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Solicitation No. - N° de l'invitation W6369-210236/A	**Amendment No. - N° modif.** 009
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Amendment 009

This amendment serves to publish the Summary of Feedback and Outcomes document, as well as a presentation from the 2021 Canadian Association of Defence and Security Industries (CADSI) Conference (Attachment 002).

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Industry Engagement Process for the Defence Enhanced Surveillance from Space Project (W6369-210236/A)

Summary of Feedback and Outcomes

Contents

1.0 INTRODUCTION

On December 4, 2020, Public Services and Procurement Canada (PSPC) released a Request for Information (RFI) (W6369-210236/A) in support of the Department of National Defence's (DND) Defence Enhanced Surveillance from Space Project (DESSP).

With this RFI, PSPC sought to:

- Provide industry with an early opportunity to assess and comment on the DESSP requirements;
- Determine industry's capability to provide the next generation of Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) mission and solicit industry recommendations to increase the likelihood of a successful outcome for the project; and
- Seek industry input on potential economic leveraging opportunities.

Following the release of the RFI, Canada held virtual one-on-one meetings with interested industry members. All questions received from vendors and answers provided by Canada have been posted on buyandsell.gc.ca.

This Summary of Feedback and Outcomes reflects engagement activities performed and responses received to RFI W6369-210236/A up to May 21, 2021.

Industry Engagement Process

Industry Engagement	• Posting of DESSP RFI: December 4, 2020 • One-on-one virtual meetings: December 14, 2020 and January 12-13, 2021 • RFI Responses requested: February 10, 2021
Information Disclosed Under the RFI	Preliminary information on the project background, objectives, and requirements.
Industry Participants	Nineteen vendors participated in the RFI process: • Airbus Defence and Space • Alpha Insights • AstroCom Associates • Boeing Defense, Space and Security • Bornea Dynamics • CS4 Robotics • exactEarth • GHGSat • Global Spatial Technology Solutions • Honeywell Aerospace • IBM • Kratos Defense and Security Solutions • L3 Harris • MDA Systems • Microsoft Canada • Northrop Grumman Corporation • Peraton • TerraSense Analytics • Urthecast
Other Participants	Representatives of Canada from DND, PSPC, Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISEDC) and the project's Fairness Monitoring Team.
One-on-one Meeting Participants	Seven vendors participated in a one-on-one meeting.
Industry Questions and Answers	Fifty-five questions were received from industry for which Canada provided responses and/or clarification.
RFI Responses Submitted	Nine vendors submitted written responses to the RFI.

2.0 ACRONYM LIST

AI	Artificial Intelligence
AOI	Area of Interest
CAF	Canadian Armed Forces
CSA	Canadian Space Agency
DESSP	Defence Enhanced Surveillance from Space Project
DND	Department of National Defence
DRDC	Defence Research and Development Canada
HLMR	High Level Mandatory Requirement
IDEaS	Innovation for Defence Excellence and Security
ISR	Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance
ITB	Industrial and Technological Benefit
ML	Machine Learning
NASA	National Aeronautics and Space Administration
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
PED	Processing, Exploitation, and Dissemination
PSPC	Public Services and Procurement Canada
R&D	Research and Development
RCS	Radar Cross Section
RF	Radio Frequency
RFI	Request for Information
SAR	Synthetic Aperture Radar
SIGINT	Signal Intelligence
SMB	Small & Medium Business
STEM	Science Technology Engineering & Mathematics

3.0 SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK AND OUTCOMES

This section summarizes the feedback requested from vendors.

