

Clarification Question Answers – DE&S Executive Recruitment Support - CCDT/399

	Question	Answer
1	Are you able to provide a breakdown of volume per lot? I have seen the breakdown in the original tender notice by revenue, but I wonder if we could have that by volume/number of roles?	Last year there were between 0-10 vacancies per each lot.
2	Are you please able to provide salary bandings per lot, in relation to permanent staff, in order for us to provide a firm price as required?	DE&S does not operate salary bandings within its Senior Leadership Group and each role is individually benchmarked.
3	Is this opportunity for UK based staff only, or will it also cover overseas offices?	The expectation is that roles will be UK based.
4	Can you please confirm if you want one separate tender package per lot? I.e. to be packaged, labelled and sent separately?	We will be happy to accept your tender in one package but obviously labelled clearly as to which lot the documents are relating to.
5	I assume the 8,000 word count/15 page limit is per lot?	Yes, it is per lot.
6	<p>We are a job board that has been involved with many government and MOD frameworks, where the recruitment agencies involved in these would use our job board to find relevant candidates in this market.</p> <p>Being that we are a job board and not a recruitment agency is there a way we can help with this?</p>	For this requirement, DE&S is looking for Executive Search suppliers. We are not looking to engage with job boards directly at this time.

7	<p>ITT for CCDT/399 refers to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schedule of Requirements – Schedule 2 • Statement of Requirement – Schedule 5 • Contract Conditions • DEFFORM 111 – Appendix to Contract - Addresses and Other Information <p>These are not within the ITT document so presumably separate. I cannot locate these documents from Government Contracts website, nor from mod contracts website (where I have registered). I assume they give more detail of posts likely to be included in each of the 6 lots and requirements etc.</p>	<p>The link below will take you directly to the advert on contracts finder. There, scroll to the bottom of the page where you will notice a heading stating “Other information”, under that heading click onto the link beneath “Contract Terms and Conditions”. That should bring up the contract where you may find all the documents you have referred to in your email.</p> <p>https://www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk/Notice/509dab19-2783-4372-bd16-382f2d6a5d60</p>
8	<p>The mod contracts website has a questionnaire which I have completed but no facility that I can see for attaching documents (e.g. our responses for questions asked in the ITT about each lot). I assume we both have to complete the online questionnaire and separately send our responses only on paper (as instructed in the ITT) in respect of each lot we wish to bid for?</p> <p>Please could you confirm the submission is only paper and CD? Presumably we can submit the online questionnaire now and then send the paper/CD tenders at any time as long as they arrive before the deadline and you will marry up checking the online responses and paper/CD tender submissions? Please could you confirm my understanding is right?</p>	<p>You are correct. I do not believe that you are able to attach documents through the website. Sending any paper/CD tenders you have will therefore be appropriate. As you said, do ensure that they arrive before the deadline so that we can check both submissions accordingly.</p>

9	<p>I realise, that this tender is aimed at media agencies, but have yourself and the rest of the MOD considered utilizing job boards and CV Databases directly?</p>	<p>For this requirement, DE&S is looking for Executive Search suppliers. We are not looking to engage with media agencies or job boards directly at this time.</p>
10	<p>We note that under the evaluation criteria for each lot, that the statement of requirements references are listed.</p> <p>For example, Lot 3 Track record section, we must respond to requirement reference 11, 15.d, 15j and 15 u</p> <p>We cannot see a section 15 in the statement of requirements.</p> <p>Can you kindly confirm the correct page number and section reference for this question?</p> <p>Similarly Lot 3 Supplier resource also states sections 8 and 10 of the Statement of Requirements but these relate to fees and conflict of interest.</p>	<p>The originally published DEFFORM 47 Evaluation Criteria did indeed have erroneous references against the Statement of Requirement. This has since been updated, and a Corrigendum was published on Defence Contracts Online. Tenderers are encouraged to re-download the new DEFFORM 47 from the Government Contracts Finder website which contains the corrected points of reference.</p>
11	<p>Please advise on anticipated volume of staff required across the agreement or lots – 120 is mentioned, but this seems very low for the projected spend (I therefore suspect this applies to a single lot, rather than all).</p>	<p>Last year there were between 0-10 vacancies per each lot</p>

