

**RFP # 194:0-12RPB, Electronic Procurement Solution
Addendum No. 01, Appendix 2
COVA Responses To Questions Received From Potential Offerors**

A. QUESTIONS RECEIVED PRIOR TO THE 06/27/00 PRE-PROPOSAL CONFERENCE

1. Reference RFP Section 2.1. How many state agencies are there? The solicitation cites both 250 and 185.

COVA Response: See RFP Addendum No. 01, Item 1 which corrects the second bullet in RFP Section 2.1. to read as follows:

- Approximately 185 towns, 96 counties and 40 cities.

2. Reference RFP Section 2.1. How many COVA Entities are there? 250+ or 450-500?

COVA Response: See COVA response to Question #A.1 above.

3. Reference RFP Section 2.1. Is a proposed offeror's solution required to provide continuing support of EDI invoices or may we propose a different approach to invoicing?

COVA Response: The proposed Solution will not encompass processing of EDI invoices directly to DOA. The Offeror should also refer to COVA response to Question #A.15 below.

4. Section 2.1., Background, referenced \$6Billion in procurement transacted annually. Metrics provided in Section 4.2.32 b, include an estimate of \$1Billion in annual procurement total (goods and services). Which is the correct estimate of procurement value?

COVA Response: See RFP Addendum No. 01, Item 8. The hypothetical metrics provided in RFP Section 4.2.32.b(3) are not based on actual data. These hypothetical metrics were chosen to provide a consistent basis for Offerors' use in preparing Schedule A and Schedule B responses as required by RFP Sections 4.2.32.b(1) and 4.2.32.b(2). The required use of these hypothetical metrics enables an equitable comparison of Offeror responses. Additionally, see COVA responses to Questions #A.41, #A.44, #A.84, #A.85, #B.20, #B.21, #B.22, #C.21.a below.

5. Will the existing VA electronic purchasing system be turned off when Phase 1 goes on line?

COVA Response: There is no single Virginia electronic purchasing system. Individual COVA Entities will make their own specific decisions regarding their internal purchasing systems and the opportunities afforded by the Solution. In accordance with Executive Order 65, executive branch agencies are required to take advantage of the Solution benefits to the fullest extent possible. (The full text of Executive Order 65 is available via a link posted with the list of RFP Reference Materials available at www.dgs.state.va.us/dps/e-pro-rfp.) Over the course of implementing the Solution, it is expected that utilization of the existing DPS electronic purchasing system and website will be phased out. This web site was developed by DPS and its existing html and active server web pages could be made available to the Contractor. The Offeror should also refer to COVA response to Question #B.13.

6. What is the current experience (number and value of orders, number of participating agencies, etc.) with the existing VA electronic purchasing system?

RFP # 194:0-12RPB, Electronic Procurement Solution
Addendum No. 01, Appendix 2
COVA Responses To Questions Received From Potential Offerors

COVA Response: There is no single Virginia electronic purchasing system. Currently COVA does not have the ability to capture transaction metrics from individual COVA Entity purchasing organizations; therefore the requested information can not be provided.

7. How does the state envision transitioning existing vendors to the Mall? Specifically, will existing contracts be modified to require (encourage) participation? Will vendors be required to participate once the contract renews?

COVA Response: DPS is working with contract vendors to obtain maximum participation in the E-Mall. Non-participation by contract vendors will be handled on an exception basis.

8. What ERP systems or other systems does the State currently use for inventory management?

COVA Response: COVA does not have a list of existing COVA Entity ERP or other inventory management systems. As stated in the RFP, known examples of COVA Entity ERP systems include PeopleSoft, Oracle, KPMG (APICS and Famous), SCT Higher Education Administration Systems, AMS – American Management Systems.

9. For Phase I, what will be the evaluation criteria for success?
i.e. How many users must be enabled?
How many suppliers must be enabled?
How many ordered processed over what period?

COVA Response: The success of Phase I will be measured by comparing “contracted” to “actual” deployment of functionality and related services (including depth and breadth) by February 15, 2001. The Offeror’s responses to the RFP should include any restrictions on the number of users and suppliers/vendors that can be enabled in conjunction with Phase I or subsequent phases. In addition, COVA expects the Offeror’s proposal to describe a marketing strategy to promote COVA Entity, as well as supplier/vendor, participation in Phase I and subsequent phases. The Offeror’s proposal for Phase I deployment should concentrate on functional capability versus volume of activity. The Offeror’s proposal should include a listing of its existing trading partner agreements and catalogs that can be leveraged into Phase I deployment. By contrast, the Offeror’s proposed project plan for subsequent phases should make the necessary assumptions to identify a potential schedule for converting, if necessary, and incorporating existing state contracts which can be viewed on the DPS website (www.dgs.state.va.us/dps).

10. On the DGS website, there is a list of Small Purchase Charge Card (SPCC) suppliers. Please also provide a list of COVA’s top 100 suppliers (if there are any other than those mentioned on the SPCC list) and State Agencies.

COVA Response: Currently COVA does not have the ability to capture transaction metrics from individual COVA Entity purchasing organizations, therefore, the requested information can not be provided.

11. What about political subdivisions? How many disparate financial systems are we talking about?

RFP # 194:0-12RPB, Electronic Procurement Solution
Addendum No. 01, Appendix 2
COVA Responses To Questions Received From Potential Offerors

COVA Response: COVA does not have a list of existing COVA Entity financial systems. As stated in the RFP, known examples for political subdivisions include KPMG (APICS and Famous). Offerors are reminded the Contractor is not responsible for interfaces not specifically identified in the RFP. The Contractor is required, however, to provide optional time and materials services for purchase on an as needed basis by any COVA Entity or vendor that desires to interface with the Solution. See RFP Section 3.6.3.

12. Can COVA please identify the P-Card provider?

COVA Response: American Express is the Contractor for the current statewide small purchase charge card contract. Individual public bodies may have other providers contracted on a local basis.

13. The functionality for E-Mall and Electronic Purchasing appears to be the same, what is the difference?

COVA Response: COVA envisions that both the E-Mall and the Electronic Purchasing components would encompass capture of purchase requirements and the capability to place orders. Additionally, the Electronic Purchasing component would provide the functionality necessary to conduct the traditional procurement process of Requisition through Solicitation through Bid Receipt/Evaluation through Purchase Order or Contract Award as specified in RFP Sections 3.4.5.a. thru 3.4.5.k.

14. The overall e-procurement requirements will require up-to-date technology (hardware, software, connectivity, etc.) to implement. RFP section 2.2 describes many levels of desktop capability of potential users, some of which would not be able to use the latest in e-procurement solutions. Is there an associated technology migration plan that COVA will support for its users so that they will be able to use the more sophisticated functions described in the e-procurement system requirements? And if so, what is the proposed migration plan and overlap with this contract period of performance?

COVA Response: COVA expects the Solution to be thin-client in design. RFP Section 3.5, Technical Architecture, first paragraph, last sentence states “The Solution **shall** be web server centric, requiring only a standard web-browser to access and utilize basic functionality of the Solution.” RFP Section 3.5.2.a(3) states “COVA understands the solution data warehouse components may require additional reporting/client access software. The overall Solution **should** include all software necessary for data warehouse access.” RFP Section 4.2.17 requires the Offeror to “Provide a detailed listing of the hardware and software, including browser plug-ins, required for client access to the proposed Solution.”

COVA does not have authority over technology solutions employed by vendors. COVA does not have authority over technology solutions deployed by public bodies (i.e., local governments – towns, counties, localities, political subdivisions, etc.). COVA executive branch agencies are required, by Executive Order 65, to fully review and implement, where possible, seat management for desktop computing that may lead to more standardization and reduced technology refresh cycles. The full text of executive Order 65 is available via a link posted with the list of RFP Reference Materials available at www.dgs.state.va.us/dps/e-pro-rfp.

RFP # 194:0-12RPB, Electronic Procurement Solution
Addendum No. 01, Appendix 2
COVA Responses To Questions Received From Potential Offerors

15. Section 2.2 describes the CARS and mentions 352,000 financial EDI vendor invoices. What EDI transaction sets are being used (i.e., ANSI X.12.xxx) and what integration requirements will there be with the CARS?

COVA Response: COVA does not anticipate any requirement for integration or interface directly between CARS and the Solution. Therefore, EDI transaction sets used are not applicable to the Solution. COVA intends to facilitate the payment process by capturing relevant data fields for use by COVA Entity financial systems. The responsibility for data transfer to CARS rests with the individual COVA Entities and not the Solution. The referenced information was provided to give some basic transaction information to put in context the data capture requirements identified in RFP Section 3.5.5. The Offeror should also refer to COVA response to Question #A.3 above.

16. What is the complete requirement for the “Solution” to interface with CARS?

COVA Response: See COVA response to Question #A.15 above.

17. Section 2.2 states that local governments and other legislative entities process their own payment transactions and personnel records. The cost model asks to consider “all potential revenue sources” when developing the cost proposal. How does COVA plan to administer the accounting of non-COVA transactions? If these revenues must be considered in the proposal, how will COVA evaluate their inclusion given that separate contract relationships would exist (outside the COVA e-procurement contract) with the contractor?

