This document provides a transcript of the Question & Answer session conducted during the APBI at the Hope Hotel, Wright-Patterson AFB, on 17 May 2005. All questions submitted in writing are included here, along with the majority of those asked verbally during the session. In the days following the APBI, research was conducted to obtain additional information and resolve questions which could not be fully answered during the meeting. Such supplemental answers are included here as well.

Questions denoted "**Q (CARD)**" were submitted in writing, and are copied verbatim (when multiple questions appeared on a single card, numbers have been added herein to improve readability). All other questions were asked verbally, and may be paraphrased here. In a few cases, two written questions were very similar, and a common answer was given to address both. These are indicated by an "-and-" between questions.

Answers denoted "**A (ADDED)**" indicate supplemental information which has been added to the verbal response originally provided at the meeting. This designation also includes responses to several written questions which inadvertently were not addressed at the meeting.

Q: When are small businesses required to recertify their small business status under TSA?

A: On the date they submit a priced offer.

Q: Who will be the Source Selection Authority for TSA-3?

A: It depends on the ceiling. Gen Reynolds (ASC/CC) was the SSA for TSA-2.

Q (CARD): Will there be a sample task order for TSA-3, and could you state what it is?

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Q (CARD): Will sample task be the same for large and small business?

A: Yes. It will be issued with the RFP, but has not been identified yet. Industry prefers an awardable sample task.

A (ADDED): The SMSG does not currently know if there will be an appropriate awardable task available in the same time frame as the TSA-3 source selection. A task used for evaluation in the ID/IQ source selection will require pricing by offerors. The purpose of the task evaluation is to assess the offeror's solution and pricing to a project. The cost/pricing is needed for assessment whether the task is awardable or not. In accord with regulations, price or cost shall be an evaluation factor in each source selection.

Q: Will the TSA-3 sample task cover all functional areas?

A: It is difficult to envision one sample task to cover all areas. We want an example of how the company supplies a solution to a problem, not the entire gamut of TSA-3 requirements. We will attempt to select a task which will permit all offerors to effectively respond, not just the current incumbents.

Q (CARD): What businesses on TSA-2 are still small under the existing size standards? Will this be a problem in TSA-3?

A: We don't know, since companies have changed ownership since TSA-2 was awarded. An online "certs and reps" tool is in place, but companies are having trouble getting them updated. We do a market survey, and ask for recertification with the proposal for a task order.

A (ADDED): In any set-aside Request for Proposal, we will state the current policy on small business certification.

Q: What size standard is used for small business determination?

A: 1000 employees, under TSA-2 contracts.

A (ADDED): The NAIC code is 336413.

Q (CARD): What was meant by "looking at a different requirement criteria for small business set-aside?"

A: The small business Functional Requirements Document may be a subset of the full & open FRD.

Q: What percentage or dollar value of TSA-2 has been awarded to small businesses? Are there small business goals?

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Q (CARD): Size ceiling for small business – is there a dollar threshold?

A: Don't know the percentage figures. No goal has been set for the TSA program.

Q: Why does YW West want to issue a ten year contract, and YW East a five year contract?

A: The period of performance depends on the requirements. YW West contracts are for long-term sustainment while YW East contracts are more focused on new procurements.

Q (CARD): (1) Why are the F-16 and ATARS training systems going outside the TSA vehicles? (2) Is this a trend TSPG is endorsing? (3) What will prevent the flood gates from opening?

A: (1) ATARS exceeded the $3B TSA-2 ceiling, and was taken out to free up ceiling for other programs. ATARS also required additional flexibility; ATARS involves the Army as well as Air Force, and the customer wanted more competition. Part of ATARS will stay with TSA-2. The F-16 MTC is outside TSA-2 because the original contract was outside. We want to fix the problem of how past performance is handled under TSA, and be able to take a broader look. Contract length is also an issue. (2) Going outside TSA is not a trend that the TSPG is endorsing; programs that go outside TSA need a waiver from the corporate board. (3) The waiver process is what we use to control the floodgates.