3.1 General

RFI Questions 8.1.1, 8.1.2 and 8.1.3	Respondents are invited to submit a reply to this RFI that addresses each of the requirements outlined in sections 5, 6 and 7. Based on the documentation provided, respondents are requested to provide background information on their suggested or recommended capability either individually or through partnership(s) or sub-contracting to deliver the capability/requirement. Respondents are requested to provide as much detail as possible as to how each of the requirements outlined above could be met from a practical, technical and programmatic perspective. Respondents should include: A. An indication of the overall achievability of the requirements; B. A general breakdown of what could be designed in-house vs. sub-contracted; C. Details on the engineering expertise available in-house especially related to design, build, test and manufacture of the requirements; D. An overview of the standard design/build/test facilities and processes for space hardware and related quality and product assurance oversight/processes employed at the respondent's facilities; and E. A conceptual assessment of what different high-level capability options may exist in order to meet the requirements 10 years from now.
Feedback	A. <u>An Indication of the overall achievability of the requirements:</u> Industry indicated that HLMRs 1 through 6 are achievable, with many respondents identifying that HLMR 5 - Processing, Exploitation, and Dissemination (PED) could be met with existing systems. HLMR 7 - Protection was identified as covering an area of technical low maturity; one respondent indicated that it is difficult to know if it could be adequately addressed at this time. HLMR 6 – Availability was identified by several respondents as one of the key factors influencing cost. Further investigation is also required to determine how best to meet the 10 minute low latency requirement. Several respondents stated that in order to develop an accurate representation of what DESSP may look like, a more detailed outline of the requirements, operational

	scenarios and AOIs with their corresponding coverage rates would be required. HLMR 3 – Surveillance Active requires detecting ships as small as 5m in length; one respondent indicated that, in order to determine the feasibility of this requirement, a more accurate radar-cross-section (RCS) model is needed and merits future research and development (R&D). B. <u>A general breakdown of what could be designed in-house vs. sub-contracted:</u> Respondents' in-house capabilities include mission systems architecture/engineering, integration, commissioning and delivery, Radio Frequency (RF) payloads, Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR) payloads, and SIGINT payloads. Respondents indicated that many of the PED capabilities could be achieved in-house or with pre-existing systems. Additionally, some respondents indicated that existing satellite constellation simulations, with software and hardware in the loop, could be used to train Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML) algorithms. Components identified for sub-contracting included spacecraft bus design/manufacture and launch services. C. <u>Details on the engineering expertise available in-house especially related to design, build, test and manufacture of the requirements:</u> Respondents described experience in designing, building, and testing of SAR systems as well as in the development and implementation of the PED components of SAR systems. Respondents also described expertise relating to optical and RF payload design, testing, and manufacturing. Some respondents described expertise in advanced data exploitation systems involving AI and ML. D. <u>An overview of the standard design/build/test facilities and processes for space hardware and related quality and product assurance oversight/processes employed at the respondent's facilities:</u> Many respondents have basic design, build, and test facilities; some respondents described established assembly, integration, and test facilities. In order to train AI algorithms, some respondents have emulator environments which can conduct satellite constellation simulations with hardware and software. Respondents with physical space hardware assembly, integration, and tests facilities indicated that they adhere to NASA, CSA, European, and quality assurance standards. E. <u>A conceptual assessment of what different high-level capability options may exist in order to meet the requirements 10 years from now:</u> Respondents suggested that future capabilities may include quantum computing, space-based edge processing, and automated pre-processing capabilities for collected data. An increase in the speed, precision, flexibility, and control of SAR

	systems can also be expected. Evolution of AI/ML will lead to more autonomous and effective surveillance instruments. Scalable distributed AI to process data locally, including in orbital assets, can be expected in the next 10 years. Quantum computing will become more prevalent in the next 5-10 years; this will allow the handling of more complex models with increased accuracy for weather forecasting and optimization of algorithms. Future technologies would allow for direct RF signal synthesis, and the evolution of data converters will allow conversion to occur in the antenna array itself.
Outcome	Respondent feedback on DESSP HLRMs has been reviewed by the project team and will support future planning and refinement of requirements. Canada is confident that the design, build, and test facilities exist to achieve DESSP requirements, with a concern about respondents' capacity to conduct work on Top Secret requirements; see below.