COVA Response: When asked to clarify the above Question #A.17, the submitting vendor requested that the question be struck. Not having a reasonable understanding of the question, COVA concurred and therefore will not provide a response.

18. RFP Section 3 – Statement of Needs, lists the requirements of the RFP. Similarly, Section 4.2 and Attachment B have a list of requirements some of which are duplicated in Section 3. For example, Section 3.6.7 and 4.2.9 both address “Help Desk and Customer Care support services.” Do you require separate responses for these sections or can the response to Section 3 address the areas mentioned in the other sections?

COVA Response: RFP Section 4.2 includes a detailed listing of items Offerors are required to submit as a complete proposal. COVA does not desire repetitious responses for the sake of compliance with RFP Section 4.1.2.(c). To promote straightforward, concise responses, Offerors may utilize cross-references when one section of the Offeror’s proposal responds to more than one item listed in RFP Section 4.2. Notwithstanding this consideration, the Offeror risks elimination from consideration if the evaluators are unable to find where the RFP requirements are specifically addressed in the proposal.

Offerors are not required to provide separate responses to RFP Attachment B. As stated in RFP Section 3.4, Attachment B simply provides a detailed example of one approach to addressing COVA functional requirements; it should be used as an aid to the Offeror in understanding the COVA vision; and it is not intended to limit the Offeror in suggesting innovative process improvements or to absolve the Offeror from addressing all RFP requirements.

RFP # 194:0-12RPB, Electronic Procurement Solution
Addendum No. 01, Appendix 2
COVA Responses To Questions Received From Potential Offerors

19. There are several requirements throughout the proposal to adhere to standards, policies and procedures, etc. Is the solution expected to include the latest versions of these requirements after contract award without contract modification? For example, SIC Code definitions are being redefined. If these change after award, is the contractor responsible to incorporate the new information at no cost?

COVA Response: COVA expects the Solution to adhere to standards, policies, procedures, etc. as they evolve. Offerors have the option to distinguish any additional costs to COVA for incorporating future versions of standards, policies, procedures, etc. Offerors may address these additional costs in either Schedule A – Part I, Cost Worksheet, or Schedule A – Part III, Additional Services Worksheet, of RFP Attachment E, Price and Revenue Workbook.

20. Section 3.2.2 states the proposed solution **shall** satisfy the Commonwealth’s needs... Section 3.4 states the proposed solution **should** provide the same functionality. Are these functions “shall” or “should” requirements?

COVA Response: As used in RFP Section 3.2.2, “shall” refers to the Solution components listed in items a thru f and h thru j. As used in RFP Section 3.4, “should” refers to the desired functionality associated with each of the Solution components listed in RFP Section 3.2.2.

21. In Section 3.2.2, the RFP reference sections appear to be 3.4.x not 3.3.x as stated. Please clarify the RFP cross references.

COVA Response: The cross references are to RFP Section 3.3 where Phase I minimum requirements are identified; therefore they are correct as stated in the RFP.

22. Reference Section 3.2.4. If agencies decide to use “some of the Solution functionality”, then how can overall integrity be guaranteed? Will there be different standards for data capture and reporting based on partial participation by agencies?

COVA Response: COVA acknowledges there may be partial use of the Solution and desires to receive the Offeror’s ideas to mitigate the impact on overall integrity.

23. Reference Section 3.2.5. “...the economic model shall not result in costs that create an undue barrier to participation in the Solution by COVA Entities and suppliers.” How is “undue barrier” defined?

COVA Response: Unreasonable or unfair costs to participate.

24. In Section 3.2.5, what is considered an “undue barrier to participation” in the system?

COVA Response: See COVA response to Question #A.23 above.

25. The requirements for functionality specified in Section 3 does not match to the WBS presented in Attachment A. Is there documentation available that describes the functionality for each of the WBS components, or is the offeror expected to provide a mapping of the requirements to the supplied WBS, or potentially, a completely new WBS reflecting the offeror’s solution?

RFP # 194:0-12RPB, Electronic Procurement Solution
Addendum No. 01, Appendix 2
COVA Responses To Questions Received From Potential Offerors

COVA Response: RFP Section 3.2 maps the Solution components, at the highest level, to the WBS presented in Attachment A. Many of the detailed functions described in the remainder of RFP Section 3 map to more than one Solution component. Offerors are encouraged, but not required, to provide a detailed Work Breakdown Structure (WBS) specific to the proposed Solution.

26. Reference RFP Section 3.3. We interpret this to mean that COVA desires the offeror to describe, price and develop a revenue model for deployment of a system that conforms with the basic functions listed in 3.2 by February 15, 2001. Services needed to bring individual COVA Public Bodies into this e-procurement environment, including specific system interface development, content creation, catalogue modifications and any additional functions desired would be definitized separately, and provided under separately priced task orders. Is this the correct interpretation?

COVA Response: As stated in RFP Section 3.3, “COVA envisions that Offerors may propose a phased approach (including depth and breadth) to deployment/implementation of the proposed Solution.” Based on this vision, RFP Section 3.3.a sets forth the minimum expectations for Phase I which must be completed by February 15, 2001. In accordance with RFP Section 4.2.15 the Offeror is required to provide detailed project work plans for (a) Phase 1 that must be completed by February 15, 2001, and for (b) subsequent phases which the Offeror will complete subsequent to February 15, 2001. Optional services, identified in RFP Section 3.6 will be provided under task orders developed between the Contractor and the COVA Entity or vendor for which the service is to be performed.

27. Reference Section 3.4.1. “...comparison shopping from vendor price lists and/or open web searches.” What is meant by “open web searches”? Which buying engines are requested/required?

COVA Response: Some form of real-time search on the Internet to find comparable products and/or services. As stated in RFP Section 3.5, COVA will not specify hardware or software requirements. The Offeror should also refer to COVA response to Question #C.7.

28. Reference Section 3.4.1. As required by Section 3.4.1, the E-Mall shall provide ordering from existing and future state contracts. Is the cost to collect and post the information (for each contract) to be provided within this e-procurement contract or will all contract holders be required to use this procurement site?

COVA Response: Reference RFP Section 3.6.5 and Section 3.6.6. and disclose appropriate costs in RFP Attachment E, Price and Revenue Workbook, Schedule A, Part III – Additional Services Worksheet.

29. Reference Section 3.4.1.c, page 13. Please explain COVA’s concept of how accepting an electronic purchase order supports the payment process.

COVA Response: An electronic purchase order conveys the appropriate authority for vendor performance, billing and collection, as well as COVA authorization to pay.

RFP # 194:0-12RPB, Electronic Procurement Solution
Addendum No. 01, Appendix 2
COVA Responses To Questions Received From Potential Offerors

30. Reference Section 3.4.4.b. “Loading of charge card transactions captured by the charge card vendor(s) which were processed outside the Solution...” How is this data formatted? Who will provide it? How often will it be loaded? What information is included in these “transactions”? Why would they be loaded into a procurement system and not a FMS?

COVA Response:

State Agencies: COVA will coordinate an appropriate data format with the Contractor. COVA will provide the data. The data will be provided monthly. The transaction data includes transaction #, vendor identifier, product description, amount, date of transaction, accounting information as defined by the cardholder.

Public Bodies: Public bodies may have individual contracts with charge card vendors. The individual public body will coordinate an appropriate data format with the Contractor. The individual public body will provide the data. The data will be provided monthly. Public body transaction data includes transaction #, vendor identifier, product description, amount, date of transaction, accounting information as defined by the cardholder.

The primary benefit is to aggregate purchase information to improve COVA purchasing power. An additional benefit will be to facilitate reconciliation of the charge account.

31. In loading charge card data generated outside of the system (3.4.4.b), what is the format of the transactions? What is the purpose of this data: to aggregate purchase information to improve COVA purchasing power, to reconcile accounts, both?

COVA Response: See COVA response to Question #A.30 above.

32. Reference Section 3.4.5.k. “Contract administration and closeout.” How is this defined? What is required to perform this function?

COVA Response: Contract administration would include such activities as assessing vendor performance and user satisfaction, analyzing transaction volumes, problem resolution, ongoing market analysis, etc. Contract closeout would include activities such as final analysis and reporting, changing the status to make the contract unavailable to Solution users, and archiving the contract data/documents.

33. Reference Section 3.4.7. “Surplus Property” is desired based on 3.2.2.g. Please confirm 3.4.7. is desired, not required.

COVA Response: The Surplus Property functionality described in RFP Section 3.4.7 is desired, not required.

34. Reference Section 3.4.8.a. What is the COVA definition (or examples) of “standard” commodity code data?

COVA Response: Standard commodity code data is that information which identifies goods and/or services that may be purchased through the Solution. An example can be found on the DPS website www.dgs.state.va.us/dps/Vendors/Docs/Codelookup.asp.

**RFP # 194:0-12RPB, Electronic Procurement Solution
Addendum No. 01, Appendix 2
COVA Responses To Questions Received From Potential Offerors**

35. Reference 3.4.8.b. “Standard specification documents...” Are these documents related to a specific purchase transaction or just generally available within the Solution?

COVA Response: As described in RFP Section 3.4.8.b, standard specification documents would be generally available within the Solution. The concept is to maintain a reference library of standard documents and templates (see RFP Attachment B, Section 3.2.3). The Solution is also expected to manage documents, such as specifications, which are associated with a specific purchase transaction.