A (ADDED): Period of performance for ATARS ends September FY06. AFSOC and AETC POM submissions were mildly successful and there is a fair amount of funds anticipated in FY06. Modifications / efforts, whereby the period of performance extends beyond September 06 will require a contractual vehicle other than the original ATARS contract. Our goal is to use a TSA II delivery order to "Bridge" the current ATARS contract and the future ATARS effort. Efforts under this delivery order will include, but are not limited to the following:

- HH-60 WST and OFT Image Generator Replacement
- HH-60 WST and OFT Instructor Operator Station Upgrade
- HH-60 WST and OFT DRLMS (Digital Radar) Upgrade
- AC-130U WST M2MSA/ ROVER concurrency effort
- Completion of the Common EW effort on the AC-130U
- Begin Common EW efforts on the Talon WSTs
- HC-130P WST Acq'n under TSA II - anticipate Oct/Nov 05 award date once FY06 funds arrive.

Additional Aircraft Concurrency Efforts will also be handled by this TSA II vehicle until the next iteration of ATARS is up and running.

Q: What is the breakout of TSA-2 awards by contractor?

A: Don't know. This information is available on the PIXS website.

Q: What is the business case for small businesses to support TSA-3?

A: Currently all businesses are qualified for all work under TSA-2. TSPG does not make the requirements; we don't do small studies because the funding source for them has gone away. The requirements we are getting from the MAJCOMs are for large systems. Two or more small businesses need to be qualified in order to do a small business set-aside. We need to look at enhancing subcontract opportunities to small businesses under TSA-3. The WR-ALC FAST contract requires a percentage of small business awards from the primes. The TSA-3 plan to define a narrower scope for small businesses is intended to improve opportunities.

Q: How difficult was the source selection for the FAST contract?

A: It was painful, since one contractor was not happy with small businesses competing against large ones. However, once source selection was completed, the contracting approach has been very effective and has provided much incentive for small business.

A (ADDED): Once the legalities associated with the one protestor and the full-and-open discussions held with the Small Business Administration and Congressional staffers were done, the source selection itself went very smoothly.   Of the four big-business contracts expected to be awarded, one was awarded to a small business-led team. There were three small business contracts awarded.

Q (CARD): If a small business bids under small business requirements and wins, will they be able to bid on full & open deliveries orders under the TSA-3 vehicle?

A: Yes, but only if awarded a contract for the full FRD.

Q: What programs will be awarded to small vs. large businesses for TSA-3?

A: We will take a look at it.

Q: Would you consider breaking a large contract into smaller pieces, to improve competition?

A: We would consider it, but that creates more work for the TSPG and may not be the best approach to low risk mission accomplishment.

Q (CARD): How many awardees planned for TSA-3?

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Q (CARD): How many companies, small and big business will be awarded?

A: Don't know. Likely will be higher than TSA-2, possibly up to 20.

Q: Is the present philosophy to award delivery orders as "lots" to get better participation?

A: We consider TSA-3 as an ID/IQ with multiple awards. We award delivery orders based on a fair opportunity to compete, not by awarding lots.

A (ADDED): When I think of the "lots" concept as grouping functional requirements under particular contracts, I get a picture of the administrative burden of multiple contracts. We would need to accomplish separate source selections for each group of requirements. That is not what we have planned for TSA-3.

Q: Will the TSA-3 Functional Requirements Document be distributed?

A: Yes. It will be posted on the PIXS website.

Q: Will a demo be required under TSA-3?

A: We haven't decided. We want the Bid & Proposal process to be as painless as possible. The preparation and submittal of a contractor input to the Systems Engineering Plan is being considered as one possible alternative to a demo.

Q (CARD): What is the benefit of having a TSA contract as opposed to doing individual source selections? You end up doing competitions for each task order for TSA awards in addition to the basic TSA competition.

A: TSA shortens the time to get on contract, and allows a smaller source selection team. We are accepting ideas on how to streamline proposals.

Q: Any limitations on foreign businesses and awards?

A: FMS will be on TSA-3.