12	<p>We understand that we must complete 'Tenderer's Commercially Sensitive Information Form' DEFFORM 539 A (as per page 28 of DEFFORM47 under Annex A) as part of our tender response</p> <p>Can you please confirm if this is the same form as Schedule 5 - Commercially Sensitive Information located on page.45 Contract Terms and Conditions document?</p> <p>If not, please can you provide a copy of DEFFORM 539 A as we cannot locate it in the tender documentation.</p>	<p>Yes, I can confirm that it is the same form as Schedule 5.</p>
13	<p>We understand that we must provide a 'statement relating to good standing' as per page 28 on DEFFORM47.</p> <p>We cannot locate this document - can you please send us a copy of this document so that we can complete it.</p>	<p>As we are having Tenderers Complete a Suitability Assessment Questionnaire (or 'SAQ') on Defence Contracts Online, a Statement Relating to Good Standing is not required. However we are happy to review any that are sent in as part of a tender response.</p>
14	<p>Can you please confirm if Cyber Essentials Accreditation/Certification is a mandatory requirement for this contract?</p>	<p>Cyber Essential Accreditation is a mandatory requirement of doing business with DE&S. To find out if your company has the required level of Accreditation for this Contract, visit https://supplier-cyber-protection.service.gov.uk/ and complete a Supplier Assurance Questionnaire using the RAR code provided in the Contract Notice.</p> <p>If you do not have the required Cyber Essential Accreditation at this time, but are able to demonstrate that you are working towards it, and propose a plan of implementation by Contract Award, we can consider this issue at the Tender Evaluation stage.</p>

15	<p>Within the tender enquiry document (20180319-CCDT399_DEFFORM47) towards the end there is a form we must complete; “DEFFORM 47 Annex A – Tender Submission Document”. As part of this there are various other forms referenced, some of which I have found online, some of which I am unsure what they are. Can you please confirm if the following need to be completed as part of this “DEFFORM 47 Annex A – Tender Submission Document”;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Compliance Matrix? b. Statement Relating to Good Standing? c. Bank/Parent Company Guarantee. d. Additional Mandatory Requirements? I am unsure what this is. 	<p>A. We require full compliance with and acceptance of, the terms and conditions provided and therefore a Compliance Matrix has not been provided for this requirement.</p> <p>B. As we are having Tenderers Complete a Suitability Assessment Questionnaire (or 'SAQ') on Defence Contracts Online, a Statement Relating to Good Standing is not required. However we are happy to review any that are sent in as part of a tender response.</p> <p>C. Again, this issue is covered in the SAQ, and you should complete the SAQ finance-related questions.</p> <p>D. There are no Additional Mandatory Requirements, other than that stated for Lot 1 (5% of market share on Executive Grapevine).</p>
016	<p>I can no longer see the advert on the Defence Contract Finder, and it seems to have disappeared.</p>	<p>I am uncertain on why you would not be able to see the advert on Contracts Finder, below is a direct link to the advert.</p> <p>https://www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk/Notice/509dab19-2783-4372-bd16-382f2d6a5d60</p>

