

Special Operations Technology

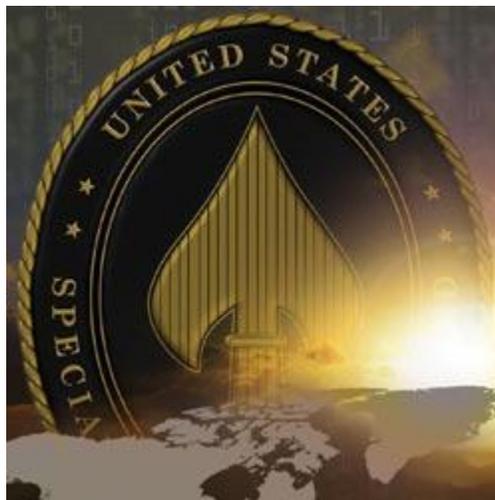
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SITEC Steps Up to the Plate

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USSOCOM is Renewing its IT Program From Foxhole to Headquarters.

SITEC will be run via the Information Technology Management Office (ITMO) responsible for delivering the SOF Information Enterprise (SIE), USSOCOM's implementation of the SOF portion of the Global Information Grid supporting a range of security enclaves supporting Unclassified NIPRNet, Secret SIPRNet and the Top Secret/Sensitive Compartmented Information Joint Worldwide Intelligence Communications System network—at a large number of locations worldwide.

SITEC's outputs and the SIE will be managed via USSOCOM's ITMO, formed specifically for this job, providing "a common focus for IT service delivery that will achieve efficiencies and a more reliable and cohesive IT environment." The SITEC program is a joint program supporting Army Air Force and Marine Corps who jointly participate in requirements definition, balancing each other out as they agree on a set of standard requirements.

The first such contract will be Information Technology Service Management contract, which has a minimum value of \$175 million, the draft RFP for which was issued in April.

USSOCOM also began the SITEC C4I Production-TACLAN contract earlier this year. Issuing sources sought notice with the potential for a request for proposal or bid to support further work on the existing TACLAN contract, which expires at the end of March, with the award set aside for small businesses.

USSOCOM describes TACLAN as a consolidation of hardware and software packages to provide operational commanders and forward deployed forces “the automation infrastructure and common-user applications to interconnect deployed SOF headquarters, main operating locations, tactical teams and liaison elements.” TACLAN equips SOF headquarters, main operating locations, tactical teams and liaison elements with equipment ranging from TACLAN suites consisting of 60 laptops, 10 intelligence laptops, routers, ancillary equipment to form a LAN, mission planning kits and field computing devices that equip users at the frontline. Through TACLAN, users have access to SIE networks.

FederalTechServices (**FTS**) is one of a number of companies bidding on SITEC. Allen Noble, chief operations officer, said, “**FTS is a network management consulting company with proven experience in performing IT production services**, specializing in design, development, implementation and life cycle sustainment of open systems distributed architecture solutions. Our solutions are designed to provide real-time visibility, analytics, decision support and management tools to effectively fulfill high level network management, network configuration management and element management functions of the Global Information Grid.”

Currently, **FTS** is the incumbent on the Theater Network Management Architecture (**TNMA**) contract, working with U.S. Central Command J-6 Chief Technology Officer Headquarters, Command Forward Headquarters and throughout USCENTCOM’s area of responsibility.

Noble said, “The **TNMA program provides real-time operational awareness**, enabling network engineers to measure IT infrastructure, model current state, and determine how incidents affect the warfighter. These insights drive decisions within USCENTCOM’s J-6 network command and control functions, as well as operational and planning capabilities. As the sole source, **FTS** is responsible for operation, maintenance and integration support of hardware, software and service elements of **TNMA**, along with oversight and implementation support of the end-to-end **TNMA** deployment. We have also been contracted by the US Army to provide **TNMA** in mobile tactical cases.”

