BENEFITS OF USING A REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

By Christopher Hughes

Your agency today may not always have sufficient resources to understand all the solutions that are available, especially in fast-moving industries. Vendors, that know how to help your agency, are doing important work. Unfortunately, many of these vendors don't know how to work with your agency and educate them about your options.

In Part 6 of the Utah Procurement Code allows for a process in which your agency can gather written information from these fast-moving industries. A Request for Information (RFI) is used when you think you know what you want but need more information from the vendors; it will typically be followed by a procurement process. An RFI may request a variety of information to help your agency develop a solicitation, including: availability of a procurement item; delivery schedules; industry standards and practices; product specifications; training; new technologies; capabilities of potential providers of a procurement item; and alternate solutions. (See Utah Code 63G-6a-504.)

A RFI’s purpose is to: obtain written information, comments, or suggestions from potential bidders or offerors before issuing an invitation for bids or request for proposals; determine whether to issue an invitation for bids or a request for proposals; and generate interest in a potential invitation for bids or a request for proposals. (See 63G-6a-502.)

In addition, the RFI may be used in order to: prepare to issue an invitation for bids or request for proposals for an unfamiliar or complex procurement; determine the market availability of a procurement item; or determine best practices, industry standards, performance standards, product specifications, and innovations relating to a procurement item. (See 63G-6a-502.)

A request for information is not a procurement process and may not be used to make a purchase or enter into a contract. A procurement unit is required to
**BENEFITS OF USING A REQUEST FOR INFORMATION (CONT.)**

use a standard procurement process, or comply with an exception to the requirement to use a standard procurement process described in Part 8, Exceptions to Procurement Requirements, in order to make a purchase or enter into a contract. (See 63G-6a-503.)

A response to a request for information is not an offer and may not be accepted to form a binding contract. (See 63G-6a-503.)

Vendors responding to an RFI do not need to fear that the information submitted will be public information because information submitted in response to a request for information is protected under Section 63G-2-305. (See 63G-6a-505.)

And for your agency, it’s OK to ask and take advantage of industry knowledge before issuing a solicitation. Additionally, the RFI can educate possible vendors about any laws or implementation barriers that the final solicitation will have to overcome.

It is important to note that the RFI can be issued quickly and can assist your agency in writing a better solicitation. If your agency would like to utilize the RFI process, please contact the Division of Purchasing to assist you.

**SciQuest: The Future e-Procurement System**

What is SciQuest? It’s the new e-Procurement system the Division of Purchasing is moving to and we need your help.

Over the course of the next 16 months, the Division of Purchasing will be working with SciQuest and a Steering Team of key members of the State’s purchasing community, to configure, test, and roll-out this new system. While SciQuest will be a change, it is also an opportunity for the State to move from a repository-type system to one that is more robust. SciQuest’s Sourcing Director will provide an opportunity to automate the entire solicitation process, from creation of the solicitation document all the way through the evaluation process. This will help to streamline processing time and further improve the consistency of the solicitation process.

Where do you fit in? The Division of Purchasing is looking for representation from the different purchasing groups to be active participants in the focus groups, testing, and roll-out of the new system.

We’ll continue to provide more information on SciQuest and the new e-Procurement system in each monthly newsletter, as well as provide a live demo at the next Quarterly PEP Training Session on December 1st.

Please contact Windy Aphayrath at the Division of Purchasing if you would like more information on participating in the Steering Team.
The next Procurement Education Partnership Seminar (PEP Seminar) will be held Tuesday, December 1 from 9 AM—4 PM. This seminar is jointly hosted by the State of Utah, Division of Purchasing, and the National Association of State Purchasing Officials (NASPO).

The seminar will offer insight into the upcoming e-Procurement System that will be implemented by State Purchasing at a future date (see SciQuest: The Future e-Procurement System article). A short presentation will be given about R33-4-108 Small Purchases of Professional Service Providers and Consultants. The remainder of the time will be given to Michael Asner, our guest speaker. Mr. Asner has twenty years of experience writing and teaching about public procurement. He will share his vast knowledge about the RFP process with us.

The PEP seminar includes lunch for those who register and attend the full-day session. There is no cost to attendees for the seminar or the lunch.

