RFI – 03ITZ0445

State of Connecticut
Department of Information Technology is issuing a
Request for Information
for
Routers and Services
Due Date: February 17, 2004 @ 2:00 PM - ET
All responses should be sent to:
Bernie O'Donnell, Director of Telecommunications Services
Department of Information Technology
101 East River Drive – 6TH Floor
East Hartford, CT 06108

Questions regarding this RFI should be e-mailed to:
Kathleen.m.anderson@po.state.ct.us

Optional Vendor Conference: January 13, 2004 @ The Department of Information Technology – 9:00 am – ET

Please make sure to bring a Photo ID and parking will be available in the Pitkin Street Lot.

Issue Date:
December 23, 2003

Request for Information #03ITZ0445: Routers and Services

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1 Introduction

The State of Connecticut requests information relative to replacing its existing Cisco-based router network with alternative router products. Prior to committing to Cisco routers as the ongoing standard, the State wants to determine if other alternatives are in the best interest of the State. The responses to this request for information (RFI) will be used to determine whether an RFP should be issued to consider alternatives. Alternatives must provide for the ongoing implementation and management of the network by State of Connecticut technical staff.

To determine the viability of introducing alternative products into the existing network, several factors should be considered including, but not limited to:

- Cost
- Local Experience and Capabilities of the Respondent
- Technical Capabilities of the Product Line
- Time to Converge for Network Disruptions versus EIGRP
- Timeline to Implement
- Mitigation of Risk in a Multi-Protocol Environment
- Security

The State is interested in the potential for all transition costs to be borne by the respondent.

2 Current Environment

2.1 Cisco Routers

Cisco routers and the Enhanced Interior Gateway Routing Protocol (EIGRP) have been the State of Connecticut standard for approximately 10 years. The routers support the following network protocols: IP, IPX, SNA, Banyan VINES, Appletalk and DecNet. The State uses Access and Distribution Control Lists for security, route management, and route summary. The routers are managed via SNMP utilizing the following products: Tivoli/Netview 6000, HP-OpenView, CiscoWorks, and RouterPM. This Cisco standard represents a considerable investment in installed devices, a significant State employee knowledge base, and extensive training. Over the years, this has included formal and informal training in the Cisco hardware, Cisco's Internetworking Operating System (IOS), and software tools to configure and manage the routers.

The Cisco routers currently installed in the State of Connecticut (at approximately 1200 locations) are listed below.

Model	Quantity	Model	Quantity
12000	3	2620	48
11506	4	2612	1
7513	3	2611	28
7505	3	2610	288
7507	2	2524	50
7401	7	2522	3
7301	22	2520	5
7206 VXR	21	2514	5
7206	3	2511	2
7204 VXR	10	2507	13
7000	4	2505	30
4500M	3	2502	1
4500	4	2501	44
4000M	13	1721	27
4000	7	1720	93
3745	1	1602	11
3640	14	1005	10
3620	13	1004	1
2691	13	776M	49
2651	34	772M	114
2621	3	771	1

3 Responses to RFI

3.1 Scope of RFI

Responses to this RFI will be used by the State to assess the viability of various alternatives. No contract will result directly from the RFI process. The responses to this RFI will be used to determine whether an RFP should be issued to consider alternatives.

3.2 Quality of Responses

Well-organized and concise responses are encouraged in order to facilitate the State's assessment.

3.3 Product and Service Availability

The State expects that products and services described in response to this request for information are generally available as of the date that responses are due. Responders must explain any exceptions.

4 Information Required

Each of the paragraphs in this section should be answered. Thorough answers that address all points are expected. Responses should clearly address both transitional and ongoing operations.

4.1 Compatibility With Existing Network

Compatibility with the installed base is required at least until such time that any new product would be fully deployed. The State's experience with the EIGRP protocol is very favorable; EIGRP scales effectively and delivers fast convergence with minimal network traffic. Changes are accomplished efficiently and EIGRP determines the paths that are loop free. Responses that call for replacing the EIGRP protocol should include an in-depth description of how the proposed protocol operates in terms of these issues. The respondent should describe how an alternate routing protocol would be beneficial to the State without a detrimental impact to ongoing operations. The respondent should also provide any available independent test results that verify the network efficiency characteristics of the proposed products (test results that verify the efficiency claims included in the response).

4.2 Network Management

Responses requiring modifications, additions, or replacement of the State's network management platforms (Tivoli/Netview 6000, HP-OpenView, CiscoWorks and RouterPM) should provide a sample transition plan for network management. This plan should include a description of network management involving the simultaneous operation of the proposed and existing systems.

5 Transition Plan

The respondent should provide a copy of a detailed transition plan from a previous project of comparable size and scope. The plan should be from a project undertaken with one of the references provided in section 7. The plan should address timeframe from contract award to completion; network design; vendor and customer resource allocations; disruption to the production network; and training and certification of staff. The State would prefer that the transition to a single manufacturer router environment be within a reasonable timeframe (e.g.: 12 months).

5.1 Previous Project Experience

The respondent should provide a narrative that details the network transition projects that they have completed. Describe the level of success of the projects. Identify lessons learned. Describe accuracy of the initial cost estimates as compared to the actual costs as well as the accuracy of the implementation schedules. Provide an overview of the customer's satisfaction level.

6 Costs

While the State expects to pay for products and services on an ongoing basis, the State will not expend additional funds to accomplish a transition from Cisco products to other products. This will include costs associated with completing the transition plan, inventories, and replacement/upgrade of any software and equipment including network management hardware/software and training. The respondent must identify State staff resource requirements.

7 References

7.1 Existing Customers

The respondent must provide at least three references similar in size to the State of Connecticut who have transitioned their networks from Cisco routers. For each reference, the VAR must provide:

- The reference organization's name
- Contact person name
- Address
- Telephone number
- Electronic mail address
- A description of the transitioned installation

8 Local Experience and Capabilities of the Respondent

The respondent must provide an organizational description including structure and staffing. This must include a list of all locations and staff assigned to provide parts and service to Connecticut. This must include certifications and tenure of all engineers, technical staff, support staff, and sales people to support customers within Connecticut.

9 Product Description

The respondent should describe the overall router product line. This description should take into consideration, but not be limited to, products that would be utilized for Enterprise, Distribution, and Access multi-segmented WAN connectivity.