

**RFI-ACT-SACT-21-50**

**Amendment 2**

**Headquarters Supreme Allied Commander Transformation Norfolk Virginia**



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**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION AND QUESTIONS**

This document contains supplementary information and a supplementary questionnaire relating to HQACT's Request for Information (RFI) for NATO's Integrated METOC Briefing and UserServices (NIMBUS) Capability.

The information and questions contained are intended to provide further context to Nations and Suppliers responding to the initial RFI.

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HQ Supreme Allied Commander Transformation RFI 21-50 Supplementary Information	
Request For Information No.	21-50
Project Title	Supplementary Information for Nations and Industry responding to the RFI for NATO's Integrated METOC Briefing and User Services
Due date for submission of requested supplementary questionnaire information	20 September 2021
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**Introduction**

1. In relation to the Request for Information document published to the ACT Contracting website on 17 March 2021, Headquarters Supreme Allied Commander Transformation (HQSACT) wishes to provide further contextual information and request further information from respondents in relation to the NATO integrated Meteorology and Oceanography (METOC) Briefing and User Services capability. The intent is to provide further support to an analysis of available alternatives which in turn is aimed at supporting NATO Governance decision making with respect to future common-funded capability development in relation to NIMBUS.

2. In alignment with the original RFI issued<sup>1</sup> this request does not constitute a commitment to issue a future request for proposal (RFP), but simply to collaborate with industry and nations to identify capabilities related to the receipt, display, analysis and data / product creation and management of METOC information with a focus on technologies and commercial products. HQSACT has made no commitment to procure any of the items described herein and release of this supplementary information and questionnaire shall not be construed as such a commitment, nor as authorisation to incur cost for which reimbursement will be required or sought.

<sup>1</sup> [https://www.act.nato.int/application/files/4116/1651/7609/rfi021050\\_amdt1.pdf](https://www.act.nato.int/application/files/4116/1651/7609/rfi021050_amdt1.pdf)

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3. Furthermore, respondents are advised that HQ SACT will not pay for any information or administrative costs incurred in providing response to any supplementary questions. The costs for responding to these supplementary questions shall be borne solely by the responding party. Not responding to the supplementary questions will not preclude participation in any subsequent RFP if issued in the future.

**Purpose**

4. Following HQACT’s release of its initial RFI and questionnaire<sup>1</sup>, it became evident that a number of the respondents would welcome additional information. It was also apparent that the initial questionnaire, which was centred upon the outline capability requirements, would benefit from some additional detail in order to further support the delivery of a Capability Programme Plan including an analysis of the different alternatives available to NIMBUS. ACT kindly request additional responses using the related supplementary questionnaire.

5. The key considerations utilised to analyse alternatives in support of the CPP are :

- a. METOC Operational Effectiveness;
- b. System Operational Cost;
- c. Training model;
- d. Any associated costs.

6. Additional contextual information is provided within this document to assist respondents in completing the supplementary questionnaire.

**Background Information**

7. Whilst user requirements continue to be developed we anticipate that NIMBUS will support specialist and non-specialist users across the NATO Command Structure providing access at the various nodes to METOC data, products and services (METOC information). Against NATO’s current architecture it is anticipated that NIMBUS may likely be used at the following fixed NATO nodes:

<b>Id</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Location</b>
1	SHAPE	Belgium
2	JFC HQ	Netherlands
3	JFC HQ	Italy
4	MARCOM	UK
5	LANDCOM	Turkey
6	AIRCOM	Germany
7	CAOC	Germany
8	CAOC	Spain
9	E3 Component	Germany
10	NAGSF	Italy
11	MN MSG	Germany
12	JWC	Norway
13	JFTC	Poland
14	NATO Academy	Portugal
15	NCI Agency	Netherlands

8. Additionally, NATO is required to conduct expeditionary activity which can involve deployment of CIS

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capability into locations with limited bandwidth or infrastructure. It is envisaged that if required, NIMBUS would be deployed using NATO’s deployed CIS capability (DCIS). This may require NIMBUS to function with either time limited or bandwidth limited connectivity.

- 9. Possible fielding scenarios envisaged for NIMBUS include:
  - a. SME system users with full interaction, manipulation and input / output;
  - b. Non-SME users accessing visualisation or accessing specified data sets to support adjacent NATO functional area systems;
  - c. Administration users with configuration and administrative requirements;
  - d. Semi-automated server locations facilitating distribution of METOC data, products and services across the NATO Command Structure.

**Foundation Data provision**

10. In delivering its output, NATO’s METOC architecture is reliant upon provision of raw or foundation data, primarily Numerical Weather Prediction (NWP) data, from national organisations with atmospheric modelling capabilities. Through technical arrangements, data is provided by these organisations to support general or specific NATO activities. Currently this is achieved using file transfer protocols across landlines and virtual private networks. Increasing data volumes and the need to manage data more efficiently are driving Atmospheric modelling nations to migrate from FTP dissemination and adopt server oriented architecture (SoA) accessed through Application Program Interfaces (API). It is therefore expected that NIMBUS will need to be API / Cloud compatible for future interoperability.