017	<p>Page 8 of section D, final paragraph - MOD states that only tenderers with more than 5% of market share on Executive Grapevine will pass the evaluation for Lot 1. However, as firms pay to be included in Executive Grapevine, we don't believe this is a fair metric to use as it is not an objective measure of the marketplace and supplier activity and that other measures more relevant to DE&S should be considered. Is there any possibility to remove or change this requirement?</p>	<p>We have verified with Executive Grapevine that membership to the Executive Search firm directory is a paid service but it has no bearing on the market share rankings. The companies in bold on the Executive Search market share rankings are those who have paid to be included in the Directory, however those not in bold have not paid for the Directory. Therefore, payment has no bearing on the Executive Search ranking based on market share.</p> <p>The market review is conducted completely independently concentrating on firms that exclusively focus on assignments for UK executive positions with guaranteed first year remuneration above £100k, and also non-executive roles. The report includes only those firms working on a retainer basis using a research methodology. The combination of assignment salary level, retained fee structure and research basis captures the vast majority of the market for UK senior level hires and aligns to the DE&S executive recruitment service requirement.</p> <p>The Authority believes that this is valid evaluation criteria for the premium leadership lot. Please note the market share stipulation is only applicable to Lot 1 so potential bidders are able to tender for one or more of the other 5 lots</p>
018	<p>Please can you confirm whether an electronic copy of the tender documents saved onto on a USB memory stick would be acceptable instead of a CD?</p>	<p>Unfortunately, due to Security protocol we are unable to receive USB memory sticks and we will require a CD.</p>
019	<p>I am contacting you to see if you have any micro opportunities/mini lists for recruitment.</p>	<p>No micro opportunities exist at this time. I would encourage you to continue to keep an eye on Defence Contracts Online and the Contracts Finder website. You may also wish to approach any of the successful contractors of this Contract Requirement to see if they have any sub-contracting opportunities.</p>
020	<p>Hello, could we please clarify what the salary levels for each lot under this framework?</p>	<p>DE&S does not operate salary bandings within its Senior Leadership Group and each role is individually benchmarked. Last year, salary ranges on adverts varied from approximately £70,000 to £160,000</p>

021	It is our understanding from the tender documents that we are required to submit one bid response whether we are tendering for one or multiple lots. Is this correct?	Tenderers are welcome to submit responses for multiple lots, however these should be composed into a single overall document.
022	If the above is incorrect and a separate bid response is required for each lot, please can you clarify if the word and page limit applies to our response in its entirety (i.e. all lot responses) or the individual tender response we submit for each lot?	The page limit/word count specified would technically be per lot, and thus if you are tendering for multiple lots this would be cumulative. However we would discourage Tenderers from providing overly lengthy responses, and would encourage keeping your responses as concise as possible while still addressing the relevant evaluation criteria.
023	To support our decision to bid or not, could we, from an interim perspective, have the previous annual spend and previous number of roles per annum?	This is difficult to pinpoint as it is a constantly moving picture. Ballpark figures would be c.10 individuals with an estimated spend of £1.5million.
024	Cls 47.2(c) In view of the non-exclusivity statement in cls 47.1(d), could you please clarify the rationale behind cls 47.2(c), and give examples of what you would consider to be 'unreasonable refusal'?	The Authority's expectation is that if a Framework Contractor is given a Task on their Lot, and are unable to accept that Task, that a full explanation will be provided to the Authority.
025	Please can you clarify the requirement for a daily rate fee model for interim candidates? Based on clause 47.8, our understanding is that interim candidates will become interim employees of DE&S. This would suggest candidates would be paid a salary rather than a day rate.	Interim appointments would be classed as Contractors and would not be employees of DE&S.
026	We understand DE&S is looking for a firm price paid in three instalments to be applicable to all roles within each lot. This is highly uncommon within the executive search industry and, due to the significant disparity between the salaries of your required roles within these lots, this is unlikely to offer DE&S the most cost-effective solution. Would DE&S consider allowing bidders to propose firm prices based on salary bands?	DE&S would like firm prices for each instalment per lot. Bidders are permitted to propose different firm prices for each lot to provide the most cost effective solution.
027	In saying 'contractors are expected to cover all costs associated with the engagement of the candidate from this day rate', we understand that DE&S will expect the agreed day rate for an assignment to be the final charge rate (i.e. incorporating the agency margin). Is this correct?	Correct. All interim day rates will be final charge rate inclusive of margin.