36. Section 3.4.8.h. states “Capture professional experiences in knowledge base.” In what capacity does the state intend to use this information? Please explain.

COVA Response: COVA envisions the Solution will capture procurement experiences as textual narratives input by users. Solution users will be able to question and search this knowledge base.

37. Reference Section 3.4.8.h. Is the “capture of professional experiences in a knowledge base” a passive or active-based system requirement?

COVA Response: See COVA response to Question #A.36 above.

38. Reference RFP Section 3.4.9. Please provide a list of systems (such as PeopleSoft, Oracle, KPMG (APICS and Famous), SCT Higher Education Administration Systems) used by each COVA Entity.

COVA Response: COVA does not have a list of systems used by each COVA Entity. Known examples of COVA Entity systems include PeopleSoft, Oracle, KPMG (APICS and Famous), SCT Higher Education Administration Systems, AMS – American Management Systems.

39. To which WBS element does the activities of Services (3.4.9), Web Services (3.4.10) and Services (3.4.11) correspond?

COVA Response: RFP Section 3.4.9 lists examples of optional interface services COVA Entities may wish to purchase in accordance with the provisions of RFP Section 3.6.3. RFP Section 3.4.9 and RFP Section 3.6.3 correspond to WBS 1.10.

RFP Section 3.4.10 does not correspond to a specific WBS element. It is a foundation piece to the entire WBS.

RFP Section 3.4.11 does not correspond to a specific WBS element.

40. Reference Section 3.4.10.b.3. “maintain separate training, testing, and production environments...” Are each of these systems to be hosted outside COVA’s IT infrastructure?

COVA Response: Yes. All environments are to be hosted outside COVA’s information technology infrastructure.

**RFP # 194:0-12RPB, Electronic Procurement Solution
Addendum No. 01, Appendix 2
COVA Responses To Questions Received From Potential Offerors**

41. Metrics:

	RFP Section 2.1	RFP Section 3.4.11	RFP Section 4.2.32.b(3)
State agencies, institutions and other state entities	250 and 185	450-500	
Vendors	50,000 – “Estimated”		40,000 – “Registered”
Purchase Charge Card Transactions	450,000		250,000

Please verify the above metrics provided in the indicated sections of the main body of the RFP. For example, the number of estimated vendors listed in Section 2.1 is 50,000. In Section 4.2.32.b(3) there are 40,000 registered vendors. Are the 10,000 vendors not currently registered with COVA?

COVA Response: See COVA responses to Question A.4. above and Questions #A.44, #A.84, #A.85, #B.20, #B.21, #B.22, #C.21.a below. Additionally, the numbers included in RFP Sections 2.1 and 3.4.11 are estimates based on actual data. Section 2.1 provides a sense of the breakout between state agencies and public bodies. Section 3.4.11 approximates the combination of the two.

42. Reference Section 3.4.11.c. What was the method to determine the 4,000-user concurrency? Could you please provide the metrics involved in the concurrency calculation?

COVA Response: As set forth in RFP Section 3.4.11.c., the Solution **should** support 4,000 or more concurrent sessions during peak usage. As used here, 4,000 concurrent sessions is based on the average number of hits per day on the current DPS website.

43. Of the 4,000 peak concurrent user sessions in 3.4.11.c, what is the expected break out between buyer and vendor sessions?

COVA Response: COVA does not have this information. See COVA response to Question #A.42 above.

44. Reference Section 3.4.11.c. “Support 4,000 or more concurrent sessions during peak usage.” Section 4.2.32.b(3) “Estimated Metrics” says that there will be 1,000 buyers and 1,800 Charge Card users. How will there be 4,000 concurrent sessions with only 2,800 total users?

COVA Response: See COVA responses to Questions #A.4, #A.41, #A.42, and #A.43 above and Questions #A.84, #B.20, #B.21, #B.22, and #C.21.a below.

45. In Section 3.5.1.a(1), the requirement implies the “Solution” should be deployable in “both” a Windows NT and a UNIX environment. Is that the desired intent? This creates a “knock-out” criteria that would eliminate most, if not all, of the current applications available for integration into the “Solution”.

RFP # 194:0-12RPB, Electronic Procurement Solution
Addendum No. 01, Appendix 2
COVA Responses To Questions Received From Potential Offerors

COVA Response: COVA views multiple hardware, operating systems, web server, and database options as desirable and an indication of product maturity, flexibility, and a predictor of long-term success. As stated in RFP Section 3.5, COVA will not specify hardware or software requirements. Offerors with only one technical architecture option should provide a discussion on how they plan to respond to market innovation, scale the Solution to respond to increased demand, and how their decision to focus on a single platform does not affect long-term success.

46. Reference Section 3.5.1.b. Could you explain what constitutes appears to be available 100% of the time?

COVA Response: There is sufficient redundancy that although system performance may be degraded, it is still available 100% of the time. Example: An e-mail post office back end is not available but the user is able to draft and send an e-mail that is queued for later processing.

47. Reference Section 3.5.1.b., Availability. We understand the need for a highly available, scalable and reliable e-Procurement solution. This is especially critical during expected peak use hours. However, the requirement that the system should achieve 100% availability exceeds the performance capability of virtually all complex software-intensive internet solutions in use today. We suggest the Commonwealth restate this requirement in terms of service levels needed so that architecture and design features can be appropriately compared to cost.

COVA Response: Schedule A, Part IV of the Price and Revenue Workbook (RFP Attachment E) should be used by the Offeror to identify particular component(s) and/or requirement(s) that add significantly to the cost, to recommend alternatives, and to indicate cost savings that would be achieved as a result of the proposed alternative(s).

48. Please clarify the response time requirement in 3.5.1.c. Does COVA have a specific set of WWW tasks and users that should be part of the benchmark standard?

COVA Response: No. COVA's expectation is that the independent benchmark provider will have an established set of www tasks and users.

49. Reference Section 3.5.1.c. Response time requires an independent response time measurement service, would a contracted ASP be classified as independent?

COVA Response: An ASP hosting the Solution can not be the independent response time measurement service provider described in RFP Section 3.5.1.c.

50. Reference Section 3.5.1.c, Response Time. As the state is aware, the internet is a fluid environment which can impact response time. What is the expectation of the state in regards to meet or exceed response time benchmarks?

COVA Response: The benchmark concept is an attempt to acknowledge that Internet response times can vary. By using a basic benchmark test, the Contractor is asked to have an independent response time measurement service provider place the Solution site on its monitoring list. This independent service provider will compare the Solution site's response time against a collection of benchmark sites that are tested using exactly the same process (including client hardware and

RFP # 194:0-12RPB, Electronic Procurement Solution
Addendum No. 01, Appendix 2
COVA Responses To Questions Received From Potential Offerors

software, beginning site location, and exact time of day. In this way the Solution site is judged against leading industry sites.

Additional information on independent response time measurement services may be accessed at:

- http://www.servicemetrics.com/market_metrics/marketmetrics.asp
- <http://www.keynote.com>

51. Section 3.5.2.b.10 requires downloads to be “short (5-10 seconds)”. Is this an average or absolute time and is it for all users or users with optimum desktop capabilities?

COVA Response: “The Solution **should** ensure downloads are short (5-10 seconds or less) even under poor Internet conditions.” This applies to the basic web presentation screens of the proposed Solution. For example : e-mall shopping, on-line solicitation functions, review of specifications, etc. It does not include download of interface files, download of data associated with a report, etc.

52. Section 3.5.2.b(10) states a download requirement that is determined by the end user equipment, rather than solely controllable by the “Solution”. What is the intent of the requirement for the “Solution” only?

COVA Response: See COVA response to Question #A.51 above.

53. Reference Section 3.5.2.c.4. “Provide for learning buyer or supplying preference.” Please clarify what is meant by “learning” and “preference”.

COVA Response: As users navigate through the Solution, displayed information will be prioritized based on their historical navigation choices and inquiries (i.e., the Solution will present information appropriately tailored to the user’s profile which is developed from the user’s historical buying, shopping and navigating patterns).

54. In section 3.5.3, does COVA intend that COVA data and information ownership extend to the vendor and network managed catalogs?

COVA Response: When hosted catalogs are representative of a specific relationship between COVA (or a COVA Entity) and a vendor, relative data ownership issues will be addressed in the specific contract or trading partner agreement executed between COVA (or a COVA Entity) and the vendor. COVA will not claim ownership of data for hosted catalogs when there is no relative contract or trading partner agreement executed between COVA (or a COVA Entity) and the vendor.

55. Section 3.5.3.a does not state the scope of data to be archived on a daily basis, nor does it state for what time period the data should be stored. Please provide this information. Section 3.5.3.c addresses portability without identifying the space. What is the technology space that the Commonwealth anticipates for data portability? The contractor cannot ensure an open ended technical space portability. Section 3.5.3.d does not specify the type or amount of data, or the frequency of extraction anticipated. Please provide this information.

