

NATO Improved Link Eleven Project Management Office (NILE PMO)



Request for Information (RFI)
Link 22 Mobile Test System Requirement
18 March 2024

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1. BACKGROUND

- a. The Naval Information Warfare Systems Command (NAVWAR), in support of Program Executive Office Command, Control, Communications, Computers, and Intelligence (PEO C4I), Navy Command and Control Program Office (PMW 150), on behalf of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Improved Link Eleven (NILE) Nations is conducting a market survey to determine the interest and capability of Industry to provide a Link 22 mobile test system.
- b. This Request for Information (RFI) intends to accomplish two objectives: 1) to gain an understanding of which parties in the current marketplace within the seven NILE Nations (CAN, DEU, ESP, FRA, GBR, ITA and USA) are interested in delivering the RFI requirement, and 2) to gain an understanding of whether and how those interested parties can meet the requirements of this RFI.
- c. During the late 1980s, NATO, agreeing on the need to improve the performance of Link 11, produced a Mission Need Statement (MNS) and later the Elementary Requirements Document that became the basis for the establishment of the NILE Project. The Link 22 goals are to replace Link 11, thereby removing its inherent limitations; to improve allied interoperability; to complement Link 16; and to enhance the commanders' war fighting capability.
- d. The design of Link 22 uses a layered communications stack approach to produce a modular, open system architecture, with well-defined interfaces between the components. This approach allows for substitution of components on either side of the interface, and it maximizes extensions and enables contributions from multiple providers, including contributions from non-US NILE providers, during the sustainment of Link 22.
- e. The inner grey box in Figure 1 below indicates the NILE Communications Equipment (NCE) system components that consist of the following:
 - i. System Network Controller (SNC);
 - ii. Modernized Link 22 Link Level COMSEC (LLC 7M);
 - iii. Signal Processing Controllers (SPCs); and
 - iv. Radios
- f. The Link 22 system, shown by the outer green box in Figure 1, consists of the NILE Communication Equipment (NCE) and the Link 22 portion of the Data Link Processor (DLP). Within the DLP, the Link 22 system consists of the interface to the SNC and the handling of the tactical messages that the system transmits and receives on the data link. The formats for the tactical messages are defined in ATDL-5.22 (Allied Tactical Data Link Publication). The DLP is connected to, or is part of, the Tactical Data System (TDS), also known as the host system of the NILE Unit (NU), which processes the received tactical messages and generates tactical messages for transmission in accordance with the unit's national requirements. Additionally, a Time of Day (TOD) source that meets Link 22 requirements is required.
- g. All NILE interface specifications (the orange and yellow arrows in Fig. 1) and the SNC have been jointly defined, designed and developed by the NILE Nations.

