

Minutes: Q&A session on Request for Information RFI-ACT-SACT-20-31

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Attendees:

Leah.Martin@anser.org ;	ANSER
Mark.Kinner@anser.org ;	ANSER
hnanranjo@gmv.com ;	GMV
lance.robinson@cgideu.com ;	CGI DEU
ralf.dobberschuetz@cgideu.com ;	CGI DEU
zdevereaux@nexalogy.com ;	NEXALOGY
m.rick@esri.de ;	ESRI
K.Davis@calian.com ;	CALIAN
CCowan@esri.com ;	ESRI
JMajerowicz@esri.com ;	ESRI
gilles.desclaux33@gmail.com ;	
d.chupick@calian.com ;	CALIAN
alma.noubel@earthcube.eu ;	EARTHCUBE
phil@improbable.io ;	IMPROBABLE
john.goolgasian@geospark.io ;	GEOSPARK
bhunter@thelatumgroup.com ;	THE LATIUM GROUP
james.boehm@geospark.io ;	GEOSPARK
Deb.Higgins@rsa.com ;	RSA
rfroh@terida.com ;	TERIA
tacteris@terida.com ;	TERIA
tprince@terida.com ;	TERIA
hans.tenbergen@masagroup.net ;	MASA GROUP
rvasey@palantir.com ;	PALANTIR
ashalexcooper@palantir.com ;	PALANTIR
afriden@palantir.com ;	PALANTIR
e.martin@eqeng.com ;	EQENG
j.pineiro@eqeng.com ;	EGENG
stephenwest@improbable.io ;	IMPROBABLE
petnehazi.ferenc@hm.gov.hu ;	HUM GOV
berenyi.jozsef@hmei.hu ;	HMEI
john.cullen@cts.international ;	CTS
remi.meunier@dataiku.com ;	DATAIKU
karim.battata@dataiku.com ;	DATAIKU
skargupta@palantir.com ;	PALANTIR
JamesCasuga@centuriondefence.ca ;	CENTURION DEFENCE
StevenLazarowych@centuriondefence.ca ;	CENTURION DEFENCE
stangorra@esriitalia.it ;	ESRI
mozdemir@stm.com.tr ;	STM
gokhanozkan@stm.com.tr ;	STM
Matthew.Martin@L3Harris.com ;	L3 HARRIS
valerie@compusult.com ;	COMPUSULT
gkitzmil@amazon.com ;	AMAZON
btwest@amazon.com ;	AMAZON
rwoodaman@innovatedecisions.com ;	INNOVATIVE DECISIONS
rfptracking@compusult.net ;	COMPUSULT

ludodb@amazon.com ;	Amazon
Catherine.Giglio@act.nato.int ;	HQ SACT
ccarboni@esriitalia.it ;	ESRI
ludodb@amazon.com ;	Amazon
Tonya.Bonilla@act.nato.int ;	HQ SACT
Robert.Bracknell@act.nato.int ;	HQ SACT
Mark.madden@act.nato.int ;	HQ SACT
buck@act.nato.int ;	HQ SACT
Jan.hodicky@act.nato.int ;	HQ SACT
Sascha.Repoki@act.nato.int ;	HQ SACT
Eliska.filova2@act.nato.int ;	HQ SACT
Lafenetre.Philippe@HQ.NATO.INT	STRE
collins.david@hq.nato.int ;	STRE
dell.benjamin@hq.nato.int ;	STRE

Introduction

- Section Head SACT HQ JFD M&S Angel San Jose Martin welcomed everybody, introduced himself and presented the agenda. He also explained how it was going to work. The RFI document would be discussed paragraph by paragraph and if a participant had a question regarding the section, they would write the name of their company into chat and they would be invited to ask the question.
- Col Mark Madden, Branch Head HQ SACT JFD MSTT gave introductory remarks. He stated that the aim is to bring the CMX into the 21st century by providing the strategic political-military decision-makers with the relevant information so they can make an informed decision. It was highlighted that the aim is not to change CMX, but to showcase how technology could enhance decision-making.
- It was clearly stated that legal and contracting will not be covered as it will be part of the RFI review, and that the two GoToMeeting sessions are the only platforms for asking questions to maintain fairness and fair competition.

