CEA RFP 05-20 - CEA IT Assessment

Q&A

1. How many IT staff are there?

    a. CEA IT is currently staffed with 50 positions.

2. Are IT personnel located in one location or are they dispersed?

    a. Because of the current pandemic, IT staff are all working from home. The CEA has a single office space in downtown Sacramento.

3. How many locations will need to be visited?

    a. Because of the current pandemic, the CEA is anticipating that the work be done via remote, virtual meetings and communications.

4. Is the data center located at the primary location of the organization?

    a. The CEA IT data resources are located on the CEA's Microsoft Azure platform and the NTT (formerly Raging Wire) datacenter located in Sacramento.

5. Does management of the technology environment occur at a single, primary site or are there other locations with independent systems that are managed independently by other in-house staff?

    a. Management occurs at a single site.

6. Are any systems or critical IT services leveraging cloud-based services? (e.g., SaaS-based applications, data backup in the cloud, security monitoring, etc.) If yes, how many vendors are used?

    a. There are approximately 10 vendors used by the CEA.

7. Are any IT services outsourced? If yes, how many IT vendors are used?

    a. There are 2 vendors used for outsourced IT services.

8. How many total servers are in the IT environment?

    a. There are over 400 servers in the current IT environment (this number includes virtual servers).

9. How many workstations/laptops are in use?

       a.   Approximately 170 laptops.

10. How many network devices, firewalls, switches, routers, wireless access points, does IT manage and support?

       a.   Over 30.

11. How many CEA personnel does IT support?

       a.   Approximately 170 staff.

12. Besides the mention of Microsoft in the RFP, are there other major vendors that IT personnel use and support? If yes, please provide names of vendors.

       a.   CEA IT supports Apple, Cisco, and HP products.

13. How many applications are supported by IT? How many of these are in-house developed applications?

       a.   There are currently over 40 applications currently supported by CEA IT, 10 of which were developed in-house.

14. What is the current budget for the IT program?

       a.   The current CEA IT budget is over $20,000,000.

15. With respect to RFP Section VI.B.1: We understand CEA expects the consultant to evaluate the capabilities and competencies of CEA's IT staff to utilize and support the Microsoft technologies used. We also understand CEA does not expect the consultant to evaluate the appropriateness and effectiveness of Microsoft technologies for delivering IT services to CEA's staff and stakeholders. Is our understanding correct?

       a.   The CEA expects each proposer to apply their experience and expertise to determine the scope that will provide the CEA with the results outlined in the RFP. The CEA also expects each proposer to define their scope and associate costs appropriately to each item within the proposed scope.

16. With respect to RFP Section VI.C.1.a: Can you provide the current organizational structure of CEA IT? This is intended to inform the proposal preparation and allow us to better estimate the effort required.

       a.   As outlined in the RFP, the CEA is an earthquake insurance company of approximately 170 staff, 50 being IT. This RFP is focused on CEA IT. CEA IT currently has the following

four functional departments to support the insurance, earthquake mitigation, finance, legal, communications internal operations (including human resources), and actuarial functions:

    i. Operations – 15 positions
    ii. Security – 6 positions
    iii. Implementation – 20 positions
    iv. Architecture – 7 positions

Additionally, there is the CIO and an administrative assistant.

17. With respect to RFP Section VI.C.1.b: Can you provide the catalog of services (or list of services) delivered by CEA IT to CEA staff and stakeholders? This is intended to inform the proposal preparation and allow us to better estimate the effort required.

    a. CEA IT services include:

        i. Help Desk
        ii. Solution Development, Recommendations, and Analysis
        iii. Solution Deployment
        iv. Support
        v. Maintenance
        vi. Platform Architecture
        vii. Data Architecture
        viii. Security
        ix. Testing & Troubleshooting

18. With respect to RFP Section VI.C.2.b: What IT workflows do you envision should be included in the proposed IT future state? E.g., handling end-user support, managing work requests, IT solution decision making, etc.

    a. CEA IT is in the process of minimizing its historical software development function and focusing on expanding its role and offerings as a service provider to the CEA. All end-to-end workflows associated with the IT as a service provider model are expected including:

        i. IT solution development
        ii. IT solution, environment, & platform maintenance
        iii. IT support
        iv. IT work requests

19. With respect to RFP Section V.A.1: To develop a future state IT function and organizational structure, we believe is necessary to have a thorough understanding of the overall technology

and IT service delivery environment at CEA. Therefore, we intend to include in our proposed workplan activities that are conducive to that purpose. Does CEA agree with this approach?

   a. The CEA expects each proposer to apply their experience and expertise to determine the scope that will provide the CEA with the results outlined in the RFP. The CEA also expects each proposer to define their scope and associate costs appropriately to each item within the proposed scope.

