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Project TELUM

Request for Information

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Introduction

1. The Authority objectives of this RFI are as follows:
 - To advise suppliers of a potential Air Command procurement.
 - To gain an understanding of the market capacity for supplying these services.
 - To seek feedback from potential suppliers that may inform the Commercial approach to meet the Project TELUM requirement.
2. This RFI is not a call for competition. Any comments, indications of interest, participation, or non-participation by any organisation at this stage will not influence the process, selection and/or award decision for any future possible procurement, nor will it be taken as a supplier's committed position. Non-participation in this RFI will not exclude you from any possible future competition for this requirement.
3. Whilst the Authority may proceed to procurement in due course, there is no obligation to do so as a consequence of this Pre-Market Engagement. The Authority will make the final decision whether to proceed to a formal procurement and the Authority does not intend to be bound by any information at this stage.
4. The Authority makes no commitment to accept recommendations or suggestions and, in the event that the Authority does proceed to a formal procurement, an Invitation to Tender, once published, will contain the final requirements in relation to this service. All previous versions, including any documents published at this stage should be disregarded.

Background

5. The Light Aircraft Flying Task (LAFT) 2 Contract provides Aircraft, and Services to support University Air Squadrons. Furthermore, it also supports Air Experience Flying, Army grading, Royal Navy grading and streaming (including Qualified Flying Instructors), support to Elementary Flying Training (EFT) as part of UK Military Flying Training System (UK MFTS) as required, and other Defence tasks as required, such as international training. This contract has been deemed to be both operationally and reputationally important due to the close links it has with Universities and Air Cadet Squadrons, and the subsequent impact this has on recruitment and public image.



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6. Project TELUM (TELUM) seeks to upgrade the current LAFT 2 capability to meet the Defence Climate Change and Sustainability Strategy need for all new capabilities entering into service to demonstrate benefits for the environment over those services being replaced. TELUM will seek to embody the most suitable technology to ensure whole life environmental benefits whilst maintaining performance capabilities required by defence.
7. In March 2021, market engagement was undertaken via the Defence Sourcing Portal to aid the Authority in developing its understanding of the capability, dependencies, and competitiveness of the market to deliver the current LAFT requirement from 1 Apr 22 (original expiry date). The result of this engagement was for the current LAFT 2 Contract to be extended by four core years, plus four optional years. The LAFT 2 Contract therefore currently expires on 31 March 26, with the potential to be extended by up to four years to 31 March 30. The supplier of this Contract is Babcock Aerospace Limited.
8. The Authority has another contract in place for the UK Military Flying Training System (UK MFTS). This contract currently provides flying training for RAF, Army and Navy Aircrew, Officers, and Senior Non-Commissioned Officer Aircrew (NCA). The expiry date of this contract is 30 May 2033.
9. Project TELUM is looking to continue the LAFT requirement, with the additional TELUM environmental and training requirements, and align the expiry date of TELUM with that of UK MFTS. The end date of TELUM, therefore, is expected to be 30 May 2033, although this is only indicative and may be subject to change.
10. The Statement of Requirements can be found at Annex B of this RFI.

RFI Procedure & Timelines

11. Following release of this RFI on the Defence Sourcing Portal, Respondents will have until **1 Nov 24 12:00 GMT** to seek clarification from the Authority on any part of this RFI. Any clarifications received after this deadline may not be responded to.
12. Authority responses to all clarifications received by the submission deadline will be provided by **8 Nov 24 12:00 GMT**.
13. As part of this RFI, the Authority will host an Engagement Event at RAF Wittering (PE8 6HB). The Authority shall present the information from the RFI and will provide an open forum for interested suppliers to ask questions regarding the RFI. Questions may be taken away and responded to within the Clarification Period as



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outlined in this document. Please note that all information on this day will be held at **OFFICIAL** level.

