



**Solicitation Information**

**March 1, 2013**

**Addendum #3**

**RFI # 7459235**

**TITLE: STATE OF RHODE ISLAND HOSTED EMAIL, COMMUNICATIONS, AND COLLABORATION SERVICES**

**Submission Deadline: Thursday, March 14, 2013 at 10:00 AM (ET)**

**ATTACHED ARE FINAL VENDOR QUESTIONS WITH STATE RESPONSES. NO FURTHER QUESTIONS WILL BE ANSWERED.**

**Daniel W. Majcher, Esq.**

**Assistant Director, Special Projects**

## State of Rhode Island

### RFP # 7459235: Hosted Email, Communications, and Collaboration Services

#### Vendor Questions

Pre Bid Conference 02/15/2013

Questions 1-20 can be found in Addendum #1 dated 2/02/2013

#	Section / Page	Question	State of Rhode Island Response
21		The solicitation contains numerous requirements or preferences that are specific to a single vendor's solution. We are concerned that these product specific requirements and preferences will disadvantage other offerors. Many federal, state, and local agencies have used a broad, technology agnostic, objectives-based solicitation that allows offerors to propose solutions that will best satisfy the described objectives. Will the State consider a solicitation that is objectives-based as opposed to one that appears to be based on the service that is offered by a single vendor? An example of such an objectives-based solicitation may be found at <a href="http://www.gsa.gov/emailcollaboration">www.gsa.gov/emailcollaboration</a> .	The State believes this RFP is an objective based solicitation. This solicitation is a fair and open process and the State will consider solicitations with alternative methodologies that meet the specific criteria listed therein.
22		As part of its market research, did the state review and assess the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) Email as a Service Blanket Purchase Agreement? (EaaS BPA)? This is a pre-competited contract vehicle available for use by U.S. federal, state, and local government agencies. It was designed to maximize competition, accelerate adoption, and reduce the time and administrative burden associated with procuring cloud computing solutions for email and collaboration. The efficiencies gained through the use of the GSA schedule will also reduce the overall cost to the State. More details about this program can be found at: <a href="http://www.gsa.gov/schedule70">http://www.gsa.gov/schedule70</a> . Google suggests that the State use the GSA schedules program instead of the current acquisition approach. Will the State consider this option?	The State has chosen to request solicitations which best satisfy our specific requirements.
23	Section 1.4	Provides that "the architecture must provide for the ability to implement a hybrid solution which affords the State the opportunity to host a percentage of the user population on premise and the remaining percentage of users in the government clients only public cloud hosted environment. For the purposes of this solicitation it should be assumed a 80% Cloud and 20% On Premise."  A hybrid model proposed by the State has numerous disadvantages, which we are prepared to describe in our proposal response. The disadvantages include added complexity, security vulnerabilities, increased maintenance burden, and increased cost. Federal, state, and local agencies have made the same assessment and chose a 100% cloud based solution. We recommend that the State change this mandatory requirement to allow offerors to propose solutions that do not contain an on-premise component.	The State has defined an architecture which best meets OUR diverse agency requirements today and provides the flexibility to address un-anticipated changes in the future regardless of any single vendor's ability to deliver such a solution.  Certain agencies have concerns regarding security of their sensitive data being located in the cloud. Therefore, this is why the RFP requested a hybrid solution. With that said, alternative approaches and/or methodologies to accomplish the desired or intended results of this procurement are solicited, This means that if a solution is presented that addresses the concerns of the agencies and meets the objectives of the RFP, it will be considered. However, proposals which depart from or materially alter the terms, requirements, or scope of work defined by this RFP will be rejected as being non-responsive.
24		Will the state please describe the market research efforts it undertook before developing the solicitation?	The State performed its due diligence prior to developing the solicitation, including, but not limited to discussions with other jurisdictions and independent research firms, including but not limited to Gartner.
25	Section 4.0.2.1.7	Not all email solutions provide such formatted header information, but instead use other features that allow users to	No. Offerors are reminded per section 1, INSTRUCTIONS AND NOTIFICATIONS TO OFFERORS:

