service provisions such as SF, is there potential for appetite to incorporate SF into a managed service model or other managed services, but within that similar footprint?
<b>Response</b>	As with all Air Platforms, there is potential in the future for aircraft to both come into scope of SFA, as well as drop out of it. Table 2 of the Request for Information (page 2) identifies the current in-scope aircraft serviced by the Surface Finish contract and the type of Surface Finish work carried out on each. This is subject to change before contract award and through-life as aircraft are retired, and replacement aircraft are brought into scope. Those teams who are delivering projects whose scope may impact this project have been consulted and the extent of the requirement as stated in the Request for Information remain in scope at the start of the planned contracting period.
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 59</b>	In terms of timelines, and the two-stage process, how does SFA compare for example to timelines for the rest of Airfield Support Capability, you know from PQQ onwards, but do appreciate there is a potential or division there and how they might look in the future?
<b>Response</b>	The SFA project delivers a capability as part of the ASC Programme and its milestones are agreed against the wider programme deliverables and the indicative dates provided for ITN release and Contract Award are provided as a response in this pack.
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 60</b>	Will the current consumables paint Contract that is amalgamated, in terms of its scope of supply, into SF new Contract continue to have the same volume of paint in it? The reason this is important to understand is because the volume of paint demanded and supplied directly to the SF Contract is priced in the market using the current paint Contracts total volume.
<b>Response</b>	The current paint and consumables contract provides for Aviation Output Support across Defence. The Project is considering amalgamation of the commodity requirements for the identified in-scope units and aircraft into one contract and would also be interested in market responses to this being a responsibility of the prime contractor. Wider Defence provision to aircraft and locations out-of-scope SFA Project will continue to require support by other means. Assessment of this option will have to meet or improve upon value-for-money thresholds in the current contract
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 61</b>	Timescales of procurement – When is potential in-service date of new Contract (Nov 25?)? Will this date be brought forward?
<b>Response</b>	Unlikely Contract Award date will come forward. The indicative time line for this project, which is subject to change, is:- Tender release Sep 24 Contract Award Nov 25
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 62</b>	Technology discussions from EMES & RFI – New technology requires investment and from a Supplier point of view its difficult to generate a return in investment from a competitive process. For the introduction of new technology, will the Authority make capital investment available? Authority CQ - Is a longer-term Contract preferred? Supplier Response - Yes, a longer contract is always beneficial to generate a return of plan of investment on any capital expenditure that we might make. Also gives a supplier freedom to look at and introduce new technology through the life of the contract, not necessarily from day one.
<b>Response</b>	The authority is open to save-to-spend opportunities in the future contract. Any new Tools. Techniques & Procedure proposals in this RFI's responses are made without commitment or consideration of future spending. All comments made by the Authority are also subject to contract.
<b>Reference</b>	



