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

Date/location: 17 June 2020, 0900 Eastern Time, GoToMeeting

INTRODUCTION

- <u>This is the second and last Q&A session about the RFI.</u> Section Head SACT HQ JFD M&S Angel San Jose Martin welcomed everybody, introduced himself and presented the agenda. Like last time, RFI document was discussed paragraph by paragraph and the participants could ask questions.
- Col Mark Madden, Branch Head HQ SACT JFD MSTT, gave introductory remarks and he summarised what CMX is about and what we are trying to achieve. The overall vision is to provide technology that can i.e. give the decision-makers information at the speed at relevance as there are so many information, so it is important to get the most relevant ones.

KEY POINTS

<u>Expected Input from Industry</u>

- Q: What is the relation to the CMX exercise since it will be running in parallel? Could you please clarify the connection between the exercise and the demonstrations? Will the demonstrations take place in separated rooms?
- A: We are part of the exercise as it is a part of the experimentation specification. However, we will not interfere into the exercise part. The demonstrators will not be able to go to the NAC, but the demonstrations will be happening at the same time. Physically, you will be co-located with the committees (this will be the classified environment). It is a big conference area, where we will be co-located. Regarding the scenario, we will try to get the scenario as close as possible in non-classified manner.
- Q: Can you clarify whether the demonstration is done by the nations, do we have to provide it to the nations or is it a demo?
- A: You do not have to go through the nations, it is done by ACT. Nations are customers. All relations are with ACT only.
- Q: Can we demonstrate that our technology can support some particular issue that is being exercised at that moment there?
- A: Yes, it will be possible as long as it is ready to use.
- Q: Is there any arrangement to make different demonstrations that would collaborate? Would that be possible to get some compound solution?
- Answer: SACT wants to have a good choreography of. ACT will not ask you to work together unless it is specified in the spreadsheet that you will be working together. If the companies do not indicate that they want to work together, they will be connected to the scenarios directly. We are unable to provide technological solution for two companies working together. In theory, there is nothing stopping two companies teaming together. If a company will team up with another company, they would both have to be from NATO nations.
- Q: If we wanted to do that, we would need to know exactly what kind of demonstrations we will perform. However, this is not possible to make up a story in advance when we do not know who will be selected.
- A: You will have to make the determination on its own, as you will not know who will be selected. The decision is whether you would team up with another company and apply

for it together or not, which is up to you what strategy to use. It would have to be a combined proposal.

NATO Crisis Management Process

- Q: Are you looking for solutions for the highest pol-mil level or for operational level (SHAPE)?
- A: Mainly the political level – the NAC and MC, the highest level.

Practical considerations

- Q (par 26 g): Is it compulsory to use the CMX scenario or can we use our own scenarios?
- A: You are not expecting to use the CMX scenario as it will not be possible to do so. You can use your own scenario.
- Q: Follow-on question from the previous one. Is there going to be wifi in the demonstration areas?
- A: At the moment it is planned to have at least two main locations where it will be demonstrated. The first one is a conference room within the classified environment without any Wi-Fi. Within the second, the Public Square Wi-Fi might be available.

Selection Criteria

- Q: Will we be scrutinised from the national delegations?
- A: Principally not, but this is an issue between the respective national delegations and the particular company.

Security Clearance

- Q: If there are more companies applying as consortium, do they all need to have security clearance?
- A: All participants that will be entering the building will have to have security clearance and all companies must be from NATO nations and must be accredited or certified no matter if as a consortium or not. The final procedure will be provided to the selected companies by the NATO Office of Security of NATO HQ.
- Q: Can you clarify whether the facilities must be cleared as well?
- A: It will depend on the equipment and on the office of security. We cannot answer that until the companies are selected, the equipment will be investigated after the selection.
- Q: What is the policy for the devices?
- A: As long as you bring something within the classified area, there is no access to Wi-Fi or NATO/other networks. You can give us something in advance or you can connect with your own device, but it would have to be approved by the Office of Security. For instance, you cannot bring your mobile phones or smart watches to the conference area.
- Q: If we bring demonstration hardware such as a laptop, will be allowed to take it home? There were questions at the last Q&A session about whether we would be required to turn hard drives over the NATO security following the event.
- A: Once you are done with the demonstration, the Office of Security is likely to check the device to ensure there are no remaining things that are classified. Once we know the hardware requirements, we will be able to provide clear guidance on that.

Spreadsheet

- Q: Can we propose several products in the same category?
- A: You can propose several products. It would be helpful to indicate in which area is it the most appropriate.
- Q: In case we would like to send a proposition as a consortium – is it one form for company or one for the consortium?
- A: You can put several companies into one – you can apply as a consortium in one form. (therefore, please note the requirements regarding Security Clearance, above)
- Q (row 44): What do you mean by 'existing defence technologies and processes'?
- A: In case they give us some example that somebody is using similar technology or your technology. We prefer solutions that are already proven. If you have use cases, send it to us as it would be very useful. There is no limit what you can send.
- Q: Are there any standards such as MIL-STD, ISO?
- A: Yes, in the RFI reply it may be advantageous to note the standards to which your product adheres. This can include STANAGs, ISO, SISO, etc.
- Q (row 68): 'Represent the dynamic situation of the exercise scenario allowing the realistic assessment of threats, comparison of response options and assessment of plans.' Response options and assessment is a sort of what of simulation scenario? Do you prefer 'what if' simulation scenarios?
- A: The key question is whether the product has a way to stimulate the audience. You fill in this section only if your technology is about training.

Selection criteria

- Q: What are the expectations about the level of maturity of the briefings that you would expect in July?
- A: We expect you to elaborate the form you sent. We expect a pitch between 15-20 minutes. We would like to have the opportunity to ask questions. It is an opportunity for us to get clarifying questions and an opportunity for you to answer them.
- Q: It seems you only evaluate the excel sheet and additional support material will be asked to present afterwards. Is that the way it goes?
- A: We evaluate only the spreadsheet. After that, you will be asked to provide a presentation online and you can then present more materials. There is a spot in the template that says that you can send materials you think that is relevant, feel free to attach it.
- Q: What is the number of companies you will select?
- A: It will depend on the conversations with the Nations and the planners how much time and resources (mainly conference rooms) we will have for the demonstrations etc. This will yet to be determined, we are unable to say any precise number. We are looking for between 5 to 10 companies. COVID restrictions are currently in place, so it also depends on the number of personnel that you will send. It may be the case that you may be only able to send maximum of 2 personnel. There are likely to be restrictions on the number of personnel that can be in one room.
- Q: What is the limit of companies for the first stage of selection?
- A: We do not have any limit. It will depend on the proposals.
- Q: Is it possible to prepare in the equipment in advance?
- A: Yes, it is possible to prepare your equipment/stuff in advance, you will be provided with additional time to prepare.

CONCLUSION

- <u>Questions after QA – as long as somebody participated in this forum, you can send it by email, but please try to limit that as we will have to publish it publicly with each new question.</u>
- **<u>The deadline for the submission 1 July 2020. Companies will be notified about the result in the first two weeks of July 2020.</u>**
- Angel San Jose Martin thanked everybody for joining the session and we are looking forward to receiving the proposals.
- Session closed at 1016 hrs Eastern Time.

Recordings:

- 1st Q&A Session, 27th May, Video is in
  https://transcripts.gotomeeting.com/#/s/eec4e4c1b3f0adb24987a21b588eb936b7d68 77e1b2d20ffb68c6614d2a05033

- 2nd Q&A Session, 17th Jun, video was unfortunately lost.