



Maritime &
Coastguard
Agency

MCA Aviation: Pan Government Aerial Surveillance Question & Answer Sheet

During the Aerial Surveillance Industry day, attendees from the Maritime & Coastguard Agency (MCA) and Marine Management Organisation (MMO) were asked a range of questions by industry. This document has been created to provide a record of question raised, and Government's responses in the run up to the Aerial Surveillance procurement commencing.

Question 1: Within the timeline you have 2 tranches, can you explain what those 2 tranches are?

Answer: Bids will be evaluated in 2 tranches, following the receipt of ITT responses. Tranche 1 will cover pre-negotiation/ dialogue, bidders will be provided an opportunity to update their bid responses. Tranche 2 will cover a re-assessment of updated bids.

Question 2: 3 month start up from contract award seems challenging and could advantage the incumbent.

Answer: Timeline shared during industry day presentation held on 19 April 2018 is indicative and the MCA are not looking at a hard switch from old to new but a gradual transitional phased in approach. We are serious about creating competition and ensuring all potential bidders have a fair chance. We are aware that we need to create a transition timeline within the ITT to allow for that and to ensure a capable service can be rolled out.

Question 3: How many "pollution events" have been found by the current methods over the last 3 years (so that I could understand the range / distance window etc that would be expected and need to deploy to etc).

Answer: In the previous 3 years the MCA's contracted aircraft has been used almost exclusively for verification rather than active surveillance. Pollution is normally 'found' through daily satellite passes (EMSA CleanSeaNet), third party reports (passing ships, aircraft and members of the public when washed onshore) and through self-reporting by the polluter. Over the past 3 years approximately 130 satellite reports have been received annually, containing about 450 alerts to potential spills. Verification flights in support of these would normally only occur where there is further corroborating evidence of a spill. As a guide, in 2017 approximately 120 hours were flown in support of pollution verification and surveillance. Known pollution incidents are collated into yearly ACOPS reports (Advisory Committee on Protection of the Sea), which can be found at the link: <http://www.acops.org.uk/acops-reports/>.

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The only dedicated surveillance conducted by the aircraft is through the UK's 'Tour d'Horizon' – a yearly surveillance flight on a pre-determined North Sea route (including installations outside the UK EEZ) conducted over 3 consecutive days in support of the Bonn Agreement. The outputs of these are publicly available at the following link, which also gives wider detail on the Bonn Agreement: <https://www.bonnagreement.org/publications>. The capability requirement is to respond to any potential pollution incident within the UK EEZ, extending beyond the UK EEZ in the North Sea for Tour d'Horizon (3 days annually).

Question 4: What is the extent of the surveillance requirement, vice verification

Answer: The capability requirement is almost currently exclusively for verification as opposed to active surveillance. The only dedicated surveillance to be conducted is through the UK's 'Tour d'Horizon' – a yearly surveillance flight on a pre-determined North Sea route (including installations outside the UK EEZ) conducted over 3 consecutive days in support of the Bonn Agreement.

Question 5: What is the reporting requirement once pollution is found, and what is the timeline?

Answer: The Threshold (minimum) requirement is to report the pollutant by type, thickness and coverage within an hour of finding the pollution. The Objective (aspirational) requirement is to provide this in near real time. A full post flight report showing location, assessments and images is required.

Question 6: What capability is required beyond finding maritime pollution and reporting its position and size?

Answer: The full capability is outlined in the Single Statement of User Need which will be issued in draft for consideration.

Question 7: What is the extent of the area of interest (although the 'UK EEZ' was briefed, it was apparent that some were not familiar with it)?

Answer: The minimum area of interest is the UK EEZ, see <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/uk-maritime-limits-and-law-of-the-sea> the objective area of interest is the UK SRR as far out to 30°W as practicable, see Annex A UK SRR.

Question 8: Where will the service operate from?

Answer: At present we are open to suggestions and proposals from industry regarding the best operational location for the service. We will assess operating locations on a bid by bid basis. However, a consultation is being released soon, if industry provides additional steer before the ITT is released we may make a decision on a preferred location.

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Question 9: The mobilisation timescales are tight and may force us to not bid. Will those timescales remain as stated?

Answer: We have received feedback from industry regarding the current mobilisation window and will take onboard feedback for consideration. A final approach to mobilisation will be captured in the ASV ITT.

Question 10: Would the operator need to work with other government departments?

Answer: Not necessarily. The operator will be contracted to deliver a service on behalf of the MCA and will be tasked by the MCA's Aeronautical Rescue Coordination Centre (ARCC) based in Fareham. Although we envisage the service being tasked to complete tasks which support the needs of another government department, the MCA will be responsible for contractor/service management.

Question 11: Am I in the right place? My organisation provides equipment that can be used by a potential service provider, but I am not an operator.

Answer: We encourage attendees to collaborate and explore ways to collaborate to deliver the service we aim to procure.

Question 12: How many hours will the operator operate for and how will the MCA manage dips in airframe usage.

Answer: The MCA is working closely with Other Government Departments (OGDs) to assess baseline figures for service use and will provide clarity in the Aerial Surveillance ITT and service requirements.

Question 13: I have thoughts regarding the service and ways to deliver it but would rather share thoughts directly with the MCA for discussion/consideration.

Answer: The MCA will be publishing an ASV consultation document. We encourage stakeholders to participate in the consultation process (which includes an opportunity to meet and discuss issues prior to providing responses) to share thoughts and provide clarity regarding industry capability.