RFP # 194:0-12RPB, Electronic Procurement Solution
Addendum No. 01, Appendix 2
COVA Responses To Questions Received From Potential Offerors

COVA Response:

- a. Reference RFP Section 3.5.3.a. This Section addresses data portability. The Offeror may propose any frequency, backup techniques, and retention strategies that meet the intent of having all Solution data backed up and stored in a secure off-site location on a daily basis.
 - b. Reference RFP section 3.5.3.c. COVA is concerned with data portability. COVA requires the Contractor to commit to availability of COVA-owned data in an open access format. See RFP Addendum No. 01, Item 2.
 - As an example, for illustration purposes only, of COVA’s concerns: assume the Contractor stores all COVA transaction data in a proprietary database with no third-party access methods and all data encrypted. COVA would require that the Contractor demonstrate a process for converting this data into an open-access database management system supported by COVA (for example: Oracle or SQL Server) and decrypt the information for use in the new database.
 - c. Reference RFP Section 3.5.3.d.(1). The Offeror should propose an acceptable extraction schedule, identifying any limitations. COVA entities would require extraction no more frequently than twice per day and no less frequently than once per month. Frequency will depend on the functionality of the proposed Solution and which components COVA Entities decide to use; therefore the requirement cannot be more specifically defined.
56. Does the Commonwealth intend to keep 5 years of data on-line, and date-keyed events forever, and back-up this data on a daily basis for external off-line storage, without affecting response time throughout any such activities?

COVA Response: See COVA response to Question #A.55 above for a discussion on external off-line storage. As stated in RFP 3.5.3.g., COVA intends to keep 5 years of data on-line. COVA desires to have logical access to this data and is not prescribing the architecture for use in satisfying the requirement. However, COVA expects the database design to provide the ability to determine when a transaction was created, modified, and deleted. This requirement does not dictate how the Contractor decides to segment the data. It would be reasonable to assume that active transaction data may be physically managed within one database subject area, schema, etc., and completed transactions physically managed in another on-line database area.

57. Reference Section 3.5.3.f.1. “Buyer-managed catalogs should allow buyers and vendors to store catalog data on COVA Entity premises or on the Solution’s site and to maintain the catalog accurately by automated updates from buyers and vendors.” Who would control the updates? What is meant by “automated updates”? This seems to be internally conflicted – buyer managed catalogs are, by definition, managed by buyers not vendors.

COVA Response: Buyer-managed catalogs are established as a result of specific contracts or trading partner agreements executed between COVA (or a COVA Entity) and vendors. Update responsibility for buyer-managed catalogs will be addressed in the contract or trading partner agreement. Such contracts and agreements could result in catalogs that are updated by both the

RFP # 194:0-12RPB, Electronic Procurement Solution
Addendum No. 01, Appendix 2
COVA Responses To Questions Received From Potential Offerors

buyer and the vendor(s). Automated updates would include capabilities such as scheduled batch uploads or scheduled interface updates.

58. In the buyer-managed catalog requirement, Section 3.5.3.f.1, who controls the catalog updates: buyers or vendors? What is meant by an automated update, what is the format of the update?

COVA Response: See COVA response to Question # A.57 above.

59. Section 3.5.3.f.1 requires data storage on the solution site or “COVA entity premises.” Linking to COVA data sources and systems involves unknown technical issues (e.g., security access) that need to be more clearly defined. Are there system specifications available for these systems?

COVA Response: System specifications are not necessary. If this requirement can not be satisfied by the set of standard application interfaces provided in accordance with RFP Section 3.5.5, it can be satisfied by the provisions of RFP Section 3.6.2, Integration Services, or RFP Section 3.6.3, Interface Services.

60. Section 3.5.4.b(4), page 23. Please explain COVA’s concept of how the e-procurement solution uses digital signature certificates in this context.

COVA Response: COVA expects the Offeror to describe how the proposed Solution incorporates the use of digital signature certificates in the signing of procurement documents.

61. Section 3.5.4.b(5), page 23. Please explain COVA’s concept for using smart cards and biometrics in the e-procurement solution.

COVA Response: COVA expects the Offeror to describe how the proposed Solution incorporates the use of smart cards and biometrics security devices. The Offeror should also refer to COVA response to Question #A.68 below.

62. Section 3.5.5 does not provide any specific standard application interface information. The Offeror cannot design to an unspecified interface, or to multiple, unspecified interfaces. If this information is not available, the Offeror would need to collect this information prior to final design. This would affect cost. Is the Commonwealth planning to adjust cost subsequent to award?

COVA Response: COVA expects the Offeror to address the specific interfaces listed in RFP Section 3.5.5 by establishing interface standards. COVA entities and vendors would have the option to utilize the standard interfaces or to negotiate non-standard interfaces under the time and material services provisions of RFP Section 3.6.3. Costs for the standard interfaces should be included in RFP Attachment E, Price and Revenue Workbook, Schedule A – Part I, Cost Worksheet.

The Offeror should identify any currently existing interfaces that could be used by application systems listed in Section 3.4.9. Vendors for the applications systems listed in Section 3.4.9 publish specifications about how to interface with their products. In addition, some third-party vendors have developed partnership relationships with supply chain vendors to agree on common interface requirements. Examples of this effort may be found on the following web sites:

**RFP # 194:0-12RPB, Electronic Procurement Solution
Addendum No. 01, Appendix 2
COVA Responses To Questions Received From Potential Offerors**

- www.requisite.com
- www.rosettanel.org
- www.eaijournal.com/erpintegration/
- www.commercedesk.com

63. Section 3.6.3 references the standard interfaces identified in Section 3.5.5. As noted in the prior question, there are no standard interfaces identified in Section 3.5.5. Does the Commonwealth have any standard interface information that can be provided at this time?

COVA Response: See COVA response to Question A.62 above.

64. Reference Section 3.5.5.c.3. “Interface the Solution with related e-government applications.” Which applications should be considered here?

COVA Response: COVA does not have a specific list of applications. RFP Section 3.5.5.c is intended to provide examples of the potential use of the interfaces listed in RFP Section 3.5.5.a.

65. Reference RFP Section 3.5.5.c(3). In reference to the requirement that the offeror’s Solution should interface with related e-government applications. Could the Commonwealth identify these related e-government applications.

COVA Response: See COVA response to Question #A.64 above.

66. Section 3.5.6.a, page 24. Does COVA intend that the solution itself include a format translator or merely accommodate files in different formats?

COVA Response: The Solution should include a format translator. The intent of the second sentence of Section 3.5.6.a. is that the Solution should provide a means to ensure that document content can or cannot be changed based on the sender’s preference.

67. Section 3.5.6.b, page 24. Does COVA intend to produce mass mailings using the solution? If so, please provide some estimates of anticipated volume.

COVA Response: Yes. For examples, see RFP Sections 3.4.2.d. and 3.4.2.e.

68. Reference Section 3.5.7.g. “...use of smart cards and biometric security devices where strong authentication is required.” When would “strong authentication” be required? Is there an existing technology or vendor solution that COVA prefers to address this need?

COVA Response: COVA envisions the need for strong authentication in situations where users are involved in health and public safety such as at correctional facilities. COVA does not have a preferred technology of vendor solution for this need. The Offeror should also refer to COVA response to Question #A.61 above.

69. Reference RFP Section 3.5.8.b. What is meant by a “criminal background check” for employees? What is meant by “sensitive” data that would require such security access?

RFP # 194:0-12RPB, Electronic Procurement Solution
Addendum No. 01, Appendix 2
COVA Responses To Questions Received From Potential Offerors

COVA Response: By use of the term “criminal background check”, COVA means a check of the employee’s criminal record for any convictions related to job activity including access to data provided by virtue of the employee’s position. The meaning of the term “sensitive” data is dependent upon the functionality of the proposed Solution but is intended to describe data which is confidential in nature such as sealed bid prices and other proprietary bidder/offer data.

70. Reference Section 3.6.8. “...the Contractor shall maintain a virtual computer-based training environment for COVA Entity use.” What client computing platform would be used (Windows, Mac, UNIX, etc.)?

COVA Response: COVA expects the virtual computer-based training environment to be part of the hosted Solution; therefore the platform would be that of the host. As stated in RFP Section 3.5., “COVA will not specify hardware or software requirements.” and “The Solution shall be web server centric, requiring only a standard web-browser to access and utilize basic functionality of the Solution.”

71. Reference Section 3.6.8.a(2). What is the purpose of the IT Support Staff Training? Does the Commonwealth anticipate staffing the Offeror’s Web Host site?

COVA Response: The purpose is to provide COVA IT Support Staff with sufficient high level understanding to make them capable of activities such as interface development, technical mentoring to COVA Entity and/or vendor organizations, supplemental support to the Contractor’s Customer Care program, and troubleshooting basic problem.

72. Reference RFP Section 4.1.1. The Instructions for Proposal Preparation state that the offeror must include a copy of the RFP with the proposal response. Does that include all attachments, even where the attachment, when filled out, is included as part of the proposal submission?

COVA Response: Offerors are not required to include a blank copy of any RFP attachment that, when filled out, is included as part of the proposal submission.

73. Section 4.1.2e states that all material prepared pursuant to the RFP shall belong exclusively to the State. How can work for which the state has not paid be exclusively held by the state, rather than jointly held by the offeror and the state? Does the statement preclude the offeror from reusing material for other proposals or purpose?