14. To indicate your attendance at the Engagement Event at RAF Wittering, please send a confirmation email to Hannah Price (Hannah.Price107@mod.gov.uk) by **12:00 GMT on 15 Oct 24**. Please include the following as part of your response:
 - Full Name
 - Company Name
 - Vehicle details – Make, model, colour, Registration number.
15. Please also note that only three people per Supplier may attend and a valid form of ID will be required (Passport or Driver's Licence). Any attendance emails sent after this deadline will not be included, and you will unfortunately not be invited to the Engagement Event.
16. The proposed timings and details of the Engagement Event are:
 - 12:30** – Arrival at RAF Wittering
 - 12:45 – 13:30** – Presentation given by the Authority to Suppliers
 - 13:30 – 14:45** – Open floor for Clarification Questions
 - 14:45 – 15:00** – Break
 - 15:00 – 15:15** – Final remarks
 - 15:15 – 16:00** – Opportunity for one-to-one questions, and departure
17. The travel and subsistence cost of attending the Engagement Event will not be covered by the Authority.
18. The Authority withholds the right to cancel the Engagement Event if fewer than **two** different Suppliers positively respond to attend the Event. In this case, there would be no alternative means of holding the Event, therefore any Clarification Questions must be submitted virtually. Cancellation or procession of the Engagement Event would be confirmed by **17:00 GMT on 15 Oct 24**, and any costs associated with cancelling the event would not be covered by the Authority.
19. Responses to this RFI will be reviewed by subject matter experts from different functional areas within the Authority.
20. If upon review of submitted responses, any clarifications or additional information is required, organisations will be contacted using the details provided in your RFI response Annex A: Part 1.
21. The results and analysis of this RFI shall not constitute any form of pre-qualification exercise, nor shall they be in any way prejudicial to future procurement processes. The results of the RFI are for information only for the Authority.



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22. Any formal procurement process will be undertaken in accordance with the relevant Procurement Law (the Procurement Act 2023).
23. 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 any future requirement.

Activity	Timelines
RFI Published on Defence Sourcing Portal	11 Oct 24
Suppliers can submit Clarification Questions regarding the RFI (in accordance with the 'Contact' section)	11 Oct 24 – 1 Nov 24 12:00 GMT
Engagement Event	17 Oct 24
Authority provides responses to all Clarification Questions	8 Nov 24 12:00 GMT
RFI closes	22 Nov 24 12:00 GMT

RFI Instructions: How to submit responses to this RFI

24. Please submit a response to both Part 1 and Part 2 of Annex A via email. More information can be found in the 'Contact' section below.
25. Please respond to as much of the questionnaire as you feel is applicable. Should you consider a particular question is not applicable to your organisation, please state "not applicable".
26. Please stay within the specified word limit. Any responses outside of the word limit will not be reviewed. Please do not submit additional documents or materials not required as part of the RFI response, such as company overviews. The purpose of the RFI is to collect information related to the Questions as outlined in Part 1 and Part 2, any additional documents will not be included in the review process.



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Confidentiality & Proprietary Information

27. No information included in your response, or in discussions connected to it, will be disclosed to any other third party.
28. Proprietary information, where included, should be kept to minimum and must be clearly marked.
29. For the purposes of this RFI, any documentation submitted should not exceed the classification of **OFFICIAL**.

Disclaimer

30. Any costs relating to the preparation and submission of a response to this RFI are the sole responsibility of the respondent. The Authority will not be liable to reimburse any costs by any parties who respond to this notice or register and interest; either on the Defence Sourcing Portal or for further market engagements.

Contact

31. To submit your RFI response, please save Part 1 and Part 2 of Annex A in this RFI as a new document, file reference: **2024xxxx_TELUM_RFI_[Organisation Name]-O**. Please email your response to Hannah Price (Hannah.Price107@mod.gov.uk) either using Microsoft Word or PDF format.
32. Please return any Clarification Questions by **1 Nov 24 2024 12:00 GMT**, and the response to this RFI by **22 Nov 24 2024 12:00 GMT**. Further information about Timelines can be found in the 'RFI Procedure & Timelines' Section above.