3.2 Security

RFI Question 8.2.1	Respondents are requested to comment on the following: A. What is your current and planned capabilities/capacities/facilities in terms of physical security and security cleared personnel, to address Secret and Top Secret requirements? B. If no such capabilities/capacities/facilities exist, how long and what would it take to establish these security facilities? C. What does industry view as the challenges in establishing these types of facilities? D. Are there other potential solutions that could be considered? Explain. E. Please explain and detail your internal processes and capabilities to meet the classified facility and personnel requirements.
Feedback	A. <u>What is your current and planned capabilities/capacities/facilities in terms of physical security and security cleared personnel, to address Secret and Top Secret requirements?</u> Several vendors indicated that they have experience working with classified data at the Secret and NATO Secret levels and currently have the security-cleared personnel and facilities to address these requirements. However, responses indicated a limited existing capability and cleared facilities/resources to work with Top Secret requirements. Some respondents indicated plans to increase their security capabilities in order to work with data of a higher security classification. B. <u>If no such capabilities/capacities/facilities exist, how long and what would it take to establish these security facilities?</u>

	Though Canada's own processes could impact these timelines, some respondents estimate it would take at least 36 months to complete Secret/Top Secret facility and personnel clearances, not including facility construction where required. Some respondents have suggested that for PED-only systems, this timeline could be shortened to between 12 and 24 months. C. <u>What does industry view as the challenges in establishing these types of facilities?</u> Some challenges identified by respondents include how to best estimate lead times to attain appropriate Facility Security Clearances, clear/train Company Security Officers and conduct personnel security screenings, in particular as these processes rely largely on Canada's own processes and timelines. Additional challenges were noted should onsite construction or preparations be required to address the physical separation needs associated with upgrading to a Top Secret capability. Respondents highlighted that establishing Top Secret facilities can be a costly undertaking, and indicated that industry is unlikely to make major and non-standard investments to establish Top Secret facilities on a speculative basis without a contract in-hand. Some respondents identified challenges and inconsistencies with security directives and guidelines and expressed difficulties navigating through the departmental approval processes; delays addressing and resolving related issues could impact project timelines. D. <u>Are there other potential solutions that could be considered? Explain.</u> Respondents made the following suggestions related to security: i. Canada could require bidders to have existing security-cleared personnel and facilities at the time of bid submission; ii. Canada could segregate unclassified and classified segments of the project into separate contracts; and iii. Canada could provide a secure area in which vendors could carry out work that requires secured facilities. E. <u>Please explain and detail your internal processes and capabilities to meet the classified facility and personnel requirements.</u> Some respondents currently have security-cleared facilities and personnel compliant with industry cyber security standards to work with data up to a Secret security classification. However, responses indicated a limited existing capability and cleared facilities/resources to work with data up to a Top Secret security classification. Some respondents described their own pre-employment screenings, security training/briefings, and ongoing assessment processes regarding the suitability of their employees to handle classified data at higher levels.
Outcome	Canada will inform industry of the scope of the project's security requirements as the requirement develops. The timelines, challenges and strategies proposed by

	respondents have been reviewed by the project team and will support future project planning.

3.3 Top Secret Cloud Computing Environment

RFI Question 8.3.1	In order to provide Top Secret data collection, processing, and storage, respondents are requested to comment on their current plan (if any) of developing their own Top Secret cloud computing environment as opposed to sub-contracting to a third-party cloud service provider.
Feedback	A variety of responses were received on this topic. Some respondents indicated that they have already developed and are implementing a Top Secret cloud computing environment; others indicated that they are evaluating options to do so; and others indicated that they have no plans to develop such an environment. Some respondents recommended that Canada pursue its own sovereign Top Secret cloud computing environment to meet DESSP requirements. Other respondents suggested a collaborative project between Canada and Industry to develop a cloud environment that will support the collection, processing, and storage of data up to the Top Secret security classification; the cloud and its physical facilities could be managed either by the respondent or the customer.
Outcome	Based on the feedback received, Canada is confident that industry has the capability to deliver a Top Secret cloud computing environment that meets DESSP requirements.