LINK 22 SYSTEM

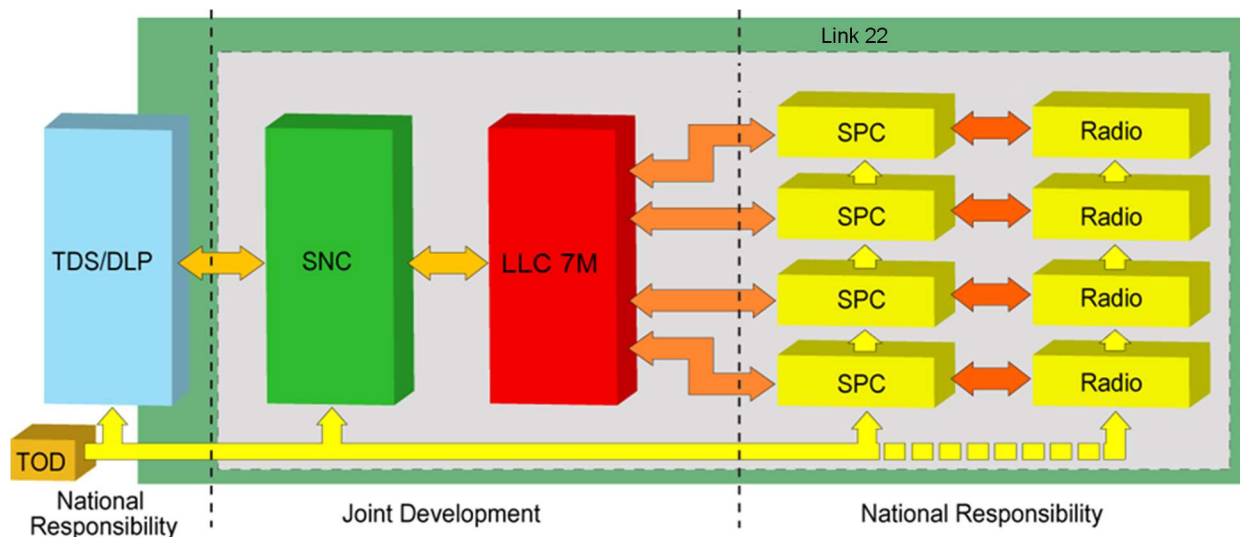


Figure 1- Link 22 System with NILE Communication Equipment

- h. In addition to the NCE shown in Figure 1, the NCE also includes the NILE Reference Systems (NRS). The NRS is a tool that simulates the DLP, LLCs and the media segment (modems and radios) and several other SNCs for testing of the NCE in a laboratory setting.

2. LINK 22 MOBILE TEST SYSTEM REQUIREMENT

The NILE Project Management Office has a documented requirement which can be found in the Link 22 Mobile Test System Performance Work Statement, which includes all system requirements, configurations, any provided GFE/GFP, and proposal options available.

3. RESTRICTIONS

- a. The Government plans to award a contract under U.S. law, in accordance with Federal Acquisition Regulations (FARS) and Defense Federal Acquisition Regulations (DFARS).
- b. Any non-US vendor awarded a contract as part of this requirement will be mandated to request a National Interest Determination (NID). The vendor shall be responsible for performing all requirements under this contract.
- c. In accordance with the NILE ISS Phase Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) dated 02 July 2002 and FAR 6.302-4 (International Agreement), award is limited to vendors of the seven NILE ISS Phase Participating Nations (CAN, DEU, ESP, FRA, GBR, ITA and USA). In addition, only vendors of the Participating Nations will be eligible for award of first-level subcontracts.
- d. NATO STANAG documents (e.g., STANAG 5522) shall be obtained by the Vendor independently.

4. CONTRACTING AND INDUSTRY EXCHANGES

- a. At present, the Government is considering procuring these supplies or services via a Single Award Purchase Order with Firm-Fixed-Price (FFP) CLINs. The Government anticipates this Purchase Order to have a two-year period of Performance. The Government seeks additional input from interested vendors regarding the Government's planned contracting strategy.
- b. NAVWAR representatives and the NILE PMO may or may not choose to interact with respondents in order to perform market research; such exchanges, should they occur, would be solely for the purpose of obtaining further clarification of industry's potential capabilities.
- c. The North American Industry Classification System Code is 541512 and the Product Service Code is DA01.

5. CAPABILITY QUESTIONS

- a. Vendors are still encouraged to respond to this RFI if they are able to meet, most, but not all, RFI requirements. Teaming possibilities may become apparent, and subcontracting/teaming arrangements between vendors from any combination of NILE Nations to meet the entire requirement are actively encouraged. If vendors "team up", please provide details of any proposed teaming/subcontracting arrangements as part of the RFI response.
- b. In responses to this RFI, vendors are required to respond to the following capability questions:
 - i. Please briefly describe previous experience in building and delivering Link 22 mobile test system for use in Link 22 trials involving operational platforms. Previous experience should relate to efforts where the goal of the Link 22 mobile test system was to verify the end-to-end operation of a full Link 22 test suite and observe, collect and analyze the data.
 - ii. Please briefly describe the architecture of the Link 22 mobile test system that you would deliver, to meet the requirements set out in Section 3 and Section 4 of this document. Vendors shall include a diagram/picture of the Link 22 mobile test system that they would provide.
 - iii. Please briefly describe your experience delivering training on the operation of the Link 22 mobile test system to Government and civilian users.
 - iv. Please briefly describe the Link 22 mobile test system subject matter experts in your company, who can provide remote and in-person support on the operation and maintenance of the Link 22 mobile test system.
 - v. Please state if there are any parts of the PWS requirement with which you cannot comply, and if you propose a teaming arrangement (as stated above, please include the teaming arrangement terms).
 - vi. Please provide the technical specification of the climatic condition ranges for the operation of the Link 22 mobile test system.

