November 10, 2020

To: All Potential Bidders
From: Steve Dawson, Issuing Officer
Subject: RFP #1020-605-01 – Mass Notification System

Amendment One

Please amend the subject RFP to include answers to the attached timely received questions. This Amendment One shall supersede, modify and/or change all requirements to the contrary in the RFP and associated documents.

Questions and Agency responses begin on the next page.

AMENDMENT #1 TO RFP #1020-605-01 MASS NOTIFICATION SYSTEM

	Section Number (i.e. 1.2.1)	Page Number	Section Text Requiring Clarification	Specific Question / Request	Agency Response
1	1.3	6	Background Information	Can you be more specific about your expectations around delivering voice/text messages to "Social Media Pages"? What specific Social Media Pages are you referring to? And what are your expectations for how "voice/text" should be delivered?	The system should allow for the option to link social media pages, i.e. Facebook and Twitter to county accounts for messaging, and deliver text alerts.
2	1.3	6	Background Information	Are you expecting the vendor to supply TTY/TDD devices, landlines, or any other hardware as part of this RFP? Or will the state of Iowa supply the devices?	No, the vendor is not expected to supply these devices.
3	1.3	6	Background Information	Can you provide estimated volumes for mass notifications? For instance, how many notifications total you expect will be sent on average per month?	Per the numbers given for messaging there were around 250,000 SMS messages, 125,000 voice calls, and 158,333 emails a month for the 2020 fiscal year. There was an increase in messaging that year over the prior.
4	N/A	N/A		During your conference call, you mentioned the following volumes: 3 million SMS, 1.5 million voice, 1.9 million email. Are these the anticipated volumes for the coming year(s) based on the 5 year average growth you might have experienced?	No. Those numbers were for the usage for the 2020 fiscal year. Numbers for the prior year are similar, if not a slight decrease.
5	N/A	N/A		You mentioned you currently have 90 of 99 counties in the state. Have you anticipated what the volume might be if you were to have these counties join the program?	No, we do not have an estimate for what the increase in volume would be in the remaining counties were to join the program. The following counties do not currently use Alert Iowa: Allamakee, Benton, Cerro Cordo, Crawford, Greene, Harrison, Polk (uses as backup), Sioux and Wright.
6	1.3	6	Background Information	Can you describe the use case for the mass notifications?	To send message to citizens for events that directly impact life, safety and property. Examples can include, but are not limited to flooding events, power outages,tornados, disaster assistance and relief after an event etc.
7		22	solution	What are the use case(s) and expected volume of requests/responses?	For messaging that may require a response it may be questions to response or survey teams about availability, availability of staff to report to an EOC, or scenarios to the public about if assistance is needed for vulnerable populations. Response depends on the agency and or county sending the messaging.

8	4.3.3	22	solution		Please provide use cases for integration with Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS) for alerting via Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA 3.0)	Train derailments that requires messaging to be sent due to the threat of a chemical or hazardous agent being released, Flash flooding that requires evacuation, AMBER alerts, etc. The system must support all valid IPAWS event codes that the COG is authorized to send.
9	4.3.3	22	solution		Please provide use cases for integration with Emergency Alert System (EAS)	In the event of an urgent need to evacuate or take action to avoid bodily injury or death.
10	4.3.3	22	solution		Please provide use cases for integration with HazCollect NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards	Derechos, Snow storms/squalls, flash flooding
11		22	solution		Is the system a central or distributed Operations Center model for supporting request/responses?	The system is a distributed operations center model.
12		22	solution		What is the number of first line agents or case managers expected?	We expect 24/7 support staff availability to assist administrators within the system. Case manager need should be determined by the vendor based on scope of the program outlined in the RFP. We anticipate this would be different for each vendor.
13	4.3.22	23	Provide a solution that has the ability to translate messages into other languages as selected simultaneously with English language messaging.		What languages does your current solution support?	Spanish
14	4.3.23	23	Weather Notifications		Is the expectation that real-time weather data is retrieved and then sent over a communication channel as part of the vendor solution? Or would you be providing the weather data and then the vendor simply sends that over the communication channel of your preference?	The solution should provide automated weather notifications. We would anticipate the vendor to integrate with NOAA NWS weather feeds (CAP, ATOM etc) or similar authoritative feeds.