		quickly identify critical header information. Will the State change this requirement to allow offerors to propose an alternative approach to identifying header information?	Alternative approaches and/or methodologies to accomplish the desired or intended results of this procurement are solicited. However, proposals which depart from or materially alter the terms, requirements, or scope of work defined by this RFP will be rejected as being non-responsive.
26	Section 4.0.2.1.12	Requires the “ability to define proxy access limitations (e.g., Read Write; Subscribe to Alarms and Appointments, Modify Options, Rules, and Folders), and retract and/or retrieve messages within an established time period within the State email system.”  Not all email solutions allow for “Read Write; Subscribe to Alarms and Appointments, Modify Options, Rules, and Folders.” These features are specific to a particular vendor. Will the State consider changing this requirement to allow other solutions that are equal to or better than what is specified?	See answer to Question #25.
27	Section 4.0.2.1.18	Requires the “ability to schedule or delay the delivery of email messages.”  Not all email solutions can meet this requirement. Given that users do not often use this feature, and other federal and state agencies have no such requirement, will the State make this a ‘desired’ as opposed to a ‘mandatory’ requirement?	See answer to Question #25.
28	Section 4.0.2.1.27	Requires the “ability to set the priority of a message by sender.”  Not all email solutions offer this ability, but instead have other ways to create message priority. Will the State change this requirement to allow offerors to propose other methods of establishing priority?	See answer to Question #25.
29	Section 4.0.2.1.28	Requires the “ability to add a ‘reply requested’ tag to an email message, calendar item or task.”  Not all email solutions can meet this requirement that is unique to a specific vendor. Given that users do not often use this feature, will the State make this a ‘desired’ as opposed to a ‘mandatory’ requirement?	See answer to Question #25
30	Section 4.0.2.13.1	Requires the “ability for Gateway (relay) to provide alerts and notification if service is compromised.”  The term “Gateway” is typically associated with on-premise systems. This requirement is not applicable to a cloud system, and there are better solutions. Given that the state desires a cloud system, we request that the state remove this requirement. Rather than prescribing an on-premise model to meet these requirements, we request that the State describe the objectives it wishes to achieve and allow cloud providers to explain how those objectives can be met.	The State has defined an architecture which best meets OUR diverse agency requirements today and provides the flexibility to address un-anticipated changes in the future regardless of any single vendor’s ability to deliver such a solution.  Offerors are reminded per section 1, INSTRUCTIONS AND NOTIFICATIONS TO OFFERORS: Alternative approaches and/or methodologies to accomplish the desired or intended results of this procurement are solicited. However, proposals which depart from or materially alter the terms, requirements, or scope of work defined by this RFP will be rejected as being non-responsive.
31	Section 4.0.2.13.2	Requires the “ability for Gateway (relay) to provide bandwidth guarantee.”  The term “Gateway” is typically associated with on-premise systems. This requirement is not applicable to a cloud system, and there are better solutions. Given that the state desires a cloud system, we request that the state remove this requirement. Rather than prescribing an on-premise model to meet these requirements, we request that the State describe the objectives it wishes to achieve and allow cloud providers to explain how those objectives can be met.	See Answer to Question #30.
32	Section 4.0.2.13.3	Requires the “ability for Gateway (relay) to restrict size and attachments.”	See Answer to Question #30.

		<p>The term "Gateway" is typically associated with on-premise systems. This requirement is not applicable to a cloud system, and there are better solutions. Given that the state desires a cloud system, we request that the state remove this requirement. Rather than prescribing an on-premise model to meet these requirements, we request that the State describe the objectives it wishes to achieve and allow cloud providers to explain how those objectives can be met.</p>	
33	Section 4.0.2.13.4	<p>Requires the "ability for Gateway (relay) to provide authorization levels."</p> <p>The term "Gateway" is typically associated with on-premise systems. This requirement is not applicable to a cloud system, and there are better solutions. Given that the state desires a cloud system, we request that the state remove this requirement. Rather than prescribing an on-premise model to meet these requirements, we request that the State describe the objectives it wishes to achieve and allow cloud providers to explain how those objectives can be met.</p>	See Answer to Question #30.
34	Section 4.0.2.13.5	<p>Requires the "ability for Gateway (relay) services to restrict sending functions by domains, sub domains, users, or IP ranges."</p> <p>The term "Gateway" is typically associated with on-premise systems. This requirement is not applicable to a cloud system, and there are better solutions. Given that the state desires a cloud system, we request that the state remove this requirement. Rather than prescribing an on-premise model to meet these requirements, we request that the State describe the objectives it wishes to achieve and allow cloud providers to explain how those objectives can be met.</p>	See Answer to Question #30.
35	Section 4.0.2.13.6	<p>Requires the "ability for Gateway (relay) services to prioritize based on domains, sub domains, users, or IP ranges."</p> <p>The term "Gateway" is typically associated with on-premise systems. This requirement is not applicable to a cloud system, and there are better solutions. Given that the state desires a cloud system, we request that the state remove this requirement. Rather than prescribing an on-premise model to meet these requirements, we request that the State describe the objectives it wishes to achieve and allow cloud providers to explain how those objectives can be met.</p>	See Answer to Question #30.
36	Section 4.0.2.14.5	<p>Requires the "ability for the state to perform onsite audits of respondent data center hosting facilities to ensure security compliance. Provision of SAS 70 Type II reports and FISMA certification does not mitigate the need for onsite audits."</p> <p>This approach is one that is used by a specific vendor, and has no relation to a legitimate security or auditing need. We request that this requirement be made generic so that vendors can propose alternative audit approaches that will better serve the State.</p>	See answer to Question #25.
37	Section 4.0.2.16.2	<p>Requires the "segregation of State data from other data."</p> <p>This requirement is contrary to the concept of a community cloud. More clarification is needed for offerors to determine how to respond.</p>	A multi-tenant cloud environment which stores US state and/or federal government data and is limited to Government Clients only
38		<p>There are numerous references in the solicitation to a "government client only public cloud." This term does not correspond to the NIST definitions of Government Community Cloud and Public Cloud. Can the government please clarify what it means by the term "government client only public cloud."</p>	See answer to question #37.
39	Page 5	<p>RFP addresses alternative proposals.</p> <p>An alternative proposal will not make a proposal responsive if the terms deviate from mandatory requirements. Will the</p>	See answer to question #25.

