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**Headquarters Supreme Allied Command Transformation Norfolk,
Virginia**



REQUEST FOR INFORMATION NEXT GENERATION WIRELESS (OTHER THAN
SATCOM) SERVICES

RFI-ACT-SACT-25-25

This document contains a Request for Information (RFI) call to industry, academia and nations for their input to NATO's requirement for testing the implementation and performance of (insert RFI title)

Industry, academia and nations wishing to respond to this RFI should read this document carefully and follow the guidance for responding.

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| General Information | |
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| Request For Information No. | 25-25 |
| Project Title | Industry and Academia input to NATO's NG Wireless (other than SATCOM) Services Capability |
| Due date for questions concerning related information | 16 April 2025, 0900 (9:00 am) (ET) |
| Due date for submission of requested information | 14 May 2025, 0900 (9:00 am) (ET) |
| Contracting Office Address | NATO, HQ Supreme Allied Commander Transformation (SACT) Purchasing & Contracting Suite 100 7857 Blandy Rd, Norfolk, VA, 23511-2490 |
| Contracting Points of Contact | Mr Robert Friend E-mail: Robert.friend@nato.int Tel: +1 757 747 4433 Ms. Catherine Giglio E-mail: catherine.giglio@act.nato.int Tel: +1 757 747 3856 |
| Technical Points of Contact | LCDR Thomas Morefield (Programme Director) e-mail : thomas.morefield@nato.int Tel : +1 757 747 3931 Mr. Jeffery Farmer (Programme Analyst) e-mail: jeffery.farmer@nato.int Tel: +1 757 747 3476 Dr. Kamil Akel (Operations Research Analyst) e-mail: kamil.akel@nato.int Tel: +1 757 747 3796 |
| All request for clarifications, questions and responses to this RFI must be sent via email to all Points of Contact reported above. Individual emails will not be accepted and should not be sent. Contracting and Technical POCs must be included in any correspondence. | |

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1. INTRODUCTION

Headquarters Supreme Allied Commander Transformation (HQ SACT) is issuing this Request for Information (RFI) in order to engage with industry and Academia on future Next Generation (NG) Wireless (other than SATCOM) Capabilities. The intention is to evaluate what could be immediately available, the art-of-the-possible and state-of-the-art with respect to systems, products, services, technologies, and methodologies pertaining to NG Wireless. This will support NATO Governance decision making on Common Funded Capability Delivery.

This Request for Information (RFI) does not constitute a commitment to issue a future request for proposal (RFP). The purpose of this request is to involve industry and academia in an examination of Alliance-wide current and future capabilities related to NG Wireless. Future capabilities will be either Nationally-owned or commercially available (procured by a Nation as Host Nation (HN), or by a NATO Agencies).

Further, respondents are advised that HQ SACT will not pay for any information or administrative costs incurred in responding to this RFI. The costs for responding to this RFI shall be borne solely by the responding party. Not responding to this RFI does not preclude participation in any subsequent RFP if issued in the future. All information shared with ACT might be shared with contracted third parties in order to support the capability development process as needed. 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.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1. HQ SACT Framework for Collaborative Interaction (FFCI)

2.1.1. HQ SACT has implemented a Framework for Collaborative Interaction (FFCI) to increase opportunities for Nations, Industry and Academia to contribute to HQ SACT's capability development efforts through collaborative work. Such collaboration enables HQ SACT, and NATO as a whole, to benefit from National, Industrial and Academic models, advice, capabilities and experience in the course of this work. In addition to the benefits HQ SACT gains from such projects, this collaborative effort will provide Nations, Industry, and Academia with an improved understanding of NATO's Capability Requirements (CRs) and associated issues and development challenges that need to be addressed by HQ SACT. Potential collaborative projects are on specific topics that are of mutual interest to all parties but shall be restricted to collaborations in non-procurement areas. Several mechanisms have been developed to support the initiation of collaborative projects between Nations, Industry and Academia and HQ SACT ranging from informal information exchanges, workshops, studies or more extensive collaboration on research and experimentation.

2.1.2. Depending on the level and type of interaction needed for a collaborative project, a specific agreement may be required between parties. The FFCI agreement for any specific project, if required by either party for the project to proceed, will range from "Non-Disclosure Agreements" (NDA) for projects involving exchange of specific information to more extensive "Declaration of Mutual Collaboration" to address

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intellectual property and other issues.

2.1.3. More extensive information on the HQ SACT FFCI initiative can be found on the ACT website being developed to support FFCI projects at <http://www.act.nato.int/ffci>. Note that respondents of this RFI are not required to initiate an FFCI agreement to respond to this RFI.