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<b>Question 63</b>	What are the security aspects of providing SF capability on or off the MOD estate?
<b>Response</b>	Security requirements are identified in the RFI. The Authority will provide information regarding security requirements at a later stage in the competitive process.
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 64</b>	Is 31st March 2023 RFI response deadline a firm date?
<b>Response</b>	Due to a delay in releasing this Information Pack, the Authority has granted an additional two days duration to respond to the RFI. The respond deadline date has moved from 31 Mar 23 to 11 Apr 23.
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 65</b>	Is there a confirmation of the total annual spend for the Supply of Paints/Coatings and details on the constituent properties of the paints?
<b>Response</b>	Information on details and total annual spend on the constituent properties of the paints/specification can be provided, if appropriate, in due course/later in the procurement process, rather than at RFI stage.
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 66</b>	Do you want a response that includes ideas on larger aircraft as well?
<b>Response</b>	Yes. Note, we currently don't have a facility on the defence estate to achieve this.
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 67</b>	What is the length of the Contract?
<b>Response</b>	RFI poses 8 years with approximate value of £73M. Feedback from the market is welcome to determine whether an eight (8) year contract period would be a suitable vehicle to fully realise innovative proposals.
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 68</b>	Will there be an opportunity to visit the facilities on other defence estates illustrated on the locations map within the RFI document, other than RAF Coningsby, at a later stage?
<b>Response</b>	Potential opportunities for visit to other RAF estate facilities may be considered at a later stage in the process.
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 69</b>	Will the consumables for SF, including paint, be demanded by the users using the same Exostar system, as per current arrangement?
<b>Response</b>	Yes, there is no planned change to this activity.
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 70</b>	Is there an opportunity from a Category Management perspective to broaden the approach to the supply of consumables?
<b>Response</b>	As per paragraph 4 of the RFI This RFI is an opportunity to seek feedback and information from the market to inform the most appropriate Procurement Strategy for a Surface Finish Capability, including new contract delivery proposals; exploitation of new technology or approaches; and/or broader Category Management approach .
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 71</b>	Does the model that you envisage for the future output of the SF capability allow for the removal of the current obligation to manage the facility in conjunction with other government agencies, such as Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO)?
<b>Response</b>	Yes. There is no restriction within the RFI document on receiving information on a suggested model that would allow complete autonomy or a Contractor within the defence estate to manage an area of it for SF capability using their own equipment, consumables and MRO support. Nor, is there any restriction within the RFI document that would restrict a suggestion of a service model that provides equipment, consumables and MRO support off the defence estate or any hybrid of the aforementioned models.
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 72</b>	What do you see as the end state? Is this an exercise to identify cost savings or utilisation efficiencies?
<b>Response</b>	As is set out within the Brief Background of the RFI document, the SF capability must ensure that serviceable aircraft and Airfield Support Equipment (ASE) are available to support operational, training and display output for the UK MOD. This is enhanced by an efficient, effective, and reliable Surface Finish (SF) capability that supports reduced maintenance turn-round times, reduced equipment / component failure and improves mission survivability through the application of adequate corrosion protection, camouflage, and conspicuity markings. There are multiple options we could take forward when we make a decision internally to achieve this end state. Your view of what these options might be is information we would like to receive from the market.
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 73</b>	What is the prompt to come out to the market? Has there been a particular problem you have identified?
<b>Response</b>	The current two Contracts which together provide the output for SF currently are coming to the end of their term providing an opportunity to consider options for the future state of provision of the service.
<b>Reference</b>	

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<b>Question 74</b>	Are you looking for single contract with provider to provision all of the refinish requirement outlined within the RFI or are you open to multiple Contract arrangements?
<b>Response</b>	We have not formed a prescribed position in terms of what option we want to use to scope the requirement for this project yet. There are currently two Contracts which together provide the SF output. The fact that there are currently two Contracts is not relevant to the decision on which option we want to engage the market on to find the information described in the RFI document.
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 75</b>	How does a specialist coatings manufacturer in the Defence Sector take part in this RFI?
<b>Response</b>	A specialist coatings manufacturer could, at this stage, provide information about the specialist coatings market, e.g. where the market is at the moment in terms of market innovation in terms of particular paints and techniques for consumables distribution in that market.
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 76</b>	When will you provide the specification or Defence Standards for specialist coatings?
<b>Response</b>	We cannot give any further information at this RFI stage in the process regarding specification or Defence Standards for specialist coatings for this project.
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 77</b>	Can you confirm who the other interested parties are?
<b>Response</b>	The Early Market Engagement Sessions was the opportunity for those parties interested in this opportunity to meet. Further opportunities may be available as the process progresses and will be confirmed at that time.
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 78</b>	Are there any restrictions around the use of facilities across the SF estate?
<b>Response</b>	Yes, if the facility is MOD estate. Various government agencies including Defence Equipment & Support, Defence Infrastructure Organisation & the Head of Establishment of an MOD Unit have responsibilities that will restrict the use of the MOD estate in a certain prescribed manner. However, outside of the MOD estate the party responsible for the facility would, itself, dictate any or all restrictions.
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 79</b>	How is the task management achieved & performance measured? Understanding KPIs in this context will be beneficial.
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<b>Response</b>	Performance is measured through output committed to contract at each Surface Finish Facility and is reviewed weekly through a productivity report and at quarterly Contract Review Meetings. Task Management is achieved through liaising with the customer to determine turn-around times and prioritisation. Scheduled tasks have fixed duration for completion and additional days either side for delivery and collection. Random rectifications are negotiated with the customer on a case by case basis. Monthly work completed statistics provided to Air Command iaw Command Acquisition Support Plan (CASP) requirements.
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 80</b>	If demand was as planned as is possible, what would 'good performance in terms of outcome' look like?
<b>Response</b>	Good performance metrics would be full delivery of forecasted service
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 81</b>	Can you provide any information on a typical day in the life at Marham for example, how does that look, where are the priorities for the teams?
<b>Response</b>	A typical day at a Surface Finish facility such as RAF Marham would not provide the market with useful data at this time however, task priorities would be pre-planned Aircraft, aircraft component work (on or off aircraft), ASE and Station Support tasks before MOD out-of-scope work or 3PIG tasking is addressed.
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 82</b>	What is the current arrangement for movement of equipment, in particular GSE & MT, from one location to another?
<b>Response</b>	All equipment is moved by MOD fleet. Two levels of fleet assistance are available. One is by the unit (what's called the 'early bird route') via a truck which does a route around the Airforce. The other is Joint Aircraft Recovery and Transportation Squadron (JARTS), a specialist military aircraft movement organisation.
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 83</b>	What GFE is currently provided to the SF Contract and who is responsible for maintaining that equipment?
<b>Response</b>	See Supporting Information Pack Reference Document
<b>Reference</b>	Supporting Information Pack Reference Document SF Support Tab