		state consider removing the mandatory requirements, which would allow all offerors to compete in this acquisition?	
40	Section 4.0.2.14.1	<p>A mandatory requirement entitled "FISMA Certification," It appears this requirement may have been written to accommodate a single vendor that had achieved ISO 27001 and SAS70 certifications, but did not have a FISMA ATO for one or more of its products.</p> <p>Section 4.0.2.14.1 (A) requires documentation demonstrating compliance with ISO 27001 and SAS70, both of which have no bearing on FISMA certification. Section 4.0.2.14.1 (B) appears to be an optional requirement for FISMA certification. It states that: "To further document the security capabilities of its data center and proposed services, Respondent may submit with its proposal documentation of its compliance with the Federal Information Security Management Act ("FISMA") security controls in NIST Special Publication 800-53 Revision 3 for Moderate Impact System." The section also states that: "For any FISMA certification or ATO issued by an agency or department of the U.S. Government upon which Respondent relies in this proposal, Respondent shall submit to the State (a) a copy of the Certification and Accreditation package (including but not limited to all attachments, exceptions and conditions) that was submitted to the agency or department of the U.S. Government, (b) the ATO issued by the agency or department of the U.S. Government (including all attachments, exceptions and conditions), and (c) a point of contact at the U.S. Government agency."</p> <p>An ATO letter issued by a federal government agency is evidence of "FISMA certification" based on the submission and government approval of a Certification and Accreditation (C&amp;A) package. To protect the security of customers and users, most vendors and government agencies place stringent restrictions on the dissemination of copies of Certification and Accreditation packages because, among other reasons, the documents often contain security sensitive information that should be strictly controlled. Therefore, not all vendors would be authorized to submit a copy of the C&amp;A package as part of a proposal evaluation. Would the state consider removing the requirement to include a copy of the C&amp;A package or allow for alternative methods for the state to review the package?</p>	See answer to question #25.
41		The solicitation calls for a "hybrid" solution that requires both a cloud and on premise service. It is well known that Microsoft advocates this "hybrid" configuration. In other procurements, federal, state, and local customers have evaluated the hybrid model and chose to adapt a 100% cloud service. Vendor is prepared to explain why a cloud based service is superior to a model that calls for a portion of the service to be on-premise. In fact, no technical or business justification supports an on-premise requirement	See answer to question #23.
42		Storage, pricing, security, and functionality requirements, among others, appear to be drawn from Microsoft Office 365 sales literature	The State disagrees with this assessment.
43		Microsoft is mentioned 13 times in the RFP	While accurate in terms of count. Microsoft is referenced 13 times within the RFP; 3 times as part of the Purchasing format directions for responding to the Bid, and 10 times describing our current environment. In order for bidders to provide a response to our RFP, we needed to describe what is in place today. As an example, today, 40% of our 6,970 users in scope representing six agencies utilize Microsoft technology for their email system and 100% of the users in scope use Microsoft