COVA Response: RFP Section 4.1.2.(e) pertains to materials provided to the State pursuant to the RFP. It does not pertain to copies of these materials that are retained by the Offeror except to the extent set forth in the last sentence of the first paragraph of RFP Section 4.1.1.

74. The solicitation states that the offeror must respond to the requirements in the order presented in the RFP. The solicitation also includes instructions for proposal preparation and submission, stating that deviation may result in disqualification. The order of the requirements in Section 3 is not exactly the same as the order of the same topics in the instructions for proposal preparation in Section 4. Whis is the preferred order that topics are to be presented?

COVA Response: See COVA response to Question #A.18 above.

**RFP # 194:0-12RPB, Electronic Procurement Solution
Addendum No. 01, Appendix 2
COVA Responses To Questions Received From Potential Offerors**

75. Reference Section 4.2.6. The breadth of requirements in this solicitation can in many cases best be met by contractor partnerships or teams, rather than a single offeror. Could client references originating from significant technology partners as well as the prime contractor be provided for the three references requested?

COVA Response: Yes. It is expected that references will be provided for the Offeror and the Offeror's significant technology partners/subcontractors. See RFP Addendum No. 01, Item 4.

76. Section 4.2.8, page 38. Please explain COVA's concept of how document imaging enters the workflow.

COVA Response: COVA envisions that scanned documents, pictures and other images associated with specific procurements would be created outside the Solution then uploaded and stored to the Solution.

77. Section 4.2.8 mentions incorporating document imaging management. Is the state looking for a solution that integrates a complete imaging system (e.g., scanners, jukebox)? What is the state's vision on the use of imaging technology with the e-procurement solution?

COVA Response: See COVA response to Question #A.76 above.

78. What is the marketing plan or level of assistance the state will provide the vendor to promote and encourage the use of the new system within the COVA entities?

COVA Response: Reference RFP Section 4.2.10. It is COVA's intent that the Offeror's proposal include a marketing strategy to promote and encourage use of the Solution by COVA Entities and Users, as well as vendors. This proposed marketing strategy should recommend the roles and responsibilities of the Contractor, its partners and subcontractors, and COVA.

79. Reference Section 4.2.25. The first part of this requirement asks for a description of the offeror's system development methodology. The last sentence however, appears to proscribe the use of either SEI, ISO, Pressman or Jones methods. Models other than those listed in this paragraph have been proven successful for high quality solution integration in internet environments. Request the last sentence in this paragraph be deleted to allow offerors to describe the features and benefits of their own approach.

COVA Response: See RFP Addendum No. 01, Item 5.

80. What is meant by Contractor costs?

COVA Response: As used in RFP Section 4.2.32. and RFP Attachment E, Price and Revenue Workbook, the term "cost" does not refer to the costs that the Contractor must bear. The term "cost" means the costs paid by any COVA Entity, supplier, citizen, other user of the Solution or a third party. The Offeror should also refer to COVA responses to Questions #B.16, B.17, and B.18 below.

RFP # 194:0-12RPB, Electronic Procurement Solution
Addendum No. 01, Appendix 2
COVA Responses To Questions Received From Potential Offerors

81. Section 4.2.32 discusses the provision of a treasury loan to the Department of General Services. Will any of these funds or other monies be available to the vendor to offset cost during Phase I implementation? If yes, what is the approximate amount?

COVA Response: The treasury loan discussed in RFP Section 4.2.32 is available to assist in financing the Solution. RFP Attachment E, Price and Revenue Workbook, Schedule A, Part I, requires the Offeror to propose an annual distribution of total cost over 5 years. The Offeror should also refer to COVA response to Question #C.6 below.

82. What is the intended use of the funds identified as Item 75, paragraph B, of Chapter 1073, 2000 Acts of Assembly?

COVA Response: See COVA response to Question #A.81 above.

83. There is no mention of funding available to the COVA Entities, within the current budget process, for participation in the eProcurement startup and sustaining effort. What incentive is there for an Entity to participate, when they will be expected to pay, and have no budget identified at this time? Please explain the economic model the Commonwealth has assumed for procuring the “Solution”.

COVA Response: The incentive for use should be the functionality provided to the COVA Entities by the Solution.

84. Reference Section 4.2.32.b(3). “Estimated metrics” states that there will be 40,000 vendors, 10,000 contracts and 1,000 state contracts. How many of these suppliers and/or contracts are already staged in a OBI/XML compliant catalog format?

COVA Response: See COVA responses to Questions #A.4, #A.41 and #A.44 above and Questions #B.20, #B.21, #B.22, and #C.21.a below. COVA does not have information to provide a breakdown on the number of existing suppliers and/or contracts that are already staged in a OBI/XML compliant catalog format.

85. Approximately how many of the 40,000 vendors referenced in Section 4.2.32 currently have web-based catalogs?

COVA Response: See COVA responses to Questions # A.4, #A.41, #A.44 and #A.84 above and Questions # B.20, #B.21, #B.22, and #C.21.a below. COVA does not have the requested information regarding vendors that currently have web-based catalogs.

86. In Section 9.9, please clarify the Acceptance Test requirement to be 98% effective over a 168 hour period. Is effectiveness synonymous with availability?

COVA Response: No. Availability is a consideration in determining effectiveness. Other considerations in determining effectiveness include whether or not full functionality is working and performing per specifications.

87. What is the purpose of the “bond” requirements? In particular, what is the purpose in requiring two separate performance bonds, each in the amount of the total contract cost?

RFP # 194:0-12RPB, Electronic Procurement Solution
Addendum No. 01, Appendix 2
COVA Responses To Questions Received From Potential Offerors

COVA Response: Three separate bonds are referenced in RFP Section 9.10. Each bond ensures the responsibility of the Offering party. The required bonds are as follows:

- a. Proposal (Bid) Bond or Guarantee (RFP Section 9.10.1.)
- b. Commonwealth of Virginia Standard Performance Bond (RFP Section 9.10.2)
- c. Commonwealth of Virginia Standard Labor and Material Payment Bond (RFP Section 9.10.2)

88. Reference Section 9.10.2., Performance and Payment Bonds. The solicitation envisions a variety of business models that could be used for the economic basis of this system (see Section 4.2.32). Models that support system development and operations costs through fee recapture or other revenue generating features would avoid direct costs to the Commonwealth. We assume that the bonding requirement is limited to the actual developmental costs levied directly to the Commonwealth and does not include costs born by the contractor to implement the system. Please clarify.

COVA Response: The sum of the required performance and payment bonds would be equal to COVA's total financial obligation to the Contractor for the 5-year term of the initial contract. For any subsequent contract renewal, COVA will also require performance and payment bonds in a sum equal to COVA's total financial obligation to the Contractor for the 2-year term of the renewal.

89. Section 9.13 discusses vendor penalties in the annual service level agreement. What capacity planning information will the state provide the vendor to assist in planning?

COVA expects the Offeror's previous experience in supporting large web sites will be the best guide to anticipating growth. COVA understands that the service level agreement may require great flexibility in the evaluation of performance in the first year(s) until the Contractor and COVA have a better understanding of capacity and growth.

90. A mailing address of "P.O. Box 1199, Richmond, VA 23218-1199" has been provided in the RFP. Federal Express however, does not deliver to a P.O. Box. Can the following address listed in the RFP be used instead "805 East Broad Street – 3rd Floor, Richmond, VA 23219"?

COVA Response: Reference RFP Section 9.16. The proper address for hand-delivered responses (including those delivered by couriers such as UPS, Federal Express, etc) is Department of General Services, Division of Purchases and Supply, ATTN: Bid Tabulation, 805 East Broad Street – 3rd Floor, Richmond, VA 23219. The proper address for mailed responses is Department of General Services, Division of Purchases and Supply, ATTN: Bid Tabulation, P.O. Box 1199, Richmond, VA 23218-1199. Because the U.S. Postal Services does not deliver to our building and does not automatically cross-reference the street address to the post office box, responses mailed to the street address are considerably delayed.

91. What will be the requirement for nonvisual access for this system (9.19)? Will the requirement be the same for all aspects of the User Interface? For instance, will vendor managed catalogs be

RFP # 194:0-12RPB, Electronic Procurement Solution
Addendum No. 01, Appendix 2
COVA Responses To Questions Received From Potential Offerors

required to meet the nonvisual access to technology standard? If so, which organization is responsible for ensuring compliance?

COVA Response: COVA expects the Solution to comply with the provisions of RFP Section 9.19, Nonvisual Access To Technology. Although COVA understands the Contractor may not be able to ensure compliance with these provisions for associated technology and/or data which resides outside the bounds of the Solution, the Offeror's proposal is required to include a detailed explanation for any such exceptions.

92. Reference Section 9.19.a., Nonvisual Access to Technology: Section 3.4.1 requests "...comparison shopping from vendor price lists and/or open web searches." And Section 3.5.3.f.2 requests "vendor managed catalog support". Both of these options involve display of external web sites that are outside the Contractor's control. How can compliance to 9.19 be assured if these sites are maintained by external suppliers?

COVA Response: See COVA response to Question #A.91 above.

93. Reference Section 9.20., Ownership of Intellectual Property. In the event that this project is awarded as a "reverse revenue" contract, where the Contractor is responsible for investing its own capital in the project and bears the risk of recovering its investment, we believe that it is appropriate for the Contractor to own the rights to the intellectual property created or developed in the performance of the contract. Please clarify the Commonwealth's view of ownership of data rights in the context of a reverse revenue contract.