3.4 Acquisition Options

RFI Questions 8.4.1 and 8.4.2	Respondents are requested to provide feedback on various acquisition models that would provide best value for Canada. There are multiple acquisition methods that could potentially meet the HLMRs, which could range from: a major crown acquisition, managed services, government-owned contractor operated equipment, and long-term leasing of existing or planned commercial systems. These models must align to the business outcomes, minimize cost, maximize cost-benefit, minimize risk, and meet the project schedule and security requirements. Respondents are asked to comment on the strengths, weaknesses, and challenges of their proposed acquisition models.

Feedback	Respondents offered feedback on a number of acquisition models; an overview of the strengths, weaknesses and challenges associated with each proposed model is presented below. Major crown acquisition: Strengths identified include the ability to acquire a system that meets all requirements, added flexibility in contract structure (i.e. cost models), and full control and ownership over the development, implementation, operations, and sustainment of the delivered capability. Weaknesses could include longer acquisition timelines to accommodate a large and complex government procurement acquisition strategy, Canada's aversion to risk could result in possible cost/schedule overruns, as well as significant risk in achieving business outcomes and increased operation and sustainment costs of the Canada-owned-and-maintained capability. One respondent indicated that compressed project timelines could be achieved with transfer of technical authority and risk management to the industrial contractor. Managed services: Strengths identified include the possibility to find cost and schedule efficiencies, a reduction in project risks normally associated with a major crown acquisition, and the possibility for a more agile delivery model that could enable the project to incorporate changing technologies. Weaknesses identified include that Canada would not have influence on the mission requirements; as such, it is possible that not all DESSP requirements would be addressed, and the system may not be available in full capacity to Canada at any given time. There may also be a limited number of vendors that could support the highest security level being considered, and industry may be challenged to finance planned commercial missions. Government-owned, contractor-operated equipment: Strengths identified include the ability to acquire a system that meets all requirements, added flexibility in contract structure (i.e. cost models), and full control and ownership over the development and implementation with operations and their associated risks outsourced to maximise cost benefit for Canada. Weaknesses identified would be similar to the major crown acquisition, with the additional challenge that there may be a limited number of vendors that could support the highest security level being considered. Long term leasing of existing or planned commercial systems: Strengths identified include the possibility to find cost and schedule efficiencies, a reduction in project risks normally associated with a major crown acquisition, and the possibility for a more agile delivery model that could enable the project to incorporate changing technologies. Some respondents indicated that Canada may be able to drive the requirement, and there may be a cost benefit where there is more flexibility in sourcing. Weaknesses identified include Canada having little control over the resultant system itself, Canada may not have influence on the mission requirements; as such, it is possible that not all DESSP requirements would be addressed, and the system may not be available in full capacity to Canada at any given time, and Canada potentially becoming locked in to sourcing proprietary aspects from a given supplier.

	Additional comments on acquisition models included the following: • A recommendation to consider addressing project requirements by sourcing smaller project components separately; • A recommendation to combine acquisition methods to mitigate the inherent risks and weaknesses of any single method; • That the nature of the security requirements could dictate that Canada owns, operates and manages the DESSP mission operations centre; • A recommendation to include an initial R&D phase to lower risks and to further refine requirements; and • A suggestion for a joint project between the CSA and DND to meet both DESSP and the Earth Observation Service Continuity project's requirements.
Outcome	Respondent feedback on proposed acquisition models has been reviewed by the project team and will support future planning in the development of the acquisition strategy.