Contracting Authority Details

Address Line 1: Ministry of Defence, Air Commercial

Address Line 2: Nimrod Building, 3 Site



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Address Line 3: RAF High Wycombe

Town: High Wycombe

Postcode: HP14 4UE

Country: United Kingdom

Contact Person: Hannah Price

For the attention of: Hannah Price

Email: Hannah.Price107@mod.gov.uk



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Annex A – RFI Question Set

Part 1: Company Details

Question	Answer
Full name of your Organisation	
Company Registration Number	
Organisation headquarters location (Town/City and Country)	
Is the company a Small-Medium Enterprise as defined by the UK Government? (Small to medium sized enterprise (SME) action plan - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk))	
Name of Company representative completing the RFI	
Contact details (email and telephone number)	
Company core specialisation products /services	
Main market sector	
Number of years in the sector	



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Part 2: RFI Questions

Please provide responses to the following questions, whereby each answer shall not exceed **350** words. Please provide context in your responses including the contracts your company has worked on, value, timescales, and any other information you find relevant.

Q1.1	What would be your solution to delivering the (full) TELUM requirement from 1 April 2026?
Q1.1a	What risks do you see impacting on your capacity to deliver the full requirement from 1 April 2026?
Q1.1b	If 1 April 2026 is unfeasible, what would be the earliest date you could meet to deliver the full TELUM requirement?
Q1.1c	What would be the expected impact that an end date of 2033 would have on your ability/willingness to provide a service?
Q1.2	How would you provide the capability to meet the requirement to embody sustainable technology and options for upgrades?
Q1.2a	Do you currently have a fleet of aircraft able to meet the requirement?
Q1.2b	If not, what would the lead time be for the delivery of a different aircraft type to meet the requirements?
Q1.3	What would be your recommended approach for the Authority to deliver the core services? (Please see "Core Services" in SOR at Annex B)
Q1.4	What do you believe would be the implications of having to gain accreditation (MAA and/or CAA) as part of providing a new fleet?
Q2.1	If 2033 was not the specified end date, what would be the minimum contract term you would expect for a requirement such as this?
Q2.2	What lotting structures would you see as appropriate for this requirement?



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Q2.2a	Which of these lots would you be able to deliver?
Q2.3	Based on the information provided, in your professional opinion, what would be the best procurement approach for the Authority to take to deliver the TELUM requirements to 2033?
Q2.3a	What risks have you identified in your suggested approach?
Q3	Is there anything else not covered by the questions above you would like to add?



Annex B - Statement of Requirements

Overview

1. Project TELUM has been conceived, within the Youth Aviation Programme, to support the Phase 0 training¹ needs of all three services, alongside other discretionary flying tasks required by Defence. These tasks are presented in more detail in this document but fall under 3 strategic objective headings:
 - a. **Inspire** a practical interest in aviation through provision of powered Air Experience activities.
 - b. **Attract** undergraduates to military service through provision of military flying training as part of the University Air Squadron (UAS) construct.
 - c. **Reduce pressure** on the Elementary Flying Training (EFT) phase of Military Flying Training System (MFTS) by:
 - (1) Enhancing the probability of proficiency progression of students entering MFTS based on prior training experience, and by offering a means of mitigating duplication via the delivery of UKMFTS accredited flying training.
 - (2) De-risking flying training through pre-MFTS grading (Army) and grading and streaming (Royal Navy).
 - (3) Providing a means of streaming suitable Army and Navy candidates, direct to rotary wing only training.
2. The current capability is provided for by the Light Aircraft Flying Training 2 (LAFT2) contract using a fleet of Grob 115E/EA Tutor T Mark 1 aircraft. The current service provision also means the contractor is responsible for:
 - a. Provision of aircraft and associated engineering support services to all 3 services; including Qualified Flying Instructors (QFIs) to 727 Naval Air Squadron (NAS) and Army Flying Grading (AFG).
 - b. Where required, site specific support services including:
 - (1) Mechanical Transport (MT) support.
 - (2) Flight Operations support.

¹ Phase 0 in this context is defined as those training tasks that precede or prepare potential candidates for entry into service in the RAF or flying training for Army and Navy



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- (3) Soft and Hard facilities management (where not provided for under existing defence arrangements).
- (4) Air Traffic Management.
- (5) Site Security.
- (6) Safety Equipment provision and maintenance.

Operating Environment and Processes

- 3. The TELUM capability will operate from the existing operating locations² as depicted in the following chart:



² For planning assumptions, the current footprint can be assumed to be extant, however it remains subject to ongoing Defence Estate Optimisation studies.

