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Post 1959 - July

ELECTRONIC ENVIRONMENTAL TEST FACILITY

GENTLEMEN:

For many years the Army has required newly developed equipment to be subjected to extensive tests in the form of engineering tests conducted at our laboratories and proving grounds and then subjected to user tests conducted by the Army's Test Boards supervised by the U. S. Continental Army Command. In addition, the Army has regularly assembled its electronic and communications systems in field exercises which simulate battlefield conditions as closely as possible. However, as the number and types of electronic devices have increased in recent years, we have been experiencing compatibility problems during these major exercises. We could not isolate the cause of these problems by individual test or in the uncontrolled environment found in a field exercise.

Therefore, the requirement for this facility has arisen from the need of the Army for electronic environmental testing of communications-electronic equipment under controlled conditions. We know that if we go to war today, an Army Corps will have about 23,000 electromagnetic emission devices in a square 60 miles on a side, whereas there were something like 9,000 such devices in use in 1948 in the same area.

This program will create a field laboratory which will determine the incompatibility among existing equipments. It will acquire data



on which to base specific recommendations for modification of equipment to reduce interference. It will provide the basis for the establishment of standards and specifications to limit interference in future development; and will test frequency allocation plans and operational concepts under controlled conditions. Newly developed equipment will be tested in a realistic electromagnetic environment prior to standardization. Also, it will provide a range for engineering and operational testing of surveillance devices and systems.

The environment, when in operation, will be a vital training ground for signal, electronic warfare, and Army Security Agency units for coping with the problems which combat troops will face in this area on the future battlefield. Through this effort the battlefield commander will be assured that his command control and surveillance equipment will operate properly in any and all electromagnetic situations.

It was determined that the problem was of such magnitude and complexity that a major contractual effort would be necessary to install and operate such a facility under the management, supervision and control of the United States Army.

Accordingly, a meeting was held in Tucson, Arizona, in January 1959, to acquaint Industry with the Army's requirements. This meeting was attended by approximately 400 individuals representing more than



130 concerns. At this time the intent of the Army to solicit proposals for this program was disclosed with the details as to the requirement. A request for quotation was issued in July 1959 to all concerns that had indicated an interest in submitting a proposal. The solicitation went to 127 companies - of which 80 were large business and 47 small business.

A pre-bidders conference was held 27 July 1959 in Tucson, Arizona, to permit Industry to query the Army as to any points not clear. At this time it was disclosed that this procurement would be made by means of a two-phase method. The first phase would consist of the submission of technical proposals without pricing and their evaluation to insure that the proposals were technically acceptable. Bidders were advised that the technical evaluation of their submissions would be utilized to reduce the number of bidders to those concerns whose offers were considered most advantageous to the Government from a technical standpoint. Twelve technical proposals were received by 31 August 1959. The concerns submitting these proposals were identified in the material which has been forwarded to the Committee.

The 12 proposals were submitted by the contracting officer for technical evaluation to an evaluation panel established by the Chief Signal Officer of the Army. The evaluation by this panel resulted in the conclusion that four proposals were considered sufficiently high in technical quality to warrant consideration in Phase II. The concerns which submitted these four proposals were also identified



in the material forwarded to the Committee.

Full and free price negotiations were then conducted with these four concerns and with their proposed subcontractors by military teams representing the Chief Signal Officer to insure a complete understanding of each proposal. After thorough negotiations, cost and price analyses, and reexamination of the technical aspects of these four proposals, the recommendations of the Chief Signal Officer were forwarded to the Army Staff for final processing and decision by the Secretary of the Army.

This program is so designed that the contractor will not himself evaluate equipment in the operation of this facility or determine the equipment to be tested. The contractor will be charged with installing testing equipment and the conduct of testing operations.

The equipment to be tested in the initial phases will be standard items of equipment available in the Army inventory plus new items beginning to emerge from the development program which are suitable for the conduct of field engineering tests. During the course of the tests the contractor, under supervision of the Army, will collect the necessary data, reduce them to manageable proportions; and deliver them to the military authorities at Fort Huachuca. The final analysis of the data, the evaluation of the test, and the determination of the suitability of the tested equipment for inclusion in the Army inventory will be the responsibility of the Army and not the Contractor.



The Army will direct and control the manner in which the contractor prosecutes this contract. A team of military and civilian personnel from the U. S. Army Electronic Proving Ground will be directly controlling, reviewing, directing and approving the performance of the work.

This is not a management type contract; it requires skills for devising, fabricating, installing and operating a test facility.

The Army feels that this facility is a most urgently needed proving device which will obviate the development and introduction of equipment into a battlefield environment where it may not function, and which will save critically short Research and Development funds needed for the Defense Effort. It has the full support of the Director of Research and Engineering in the Office of the Secretary of Defense.