A (ADDED): TSA-3 will comply with the policies and provisions for acquiring foreign supplies and services in FAR Part 25 as Supplemented. The Buy American Act is implemented in these regulations and provides acquisition restrictions based on:
    Purchase of supplies
    Construction material
    Trade agreements
    Evaluation of Foreign offers
    Trade sanctions
    Prohibited sources
    Other International Agreements and coordinations
    Customs and Duties
    Additional Foreign Acquisition Regulations
    Solicitation Provisions and Contract Clauses

Q: Will the Air Force consider excluding aircraft prime contractors from evaluating and then selecting their own solution?

A: Yes, this is why we are trying to influence the development of policy that would require the training system to be separate from the OEM contract. By acquiring a training device directly through the TSPG, we avoid the additional burden added by the aircraft prime.

Q (CARD): Relative to large business vs. small business acquisition decision – dollar value of program vs. incumbent. Example: T25 SECT and T45 UNTS... why are these programs full & open?

A: Programs are a long way out, and the acquisition strategy has not been evaluated yet.

Q (CARD): If this is a 10 year ID/IQ, how will the ATS contracts be issued – off TSA-3 or on TSA-2 – or outside both?

A: We will try to satisfy the ceiling on TSA-2 first.

Q (CARD): Can you please explain what new leverage SMSG may have with the new edict? How will it work if the Wings have a different Acquisition Strategy in mind?

A: The policy will need the backing of the PEO to work.

Q: Are there DMO requirements for a distributed Brief/Debrief capability?

A: A study has been done, and a prototype is going to be developed. Don't know current status of the prototyping.

Q: In selecting TSA-3 contractors, will any consideration be given to companies with certified M&S professionals?

A: Good idea, we will look at it.

A (ADDED): We will also explore other beneficial certifications, such as engineering, contracts, financial, program management, CMMI, etc.

Q: Are TSA-2 contractors going to be "grandfathered" under TSA-3?

A: No. By law, we are required to do a full and open competition.

Q (CARD): (1) Will there be opportunities for new contractors to qualify as a prime under TSA-3 in addition to the TSA-2 primes (will there be constraints on the number of awards)? (2) Might new prime contractors have the opportunity to bid on a subset of functional capabilities rather than being required to establish a team to meet all possible requirements? (3) What is being done to address the issue of high proposal costs/effort associated with both the ID/IQ vehicle as well as task orders?

A (ADDED): (1) Yes. We currently have no constraints on the number of awards. (2) The contractor must be able to meet all requirements in the FRD appropriate to his business size. We plan to use a less comprehensive FRD for small businesses. (3) We are looking at streamlining the process, especially for small businesses.

Q (CARD): Is there any way to find out what kind of a CPAR LM received for default on F-16 MTC/CTSS? Col Chapin might be willing to verbally share if he realizes how important it is that industry needs to be reassured that this F-16 re-compete is not just a

way to let LM reprice. Industries position is that LM should be excluded from the re-compete, for cause. If they are allowed to bid, their bad Past Performance has to offset a huge nonrecurring investment that they hold exclusively. This bit of info is critical to Bid/No-Bid on recompete of F-16 MTC.

A (ADDED): No, CPAR information is confidential between the government and contractor. The F-16 contract was not terminated for default; it simply reached the end of its original period of performance without the award of additional term. The reasons for concluding it in this manner are between LM and the Air Force. The new F-16 MTC contract will be acquired through full and open competition. It is not just a ploy to enable LM to reprice. LM would not be prohibited from bidding under this competition. The Air Force has determined that nonrecurring investment in F-16 training devices is not exclusive to LM. Over 10 companies responded to an August 2004 RFI on the F-16 MTC. The Air Force visited some of these companies, and concluded that alternative devices are immediately available at reasonable costs.

Q (CARD): How will the operation of the Mesa Lab and Govt/Contractor relations differ under the new BAA? Or, to ask it another way - what problems are you trying to solve with this BAA?

A (ADDED): The existing Indefinite Delivery, Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ), on-site contract at the Mesa Research Site, which is currently in the process of being re-competed, will not be significantly impacted by this BAA. This larger IDIQ contract will still handle the vast majority of work at the Mesa Research Site. The BAA adds flexibility and provides a more effective means to obtain new and innovative ideas and solutions from industry and provides a mechanism to reach out to those industry partners. We are anticipating that the majority of the work under the Open BAA would not be performed at the Mesa Research Site.