



**ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES
PURCHASING**

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Equal Opportunity Employer

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TO: ALL PROSPECTIVE BIDDERS

FROM: KIM NAUSIN, PURCHASING MANAGER

SUBJECT: BID NO. 7038 – EXCLUSIVE OPERATOR FOR EMERGENCY AMBULANCE SERVICE AND SECONDARY MEDICAL PUBLIC SAFETY ANSWERING POINT

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED TO DATE:

Question 1: Each of the response time priorities identifies that response time requests are measured within any consecutive 30-day period. This measuring period is in conflict with Section V (p. 36), which identifies that response times shall be calculated on a monthly basis to determine compliance. In addition, a rolling 30-day measurement effectively turns this contract into a daily compliance contract. Recently, several LEMSA's have moved away from this measurement as daily compliance drives significant system costs. Is it the intent of the County to have a daily compliance measure? (Section IV.C.3.b. Response Time Performance Requirements)

Answer: It is not the intent of the LEMSA to establish a Daily Response Time Compliance Measure. The Response Time Compliance Requirement for ambulances as indicated in Table 6 titled "Response Time Compliance Requirements - All Merced County Emergency Response Zones," page 36 of the RFP is the standard utilized to determine ambulance Response Time Compliance. Ambulance Response Time Compliance is measured on a monthly basis, i.e., March, April, May, June, etc. The LEMSA will randomly review Contractor's response times during ANY 30-day period, e.g., April 15 – May 15, as a means to measure system efficacy, not for the purpose of establishing ambulance Response Time Compliance or for levying penalties.

Question 2: How many CCT trips should we assume? Are these trips included in the BLS Non-Emergency counts or in addition to them? (Section IV.C.3.b.5. Critical Care Transports (Priority 5))

Answer: The LEMSA does not track the numbers of requests for CCT services. The CCT responses are included in the 3-year (2011, 2012 & 2013) Historical Service Volume, but not differentiated from emergency call data. This data has been made available to the Merced County Department of Administrative Services for distribution to the bidders.

Question 3: The RFP identifies annual rate increases based upon “the greater of three (3) percent or the increase of the CPI for any given year.” In the current payer mix, over 77% of payers are government funded and therefore unresponsive to rate increases. Given this scenario, a 3% rate increase will yield less than a 1% increase in net revenue ($3\% \times .23 = .84\%$). A 1% increase in net revenue is insufficient to cover a 3% increase in costs of providing service. Has the County considered adjusting the rate increase based upon the margin collection rate (i.e., the percentage of responsive payers) in order to avoid frontloading of the price or financial instability of the system in future years? (Section IV.G.3.b. Fee Adjustment)

Answer: In the event changed circumstances substantially impact the Contractor’s costs of providing services or there are substantial reductions in revenue caused by factors that are beyond the control of Contractor, the Contractor may request increases or decreases in charges to patients to mitigate the financial impact of such changed circumstances. (Ref: RFP, pg . 54)

Question 4: Is it a requirement that field personnel have *portable* radios to communicate with the hospitals, or will a radio located in the ambulance sufficiently meet this requirement? (Section V.B.1.a.1.)

Answer: Yes, in addition to the mobile radio located in the ambulance, it is a requirement that field personnel have portable radios to communicate with the hospitals. (Ref: RFP, pg. 75 “Contractor’s communications system shall be capable of... “)

Question 5: Included in the map legend is a one-mile buffer. Will the County explain the intent and use of this buffer for bidding purposes? (Legend on pages 3-8)

Answer: The one mile buffer is included in the high density zone for calculating Response Time Compliance.

Question 6: The clinical section mentions quality improvement programs bidders need to have in place (with LEMSA). Could you describe the recommended PIT and PIM QI tools as well as the actual quality metric program? Will you share what you have? (Section V.A.3.a.-b. Dedicated Clinical Oversight Personnel)

Answer: Merced County EMS Policy #650.00 “EMS Quality Improvement Committee” and Policy #655.00 “Quality Improvement Program Approval” are the policies that establish EMS Quality Improvement programs. EMS Policy and procedures are available for download from the Merced County EMS website. The selected provider will be expected to work with the LEMSA to establish system-wide EMS Quality Improvement.

Question 7: Does the current contract holder provide a CCT Paramedic? Are CCT Paramedics required to meet the CCT requirement in this RFP? (Section IV.B.3.a. Ambulance Staffing Requirements)

Answer: (1) The current contract holder does not provide a CCT Paramedic. (2) The Contractor is accountable for providing or securing CCT services in accordance with the requirements of this RFP, LEMSA policies and procedures, and County regulations.