Registration for the seminar is located here. If you do not see the following notice at the end of registration, then you will need to try again as Google forms did not complete and record your registration.

The Division of Purchasing will have a webinar available for those who have a distance to travel. We believe that we have ironed out all the wrinkles in that program. If you would like to attend via webinar, register here: Webinar Registration Link. Further information concerning the webinar will be given to those registered individual in late November. If you do not see the following notice at the end of registration, then you will need to try again as Google forms did not complete and record your registration.

Google will not send you an email nor does it set the date on your calendar. We recommend that you add the Seminar to your calendar right away and print the flier on the next page as a reminder. A week prior to the seminar, Tara Eutsler will send a reminder to all who have pre-registered. If you do not receive an email by November 23, please contact Tara to determine if your registration was received.

Registration ends on November 23 so that we can provide solid lunch numbers to the caterer.
Procurement Education
PARTNERSHIP SEMINAR

Hosted by the State of Utah, Division of Purchasing and NASPO Value Point

Topics & Presenters

SciQuest Demonstration      SciQuest Representative
Professional Services Procurement    Jennifer Salts
Request for Proposal          Michael Asner

DATE:  1 December 2015
TIME:  9 AM – 4 PM
LOCATION:  State Office Building; 1st floor Auditorium
           450 North State Street, Salt Lake City, Utah

There is no cost to attend this training
Lunch will be served to those who are registered

On Location Attendance Registration   ➤➤➤   Registration Link
Webinar Registration ➤➤➤   Webinar Registration Link

NOTE: This training qualifies as “instructor-led” procurement training for the CPPB & CPPO certification requirements
DID YOU KNOW: WIRELESS COMMUNICATION SERVICES AND EQUIPMENT

Five cooperative contracts are dedicated to the procurement of wireless communication services and equipment. They provide discounts for eligible wireless contracts and hardware as well as personal discounts on wireless contracts. See Purchasing’s website for the contact person for each contractor. The contracts are:

MA152 Verizon Wireless - Discounts on Voice and Data plans as well as equipment and accessories for State equipment.

MA176 T-Mobile - Discounts on Voice and Data plans as well as equipment and accessories for State equipment.

MA262 Sprint - Discounts on Voice and Data plans as well as equipment and accessories for State owned equipment.

PD180 Discountcell - Significant discounts for equipment and accessories. Check summary for pricing schedule.

MA149 AT&T - Discounts on Voice and Data plans as well as equipment and accessories.

Please see the contract summary pages for the terms of the agreements. To view these summary pages, please follow this link: http://purchasing.utah.gov/purchasing/statecontractsearch.html and search for the above referenced contract numbers. Click on the "view" link under the contract summary heading.

Please contact Christopher Jennings with State Purchasing if you have any questions or concerns about these contracts at ctjennings@utah.gov, 801-538-3157.

DID YOU KNOW: MULTI-CHANNEL VOICE LOGGING RECORDERS

Did you know the State of Utah has a multiple award State Cooperative Contract for Multi-Channel Voice Logging Recorders?

The multiple award includes the following vendors: Contract MA2247 Dictation Sales & Service, Inc. (DSS), MA2248 Goserco, Inc., MA2252 McIntosh Communications, MA2249 Stancil Corporation and MA2250 Motorola Solutions, Inc.

The contract provides the pricing, installation, and configurations requested for a 16, 32, 48, 64, or 120 Channel system. Training will be provided to dispatch, technical, and supervisory personnel on proper operation and technical aspects of the logging recorder.

The vendor shall provide a three (3) year warranty with toll free technical assistance 24/7/365 along with a four (4) hour response time for any critical failure.

If you have questions relative to this contract, please contact Jeff Hammer at jhammer@utah.gov or by phone at (801)538-3159.