2.2. The Common Funded Capability Delivery Governance Model (CFCDGM)

2.2.1. The CFCDGM aims to accelerate the delivery of capabilities required by NATO commanders and the NATO Enterprise. It consists of six stages across the capability development life cycle, four NATO Governance level decision points, or Gates, and two optional decision Gates.

2.2.2. At the first decision Gate, the Military Committee (MC) approves the Operational Requirements (ORs) and determines if the submission of a Capability Requirements Brief (CRB) is required at the first optional decision Gate. Factors that may lead the MC to require governance approval of this product include; anticipated capability type, the expected level of complexity and/or likely existence of more than one viable alternative for filling the ORs.

2.2.3. During stage 2 (Requirements Development), a CRB is developed to identify the specific CRs and potential courses of action, also to examine and confirm the courses of action that are best suited to deliver the capability within scope, cost and schedule.

2.2.4. During stage 3a (Capability Programme Planning), a Capability Programme Plan (CPP) is created, which includes details about the programme scope, schedule, risks and through-life costs. An Analysis of Alternatives (AOA) occurs during this stage that involves an analytical comparison of the operational effectiveness, risk and lifecycle cost of alternatives that are under consideration to satisfy ORs as described in the Operational Requirement Statement and CRs articulated in the CRB. Alternatives identified can involve combinations of materiel and non-materiel solutions from multiple Nations, Industry and/or Academic sources. **The intent of this RFI is to collect the information required to conduct these stage 3a activities and inform the development of the CPP.**

2.2.5. This is not a formal request for submissions and it does not constitute the commencement of any other type of procurement process for the CPP; but rather a general request intended to determine **if any possible solutions exist that should be included in one or many alternatives** during the development of the CPP. Discussions related to the specific CPP requirements and related procurements should not occur during the RFI solicitation to avoid any conflict of interest or unfair competitive advantage.

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This is not a formal request for submissions as part of a procurement; but rather a general request intended to determine whether any possible solutions exist that should be included in one or many alternatives during the development.

3. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

3.1. Objectives

This RFI is intended to provide Industry and Academia an opportunity to provide data that would allow NATO to determine potential benefits they might receive from a capability.

3.2. Expected Benefits to Respondents

Industry and Academia participants will have the chance to reveal state-of-the-art systems, products, services and technology in the Wireless area of interest.

3.3. Expected Benefits to NATO

Exposure to, and understanding of, current, emerging and future capabilities in the Wireless area of interest.

3.4 Background

3.4.1. The NATO Digital Backbone is one of the four Key Requirement Areas identified for the full implementation of the Deterrence and Defence of the Euro-Atlantic Area and of the NATO Warfighting Capstone Concept. NG Wireless is under the NATO Digital Backbone.

3.4.2. The aim of the NG Wireless program is to obtain resilient, robust, secure and service-oriented wireless communications capabilities in line with current NATO capability development efforts towards Digital Transformation of NATO for the Alliance to be Multi-Domain Operations enabled.

3.4.3. The implementation of NG Wireless requires coherent alignment with other related and interconnected work strands. Therefore, based on NG Wireless operational, and associated capability, requirements, NATO is exploring various Wireless (Other than SATCOM) capabilities to gain a better understanding of possible solutions that NATO could potentially use to adopt, acquire (buy), and/or create NG Wireless solutions that meet the capability requirements.

4. PROCESS

4.1 NATO has started developing the capabilities required for NG Wireless in align with the operational requirements which were stated in the Operational Requirements

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Statement¹ (ORS).

4.2 With the development of capabilities NATO NG Wireless implementation efforts will neither supersede any existing NATO processes, nor impact initiatives that are not the responsibility of the NATO Wireless community. NATO NG Wireless efforts will rather support these processes and initiatives where applicable, thus avoiding any duplication of efforts.

4.3 The NATO NG Wireless Programme oversees implementing NG Wireless capabilities by, leveraging assets and resources coming from related NATO Programmes and leveraging also on Wireless Capabilities, Assets and Resources coming from Nations, their Industry and Academia, and finally filling the gaps of missing Capabilities, Assets and Resources needed to achieve the NATO Wireless MOR (Military Operational Requirement).

4.4 Allied Command Transformation (ACT) is surveying Industry and Academia to understand what solutions may be able to support NATO's NG Wireless requirements.

4.5. This survey seeks to gather information from Industry and Academia on existing Wireless business processes and solutions, as well as those in development that could potentially be procured by NATO.