Question 8: It's our understanding that a ring cycle is 6 seconds and that the standard pick-up time for contracts of a similar scope is 18 seconds (three 6-second rings). Does the County intend for the phone to be picked up in 2 or 3 rings? Will the County please confirm the time for a ring cycle? (V.B.1.a. Dispatch and Communications)

Answer: Staffing levels shall be such that electronic or telephonic notifications from the County designated public safety dispatch centers are answered or responded to within fifteen (15) seconds, 95% of the time. (Ref: RFP, pg. 74)

Question 9: With the exception of the Face Sheet (Appendix 8, Exhibit A), it appears that the other required forms are missing. Will the County please provide the remaining required forms? (Appendix 8 – Exhibits (Required Forms))

Answer: The Merced County Department of Administrative Services will make available to all Bidders the full volume of Required Forms contained in Appendix 8. An Amendment to the RFP will be posted on the website along with the updated Appendix 8.

Question 10: The County's RFP states that bidders are able to obtain transport data from the County's website. We are having difficulty locating this data on the website. We would like to use this data in the development of a customized deployment plan for the County. Will the County please help us locate the relevant information on the website? (Section I.G.1. Historical Service Volume)

Answer: Historical Service Volume will be available on the website for the years 2011, 2012 and 2013.

Question 11: Page 5, paragraph 2: Definition of when the response time clock begins is in conflict with page 36, paragraph a). Which definition will be used?

Answer: The paragraph on Page 5, #2 that reads: *"The Contractor's response time clock begins when the call is time stamped as passed from the PSAP and received by the contractor's dispatch center."* is to be deleted from the RFP. The Contractor's Response Time clock begins at "Call Receipt" which is defined as when the Contractor's dispatch center receives adequate information to identify the location of the call and the priority level, or 60 seconds after the call is answered, whichever is less.

Question 12: Page 11, paragraph 6: Provides no date here or in appendix 6. What will be the date of the notice of intent to award?

Answer: The LEMSA Director will authorize the issuance of the Notice of Intent to Award as soon as possible following the Review Panel's recommendation which will then be forwarded to the Board of Supervisors for their review and recommendation. If there are any delays in the Procurement Timeline, all bidders will be notified by the Merced County Department of Administrative Services.

Question 13: Page 34, b), (1): Does 89.5 – 89.9% round up to 90%?

Answer: No.

Question 14: Page 34, b), (2): Is any 30 day period based on calendar 30 days or ANY 30 day period?

Answer: It is not the intent of the LEMSA to establish a Daily Response Time Compliance Measure. The Response Time Compliance Requirement for ambulances as indicated in Table 6 titled "Response Time Compliance Requirements - All Merced County Emergency Response Zones," page 36 of the RFP is the standard utilized to determine ambulance Response Time Compliance. Ambulance Response Time Compliance is measured on a monthly basis, i.e., March, April, May, June, etc. The LEMSA will randomly review Contractor's response times during ANY 30-day period, e.g., April 15 – May 15, as a means to measure system efficacy, not for the purpose of establishing ambulance Response Time Compliance or for levying penalties.

Question 15: Page 36, Table 6: "Remote" is mentioned in the RFP on page 39, b), third paragraph and elsewhere but, is not on the chart. Can you resolve this conflict and identify what the response times will be in "remote" areas?

Answer: "Remote" calls are defined as when the patients' locations are greater than ten (10) road miles from the nearest boundary of the High-Density zones. Therefore, "Remote" calls will be located in the Low-Density ERZ. Remote calls will have the Low-Density ERZ Response Time Standard of $\leq 19:59$ for Priority 1 and 2 calls and $\leq 29:59$ for Priority 3 calls. The Contract Administrator may allow exceptions to the Response Time Standards for good cause as determined at his or her sole discretion. Remote calls are one of those allowable good cause exceptions.

Question 16: Page 39, b), second paragraph: Does the 200% unusual overload rule apply to all calls?

Answer: Yes.

Question 17: Page 42, (3), Paragraph 3 and table 7: CCT is measured quarterly but no 100-call rule applies. If a single CCT resource is already on a call and a second request comes in, will a penalty exception or exclusion be granted?

Answer: Upon Contractor's request to the Contract Administrator, the circumstances surrounding the sequence of events will be reviewed and decisions regarding penalty exception or exclusion will be made on a case-by-case basis.

Question 18: Appendix 3: It is difficult to determine response borders with the maps provided. Will larger/more detailed maps be provided?

Answer: Yes.

Question 19: Appendix 1, Section VIII: The required forms, other than the face sheet, are not included in Appendix 8. Can you provide these forms at your earliest convenience?

Answer: The Merced County Department of Administrative Services will make available to all Bidders the full volume of Required Forms contained in Appendix 8. An Amendment to the RFP will be posted on the website along with the updated Appendix 8.