<b>Question 84</b>	What are the total number of hours under the Contract per annum and what is the annual variance of the total hours over the term of the Contract in percentage terms?
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<b>Response</b>	See Supporting Information Pack Reference Document
<b>Reference</b>	Supporting Information Pack Reference Document 5Yr History Output Chart

<b>Question 85</b>	Who is the current Equipment Authority (EA) for the SF Contract and what are their responsibilities for the equipment Technical Publications? Will they be the same for new Contract?
<b>Response</b>	The current Equipment Authority (EA) for the SF contract is the Air Commodities Surface Finish Team. Configuration Management of the technical aspects for the SF capability output and the roles & responsibilities of the Contractor will necessarily depend on the final scope of requirements for the tender and whether that responsibility remains within the Authority or whether it is outsourced to industry.
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 86</b>	What technology and equipment do you have in place currently and what is the scale, the number of aircraft painted, and the number of personnel engaged in those activities per annum?
<b>Response</b>	See Supporting Information Pack Reference Document
<b>Reference</b>	Supporting Information Pack Reference Document SF Support Equipment Tab

<b>Question 87</b>	For the whole requirement can you provide details of volume & throughput for the SF requirement?
<b>Response</b>	See Supporting Information Pack Reference Document
<b>Reference</b>	Supporting Information Pack Reference Document Individual RAF Station Surface Finish Tabs & 5Yr History Output Tab

<b>Question 88</b>	What is the current procurement strategy for consumables for this project?
<b>Response</b>	Following receipt of information from the market engagement phase concerning how consumables, including specialist coatings are distributed by industry in today's market, the Authority will decide about its broader category management approach for those consumables. More information can be provided at later stages in the competition regarding this strategy.
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 89</b>	Is there any data that the Authority can share which demonstrates 'pinch points' across the units? This data would be useful for governance and planning and for undertaking risk management.
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<b>Response</b>	<p>Facility Downtime can be affected by a number of factors outside the control of the contractor.</p> <p>A number of possible interface ‘pinch points’ exist in the current delivery model. Key dependency stakeholders such as the Defence Infrastructure Organisation maintain the buildings that the Surface Finish Facilities on the defence estate are housed within and also provide services such as water, gas, air, etc. Any impact on these buildings’ maintenance or provision of services might understandably the contracted output.</p> <p>Any disruption to Royal Air Force Station services agencies that provide (for example) waste management services might also affect contracted output.</p> <p>Finally, any market disruptions impacting the consumables provision contractor, PPG(UK) Ltd, if severe enough may affect contracted output.</p> <p>The authority would ask the market to consider how these dependencies impact their proposals in response to the RFI.</p>
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 90</b>	Regarding estate rationalisation and efficiencies, when will historic volumetric data in terms of the through-put of the service be available? This data is necessary to consider how to drive efficiency through the current workforce model.
<b>Response</b>	See Supporting Information Pack Reference Document
<b>Reference</b>	Supporting Information Pack Reference Document Individual RAF Station Surface Finish Tabs & 5Yr History Output Tab