COVA Response: Within the context of this RFP and any resulting contract, COVA acknowledges the Solution could be construed as a service for which COVA has no right to claim ownership of the underlying technology. Under no circumstances, however, will COVA relinquish its ownership of data captured as a result of use of the Solution by COVA, COVA Entities, COVA Entity Users, vendors, trading partners, citizens, etc. Such data includes, but is not limited to, procurement files, purchase transaction data, vendor registration data, user profiles, and catalog data for which COVA (or any COVA Entity) has been granted rights by the catalog vendor(s). The Offeror's proposal shall include any exception(s) taken to the provisions of RFP Section 9.20, provide a detailed explanation for the exception(s), and propose alternative language. Any such alternative language shall not mitigate the provisions of the Exit, Transition, and Escrow Strategy required in accordance with RFP Sections 3.7 and 4.2.29. The Offeror should also refer to COVA response to Question #C.12 below.

94. Reference Attachment B, Section 1.6.7. The requirement calls for "support contract administration, performance tracking and close-out requirements". Will you provide more detailed information on the contract administration requirement?

COVA Response: See COVA response to Question #A.32 above.

95. Reference Attachment B, Section 3.2.1. Vendor Data and other information/data warehouse requirements imply that the information exists in databases and that use of existing systems should be maximized. Will this information be provided as government furnished information to be loaded into the e-procurement system or will an integration solution to the existing data source be preferable?

**RFP # 194:0-12RPB, Electronic Procurement Solution
Addendum No. 01, Appendix 2
COVA Responses To Questions Received From Potential Offerors**

COVA Response: Reference RFP Sections 3.5.4., 3.5.5., 3.6.2., 3.6.3., 3.6.5., and 3.6.6. for Solution interface, integration data conversion, and catalog service requirements. COVA anticipates a combination of standard interfaces, optional interface services, optional data conversion services, optional integration services, and optional catalog services will be required to optimize utilization of existing data.

96. RFP Attachment B, Section 3.2.2.a.1, states the solution should include EFT Information and provides URL www.state.va.us/doa/docs/projects/EDI/edinew.htm, which is an invalid link. What is the correct URL to access the information in question?

COVA Response: See RFP Addendum No 01, Item 9. The correct URL is www.doa.state.va.us/procedures/GeneralAccounting/EDI/handbook.pdf.

B. QUESTIONS ASKED AT THE 06/27/00 PRE-PROPOSAL CONFERENCE

1. Reference RFP Section 3.3. In the event of any delays whatsoever, will the schedule slide accordingly?

COVA Response: COVA's desire is to avoid any slippage in this schedule.

2. Reference RFP Section 3.3. Very few days are allowed for contract negotiations. How are you intending to compress the contract negotiations during that period of time.

COVA Response: COVA will develop very specific negotiations strategies to facilitate completing negotiations in accordance with the stated schedule.

3. Reference the deadline for submitting proposals (RFP Section 3.3. and RFP Page 1). Would it be possible to get a 30-day extension?

COVA Response: No.

4. Reference RFP Section 3.4.2. Does the state intend on having a single vendor repository? If so, how will that work be handled?

COVA Response: Yes, COVA expects to ultimately have one consolidated vendor data warehouse incorporating the centralized vendor registration concept. For Phase I (February 15, 2001) implementation, the Department of General Services(DGS) will work with the Department of Information Technology(DIT) and the Department of Transportation (VDOT) to develop consolidated vendor data which can be uploaded into the Solution vendor data warehouse in accordance with the provisions of RFP Section 3.6.5.

5. Follow-up to Question #B.3. above. The real issue is that no one is guaranteeing that all COVA Entities will participate. If their vendor data is not contained in the Solution, they would not be inclined to use it...if they had to reenter their vendors in some fashion. Is there some method in place so that the Solution would be seeded with the data they need to make it function?

RFP # 194:0-12RPB, Electronic Procurement Solution
Addendum No. 01, Appendix 2
COVA Responses To Questions Received From Potential Offerors

COVA Response: DGS, DIT, and VDOT currently maintain statewide vendor registration databases utilizing a common commodity code standard. COVA anticipates that the Solution Vendor Data Warehouse will be populated with this data in accordance with the provisions of RFP Section 3.6.5.

6. Are there any specific requirements or specifications associated with access by disabled persons.

COVA Response: Reference RFP Section 9.19, Nonvisual Access To Technology. The Offeror should also refer to COVA response to Question #A.91 above.

7. Reference RFP Section 4.2.3. In the second bullet, what is meant by “intended utilization”?

COVA Response: The area in which the individual will be utilized to perform any resulting contract. For example, if you are proposing an individual to be a project manager, you are to provide specific information regarding that individual’s knowledge, experience, and proficiency in the area of project management.

8. Reference RFP Section 4.2.4. Are actual copies of the subcontracts supposed to be included in the proposal?

COVA Response: No. However as stated in RFP Section 4.1.3, “Offerors selected to participate in oral presentations and scripted demonstrations will be required to provide letters of commitment from each partner and/or subcontractor named in the Offeror’s proposal. These letters will be requested at the time oral presentations are scheduled. The letters must be provided prior to or at the time of oral presentations.”

9. Reference RFP Section 4.2.6. and COVA’s response to Question #A.75. Are you looking for a total of three references in the proposal or three references per prime and/or partners? That can be quite extensive if there’s a large team.

COVA Response: RFP Section 4.2.6 requires a total of three references. No less than one of these references shall be for the Offeror. Offerors may submit more than the minimum requirement of three references. See RFP Addendum No. 01, Item 4. The Offeror should also refer to COVA response to Question #A.75 above.

10. Reference RFP Section 4.2.6. Do subcontractors have to supply a minimum of three references?

COVA Response: RFP Section 4.2.6 applies to the Offeror signing and submitting the proposal.

11. Reference RFP Section 4.2.19. There are a lot of requirements in the RFP concerning logical security, but do you have requirements for physical security? For example, are you looking for the data center to have bullet-proof glass or security to withstand terrorists?

COVA Response: Although the RFP does not include minimum specifications for how physical security shall be provided, RFP Section 4.2.19 does require the Offeror to describe the physical security of the web-hosting center. At a minimum, this description shall satisfy the minimum

RFP # 194:0-12RPB, Electronic Procurement Solution
Addendum No. 01, Appendix 2
COVA Responses To Questions Received From Potential Offerors

requirements for physical security set forth in RFP sections 3.5.3.a., 3.5.3.b.(3), 3.5.7.c.(2), 3.5.7.d., 3.5.7.e, and 3.5.8.

12. Reference RFP Section 4.2.31. Are there specific criteria for determining small, women-owned, and minority-owned business classifications?

COVA Response: For purposes of this procurement, the criteria for each of these designations is included in RFP Attachment D.1.A. (Small Businesses), D.2.A. (Women-Owned Businesses), and D.3.A. (Minority-Owned Businesses).

13. Reference RFP Section 4.2.32. Related to the spending and up front investments you're encouraging vendors to make in this particular RFP and then the subsequent implementation, it may be anywhere from \$8 million to \$10 million. The RFP states there is no guarantee or assurance of minimum business that will be directed to go through this particular model. What mechanism is the Commonwealth using to encourage COVA Entity use of the Solution so some sort of payback on the vendor's investment can be assumed?

COVA Response:

- (a) Reference the Governor's Executive Order Number 65 which states "Upon completion of the statewide electronic procurement system, I hereby direct all Executive Branch agencies and institutions to take advantage of its benefits to the fullest extent possible". The full text of Executive Order 65 is available via a link posted with the list of RFP Reference Materials available at www.dgs.state.va.us/dps/e-pro-rfp.
- (b) Reference RFP Section 4.2.10. and COVA response to Question #A.78 above. COVA anticipates this marketing plan/strategy will effectively demonstrate to COVA Entities that the Solution is a good deal and a desirable program in which they will want to participate.
- (c) This RFP is not just a DPS initiative. It is the result of substantial work and collaboration by key decision makers representing numerous state agencies, institutions of higher education and public bodies.

COVA Follow-Up To Response Provided At 6/27/00 Pre-Proposal Conference. Currently state agencies, departments, and institutions may publish solicitation and award actions on the DGS/DPS central electronic procurement Web site and other appropriate Web sites. Effective July 1, 2002, state agencies, departments and institutions are required to publish solicitation and award actions over \$15,000 on the DGS/DPS central electronic procurement Web site. (Virginia Public Procurement Act, Section 11-37) The Offeror should also refer to COVA response to Question #A.5 above.

14. Follow-up question. Would it be safe to assume that whatever spend [procurement transaction dollars] goes through DGS, DIT and VDOT will go through the Solution?

COVA Response: DPS will participate in the Solution. It is anticipated that DIT and VDOT will participate to some degree.

RFP # 194:0-12RPB, Electronic Procurement Solution
Addendum No. 01, Appendix 2
COVA Responses To Questions Received From Potential Offerors

15. Follow-up question. As it relates to DPS participation, are you talking only about statewide contracts?

COVA Response: No. In addition to DPS statewide contracts, we are speaking of spot purchases which DPS processes on behalf of state agencies.