028	It is our understanding that bidders are not required to propose any rates or charges for interim appointments. Is this correct?	Correct. All interim day rates will be agreed on an individual basis.
029	Please provide a full list of roles recruited within each lot for the past 12 months including salaries	Last year there were between 0-10 vacancies per each lot. Indicative job titles can be found in each lot description.
030	We understand DE&S has freedoms relating to pay and rewards which it will use to secure top quality talent. Does this mean that there are no formal salary bands or grading systems for roles within this executive framework? Can you provide indicative permanent salaries for each lot within the framework?	DE&S does not operate salary bandings within its Senior Leadership Group and each role is individually benchmarked. Last year, salary ranges on adverts varied from £70,000 to £160,000
031	Could you define the criteria for an SME as the contract summary states "No SME's" are suitable or point me in the right direction of where I may find more details?	We are specifically looking for organisations that can evidence "dedicated Consultancy, Research and Administrative expertise that is suitably trained, flexible and capable of delivering the service". It's possible an SME will be unable to demonstrate the dedicated expertise if they are a single person operation or have very few individuals, but we would encourage any Tenderer who feels they can adequately meet all of the required Evaluation Criteria to apply.
032	As the DEFFORM 47 documents states, you require written and CD copies of our bid. Will this also need to include the response prepared within the DCO response manager?	I believe you are referring to the SAQ on the DCO contract notice. We can access this directly from the DCO once a Tenderer completes and submits it, and therefore you do not need to include it on the CD also, but you may include it if you wish.
033	DEFFORM47 document indicates that CVs are required, I assume this if for the recruiting team that will be dedicated to this framework?	Correct
034	Please may we clarify that for return purposes this is a dual stage tender process, and meaning both the PQQ/SAQ via this portal and the ITT response via postal submission, are both due for return by the 24/04/2018 at 10am.	Both are due for return on the same date, 10am on 24/04/2018 .
035	Can DE&S confirm whether suppliers are required to supply both permanent and interim resource for each Lot, or whether it's possible to bid for permanent only?	For each lot, we are looking for supplier who have the capability to supply both permanent and interim resource.

036	Can DE&S confirm whether this framework is intended purely for use by MOD DE&S or will it be open to other central government contracting authorities?	This framework is only for vacancies at DE&S.
037	Can DE&S confirm whether there is a set number of call-offs that successful bidders will be able to refuse without incurring penalties?	This is a Framework Contract, and the Authority reserves the right to seek an alternative provider if a Framework Contractor is unable/refuses to provide the requested services. Therefore there is no 'set number of call-offs that successful bidders will be able to refuse'.
038	Can DE&S confirm whether there will be any scope for contract negotiation by successful bidders, particularly relating to an overall limit of liability and a general exclusion of indirect/consequential losses?	The Open Procedure of the European Union Public Contract Regulations 2015 does not allow for negotiation with suppliers during the Tendering and Contract Award stage.
039	It says 'no' to SMEs applying for the contract, I have assumed we are an SME but I would appreciate you clarifying if this is the case.	We are specifically looking for organisations that can evidence "dedicated Consultancy, Research and Administrative expertise that is suitable trained, flexible and capable of delivering the service". It's possible an SME will be unable to demonstrate the dedicated expertise if they are a single person operation or have very few individuals, but would encourage any Tenderer who feels they can adequately meet all of the required Evaluation Criteria to apply.
040	Lot Evaluation Criteria: - The 'Statement of Requirement' box refers to a series of numbers/letters to guide the answer. Please identify the document with which it is to be cross referenced - the 'Statement of Requirement' document only numbered to 12.	The originally published DEFFORM 47 Evaluation Criteria did indeed have erroneous references against the Statement of Requirement. This has since been updated, and a Corrigendum was published on Defence Contracts Online. Tenderers are encouraged to re-download the new DEFFORM 47 from the Government Contracts Finder website which contains the corrected points of reference.

041	Short List - Does the MoD accept that 'face to face' interview includes FaceTime and Skype? This being mindful that neither candidate nor company expenses are payable.	Assessment of candidates at DE&S is anticipated to be through either a face to face or Skype interview.
042	Interim Candidate Management - Can the provision of admin support including payment processing be via third party technology/systems?	We require all payments made from DE&S to be made using our Contracting, Purchasing and Finance (CP&F) software. We also require all invoices to DE&S on this contract to be sent to us electronically through our CP&F software. We do not prescribe how your own third party payment processing occurs.
043	Management Information - In what format is this anticipated to be delivered? Weekly report etc.	This will be dependent on current campaigns and throughputs and therefore we cannot give an answer on the regularity of the reporting at this time.