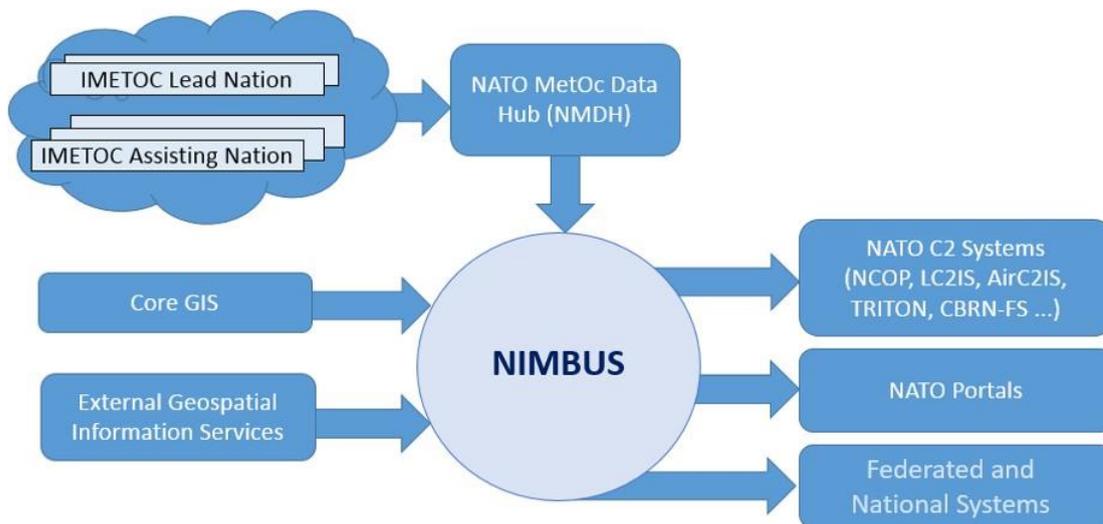


Diagram 1. NIMBUS Foundation Data provision

**ROM Cost Estimates**

11. At this stage of the NIMBUS programme, all requests for pricing models or costing are non-binding and rough order of magnitude (ROM). The intent is to help compare whether the adoption of national systems, procurement of Commercial systems or creation of a bespoke NATO solution offer the best value for money. All costings or pricings provided are none binding and purely for comparative purposes. The provision of a non-binding rough order of magnitude (ROM) price estimates, or lack of, will not prejudice any respondent in the event that ACT conducts a subsequent competitive bidding process at a later stage.

**NATO IT Infrastructure development**

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12. NIMBUS will be deployed onto the NATO Service Oriented Architecture and Identity Management Platform (non-normative). NATO is changing the way it delivers its IT and Communications Infrastructure. Under the banner of "IT Modernisation" (ITM), it is shifting from an independent, system-centric approach to a more granular set of loosely coupled services that can be quickly and easily composed to deliver agile and cost-effective support to operations.

**Follow-on**

13. The data collected in these supplementary questions will be combined with existing responses to the primary RFI to inform the NIMBUS programme. This will underpin delivery of a Capability Programme Plan (CPP) used to support a NATO decision on whether to Adopt, Buy, Create, or select a hybrid strategy towards delivering its future METOC Service capability. Provision of data, or lack of, will not prejudice any respondent in the event that there is a competitive bidding process later as part of NATO Common-Funded Capability Development.

14. As detailed in the primary RFI, all information of a proprietary nature, if any, should be minimised and clearly marked as such. HQ SACT will treat proprietary information with the same due care as the command treats its own proprietary information, and will exercise due caution to prevent its unauthorised disclosure. Please be advised, all submissions become HQ SACT property and will not be returned.

15. Questions of a technical nature about this RFI announcement shall be submitted by e-mail solely to the above-mentioned POCs. Accordingly, questions in an e-mail shall not contain proprietary and/or classified information. Answers will be posted on the HQ SACT P&C website at: [www.act.nato.int/contracting](http://www.act.nato.int/contracting).

16. In relation to the supplementary questions, responses are sought by 20 September 2021.

**Summary**

16. This supplementary questionnaire and information is for the purpose of supporting HQACT's NIMBUS RFI. The intent is to involve nations/industry/academia, through collaboration, in an examination of current and future capabilities related to NIMBUS with a focus on the technologies and commercial products. HQ SACT has not made a commitment to procure any of the items described herein, and release of this supplementary information and questionnaire shall not be construed as such a commitment, nor as authorisation to incur cost for which reimbursement will be required or sought. It is emphasised that this is a RFI, and not a RFP of any kind.

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