			Office. We also mentioned Novell in our response 10 times to define our current environment.
44		We also contend that the HIPPA BAA requirement does not recognize alternative approaches, which other states have adopted, to obtain compliance.	Offerors are reminded per section 1, INSTRUCTIONS AND NOTIFICATIONS TO OFFERORS: Alternative approaches and/or methodologies to accomplish the desired or intended results of this procurement are solicited. However, proposals which depart from or materially alter the terms, requirements, or scope of work defined by this RFP will be rejected as being non-responsive.
45		Requirements indicate you need 6 copies but, when the certification came out for open records log, it states an additional copy needs to be made available—is that one of the 6 or is that a 7 <sup>th</sup> additional copy?	It is a 7 <sup>th</sup> and is an optional requirement. It is a redacted version in order for us to make public after all of this is awarded. It is an option that you do not have to do. But, if you feel it is necessary you can give us a copy of what you feel is public and not public; it is not controlling but would be helpful for us.
46		Did the State conduct market research efforts prior to developing RFP? What are some examples of market research? What other states have done for analysis of the market place? Did you review industry reports? Did you consider vendor meetings to understand solutions and offerings? Were there any meetings with vendors? Describe the meetings with the vendors?	See answer to question #24.
47		Did the State review or is the state aware of the GSA purchase agreement to easily purchase cloud solutions. GSA provides a way for states and federal agencies to use GSA quickly. Would the State look at GSA?  GSA Background: The GSA is pre-competitively based contract vehicle made specifically for the purpose for state and federal governments to easily procure these services. It provides a framework that was invented by the Federal, State and Local Government Agencies that can reduce administrative burden and ensure competition. Therefore, the states do not have to go through a process (“reinvent the wheel”) to develop its own RFP; this is available and has been recommended by industry analysts.	See answer to question #22.
48		Would the state be willing to compare their needs to the GSA? The GSA has the capability for the state to write its own task order.	See answer to question #22.
49		Has the state looked at solicitations from other States?	See answer to question #24.
50		There are many prescriptive requirements? Will state look at and remove some of these mandatory requirements so that other vendors can offer solutions that can meet the states main objective? For example, Word Processing tool must have a button to save your actions. There are programs that save the work as you’re working on your document. So, there is no need for this button.	See answer to question #25.
51		Define what is a “Material alteration” and define the objectives of the RFP:	“Material alteration” as described in #2 on page of the RFP means a change to the underlying requirements that would prevent the State from achieving its objectives stated in RFP.
52		Why does the state require a Hybrid 80% versus 20% solution? Would the state be willing to eliminate this and describe the security concerns that need to be addressed by the data that would be stored and allow industry to offer solutions to the state that would meet those objectives?	See answer to question #23.
53		80/20 – Has the State thought about how long it will maintain this type of environment and how many years after transition to migrating to 100% solution?	No. Undetermined at this time.
54		Where is the historical archived data that is 5.5 – 6 terabytes located? Is it expected that the data will be centralized?  a. Will be done prior?	50% is on centralized archive servers. 50% is stored on laptops and desktops in multiple locations. It is our goal to have the final product that is in a centralized archive because we do not want it on individual laptops and desktops.

		<p>b. Should we account for multiple data sources?  c. and assist the State to centralize?</p>	<p>a. No, During  b. Yes  c. Yes, all data needs to be brought together</p>
55		Is there a one to one association with GroupWise resource active directory – have these users been identified as AD users?	No. Not 100%.
56		Number of environment	Appendix A, Current State Document, Page 8 Section 7 Titled Agency Email – 6970 Users
57		Is there a timeline to move to AD?	Will not be done prior to completion of RFP process
58		In terms of accessing decentralized GroupWise agency, will State give a VPN to access information?	Yes, Where Applicable.
59		Is there a security protocols for VPN documented? Is it on the website?	Yes.
60		What is meant by “Government Client-Only Public Cloud?”	See Number 37
61		In terms of the HIPAA data the state plans on storing, what percentage of data that falls under HIPAA requirements?	The State has multiple agencies which are a HIPAA “Covered Entity”
62		Due to a reference that talks about keeping HIPAA data out of email, is it the state’s desire to keep HIPAA data out of cloud system; or to have the HIPAA data in the cloud system and have it be HIPPA certified; or to have out of cloud system and have the system HIPPA certified?	The email solution needs to be HIPPA certified because there is no way to prevent having the data never part of an email. We can specify but we can not manage and govern this.
63		There is a requirement to have discretionary HIPAA data out of the data system.	The email solution needs to be HIPPA certified because there is no way to prevent having the data never part of an email. We can specify but we can not manage and govern this.
64		Is there any required separation of Agencies? Is it possible to gain efficiencies through combining smaller agencies for training in migration?	Yes, but there are migration limitations are based on network & training bandwidth.
65		Is this number due to limitations?	See question #64
66		There is reference to state segregation of data—is this non-state data or other data?	See question #37
67		For the GroupWise data is it a single domain, single post office or is it multiple?	It is multiple domains and multiple post offices. Appendix A, Current State Document, Page 6 Section 4 Titled SMTP Domains.