5. REQUESTED INFORMATION

5.1. The response(s) to this RFI shall be submitted by e-mail.

Submissions must include both the Contracting and Technical POCs listed on page 2. The responses shall not contain proprietary and/or classified information. HQ SACT reserves the right to seek clarification on submissions.

5.2. Eligibility to Respond

Only NATO Nations, Industry and Academia that originate or are chartered/incorporated within NATO Nations are eligible to respond to this RFI. Companies from Partner Nations who want to participate should collaborate with a primary company headquartered within a NATO Nation.

5.3. This RFI is interested in information that informs alternatives development. Alternatives are comprised of materiel and non-materiel solutions, and combinations thereof across the DOTMLPFI spectrum that contribute to NG Wireless CRs.

5.4. This RFI will herein refer to one or many potential combinations of these as "your capabilities". This information will inform alternatives and will be described using the NATO Architecture Framework, Version 4 .

¹ NG Wireless ORS is currently in the approval process.

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5.5. This RFI is also interested in information that informs alternatives analysis from various perspectives. HQ SACT is interested in how Industry and Academia capabilities relate to the functional and non-functional CRs which are rephrased as questions in Appendix 1.

5.6. This RFI is interested in information that informs capability programme planning. This includes the availability, readiness, feasibility and cost of Industrial and Academic capabilities.

5.7. Expected input to this RFI is Industry and Academia perspective on relevant current, emerging and future capabilities in the Wireless area of interest.

6. RESPONSE

6.1.1 Provide name, mailing address, overnight delivery address (if different from mailing address), designated point of contact (phone number, e-mail).

6.1.2 Respondents can collaborate with other providers, but all companies/organizations must be clearly identified and their role/services clearly stated.

6.1.3 Please see Appendix 1 for questions and provide your answers on the spreadsheet. Please ensure that all questions are checked.

6.1.4. Identify current services your company offers, which most closely match the capabilities, specified in this RFI (or portions of).

6.1.5. Available product brochures, specification sheets, photographs, illustration and technical descriptions that describe your company's current services are welcome. Companies are encouraged not to include marketing informational materials that do not relate to the services described in this RFI as it will be discarded; however, responses may include URL links to technical documentation materials (i.e., technical data sheets for products) are welcome.

6.1.6. Expected Input from Industry and Academia. Expected input to this RFI is Industry and Academia perspective on relevant current, emerging and future capabilities in the Wireless area of interest.

6.1.7. The document should be single-spaced, have one-inch margins, assume US letter-size (8 1/2 by 11 inches) page, use 12-point font, and be formatted for compatibility with Microsoft Word or Adobe Acrobat Reader (current versions).

6.1.8. Submissions should be named according to the following convention: <Respondent company name; maximum of 12 characters>_NG Wireless RFI_<date in YYYYMMDD format>.<filename extension of 3 or 4 characters>. Provide list of your company's past and current customers to which you have provided or are

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providing similar services, including a customer/company name and point of contact, phone number, and address/e-mail where they can be contacted.

6.1.9. Responses shall not be classified above NATO UNCLASSIFIED. NATO information that is CLASSIFIED is not included herein but can be passed to authorized Industry and Academia recipients with appropriate clearances and control measures

6.1.10. The information may be considered in developing any future potential Statement of Work requirements. HQ SACT will consider selected information for developmental contracts and experimentation candidates. The data collected in response to this RFI will be used to develop a report to inform the NG Wireless CPP. The report will provide an assessment to support a decision as to whether NATO should pursue an Adopt, Buy or Create approach to meet NG Wireless requirements.

6.1.11 In the interest of time and to maximise the number of responses to this RFI, the information provided should not be extremely complicated, overly detailed, or require significant effort to complete. Additionally, responses are not required if it is not applicable to your capabilities. A statement that the question is not applicable (NA) will be sufficient. Finally, in addition to your responses, we encourage you to include any existing materials you may have pertaining to your capabilities (e.g., marketing brochures, pamphlets, flyers, etc.).

6.2 Price Estimates

HQ SACT seeks non-binding Rough Order Magnitude (ROM) price estimates for the sole purpose of estimating programmatic costs and planning funding for future programme proposals/bids. 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.

6.3 Response Due Date

Responses to this RFI must be received by 14 May 2025, 0900 (9:00 am) (ET). The responses shall not contain any classified information. HQ SACT reserves the right to seek clarification on submissions.

7. CLARIFICATIONS AND QUESTIONS

Inquiries of a technical nature about this RFI shall be submitted by e-mail solely to the aforementioned POCs 9:00am Eastern Time (ET) 16 April 2025. Accordingly, questions in an e-mail shall not contain proprietary and/or classified information. Answers will be posted as soon as possible on the HQ SACT P&C website at: <https://act.nato.int/contracting>.