4. The Fg Hrs and core services requirement at each location are:

Location	Annual Flying hours	Core Services
Leuchars Station	1328	Engineering, Mechanical Transport
Glasgow International Airport	879	Engineering, Mechanical Transport
Aldergrove Flying Station	623	Engineering, Mechanical Transport
RAF Leeming	3260	Engineering, Mechanical Transport
RAF Woodvale	2182	Engineering, Mechanical Transport, Security, Supply, Fire and Rescue (firefighters only), Environmental Services (hazardous waste collection and disposal).
RAF Cranwell	2190	Engineering, Mechanical Transport
RAF Wittering	7445	Engineering, Mechanical Transport, Air Traffic Management (visual control only), Fire and Rescue (firefighters only).
RAF Cosford	2248	Engineering, Mechanical Transport
RAF Benson	3247	Engineering, Mechanical Transport
MOD St Athan	1493	Engineering, Mechanical Transport
Middle Wallop	1520	Engineering, Qualified Flying Instructors
MOD Boscombe Down	3229	Engineering, Mechanical Transport
RNAS Yeovilton	1865	Engineering, Qualified Flying Instructors
	Total flying hrs: 31,488	

Single Statement of User Need

5. *The User requires the capability to inspire and attract young people to a career in the RAF, through the delivery of ground training and powered air experience and flying training, whilst simultaneously providing a means to enable non-established, critical Defence tasks and Pan-Defence flying*



grading and streaming activity, using a suitably capable light flying training aircraft, and all supported by robust core services.

Key User Requirements

6. Defence requires continuity of the following capabilities:
 - A fully aerobatic, light fixed wing flying training aircraft that is sufficiently robust to withstand intensive use in an elementary flying training context.
 - Sufficient aircraft to meet the 6 Flying Training School annual flying task (31,488 flying hours per year) across 13 military and civil locations.
 - Aircraft maintenance.
 - Mechanical Transport support for both flying and ground training.
 - Air Traffic Management services at RAF Wittering.
 - Fire and rescue services at RAF Wittering and Woodvale.
 - Supply services at RAF Woodvale.
 - Security services at RAF Woodvale.
 - Provision of Qualified Flying Instructors for Army Flying Grading (Middle Wallop) and Royal Navy grading and streaming (RNAS Yeovilton).
7. Furthermore, Defence requires the following in addition to the above:
 - The embodiment of sustainable technology and options for upgrades³.
 - Ground Based Training Equipment to support training and maximise the value of live flying.
8. And that the use of regular and reserve personnel remains central to any capability construct, thereby enabling Defence to inspire a practical interest in military aviation and attract undergraduates to military service, through provision of accredited, powered military flying training and air experience.

TELUM Air System

9. The TELUM air system must be:
 - a. Able to operate by day from Civilian and Military operating bases.

³ To support a positive environmental impact and as directed by the Defence Climate Change and Sustainability strategy and the new integrated Procurement Model.



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- b. Able to operate from prepared grass and hard surface runways.
 - c. Able to operate by day from current operating locations without restriction due to airspace operating requirements.⁴
 - d. Able to operate in both Visual and Instrument Meteorological conditions (VMC and IMC).⁵
 - e. Of a single engine, monoplane design with fixed tricycle undercarriage and side by side seating arrangement.
10. The TELUM air system must meet the following performance capability needs:
- (1) Minimum endurance of 105 mins.
 - (2) Be capable of aerobatic manoeuvres.
 - (3) Should demonstrate a reduction in environmental impact across its operational lifespan⁶.

Ground Based Training Equipment (GBTE)

11. Defence recognises the need to exploit multiple, complementary methods and media in the delivery of training; maintaining an appropriate balance of live flying activity and ground based preparatory activity is critical. The TELUM GBTE capability will be employed primarily to optimise training time spent in the live flying environment; and therefore it should be complimentary to live flying.
12. As detailed in the Defence Aviation Net Zero Strategy⁷, any opportunities to maximise training value of GBTE should be taken. The core requirements of TELUM GBTE will be to:
- a. Familiarise students with the cockpit environment.
 - b. Enable the rehearsal of in-cockpit drills (including emergency procedures where possible).
 - c. Enable the previewing of sortie content.
 - d. Enable the rehearsal of sortie content.