3.5 Capability Trade-Offs

RFI Question 8.5.1	Canada seeks to optimize the implementation of the DESSP in such a way that the requirements are balanced with best overall value to Canada. Respondents are encouraged to respond in such a way that trade-offs are clearly identified and substantiated.
Feedback	Major trade-offs identified by respondents include: 1) Protection trade-offs related to active and passive protection; 2) Cost vs. capability trade-offs related to the number of satellites in the constellation and their lifespan; 3) Ground station networks vs. intersatellite links; 4) Launching of new low-earth orbit satellites vs. in-orbit servicing of satellites; 5) Common Maritime Transmissions monitoring with secondary payload vs. separate cubesat constellation; and 6) Definition of ship detection criteria using RCS vs. ship length. Other trade-offs identified by respondents: A separate satellite deployment and operations contract from data retrieval, exploitation, dissemination, and storage could be beneficial to the DESSP program as a significant number of the data related tools and services are available today. These tools can be accessed through utility based as-a-service offerings, thus removing

	costly capital procurements and expenditures. This also removes the inherent risk by eliminating the acquisition of capital assets that may not be used to their maximum.
Outcome	The trade-offs identified by respondents have been reviewed by the project team; Canada will investigate these trade-offs throughout the Definition Phase of the Project.

3.6 Schedule

RFI Question 8.6.1	Respondents are requested to comment on the achievability of the proposed timeline, in consideration of the following: A. When would the respondent need to be under contract? B. What is the critical path for a 2034 completion date (i.e. what conditions need to be met to achieve this date)? C. What respondent-managed risks/issues would significantly impact the project in terms of cost and schedule?
Feedback	The majority of the responses received indicated that the DESSP milestone dates are achievable considering the technology readiness levels of the solutions that exist. However, several respondents suggested that modifications to the proposed project milestones would be needed in order to achieve the DESSP schedule. A. <u>When would the respondents need to be under contract?</u> Many respondents recommended starting the Project Approval (Definition) phase between 2021 and 2023. The earlier Project Approval (Definition) phase dates would allow the implementation phase to be brought close to 2023. Some respondents indicated that services and solutions are already available for consumption by DND through existing contracts. B. <u>What is the critical path for a 2034 completion date (i.e. what conditions need to be met to achieve this date)?</u> Funding and regulatory approvals are some of the critical path elements identified by respondents. Specifically, frequency licensing for the constellation and establishing ground network licenses within Canada. For some respondents, another critical path element would be upgrading their facilities and personnel to meet classified data requirements. C. <u>What respondent-managed risks/issues would significantly impact the project in terms of cost and schedule?</u> Respondents identified that some of the main risks to cost and schedule would be programmatic risks, such as late approvals, funding gaps, micromanagement and intolerance to risk by Canada. Respondents further outlined challenges associated with funding gaps between definition and implementation phases, such as carrying the cost of the “marching army”, issues with continuity of staff, and subsequent loss

	of access to program knowledge. For respondents without Secret and Top Secret capabilities, a primary risk to cost and schedule would be enabling Secret/Top Secret infrastructure.
Outcome	Respondent feedback on the proposed project timelines and associated challenges has been reviewed by the project team and will support future project planning. Canada is interested in finding schedule efficiencies; however, due to the complexities of the project approval and acquisition processes, Canada does not believe it would be feasible to advance the commencement of the Implementation Phase.

3.7 Economic Benefits

RFI Question 8.7.1	Recognizing the role of R&D in space programs, please provide information regarding the engineering expertise available in-house related to design, build, test and manufacture of the requirements in terms of Canadian content. A. What roles in the above areas occur in Canada at this time? B. What roles in the above areas could be expected to occur directly in Canada under your proposed solution?
Feedback	Six of nine respondents indicated that either most or many of these activities occur in Canada with R&D on-going. Overall, the majority of responses indicated that many, if not all, of these roles could be delivered directly in Canada as part of a proposed solution. Some responses indicated that all of the above activities could be provided in Canada.
Outcome	There is strong potential for direct work in project scope as the majority of responses have indicated.

RFI Question 8.7.2	Supporting the growth of prime contractors and suppliers in Canada is an objective of the ITB Policy. A. What types of opportunities for Canadian suppliers could there be under your solution? B. Please provide information on existing relationships that could be leveraged? C. Are there opportunities or existing relationships with Small and Medium sized businesses (SMBs, under 250 employees) in Canada?
Feedback	The type of opportunities were varied but were indicative of a space ecosystem in Canada that offer solutions.