Implemented in 2009, **TNMA** links the joint services and agencies within CENTCOM’s theater of operations with **the Joint Staff, designating it a “best of breed” architecture. TNMA** will serve two headquarters with master suites and eight junior suites servicing brigade commands. A grassroots system, it operates by distributing **TNMA’s** network access; at the local level, **TNMA** has cut end-to-end data traffic at least by half.

FTS’ use of COTS in the network has reduced both the capital and through life costs. It also features security tools to address intrusion when the cyber perimeter is breached.

Chip Dickens at iCIO said, “The SITEC task is seeking the production of critical communications capabilities for deploying elements forward, however, suggests latitude in reviewing, developing and offering options to increase the capabilities or capacity of the system. iCIO brings a strong capability in program management, awareness of the market and current-to-emerging technical capabilities, with a fundamental understanding of the risk decisions needed to exercised by the operational commanders. These three elements allow the organization to have an agile, solution provider based on innovation and mission focus.”

iCIO supported USCENTCOM’s regional assessment in knowledge management and command and control. In 2009, the team reviewed options and made recommendations to add/enhance KM capabilities across the disparate networks within theater the degradation operating in so many. Dickens said, “Currently, we are supporting the Army CIO/G-6 with analysis and implementation to improve how to appropriately resource information technologies. This effort is integrating strategic planning, governance, architecture and the functional requirements processes together for informed decision making of future needs.’

“I think there are two points to consider from past performance relative to SITEC. The first is follow through—SITEC will need a strong program manager that is focused on the mission and delivering schedules. In both past performance cases, the government needed product to support their process or assessment; iCIO can and does deliver on or ahead of schedule exceeding expectations. Our agility as a small business gives an advantage to adapt to the requirement. The second area is in approach ‘solutioneering:’ combining the elements of vision, innovation and engineering to bring creative and breakthrough capabilities for the warfighter. This is one of our strong suits and our hope to bring it to bear on many more DoD initiatives like SITEC.”

iGov announced its selection as the prime contractor for the Marine Corps’ Tactical Collaborative Work Suite (TCWS) in June. The company is working towards delivering two initial systems for qualification testing by December, leading to the acquisition of up to 117 systems with a value of up to \$25 million. iGov’s solution will replace the legacy TCWS, adding additional capabilities while reducing the weight by almost half. The TCWS is designed to be a man-portable hosting platform that provides a portal for battlefield collaboration and situational awareness. Allan Bellacicco, vice president, said, “The Marine is a warfighter first, then a technician second, so we designed the system for rapid

deployment and setup." The iGov team includes IBM, supporting system testing and Conscious Security responsible for providing system security.

Bellacicco said, "iGov's most challenging task is often the integration of software into a system baseline. We have had customers with over 260 software applications in their software baseline. Our baseline includes a custom utility with a menu-driven GUI that gives users the ability to select a tailored software load. For example, the system builds a software configuration unique to an Army intelligence operations or Air Force mission planning element.

"iGov is a very process-oriented company, as reflected in our Capability Maturity Model Integrated Level 3 and our ISO 9002- 2008 certification enabling us to produce repeatable quality in our products."

iGov's TACLAN solution has deployed over 6,000 systems with tactical users around the world. Additional capabilities added to TACLAN over the life of the program have reduced the hardware footprint by 50 percent and power consumption by 30 percent. iGov maintains an active research and development for new technology insertion such as secure wireless, radio over IP, rugged PDAs and virtual mass storage.

Another iGov solution is BCS3, which provided over 7,000 systems that supported battlefield logistics and command and control. The company significantly reduced system weight, saving over \$6 million for the Army. The eArmyU global distance learning program is also led by the company, providing service personnel the opportunity to access educational programs irrespective of their location. The program offered 146 certificate and degree programs through 29 colleges and universities.

Bellacicco said, "Across all programs we focus on fielding tactical IT systems, which are ruggedized and can easily plug and play in a harsh environment. We identify commercial off-the-shelf IT products such as servers, routers, switches and power supplies that can operate in harsh environments. Our designs are then validated in both lab and operational tests environments. We are seeing a new paradigm in the tactical market; customers are moving from smaller and lighter mandates to increased performance and capabilities." ♦