- c. The Government may choose to award to a company that can provide data collection services in place of selling a physical unit for the Government Team to collect the data. Under this approach the vendor would travel on behalf of the PMO to identified instances to collect raw and processed data to be distributed to the PMO instead of selling the hardware system. To understand this approach the prospective request for proposal will require the vendor provide a comprehensive plan on how it will support the NILE Project Management Office by observing, collecting, analyzing and preparing and presenting the collected data. Under this approach, the ownership and maintenance of Mobile Test System will remain with the Vendor, however the data collected shall become the property of the NILE Project Management Office. This approach will require the vendor to provide the NILE Project Management Office with both raw collected data along with any analyzed data as requested in the tasking. The vendor is to assume that the service would be required up to 3 instances in a 12-month POP.
 - i. Please describe your experience collecting data as described above. The Government Team is interested in the contract type of prior procurements and any benefits or challenges resulting from this type of data collection service.

6. SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

- a. Responses shall be limited to ten (10) single-sided A4 pages, in 12-point Times New Roman font, standard 1" margins, including appendices, enclosures, pictures, diagrams, and footnotes. Each response shall include the following information:
 - i. Primary Point of Contact (name, address, phone number, email address, CAGE¹ code, Unique Entity ID² number);
 - ii. A statement that the respondent will allow the Government to release the respondent's proprietary data to the Government support vendor. In the absence of this statement, the response will only be reviewed by Government personnel.
- b. Interested parties are requested to respond to this RFI with a white paper following the instructions listed below. Submissions must be received no later than 1000 PST, 26 April 2024. All responses must be submitted in Microsoft Word for Office 2010-compatible format, Responses shall be submitted to the NAVWAR e-Commerce Central website at <https://e-commerce.sscno.nmci.navy.mil/>. If the NAVWAR e-Commerce website is not responding or you do not have access, responses may be submitted by email directly to Ms. Jules Ward (Contract Specialist) at

¹ Applicable to US and CAN vendors only

² Applicable to US and CAN vendors only

julie.a.ward38.civ@us.navy.mil. See the NAVWAR e-Commerce website for instructions on how to submit responses. For information regarding this RFI, contact Ms. Jules Ward. Acknowledgement of receipt will not be made. Availability of any formal solicitation will be announced separately.

- c. The Government may choose to award to a company that can provide data collection services in place of a physical unit that would allow the Government Team to collect the data.

7. QUESTIONS

- a. Questions regarding this RFI shall be submitted in writing by e-mail to the Contract Specialist, Jules Ward at julie.a.ward38.civ@us.navy.mil. Verbal questions will NOT be accepted. Questions will be answered by posting answers to the NAVWAR E-Commerce Central website <https://e-commerce.dc3n.navy.mil>, and www.link22.org; accordingly, questions shall NOT contain proprietary or classified information. The deadline for questions is 1500 PST, 18 April 2024. The Government does not guarantee that questions will be answered. Interested parties are invited to subscribe to the NAVWAR E-commerce website, and to regularly access www.link22.org, to ensure they receive any updates connected with this RFI.
- b. NOTE: THIS RFI IS FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY. IT DOES NOT CONSTITUTE A SOLICITATION AND SHALL NOT BE CONSTRUCTED AS A COMMITMENT BY THE GOVERNMENT. RESPONSES IN ANY FORM ARE NOT AN OFFER AND THE GOVERNMENT IS UNDER NO OBLIGATION TO AWARD A CONTRACT AS A RESULT OF THIS ANNOUNCEMENT. NO FUNDS ARE AVAILABLE TO PAY FOR PREPARATION OF RESPONSES TO THIS ANNOUNCEMENT. SUBMISSIONS WILL NOT BE RETURNED.