RFI0017

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION: Provision of Rotary Wing (RW) Search and Rescue (SAR) FOR Maritime Counter-Terrorism (MCT) Training Serials.

**RFI Title: Provision of RW SAR for MCT Training Serials**

**Issue Date:** 22 November 2021

**Reference:** RFI0017

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**1. Confidentiality and Proprietary Information**

No information included in your response, or in discussions connected to it, will be disclosed to any other party. Proprietary information, where included, should be kept to minimum and must be clearly marked. Any documentation submitted should not exceed classification OFFICIAL.

**2. Introduction**

This RFI is not a bidding opportunity but a means by which Industry can provide initial information to inform next steps. Any resulting contracting activity will be advertised in line with public procurement regulations and conducted competitively.

**3. Background**

To date, airborne Search and Rescue (SAR) for Maritime Counter-Terrorism (MCT) training exercises has been conducted by Navy Command Merlin HM Mk2.  These exercises are conducted twice yearly, in the Spring (March/April) and Autumn (October/November).

The need to balance operational commitments against the finite availability of military helicopters has led the Ministry of Defence (The ‘Authority’) to consider alternatives to how airborne SAR could be provided for MCT training, including the use of commercial helicopters.

The initial focus of this RFI is to understand Industry’s ability to offer a suitable airborne SAR capability for the MCT training serials commencing in Spring 2022.

**4. RFI Intended Outcomes**

This RFI aims to achieve the following four (4) outcomes:

1. Align the Authority’s requirement and expectations with Industry’s ability to deliver the necessary airborne SAR capability in the required timeframe.
2. Gauge Industry appetite and ability to deliver an initial airborne SAR ability for MCT training serials commencing Spring 2022.
3. Develop a procurement strategy that will deliver best value for money.
4. Identify an enduring solution that allows the Authority to plan its activity against an assured continuity of service that will also maximise synergies within a future maritime Rotary Wing support contract.

**5. Requested Information**

The Authority wishes to assess the availability of a suitable commercial helicopter to provide airborne SAR for MCT training. The key capability sought is the assured ability to search for and recover individual persons from the sea at night, with an additional emphasis on being able to deliver them rapidly to specialist medical care in a timely manner. This capability must be available (agreed, contracted, approved and validated) for training serials commencing in March 2022. In broad terms, the required capability is:

1. Provision of over-water airborne SAR operating from a land-base only.
2. Support up to six (6) UK based exercises per year, each of up to one (1) week duration in two calendar blocks occurring in Spring and Autumn each year.
3. Deliver up to 24hours flying per exercise across a maximum of three (3) sequential sorties per day flying up to four (4) consecutive days.
4. Operate from a suitable operating base which could be your parent base, a civilian airfield, a military airfield or a suitable military facility co-located with military aviation assets.
5. Operate separate from, but sequenced with, military aviation assets.
6. Operate day / night VFR/IFR to minima specified in MAA RA 2307(1).
7. NVD capable front and rear crew operations.
8. Ability to maintain situational awareness and safe separation.
9. V/UHF Communications.
10. Radio homing capability to 121.5 / 243 MHz.
11. Sensors – NVD, EO/IR, search and/or weather radar.
12. Ability to ‘hold’ in an airborne orbit to monitor the progress of training serials to achieve a 5min ‘on top’ response time for any casualty.
13. Capacity to recover up to four (4) personnel into aircraft via double-lift winch transfer from in-water, RHIB, and small sized vessels underway. Conduct stretcher lift from vessels.
14. Transfer casualties to a designated military base or Hospital Landing Site.
15. Baseline endurance of 2:00 – 2:30hrs.
16. Ability to obtain necessary Military Airworthiness Authority (MAA) or Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) Approvals to cover agreed activity.
17. Receive and protect sensitive information (ability for personnel to obtain a Security Clearance).

The RFI Response should address the questions at Annex A.

**6. RFI Procedure:**

Responses are requested to be no more than 6 pages. Returns to all the questions are not required, if either not appropriate to the solution being offered, or if the information is unknown.

Responses to this RFI will be reviewed by subject matter experts from within Navy Command and other Commands and Units involved in the delivery of MCT training.

Any details provided in response to this RFI will be used for information purposes only and will not be used to determine the potential Suppliers who will be invited to bid, should the Authority proceed to tender.

Please do not submit additional documents such as company overviews; the purpose of the RFI is to collect information related to the technical solution. Any additional documents will not be included in the review process.

The results and analysis of this RFI shall not constitute any form of pre-qualification exercise.

Any formal procurement process will be undertaken in accordance with relevant Procurement Law.

Nothing in this RFI, or any other engagements with Industry prior to a formal procurement process, shall be construed as a representation as to the Authority’s ultimate decision in relation to the future requirement.

**7. How to deliver responses to this RFI**

Suppliers are free to answer this RFI in whatever format conveys their responses in a clear and concise manner. Innovative solutions are most welcome - even if they do not meet all of the indicative requirements or may take longer to develop, however they should be linked to a capability available from March 2022. All submission are requested electronically to the e-mail addresses shown below no later than 12:00 7 December 2021. Responses will be acknowledged electronically by return e-mail.

**8. Costs**

Any costs relating to the preparation and submission of a response to this RFI are the sole responsibility of the respondent.

**9. Contacts**

Questions relating to this RFI and all RFI responses should be directed to:

marco.hurst108@mod.gov.uk

Annex A

RFI0017 - **Provision of RW SAR for MCT Training Serials**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Serial | Question | Answer |
| 1 | Company Name |  |
| 2 | Company Address |  |
| 3 | Is the Company a Small-Medium Enterprise (less than 250 employees)? |  |
| 4 | Name of Company representative completing the RFI |  |
| 5 | Contact details (e-mail and telephone number) |  |
| 6 | Company web site address |  |
| 7 | Number of years in this market sector |  |
| 8 | Proposed capability (air vehicle) |  |
| 9 | Relevant front crew competencies / experience |  |
| 10 | Relevant rear-crew competencies /experience (eg specific medical training) |  |
| 11 | Current MAA / CAA Approvals |  |
| 12 | Any pertinent restrictions (geographical, regulatory, capability) |  |
| 13 | Further information - key assumptions, dependencies, exclusions, constraints and any barriers/mitigations to submitting a tender |  |
| 14 | Anticipated timeframe required between contract award and commencement of service |  |
| 15 | Opportunities / efficiencies / synergies that could arise from selection of your capability |  |