20. With respect to RFP Section VI.C.1.c: We understand the CEA expects the consultant to provide a description of the current CEA production environment including platforms, applications and services but not include a proposed future state or recommendations regarding these in the VI.C.2 Proposed Future State – Function & Organizational Structure. Is our understanding correct?

   a. The CEA expects each proposer to apply their experience and expertise to determine the scope that will provide the CEA with the results outlined in the RFP. The CEA also expects each proposer to define their scope and associate costs appropriately to each item within the proposed scope.

21. Are the Authority's IT staff covered under State of California civil-service and/or represented by any unions? If so, which?

   a. IT staff are currently a mix of civil service, contract, and employment agency (Robert Half, for example).

22. What are the drivers of the maintenance costs associated with in-house developed software and applications that are not sustainable within the CEA budget and resource model?

   a. Given the IT resources listed in Q 16, the continuing maintenance and solution update costs that occur when an in-house solution is in use over multiple years require a significant percentage of the current IT capacity. The drivers are 1) to mitigate the impact on IT capacity, & 2) to move the IT function toward being primarily a CEA service provider rather than the current software development emphasis.

23. We understand CEA IT has established a KPI of providing solutions to 80% of all IT requests within five business days: ● How successful has CEA been in meeting this KPI? ● What are the reasons this metric has not been met (if any)?

   a. IT has not yet met the 80% KPI. This RFP was developed in part to help determine the reasons that this metric has not been met and develop a roadmap to achieving this goal.

24. In the Current State Assessment, you state that you require a "description of artefacts". To confirm, are you interested in the selected firm documenting the current state thru interviews and document review. In particular, are you looking for the firm to document the current state architecture.

a. The CEA expects that current state, ideal future state, and the gap between the two states will be a deliverable as will a roadmap illustrating the plan to navigate across the described gap. The CEA expects each proposer to apply their experience and expertise to determine the artifacts required to provide the CEA with the described results.

25. For the future state definition, would CEA prefer for the selected firm to: Provide a recommendation based on the current-state assessment and industry leading practices, or ○ Work with IT leadership to jointly co-create an agreed-upon future state.

a. The CEA expects the selected firm to work with IT leadership to create a future state that considers industry best practices and is customized to the vision, mission, and goals of CEA IT and to meet the business needs of the CEA.

26. What are the objectives of the current state assessment of the production environment (fit for purpose, cost, service level, etc)?

a. Current state objectives include, but are not limited to, fit for purpose, fit for capacity, cost, and the determination of business risk.

27. Who are defined as Key Personnel from the selected Provider? Would you anticipate that all individuals assigned to the project have a minimum of the experiences you outlined, or only those in leadership and management roles? For context, frequently, we staff projects with a resource mix that includes supervisors, subject matter experts (SMEs), and managers that guide and supervise the work performed by our staff

a. Key personnel represent the core team that will be working with the CEA throughout the term of the agreement. Modification of key personnel will require CEA approval. The CEA expects each submitted proposal to present a team and explanation of how the proposed team will successfully meet the expectations listed in the RFP.

28. What is the current composition of the technology ecosystem (e.g., custom build vs packaged solutions)? What is the status of the documentation of the environment (e.g., applications, infrastructure devices, dependencies)?

a. Please refer to Q 13 for an overview of the CEA technology ecosystem. Status of the documentation will be established as part of defining the IT current state.

29. As a part of the RFP, are you looking to make a decision to replacing/modernizing any core platforms (e.g., Policy Admin)

a. This RFP is a request to enlist experts in the assessment of CEA IT and to provide a roadmap to accomplish the mission and goals of CEA IT and to meet the business needs of the CEA.

30. What is the overall scope for the technology assessment and review? Does the scope include the review of CEA's IT infrastructure, data centers, etc. or is it limited to platforms/ application development and maintenance?

a.	The CEA expects each proposer to apply their experience and expertise to determine the technology scope that will provide the CEA with the results outlined in the RFP. The CEA also expects each proposer to define their scope and associate costs appropriately to each item within the proposed scope.

31.	While assessment of the CPP and MMD program functions is not in scope for this project, can you please confirm if the technology to support CPP And MMD programs are included in the scope of the review?

a.	This assessment is exclusive to CEA IT and does not include any CEA business programs. It does include all technology, platforms, environments, and services provided and supported by CEA IT.