All questions should be submitted by 9:00am Eastern Time (ET) 16 April 2025. to allow for appropriate response time prior to the 14 May 2025, 0900 (9:00 am) (ET) response due date.

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8. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

8.1. Non-disclosure Principles and/or Non-disclosure Agreement (NDA) with Third Party Company.

8.1.1. Please be informed that HQ SACT may contract a company to conduct the Analysis of Alternatives investigation in support of this project. HQ SACT will follow nondisclosure principles and possibly conclude an NDA with that company to protect submitted information from further disclosure. As the third party beneficiary of this nondisclosure, this RFI serves to inform you how HQ SACT plans to proceed and HQ SACT's intent to protect information from unauthorized disclosure. This requires the third party company to protect the disclosed information using the highest degree of care that the company utilizes to protect its own Proprietary Information of a similar nature, and no less than reasonable care.

8.1.2. The third party company receiving the information shall not, without explicit, written consent of HQ SACT:

- a) Discuss, disclose, publish or disseminate any Proprietary Information received or accessed under nondisclosure principles and subject to an NDA, if an NDA is concluded;
- b) Use disclosed Proprietary Information in any way except for the purpose for which it was disclosed in furtherance of the goals of the instant project, collaboration, activity or contract; or
- c) Mention the other Party or disclose the relationship including, without limitation, in marketing materials, presentations, press releases or interview.

8.2. Organizational Conflicts of Interest.

As Procurement/Contracting involves the expenditure of funds allocated by the member nations, we must always strive to maintain trust in and preserve the integrity of the procurement procedures. It is essential that our procedures facilitate transparent and robust competition from industry.

Contractor and subcontractor personnel performing work under an HQ SACT contract may receive, have access to, or participate in the development of sensitive information relating to source selection methodology, cost or pricing information, budget information, and future specifications, requirements or Statements of Work or perform evaluation services that may create a current or subsequent Organizational Conflict of Interests (OCI). Similarly, companies responding to an HQ SACT RFI may create a subsequent OCI determination when pursuing future NATO contracts generated from that RFI.

Each individual contracting situation will of course be examined on the basis of its particular facts and the nature of any proposed contract. The exercise of common sense, good judgment, and sound discretion is required in both the decision on whether a significant potential conflict exists and, if it does, the development of an appropriate

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means for resolving it.

In anticipation of a future OCI determination, any company either awarded an HQ SACT contract or responding to an HQ SACT RFI while also anticipating bidding on future NATO contracts relating to this work, should consider having a mitigation plan in place to address or mitigate any OCI concerns now or in the future.

8.3. Handling of Proprietary Information

Proprietary information, if any, should be minimized and clearly marked as such. HQ SACT will treat proprietary information with the same due care as the command treats its own proprietary information. HQ SACT will exercise due care to prevent its unauthorized disclosure. Please be advised that all submissions become HQ SACT property and will not be returned.

8.4. Exceptions to Obligations. The third party company receiving the information may disclose, publish, disseminate, and use Proprietary Information:

a) To its employees, officers, directors, contractors, and affiliates of the recipient who have a need to know and who have an organizational code of conduct or written agreement with the recipient requiring them to treat the disclosed Proprietary Information in accordance with nondisclosure principles and the NDA (if executed);

b) To the extent required by law; however, the company receiving the information will give HQ SACT prompt notice to allow HQ SACT a reasonable opportunity to obtain a protective order or otherwise protect the disclosed information through legal process that is:

- demonstrated in written record to have been developed independently, or
- already in the possession of the company receiving the information without obligation of confidentiality, prior to the date of receipt from HQ SACT, or
- disclosed or used with prior written approval from HQ SACT, or
- obtained from a source other than HQ SACT without obligation of confidentiality; or publicly available when received.

8.5. Any response to this RFI is considered to establish consent to this process. A copy of the NDA, if or when concluded, can be provided on request.

9. SUMMARY

This is a RFI only. The purpose of this RFI is to involve Industry and Academia in an examination of Alliance-wide future capabilities related to NG Wireless with a focus on related systems, products, services, technology, methodologies, and engineering practices. HQ SACT has not made a commitment to procure any of the items described herein, and release of this RFI shall not be construed as such a commitment, nor as authorization 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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APPENDICES:

1. Questionnaire (spreadsheet)
2. Maritime Line-of-Sight Access Points: Conceptual Design Proposal