15	4.3.14	23	Geocoding	Do you currently utilize ESRI for geocoding services, or would you expect the vendor to provide these services as part of the solution?	We expect the vendor to provide geocoding services as part of the solution. That could be through ESRI, Google or any other geocoding service.
16		23	Messaging	What are the number and type of integrations required for messaging?	At the state level several. At the county it may vary depending on the needs at local level.
17	4.3.35	24	Provide a solution that is SOC3 compliant	With the State of Iowa collecting personal data from the citizens in Iowa, it is suggested that the State also include ISO 27001 and ISO 27701 as a requirement to more specifically address data privacy and security. It is also suggested that the State include FedRamp authorization as a requirement for vendors which provides a standardized approach to security assessment, authorization and continuous monitoring of cloud products and services.	Noted. We will consult with OCIO on specific data security requirements. Respondents are free to propose this service as part of their Technical Proposals.
18	4.3.33	24	Provide a multi-tier security infrastructure for the system	It is suggested that the State of Iowa require the vendor to have their own Network Operations Center which is staffed 24/7/365 to monitor the vendors infrastructure to be able to immediately respond to any potential infrastructure issues before it turns into down time of the system. It is suggested that the State of Iowa require the vendor to have at least two geographically redundant NOC's in the event of multiple major events across the United States, as witnessed during COVID, civil unrest, and major weather events all happening simultaneously which could potentially impact a NOC if there is only one.	Noted. Respondents are free to propose this service as part of their Technical Proposals.

19	4.3.29	24	Stop a Message In progress	Can you be more specific about where in the process of sending a message, and what channel (s), that you would like this functionality?	The ability to cancel a message would exist immediately after a message was sent. We would like this function to exist for all channels by which the original message was issued. As an example, imagine a voice message was sent to an entire county, if the issuer canceled the message within a few seconds we would anticipate calls that had not been completed would be terminated.
20	4.3.30	24	Registration Portal	Can you be more explicit about who would be registering for notifications in this portal?	The citizens and residents of Iowa.
21	4.3.35	24	SOC3 Compliance	Is SOC3 a requirement for the entire solution? Is SOC 2 acceptable, or are there specific communication channels where SOC2 is acceptable?	SOC3 compliance is preferred, however in the event that a Respondent already holds SOC2 compliance, we will accept it.
22	4.3.40	25	Provide each sub-account with the ability to customize features, e.g. to have its own unique and configurable caller ID and email display, email headers/footers, and the ability to send attachments, photos, and links.	In addition to custom caller id's, does the State require the option to have dedicated toll-free numbers that allows the recipient to called back to hear the latest message that was delivered to that phone?	That is not a requirement.
23	4.3.50	25	Provide a solution that can utilize e911 or MSAG data.	How often will the state be submitting a E9-1-1 data update? Monthly? Quarterly? Biannually or annually?	MSAG data will be provided quarterly or at the request of the local jurisdiction.
24	4.3.43	25	Citizen Data	Do you currently store and maintain the citizen data points specified in this requirement? If so, what technology do you use for this?	Our current vendor stores user profile information.
25	4.3.50	25	e911 and MSAG	Can you elaborate on how you would like the solution to "utilize" these services?	MSAG (landline) data should be available as part of a group of users allowing admins to issues alerts to individuals regardless of if they have opted into the system.

26	4.3.46	25	data management and reporting	How many different administrators will be accessing the system?	Around or above 300 users, with a handful having top level statewide access and the rest having access to an account at the department or county level.
27	Attachment 5, Section 2.4	56	definitions	How many state employees will be accessing the system to support users?	
28	4.3.61	26	Provide a solution capable of accepting and utilizing geographical map files in native ESRI format. Uploaded shapes must be able to select contacts within that region, without redrawing a polygon.	Does the State have the ability to provide custom geo-coder information to its current solution?	Our current vendor supports the ability to upload and associate a geographic area to a message.
29	4.3.56	26	Database of numbers	Is the expectation that this would be a database to store existing/citizen numbers? Or unprovisioned numbers that are available for provisioning? Are these currently stored in a database?	We would expect the database to have the ability to store both existing numbers. Yes, these are currently stored in a database.
30	4.4.22/33	29	Post Implementation Section	It is suggested that the State of Iowa require vendors to provide non-third party 24/7 live customer support which must include 24/7 escalation capabilities.	Noted. Respondents are free to propose this service as part of their Technical Proposals.
31	4	21-29	Technical Proposal Contents	Can you provide a response matrix or template for vendors to respond to the requirements in Section 4 - Technical Proposal Contents?	It is recommended that Respondents provide a "Yes" or "No" response to each of the Mandatory Specifications listed in Section 4.3 to demonstrate agreement or not with the individual specifications, and that Respondents provide detailed responses to the Scored Specifications in Section 4.4 to be evaluated by the RFP evaluation committee.
32	4	21-29	Technical Proposal Contents	Can you provide your technology stack and a list of existing/current systems you use that you expect vendors to integrate with for this solution? (eg. Databases, Servers, CRMs, etc)	Our current vendor utilizes a variety of databases for various purposes. All databases used support standard database ETL functions.

33	N/A	N/A		What is the State paying its current vendor annually?	$294,500.00
34	N/A	N/A		What is the State's estimated budget?	The current budget is set by Iowa Code and is between $300,00 to $400,000, less admin costs. There are limited funds for one time set up costs available.
35	N/A	N/A		Can you tell me what solution is in place today for the Alert Iowa system, the vendor name, and also the cost?	The current solution is WENS - Wireless Emergency Notification System provided by Inspiron Logistics. Yearly costs total $294,500.