32.	What are the broad business objectives that should be delivered through the IT Assessment review (e.g. reduction in cost, faster time to market, ability to scale, increased automation, accelerated decisioning through analytics, etc.)

a.	The broad business objective is to align CEA IT with the mission, vision, and goals outlined in the RFP beginning on page 6 as they pertain to meeting CEA business needs. Increasing the efficiency of the delivery of IT solutions, maximizing the ROI associated with the delivered solution, and the ability of IT to scale both its operations and solutions to changing CEA business needs are examples of areas for possible review.

33.	RFP refers to "proposed IT function and organizational structure", could you confirm if an initial view of the target state has already been developed?

a.	The intent of this RFP is to engage with the expertise needed to develop an ideal IT future state to align to the vision, mission, and goals of CEA IT and meet the business needs of the CEA. No other views of a target state are developed.

34.	Are there any pre-existing assessment outputs (e.g. architecture diagrams, pain points, cost and FTE baseline, etc.) that can be leveraged as a starting point for current assessment and target state definition?

a.	Yes. These will be provided once an agreement is executed.

35.	How are the technology services provided in the current environment?

a.	Technology services are provided primarily by CEA IT. IT utilizes the Microsoft Azure platform and a data center to provide associated services.

36.	Is the support provided only through internal employees or does CEA engage third party technology providers/outsourcing vendors? What is the current split between internal resources and contractors?

a.	Support is provided primarily by internal IT staff.

37. Who is the executive sponsor of this IT assessment project at CEA?

    a. The CEA CIO.

38. Can you clarify item VII.B in the RFP, "each key personnel assigned to the project must have experience in IT as a service provider?" What is the expectation and how do you define service provider, i.e., internal or external? Can you give an example of meeting this requirement?

    a. CEA IT is a service provider to the CEA business. The CEA expects personnel assigned to this project to have knowledge and experience with the service provider model.

39. What is the desired timeframe to start and complete this project?

    a. It is the CEA's current intent to start this project no later than October 1st, 2020 and end no later than January 29, 2021.

40. In light of current pandemic situation, is there a requirement to conduct any of the work on-site? Can all of the work be conducted virtually?

    a. Yes.

41. Do you have a budget estimate or range for this project that you can share? If yes, please provide detail.

    a. No.

42. What is the availability of personnel for interviews and discussions (COVID impact)?

    a. COVID-19 will not impact the availability of IT staff for interviews or discussions. Meetings via MS Teams (preferred) or Zoom will be used during this engagement.

43. Are documents from previous IT strategic planning initiatives available?

    a. No.

44. What type of documents are available from previous discussions about recovery time and recovery point objectives?

    a. Existing RPO and RTO objectives will be available once an agreement between the CEA and successful proposer is executed.

45. Is there a current vendor providing these services or a portion of these services today?

    a. No.

46. The announcement of the successful candidate is 8/28/20. Do you see that being pushed back for any reason?

a. Not at this time.

47. Can you share more context to why CEA would like a deep assessment of IT? Are there reasons that now is the opportune time?

   a. Please refer to the RFP.

48. Who is the intended audience for the results of this engagement? Who are the key stakeholders who need to be involved?

   a. IT and the CEA CIO are the primary audience.

49. Does CEA have any current development plans in place for IT that should be taken into account?

   a. No.

50. Are there specific areas within IT (e.g. Applications, Infrastructure, Data, Security) that you believe will need more attention? Is CEA interested specifically in a benchmark as part of this assessment to compare CEA IT to peers with similar size/complexity?

   a. The CEA expects each proposer to apply their experience and expertise to determine focus and the use of benchmarks best able to provide the CEA with the results outlined in the RFP. The CEA also expects each proposer to define their scope and associate costs appropriately to each item within the proposed scope.

51. In the CEA RFP, you mention a specific review of "Microsoft technology stack". Is CEA primarily interested in Microsoft-specific IT assessment or should that be the focus of this engagement? If not, is CEA interested in understanding the landscape of technology vendors beyond Microsoft that can meet its requirements?

   a. The CEA does not intend to move away from the Microsoft technology stack at this time. However, the CEA expects each proposer to apply their experience and expertise to help determine the ideal future state to provide the CEA with the results outlined in the RFP. The CEA also expects each proposer to define their scope and associate costs appropriately to each item within the proposed scope.

52. Has CEA ever conducted an IT Assessment like the one being requested?

   a. No.

53. Are there special circumstances or events that generate the need for this project at this time?

   a. No.

54. To help us prepare a proposal and design a project approach that best meets the CEA's needs, what is the CEA's cost estimate for this project?

a. The CEA expects each proposer to apply their experience and expertise to help determine their cost to provide the CEA with the results outlined in the RFP. The CEA also expects each proposer to define their scope and associate costs appropriately to each item within the proposed scope.

55. What unique qualifications/characteristics are you looking for in a consultant that were not mentioned in the RFP?

a. None.