	All of respondents indicated there are existing relationships with suppliers in Canada that can be leveraged. The majority of responses were indicative of strong potential to include Canadian suppliers in a solution. Industry/academia collaborations were also noted in several responses as potential source to support a solution. Seven of nine responses indicated there were opportunities for SMBs.
Outcome	There are good opportunities to include Canadian suppliers for DESSP solutions, including with SMBs. In addition, consideration for direct work through industry/academia collaborations may be explored in the Value Proposition.

RFI Question 8.7.3	What opportunities are there to enhance innovation in Canada directly or indirectly related to DESSP?
Feedback	Many respondents noted Canadian government funded R&D programs (Innovation for Defence Excellence and Security [IDEaS], Defence Research and Development Canada [DRDC] & CSA programs) are opportunities to support innovation. Relationships with academia through collaborative projects were noted. Commercialization was mentioned as a means to innovate. Also noted was that areas of the DESSP scope itself feature elements that will stimulate innovation.
Outcome	DESSP features opportunities for innovation. While the ITB Policy does not have scope to fund R&D, support for Canadian participation in innovation activities will be considered with the ITB Policy framework.

RFI Question 8.7.4	Are there any opportunities for Canadian-based companies to participate on exports? A. What factors hinder or facilitate these opportunities in terms of your solution? B. Is this a requirement that has the potential for spin-off commercialization that may include Canadian-based companies?
Feedback	Many respondents indicated the security profile, regulations and export restrictions as elements that hinder exports. Some respondents indicated there are components or elements in their solutions that are exportable and/or 'dual' use. Also noted were commercialization opportunities in adjacent markets.

Outcome	As there are several noted challenges for exports due to the nature of the project, a consideration may be that this area has less economic leveraging opportunities under an ITB framework.

RFI Question 8.7.5	Skills development and training plays a vital role in supporting a more innovative Canadian economy. Space labour force challenges have been noted in the 2019 *State of the Canadian Space Sector Report: Facts and Figures 2018* (https://asc-csa.gc.ca/eng/publications/2019-state-canadian-space-sector.asp). A. What potential activities are there for supporting this ITB pillar? B. How would activities under DESSP or in other indirect areas support skills development training?
Feedback	The majority of respondents highlighted the opportunities for industry-academia collaboration including directly related to DESSP solutions. R&D phase of the program could offer opportunities for the Canadian ecosystem and within STEM generally.
Outcome	Development of skills and training opportunities directly related to DESSP including the role for industry-academic collaborations will be a consideration under the ITB Policy.

4.0 CONCLUSION

Canada would like to thank the vendors who participated in the DESSP engagement process, as well as those who provided written responses to the DESSP RFI W6369-210236/A. The dialogue and feedback obtained via this process has afforded significant progress towards the stated objectives.

Overall, the feedback from industry was very valuable and will contribute to the development and refinement of the project's technical requirements, the economic leveraging strategy, and the acquisition strategy. One critical observation is that Canada must better articulate the security requirements for DESSP and better inform industry regarding the timelines and processes that must be followed in order for companies to obtain the requisite clearance to deliver the full project scope within the planned schedule. Canada will provide an update on any programmatic or technical developments or changes by fall 2021 such as clarifications, any refined project requirements, and a revised project schedule.

Finally, the feedback received from respondents indicated that industry is interested in DESSP and possesses the capability and the experience necessary to meet the requirements of the project. Moreover, feedback confirmed that there is strong potential for economic leveraging and participation of Canadian industry in delivery of the requirement.

5.0 NEXT STEPS

Further responses to the DESSP RFI are welcome if interested vendors have not yet submitted one, or if new analysis has been completed.

Industry feedback was received on several topics for which Canada is still considering or investigating and therefore is unable to provide detailed outcomes at this time. As such, Canada will post a follow-on to this summary document by fall 2021.

Future engagement activities may include additional requests for information, as well as seeking industry feedback on draft solicitation documents.

Enquiries related to this engagement process are to be made by e-mail to the Procurement Authority indicated below:

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