16. Reference RFP Section 4.2.32. and COVA response to Question #A.80 above. Could you give some indication as to what the state considers to be costs that must be borne by the contractor and not reflected in Attachment E?

COVA Response: As stated in RFP Section 4.2.32, “the term ‘cost’ means the costs [to be] paid by any COVA Entity, supplier, citizen, other user of the Solution or a third party”. It does not refer to the costs that the Contractor must bear. Examples of contractor-borne costs would include, specific costs associated with the purchase of hardware, software and/or labor required to develop and/or deliver the proposed Solution. The Offeror should also refer to COVA responses to Question #A.80 above and Questions # B.17 and #B.18 below.

17. Follow-up question. Would it be a fair assumption that the word fee should be substituted for the word cost in that paragraph?

COVA Response: No. Fee is a very narrow term. The Offeror’s response to RFP Section 4.2.32 could include costs other than/in addition to “fees”. The Offeror should also refer to COVA responses to Questions #A.80 and #B.16 above and Question #B.18 below.

18. Follow-up question. You said you weren’t interested in the contractor’s startup costs. And yet in one of the cost worksheets, just for clarification, aren’t you asking us to tell you what the start up costs are?

COVA Response: The startup costs referenced in RFP Attachment E are the Contractor’s charges to COVA; not the Contractor’s costs. The Offeror should also refer to COVA responses to Questions #A.80, #B.16, and #B.17 above.

19. Follow-up question. To what extent did you involve other entities and did they indicate desirable attributes of the Solution?

COVA Response: The RFP is based on the collaborative efforts of a dedicated team of State agency, institution of higher education, and public body representatives. In addition, the RFP reflects (a) potential offeror input received via responses to a Request for Information (RFI) posted January 7, 2000, and a pre-solicitation conference conducted May 31, 2000; and (b) stakeholder vendor input received during a stakeholder conference also conducted May 31, 2000.

20. Reference RFP Section 4.2.32.b.(3), Estimated Metrics. What is COVA’s estimated forecast for these items being increased or decreased over the next five years. The estimate appears to be based on one year. What is your estimate for growth in this chart over the next five years?

COVA Response: See COVA responses to Questions # A.4, #A.41, #A.44 and #A.84 above and Questions # B.21, #B.22, and #C.21.a below. To ensure the hypothetical metrics serve the

**RFP # 194:0-12RPB, Electronic Procurement Solution
Addendum No. 01, Appendix 2
COVA Responses To Questions Received From Potential Offerors**

intended purpose, Offerors should not inflate or deflate these hypothetical metrics when preparing responses to RFP Section 4.2.32.

21. Reference RFP Section 4.2.32.b.(3), Estimated Metrics. As used in the Estimated Metrics, does COVA Entity Buyer refer to a buyer in the traditional sense or in a broader sense meaning people who have access to the Solution?

COVA Response: As used in these hypothetical metrics, COVA Entity Buyer refers to a professional buyer. Additionally, see COVA responses to Questions # A.4, #A.41, #A.44, #A.84, and #A.85 above and Questions #B.22 and Question #C.21.a below

22. Follow-up Question. Does the state have an estimate of the total number of users other than buyers (i.e., requisitioners, people who use they system)?

COVA Response: No. See COVA responses to Questions # A.4, #A.41, A.44, #A.84, #A.85, #B.20 and #B.21 above and Question #C.21.a below.

23. Reference RFP Section 4.2.32. Some vendors may choose to absorb all start-up and get a payback over time through assessment of specific on-going fees. Other vendors may choose to assess initial start-up fees and assess specific on-going fees. Given these different approaches, how will COVA equitably compare vendor responses?

COVA Response: COVA's evaluation of an Offeror response to RFP Section 4.2.32. will be based on the advantages and disadvantages of the proposed economic model. COVA has designated a team of financial experts to assist the RFP Evaluation Committee in this evaluation.

24. Will COVA publish the pre-proposal attendance roster?

COVA Response: Yes. The attendance roster was published, June 30th, in the RFP Documents lists at www.dgs.state.va.us/dps/e-pro-rfp.

C. QUESTIONS RECEIVED AFTER THE 06/27/00 PRE-PROPOSAL CONFERENCE AND PRIOR TO JULY 1, 2000

1. From the final paragraph of 4.2.32.a (RFP), would you please make available the exact text of "...Item 75, paragraph B., of Chapter 1073, 2000 Acts of Assembly...?"

COVA Response: "The Department of Accounts may provide a treasury loan of up to \$3,000,000 to the Department of General Services to pay for the costs of developing and implementing a statewide electronic procurement system that has been approved by the Secretary of Technology or his designee. Such loan shall bear interest at a rate equal to the general fund composite investment rate and shall be repaid in equal annual installments over a period of five years. Repayments of this loan will be financed by fees charged to state agencies and institutions of higher education using the electronic procurement system. Prior to requesting a treasury loan, the Department of General Services shall explore other financing strategies during development of this project and, in consultation with the Department of Planning and Budget, shall select the most viable option for developing and implementing the project. The General Assembly strongly

**RFP # 194:0-12RPB, Electronic Procurement Solution
Addendum No. 01, Appendix 2
COVA Responses To Questions Received From Potential Offerors**

encourages all state agencies and institutions of higher education to participate in the statewide electronic procurement system authorized in this Item.”

2. Will the Commonwealth only consider bids in the context of a Prime Vendor proposal?

COVA Response: As stated in RFP Section 1, Purpose: "The purpose of this Request for Proposals (RFP) is to solicit sealed proposals to establish a contract with one source, through competitive negotiations, for an Electronic Procurement Solution ('Solution') for the Commonwealth of Virginia." Additionally, the 4th sentence of RFP Section 5.2., Award of Contract, states "After negotiations have been conducted with each Offeror so selected, the agency shall select the Offeror which, in its opinion, has made the best proposal, and shall award the contract to that Offeror." The scope of the desired "Solution" is set forth in RFP Section 3 and RFP Attachments that are incorporated therein by reference.

3. Will the Commonwealth consider individual “best of the breed” technology solutions, even if they are outside the context of a Prime Vendor proposal?

COVA Response: See COVA response to Question #C.2 above.

4. Are multiple bids from the same vendor allowed (i.e., 2 bids with 2 different cost structure)?

COVA Response: There is nothing in the RFP that prohibits Offerors from submitting more than one proposal; however each such proposal must independently conform to the Proposal Preparation and Submission Requirements set forth in RFP Section 4. Furthermore, RFP Section 4.32.b. states “(1), “Offerors **shall** submit cost and revenue information for the proposed Solution using the 5-part format outlined below and included, with detailed instructions, in the MS excel Workbook provided as RFP Attachment E.” and “(2) Offerors **may** submit an additional cost and revenue schedule formatted in a manner that best demonstrates their recommendations for an economic model for the Solution., This schedule should be clearly marked as Schedule B.” The Offeror should also refer to COVA response to Question #C.20 below.

5. Can one vendor act as a sub-contractor for bids submitted by 2 or more different prime contractors?

COVA Response: There is nothing in the RFP that prohibits a vendor from acting as a proposed subcontractor for more than one Offeror.

6. Upon award, when and how much funding will we get in advance from the State to begin the contract?

COVA Response: Payment terms are set forth in RFP Section 8.9. RFP Attachment E, Price and Revenue Workbook, Schedule A, Part I, requires the Offeror to propose an annual distribution of total cost over 5 years. The Offeror should also refer to COVA response to Questions #A.81 above and C.13 below.

7. Is portal technology required?

RFP # 194:0-12RPB, Electronic Procurement Solution
Addendum No. 01, Appendix 2
COVA Responses To Questions Received From Potential Offerors

COVA Response: As stated in RFP Section 3.5, “This procurement **requires** provisioning of an externally hosted application. As such, COVA will not specify hardware or software requirements”. Additionally, COVA anticipates that the Solution will include Internet search capabilities such as E-mall shopping, specification research, and vendor sourcing. Offerors should also reference COVA response to Question #A.27 above and RFP Addendum No. 01, Item 3.

8. Who created this RFP?

COVA Response: The RFP was created by the Division of Purchases and Supply in collaboration with representatives from various state agencies, institutions of higher education, and public bodies.

9. What impact will this contract have on all exiting state contracts that are in place today? Will purchases from these existing contracts be transferred to a central shopping mall?

COVA Response: See COVA response to Question # A.7 above.

10. What are the consequences for default except for Performance Bond?

COVA Response: Reference Chapter 7 of the Commonwealth of Virginia, Vendor’s Manual (Revised December 1998). A link to this Manual has been posted with the list of RFP Reference Materials available at www.dgs.state.va.us/dps/e-pro-rfp.

11. Can we bid on line items rather than everything?

COVA Response: This is a Request for Proposals (RFP), not an Invitation for Bids (IFB). See COVA response to Question #C.2 above.

12. Will the state own all of the software being developed for this contract?

COVA Response: Within the context of this RFP and any resulting contract, COVA acknowledges the Solution could be construed as a service for which COVA has no right to claim ownership of the underlying technology. It should be noted that RFP Section 4.2.29 requires a transition plan that maintains COVA investment in training, catalogs, interfaces, etc. RFP Section 9.20 also addresses intellectual property rights for products developed specifically for this project. The Offeror should also refer to COVA response to Question A.93 above.