*The brief information in this newsletter is intended to highlight new contracts and contract changes. Always read the entire contract information sheet prior to making a purchasing decision.
# New State of Utah “Best Value” Cooperative Contracts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>CONTRACT</th>
<th>VENDOR</th>
<th>DATES</th>
<th>ADDITIONAL INFORMATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Snowplow Blade Cutting Edges</td>
<td>MA2263</td>
<td>Ironhawk Industrial Distribution LLC</td>
<td>6/30/2015-6/30/2017</td>
<td>Multiple Award</td>
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<tr>
<td>Computer Equipment and Related Svs (Desktops, Laptops, and Tablets)</td>
<td>MA432</td>
<td>Hewlett Packard Company</td>
<td>10/9/2015-3/31/2017</td>
<td>Multiple Award</td>
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<tr>
<td>Computer Equipment and Related Svs (Servers and Storage)</td>
<td>PA2211</td>
<td>Hewlett Packard Enterprise</td>
<td>10/9/2015-3/31/2017</td>
<td>Multiple Award</td>
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<tr>
<td>Computer Equipment and Related Svs (Desktops, Laptops, Tablets, Servers, and Storage)</td>
<td>PA2213</td>
<td>Dell Marketing, L.P.</td>
<td>9/29/2015-3/31/2017</td>
<td>Multiple Award</td>
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<tr>
<td>Computer Equipment and Related Svs (Laptops and Tablets)</td>
<td>PA2212</td>
<td>Apple, Inc.</td>
<td>10/7/2015-3/31/2017</td>
<td>Multiple Award</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Equipment and Related Svs (Servers and Storage)</td>
<td>PA2217</td>
<td>Hitachi Data Systems</td>
<td>7/16/2015-3/31/2017</td>
<td>Multiple Award</td>
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<tr>
<td>Computer Equipment and Related Svs (Desktops, Laptops, Servers, and Storage)</td>
<td>PA2216</td>
<td>Grace Global Inc.</td>
<td>6/12/2015-3/31/2017</td>
<td>Multiple Award</td>
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<tr>
<td>Computer Equipment and Related Svs</td>
<td>AR603</td>
<td>Avaya Inc.</td>
<td>6/1/2014-5/31/2019</td>
<td>Multiple Award</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Equipment and Related Svs (Desktops, Laptops, Tablets, Servers, and Storage)</td>
<td>MA2104</td>
<td>Transource Services Corporation</td>
<td>9/30/2015-3/31/2017</td>
<td>Multiple Award</td>
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<tr>
<td>Computer Equipment and Related Svs (Laptops and Tablets)</td>
<td>PA2219</td>
<td>Microsoft Corporation</td>
<td>10/1/2015-3/31/2017</td>
<td>Multiple Award</td>
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<tr>
<td>Computer Equipment and Related Svs (Desktops, Laptops, Tablets, Servers, and Storage)</td>
<td>PA2215</td>
<td>Computer Technology Link Corp.</td>
<td>5/27/2015-3/31/2017</td>
<td>Multiple Award</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communications: Multi-Channel Voice Recorders</td>
<td>MA2249</td>
<td>Stancil Corporation</td>
<td>10/1/2015-9/30/2020</td>
<td>Multiple Award</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communications: Multi-Channel Voice Recorders</td>
<td>MA2250</td>
<td>Motorola Solutions, Inc.</td>
<td>10/1/2015-9/30/2020</td>
<td>Multiple Award</td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communications: Multi-Channel Voice Logging Recorders</td>
<td>MA2248</td>
<td>Goserco Inc.</td>
<td>10/1/2015-9/30/2020</td>
<td>Multiple Award</td>
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<tr>
<td>Towable Air Compressors</td>
<td>PD2267</td>
<td>United Rentals (North America) Inc.</td>
<td>10/5/2015-10/5/2020</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

### Extended State Of Utah “Best Value” Cooperative Contracts

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Additional Information</th>
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<tr>
<td>Vehicle Rental (WSCA)</td>
<td>MA985</td>
<td>Enterprise Holdings</td>
<td>12/2/2009-10/18/2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wrecker/Towing Services –Iron County</td>
<td>MA084</td>
<td>Cedar City Motor Co.</td>
<td>6/20/2011-6/21/2016</td>
<td>Multiple Award</td>
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### Expired or Canceled State Of Utah “Best Value” Cooperative Contracts

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yard Dump Bodies &amp; Hydraulics &amp; Platform Bodies</td>
<td>MA369</td>
<td>KJR Truck Services</td>
<td>10/15/2015</td>
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<tr>
<td>Service Bodies and Platform Bodies Without Sides</td>
<td>MA330</td>
<td>KJR Truck Services</td>
<td>10/15/2015</td>
<td>Bought by Semi Sv Crane Options, See MA340</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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