RFI key points

Purpose of the RFI (Problem Statement)

- Terida (paragraph 3): **‘how do you plan to run the demonstrations in parallel with the actual CMX? What will be the interaction between the players?’**
- Angel: we are still discussing it. Since the first conference CMX was cancelled, we could not clarify that. What is clear, however, is that the demonstrations will be part of the exercise. While the CMX will be running, there will be other room(s) where the demonstrations will take place and where the delegations and ambassadors would come. It is also possible to interact with the participants during the breaks.
- Terida (paragraph 3): **‘What do you mean by ‘any demonstrations must be on a non-interference basis with the exercise’?’**
- Angel: the exercise consists of an exercise part which includes scenarios and vignettes and an experimentation part. The demonstrations would be part of the experimentation part.
- Col Madden: we want to take the technologies and to replicate as closely as possible what is happening during the exercising part of the CMX without interfering into it.

- Terida: **you will provide the sequencing, scenarios and details about the CMX to the selected companies/teams, is that correct?**
- Angel: no, you will not be provided with the actual scenarios as it is classified. We will provide an unclassified version, which will be as close as possible to the real scenario. This will be discussed during the planning conference in September.

Expected Input from Industry

- Esri (paragraph 5): **template appears to be written for individual companies, are you interested in partners and working groups as well, or does it have to be a company?**
- Tonya: it is not a problem, but all the working groups/partners etc. need to be based in NATO nations. If they are not, we would need to get a special permission.
- Esri: **how would you like the template to be filled if we apply when we apply a group?**
- Angel: not sure, it be clarified after the session.

PENDING QUESTION 1: how is the template supposed to be filled if somebody applies as a group and not as a company?

- Compusult: **does ACT have a target of the maximum number of companies?**
- Angel: I cannot clarify it yet, we are thinking about limited number, but we cannot answer that without reading the proposals.
- Nexalogy (paragraph 6): are you also interested in new processes or just technologies? Is it possible to bring our own computers if we need our own data?
- Angel: yes, we are interested in this too. We will check it. If it is possible to bring your own devices, there are two options, you would either get full connection or you would have to pre-load everything is the wifi connection may not be possible. More likely there will not be wifi connection.

Follow up: Please see amended response template.

PENDING QUESTION 2: is it possible bring the demonstrator's own devices and what will be the situation with wifi connection?

Political Decision Making in NATO

- Compusult: **is the collaborative interaction similar to the NATO CWIX exercise events?**
- Butch: yes, it would be somehow similar. You should expect that it will look alike.

NATO Crisis Management Process

- Nexalogy (paragraph 16): **if your technology is only relevant to one of the phases, should you make it explicit in the template?**
- Angel: yes, we would appreciate it as it would help us to know how to situate the demonstration.

Operational Planning and Decision-Making in NATO

- Masa Group: **regarding the situational awareness, what kind of level are you looking at?** What level of resolution of COP are you looking for?
- Angel: please, refer to the paragraph 24, under 'situational awareness' staff supporting tasks.

Areas of Interest

- **IDI: the idea is that the demonstrations will be used for the CMX events and the real-world events, so the exercise is a means to demonstrate?**
- Angel: this is correct. The whole idea is to demonstrate the possibilities of assisting decision-making that can be used in real situation decision making or/and exercise.