13. How will the invoice payments and billing work for this contract?

COVA Response:

- (a) Reference RFP Section 8.9 for information relative to payment due to the Prime Contractor and to Subcontractors.
- (b) Reference RFP Section 3.4.6 for information relative to receiving and electronic invoicing. The Solution is not intended to process invoice payments.

RFP # 194:0-12RPB, Electronic Procurement Solution
Addendum No. 01, Appendix 2
COVA Responses To Questions Received From Potential Offerors

(c) See COVA response to Question #C.6 above.

14. Does the State have the right to reject a bid for any reason without providing any reason to the vendor?

COVA Response: As stated in (1) RFP Section 4.1.2.(a), “Proposals which are substantially incomplete or lack key information may be rejected by the issuing agency”, and (2) RFP Section 5.2., “The Commonwealth may cancel this Request for Proposals or reject proposals at any time prior to an award, and is not required to furnish a statement of the reason why a particular proposal was not deemed to be the most advantageous”.

15. Section 4.2.32. It states that the Department of Treasury is solely responsible for all banking arrangements for COVA and that these type of arrangements are not included in this RFP. Does this also include procurement [charge] cards?

COVA Response: You are correct, the Department of Treasury is solely responsible for all banking arrangements for COVA. The Department of Accounts is responsible for the small purchase charge code program for state agencies and institutions. These types of arrangements (banking arrangements and charge cards) are not included in this RFP. It is not, however, COVA’s intent to exclude alternative electronic payment methods. The Offeror should also refer to COVA response to Question #A.12 above.

16. Section 3.6.4.(b). Is the COVA flexible on the types of deliverables generated for the project? We concur with most of the deliverables included in the RFP, but may prefer to either present them differently or do not consider them necessary given our technology solution and/or our ASP delivery model.

COVA Response: RFP Section 3.6.4.(b) lists a set of deliverables that “The Contractor **should** plan on developing and providing in electronic format...”. COVA is aware that different methodologies may combine or delete specific deliverables. The Offeror should provide a cross-referenced list of deliverables in its specific response to RFP Section 4.2.25, indicating where information content may be combined in a single document and clearly identify where specific deliverable content is not, in the opinion of the Offeror, required.

17. Can COVA supply a small number (e.g., 4 to 5 staff) of full time state personnel to assist with the implementation?

COVA Response: In accordance with the provisions of RFP Section 4.2.15 a and b, the Offeror is required to provide a specific project work plan and schedule which includes the roles and responsibilities of the Contractor, subcontractors and COVA. As implied by this requirement, COVA anticipates committing a small number of full-time state personnel to assist with implementation of the Solution.

18. Section 3.2.6: Please describe how you anticipate unknown Users and the general public will use this procurement service.

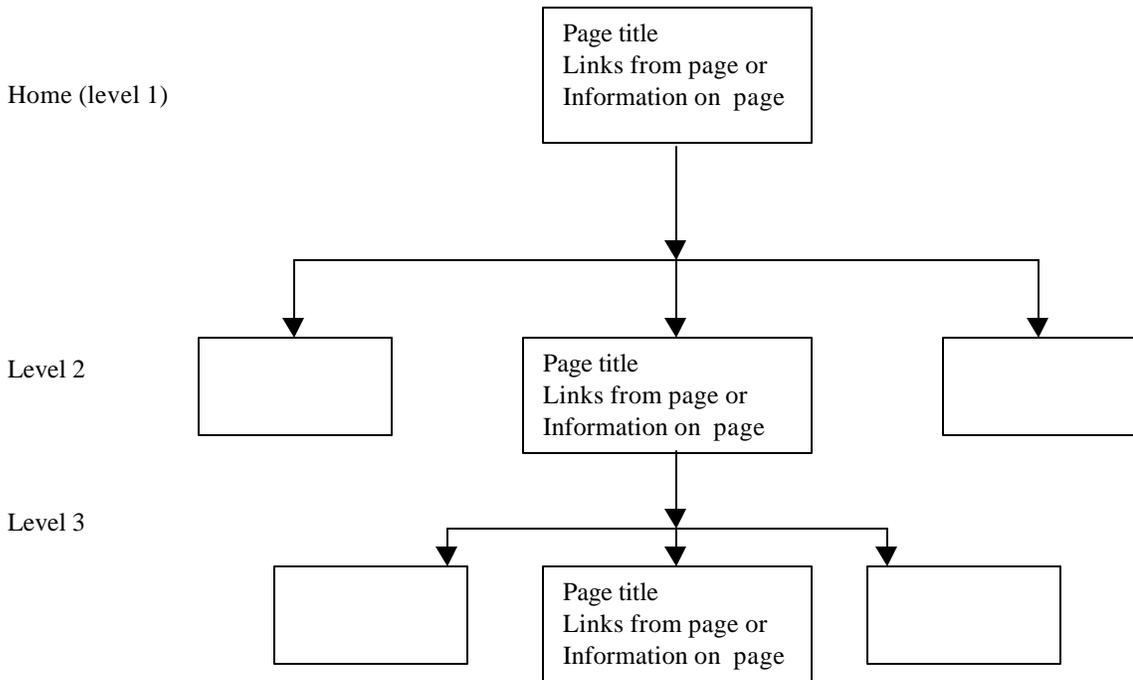
COVA Response: An example of COVA’s anticipated use of the Solution by unknown Users and the general public includes access to solicitations, award notices, procurement records, etc.

**RFP # 194:0-12RPB, Electronic Procurement Solution
Addendum No. 01, Appendix 2
COVA Responses To Questions Received From Potential Offerors**

identified in the Virginia Public Procurement Act (VPPA) as requiring public notice, public opening, public announcement, and/or public inspection. The text of the VPPA is available via a link posted with the list of RFP Reference Materials available at www.dgs.state.va.us/dps/e-pro-rfp.

19. Section 4.2.5: Please explain your interpretation of “high level web map”.

COVA Response: The web map should graphically describe the hierarchical display and navigation of the web site down to the “action” and/or ”information” level. It should begin with the first web page (home page) and progress down to the level where a process begins (for example order a product) or information is displayed (for example contract details or vendor information). One example of an acceptable web map format would be:



20. Section 4.2.32.a Pricing and Revenue General: Will you accept multiple (alternative Pricing and Revenue proposals)?

COVA Response: RFP Section 4.2.32.b.(2) states “Offerors may submit an additional cost and revenue schedule formatted in a manner that best demonstrates their recommendation for an economic model for the Solution. This schedule should be clearly marked as Schedule B.” The Offeror should also refer to COVA response to Question #C.4 above.

21. Section 4.2.32.b(3) Estimated Metrics

a. Will you provide any metrics regarding unknown users or the general public?

RFP # 194:0-12RPB, Electronic Procurement Solution
Addendum No. 01, Appendix 2
COVA Responses To Questions Received From Potential Offerors

COVA Response: See COVA responses to Questions # A.4, #A.41, A.44, #A.84, #A.85, #B.20, #B.21 and #B.22 above. Additional metrics will not be provided, however, note that RFP section 4.2.32.b.(3) states “If any additional metrics are used in preparing the Schedules [i.e., Schedule A and Schedule B], they should be clearly identified in a separate schedule.” Additionally, both RFP Section 4.2.32.b and RFP attachment E, Price and Revenue Workbook, Schedule A ask the Offeror to identify ranges and price break points where costs and/or revenue streams are dependent on volumes.

- b. Please provide the number of and dollar amounts for direct purchase orders (as opposed to term contract purchase orders) and number and dollar amounts for contract release orders.

COVA Response: See COVA responses to Questions # A.4, #A.41, A.44, #A.84, #A.85, #B.20, #B.21 and #B.22, and C.21.a. above.

- c. How many vendors are represented among the 1000 state contracts?

COVA Response: See COVA responses to Questions # A.4, #A.41, A.44, #A.84, #A.85, #B.20, #B.21 and #B.22, and C.21.a. above.

- d. Of the 40,000 Registered Vendors how many are bidders that would participate in this solution?

COVA Response: See COVA responses to Questions # A.4, #A.41, A.44, #A.84, #A.85, #B.20, #B.21 and #B.22, and C.21.a. above.

22. RFP Section 3.4.5.3 and RFP Section 3.4.7, Surplus Property. Could the Commonwealth provide an estimate of the volume of sales (a) anticipated by a reverse auctioning function and (b) through the auctioning and sale of surplus property?

COVA Response:

- a. COVA anticipates using the reverse auctioning function for large procurements of commodities that lend themselves to the use of this tool. There is no good estimate of the volume of sales for the use of this function. COVA intends to execute a dozen or so large procurements the first year and then rapidly expand the function based on its success. Other states using the function are indicating success.
- b. For Surplus, COVA is currently doing limited on-line auctions, using E-Bay, amounting to an estimated \$50,000 annually. With a more robust reverse auction tool, we would anticipate expanding this volume to replace live auctions to the greatest extent possible.

23. RFP Section 4.2.5, Executive Summary. Could the Commonwealth provide a definition of a web map?

COVA Response: See COVA response to Question #C.19 above.