<b>Question 91</b>	What is the current utilisation of your SF capabilities in terms of percentage utilisation of each facility vs down time at that facility and also what is the number of service personnel & industry personnel executing the service and their utilisation rate?
<b>Response</b>	Bay Utilisation is approx 25% across contract. This is based on total output hours (converted into days) divided by number of individual bays available within contract. This figure is based on all Surface Finish outputs at units including signage and on aircraft work conducted in hangar environments.
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 92</b>	In terms of allocated budget of £73M over 8 years, is this for core tasks as they are today across the two Contracts [SF & Paints] or a budget for the wider scope expansion at a later stage e.g. inc. new sites & platforms.
<b>Response</b>	The funding is calculated against delivery of the in-scope requirements as outlined in the RFI and future requirements are managed at a project and programme level to ensure funding is aligned. As mentioned above, the RFI welcomes comments on this level of funding and duration of contract, generally.
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 93</b>	Are there future savings advantages (e.g. in terms of future funding) in putting the management control of ‘blended estate’ facilities and their GFx under one ownership and management?
<b>Response</b>	The authority would be open to receive market feedback on this option as proposed.
<b>Reference</b>	

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<b>Question 94</b>	What, if any, consideration is there for SF in the field? If operation platforms out in the field, may need some form of SF. Is this of consideration to the team in the here and now, or purely a future look (if any)?
<b>Response</b>	Deployed SF requirements are not a contracted requirement.
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 95</b>	Is the SF future Contract going to require Maintenance Approved Organisation Scheme (MAOS) certification for the Contractor?
<b>Response</b>	Yes, the Military Aviation Authority is currently delivering a MAOS, Pt 145 Regulatory Articles for a Surface Finish specialist service and to identify operator competencies against National Standards for surface finish activities.
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 96</b>	What level of experience or qualification is required for the SF employee technicians?
<b>Response</b>	Appropriate experience as an Aircraft/Automotive Body shop industry painter and finisher building towards recognised National Standards for surface finish activities
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 97</b>	Is there an opportunity for a potential gainshare revenue generation cost model around the use of spare capacity in facilities?
<b>Response</b>	Yes. The Authority is interested to understand the markets perspective on this opportunity.
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 98</b>	Considering rationalisation and exploitation on a gainshare basis of wider market initiatives, are there any constraints on the use of the facilities for example, 'flying an aircraft to an offsite airstrip and leaving it there for a period of time'.
<b>Response</b>	There are currently gainshare activities carried out on the defence estate. Where there is capacity in the facilities and the future workforce to exploit Gainshare opportunities then the project would like to continue this and exploit further opportunities as proposed by the proposals to the RFI. Movement of aircraft on/off a Royal Air Force air station requires consultation with each unit's responsible agencies (e.g.: Air Traffic Control, Security & Engineering personnel).
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 99</b>	What are the current requirements for the SF capability output? The reason for the question is that we are unsure exactly what you are looking for in terms of a response. Is your intention to replace your current service provider or will a partnership approach be appropriate?
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<b>Response</b>	<p>The RFI document summarising current requirements and brief background describes how the SF capability output is currently achieved. We are seeking feedback &amp; information from the market to inform the most appropriate procurement strategy for the SF capability, including new Contract delivery proposals exploitation of new technology or approaches; and/or broader Category Management approach.</p> <p>The RFI document also gives some initial example options as have been outlined in an internal Strategic Outline Business Case. These options might provide an opportunity for capturing the best Value for Money (VfM) and over time, increasingly de-risk the ability to meet forecasted and operationally contingent requirements. These options are non-exhaustive and further novel ideas are welcome. See further Section 5 of the RFI document.</p>
<b>Reference</b>	

<b>Question 100</b>	It was clear that this Contract/the RFI is based around the facilities management of those different sites. Then strapped onto that may, or may not, be consumables, paints & coatings supplier?
<b>Response</b>	The RFI is not based around facilities management of the different sites, that is the current arrangement. The RFI seeks engagement with industry to consider what is possible. The Authority has not made any decision on whether the requirement will be split into separate lots.
<b>Reference</b>	