⁴ There is a requirement, due to some operating locations, for the air system(s) to be able to operate in regulated airspace. The capability will be constrained if it cannot do this in IMC.

⁵ Includes ability to exit icing conditions if encountered inadvertently.

⁶ Cradle to grave in the case of air systems still to be manufactured, or from contract start to End of Life (EoL) in the case of air systems already manufactured.

⁷ Defence Aviation Net Zero Strategy - Rethinking capability provision.



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- e. Enable the extraction of relevant data that supports proficiency progression within MFTS.
- 13. Equipment is to be deployed across the TELUM capability at all operating locations and as such should be represented by equipment that is standardised across the TELUM footprint, appropriate to task, robust and require no specialist support under normal operation, and represent value for money when set against the cost of live flying. It is intended that the GBTE be evolved throughout the life of the contract to enhance productivity, capacity and capability as user familiarity develops.

Core Services

- 14. The TELUM capability will depend on contractor-provided services at locations where Authority provided support is not available. These services, as specified in the table under “Operating Environment and Processes” will be required to interface seamlessly with host unit systems and processes. Additional context for some services is provided below.
- 15. **Air Traffic Management (ATM).** ATM is the responsibility of Project MARSHALL at all service operating locations except RAF Wittering and those civil airfields which provide their own services. At time of writing it is unknown whether MARSHALL will provide ATM services at RAF Wittering, so it is necessary to include it at this stage.
- 16. **Defence Fire and Rescue Programme (DFRP).** DFRP assumed responsibility for provision of fire and rescue vehicles and their maintenance at RAF Wittering and RAF Woodvale. However, the provision of firefighters at those sites remains within scope of Project TELUM.

Organisational Constraints

- 17. The TELUM capability will be subject to the following organisational constraints:
 - a. The capability must operate within the existing organisational structures that support 6FTS, 727 NAS at RNAS Yeovilton and 674 (AFG) Sqn at Army Aviation Centre, Middle Wallop.
 - b. Current operating locations which have been optimised to minimise travel times for RAFAC sqns participating in AEF, UAS students attending training, and to allow single Service interests to be represented.



- c. Due to the delivery of outputs to youth organisations and other vulnerable groups, compliance with Authority Safeguarding requirements and Authority Supervisory Care Direction is mandatory.

Environmental Considerations

18. The TELUM capability must be delivered cognisant of the requirement to minimise environmental impact in accordance with Defence Aviation Net Zero Strategy, which aims to achieve net zero carbon emissions as soon as practicable, with a no later than target of 2040; and in advance of the wider UK Government policy framework which requires overall net zero by 2050.
19. The Defence Aviation Net Zero Pathway is through a combination of the following 5 mitigation options:
 - Efficiency improvements – 30%
 - Sustainable Aviation Fuel – 34%
 - Zero emissions propulsion – 1%
 - Carbon removals – 15%
 - Reimagine capability provision – 20%⁸
20. The Integrated Review identifies the need to accelerate the transition to a net zero carbon economy, both as a theme for sustaining advantage through science and technology, and building resilience at home and overseas. The subsequent Defence Climate Change and Sustainability Strategic Approach further states that planned projects should seek to deliver a step change in their approach to net zero. The Defence Aviation Net Zero strategy articulates the pathway for reducing CO₂, of which one critical contributor is decarbonising basic military flying training at the single-entry portal of MFTS for all UK military aircrew and aviators.
21. TELUM must therefore be responsive to any emergent technologies or options that offer a reduced environmental impact of the capability, both in terms of the air system and associated support, measured against the current environmental impact of the capability. Whole life or 'Cradle to Grave' impact should be considered in the case of any TELUM solutions yet to enter the manufacturing phase; any solutions exploiting aircraft already produced will be required to demonstrate clear environmental benefits throughout their remaining operational life and into disposal.

⁸ [Defence Aviation Net Zero Strategy 2023 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)