Practical Considerations

- **STM: The event will last almost 10 days, what will be the duration for the demonstrations? Will you designate specific days for specific companies or are all of them will be there at the same time?**
- Angel: We don't have all details yet, but the idea is to provide those single demonstrations, that are related to what is happening during the exercise. In principle if there is a demonstration happening on Monday, you would be expected to be there one day before to prepare. Although we cannot clarify it yet, we do not think you would have to be there the whole time.
- At the end it all is about different aspects like the CMX scenario itself, possible solutions that match content wise, slots/rooms that are assigned to us as well as quantity of selected demonstrations.
- Philippe STRE: we are looking to book rooms in NATO HQ in advance, probably week advance, to prepare. It is currently being discussed.
- **CGI: Would we be expected to be on-site for the duration of CMX or only for our presentation/demonstration (i.e. 1-2 days for setup and delivery)?** One of the basic parameters is, that we are not an integral component of the exercise but use this unique platform to present exercise (scenario) related solutions iot provide NATO with innovate (and deliverable) ideas for possible future use and projects that might be setup at some point in time.
- *(question was sent by email after the session).*

PENDING QUESTION 3: are the demonstrators expected to be on-site outside of their demonstration's slots?

Selection Criteria

- Terida (paragraph 27): **you are dividing the solutions into two categories assisted decision-making and training. If one technology can address both, are you going to prioritise that company/group, or will you treat it separately?**
- Angel: It will be treated differently. It comes down to the criteria and the technology will be assessed separately.
- **IDI: are you also looking for non-material solutions?**
- Angel: yes, not just technology, also other aspects like training etc..
- **HM EI (paragraph 27): are you looking for an existing solution or something that is under development?**
- Angel: we are looking for something that is existing already as it has to be ready for the demonstrations, we would value things that are already proven, mostly final products iot ensure the time wise defaults.

Security Clearance

- Terida: **why do we need a clearance? Does the company have to have clearance too?**

- Angel: you need to have a NATO clearance to get to particular parts of HQ. We are unclear about the second part and will come back with an answer asap.

PENDING QUESTION 4: does the company need have a NATO secret clearance?

Timeline

- Compusult: **will the covid-19 pandemic influence the timeline?**
- Angel: there should be no delay from our side, but the CMX itself may be an issue as it may be cancelled for 2021.

Handling of Proprietary Information

- CGI Germany (paragraph 32): Our understanding is that any information provided to you within the course of preparation, proposal submission, etc. on a USB device (or similar) will be kept by NATO and any contents containing proprietary information (that we specifically label as such) will be destroyed properly by NATO. In case we provide any software, code, etc. in such a manner, this will not become the property of NATO for further use (so no transfer of ownership). If all agree on that (which we understood to be the case), this point is clarified for us. **If we bring hardware for demonstration purposes during the CMX, what are the expectations regarding storage media (i.e. hard drives)?** If no connections to classified networks are made, we assume there are no issues (our experience in the past). Or is there going to be an exception?
- *(this question was sent by email after the session as required by Butch HQ SACT for more clarification of the question).*

PENDING QUESTION 5: what are the expectations regarding storage media?

Technical Specifications

- Esri: **is it possible to create a virtual solution for the exercise provided network rather than bringing our own devices to the classified environment?**
- Collis HQ: there will not any virtual solution, you will be taking your own equipment.

PENDING QUESTION 6: what the requirements are for bringing own hardware to the HQ.

Annex A

- L3Harris: **could you give us an idea of the nature of the exercise and the participants, how deep are we going to the Command and Control, do you think it will be more about article 5 or more about civil support?**
- Angel: more likely article 4. Two boarders: East and the South. Mostly about strategic pol decision making. These are the main training audience. The mil operational level decision making will not be exercised.

Spreadsheet

- Terida: **can we extent the space or are we limited to how it has been formatted?**
- Angel: in principle, if you must maintain the structure, it can be done.

PENDING QUESTION 7: can the spreadsheet questions be extended and if so, what the requirements are.

- Terida: there are extra questions on the right in the Excel spreadsheet – is that deliberate?
- Angel: pending question

PENDING QUESTIONS 8: are the questions outside of the cells deliberate?

Conclusion

- Session closed at 1032.
- Angel San Jose Martin and Col Madden thanked everybody for joining the session and invited them to participate at the next GoToMeeting in 17 June 2020 at 0900 East Time.