

A. PURPOSE AND INTRODUCTION

The Mid-America Regional Council (MARC) seeks a qualified contractor to assist the Regional Cybersecurity Subcommittee Exercise Planning Team in the finalization of exercise materials for a 4-hr tabletop exercise (TTX), evaluation of the regional cybersecurity tabletop exercise for local jurisdictions, and the development of customized after-action reports for participating jurisdictions.

B. BACKGROUND

MARC serves a nine-county bistate area that includes jurisdictions in Wyandotte, Johnson, Leavenworth, and Miami counties in KS and Clay, Cass, Jackson, Platte, and Ray counties in MO. The MARC Emergency Services program assists local jurisdictions and agencies with their homeland security and emergency preparedness activities. The exercise design team has been formed and has met several times to begin to identify the exercise objectives, and participants, and set a date for the in-person exercise.

The TTX will include several modules to allow each participating jurisdiction to respond to the various injects and work as a team to test their incident response plan. Preliminary focus areas include phishing and ransomware attacks, data theft, SCADA intrusion response prioritization, and messaging. The intended audience is supervisors, security engineers, SCADA Operators, Emergency Management, Public Information Officers, and others with a key role in response to a cyber incident.

C. SCOPE OF SERVICES

Before the Exercise –

The contractor will collaborate with the existing Exercise Planning Team by participating in the exercise planning meetings, developing a standard set of EEGs, and assisting in finalizing exercise materials and execution to enhance the overall exercise experience for the participants.

Day of Exercise

Provide up to five (5) facilitators (in person) on the day of the exercise to help guide the table discussions following each module.

Provide up to twenty (20) evaluators (one for each participating jurisdiction) responsible for documenting each jurisdiction’s key decisions, actions, strengths, and areas for improvement during the simulated scenarios presented during the TTX. (In person).

Facilitation of a “Hotwash” debrief with all exercise participants immediately following the end of the exercise, and collection of evaluation materials and data from the Hotwash of the exercise for the development of the After-Action Reports.

Total day of exercise support staff: **25**

Following the Exercise

Facilitation of up to a two-hour After-Action Meeting with exercise participants and planning team within one month of completion of the exercise and draft AAR. Within two weeks after the After-Action Meeting, make requisite edits or revisions to the AARs for final submission.

The contractor will prepare an overall After-Action Report / Improvement Plan for the exercise, as well as customized AAR/IPs for the individual jurisdictions (up to 20).

This tabletop exercise (TTX) and associated documents (EEGs, AAR/IP, etc.) will be developed following the guidelines of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP).

D. PROJECT DELIVERABLES

- Participate in up to three (3) planning team meetings (remote) including reviewing the exercise documents, providing recommendations, and assisting the planning team in structuring and delivering the exercise for the best participant experience.
- Develop exercise evaluation guides.
- Provide a virtual controller/evaluator orientation before the exercise.
- Provide up to five (5) table facilitators to assist on the day of the exercise (in person).
- Provide up to twenty (20) exercise evaluators (one for each participating jurisdiction) responsible for observing, evaluating, and documenting each participating jurisdiction's actions during the exercise (in person).
- Develop an overall regional exercise After-Action Report / Improvement Plan for the exercise (electronic) and customize an estimated twenty (20) jurisdiction-specific After-Action Report / Improvement Plans (electronic) based on the exercise. *Jurisdictions will be responsible for completing the portions of the Improvement Plan including corrective actions (unless identified during the exercise), primary responsibility, and dates for completion.*

E. TIME OF PERFORMANCE

Term - Consultant shall begin performing the Services on EXECUTION OF CONTRACT and shall work diligently to complete the project to the satisfaction of MARC, in accordance with the terms provided herein NO LATER THAN SEPTEMBER 1, 2025.

F. COMPENSATION AND BUDGET

The level of funding for this project will be based on the approach taken and the number of on-site facilitators and controllers

G. PROPOSAL SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS

Open Records Act and Proprietary Information

The Mid-America Regional Council (MARC) is a public organization and is subject to the Missouri Open Records Act (Chapter 610, RSMo). All records obtained or retained by MARC are considered public records and are open to the public or media upon request unless those records are specifically protected from disclosure by law or exempted under the Missouri Sunshine Law. All contents of a response to a Request for Bids, Qualifications, Proposals, or information issued by MARC are considered public records and subject to public release following decisions by MARC regarding the bid request. If a proposer has information that it considers proprietary, a bidder shall identify documents or portions of documents it considers containing descriptions of scientific and technological innovations in which it has a proprietary interest or other information that is protected from public disclosure by law, which is contained in a Proposal. After either a contract is executed pursuant to the Request for Bids, RFQ or RFP, or all submittals are rejected, if a request is made to inspect information submitted and if documents are identified as “Proprietary Information” as provided above under Missouri Sunshine Law, MARC will notify the proposer of the request for access, and it shall be the burden of the proposer to establish that those documents are exempt from disclosure under the law.

To be eligible for consideration, one electronic copy (PDF) of the proposal must be received by MARC no later than **5 PM CDT on March 21, 2025**. Late submittals will not be considered. Please submit proposals to Erin Lynch (elynch@marc.org) and John Davis (jdavis@marc.org).

It is the responsibility of the person submitting a proposal by email to ensure that the proposal has been received by the appropriate MARC staff and not blocked by a spam filter or rejected because of large attachments. To confirm receipt, you may contact John Davis jdavis@marc.org or Erin Lynch elynch@marc.org

The following items must be addressed in all proposals:

1. **SCOPE OF WORK:** MARC staff has developed a general outline of work tasks associated with the Scope of Work and objectives. Respondents must provide a scope of work including specific methodologies and/or approaches that will be used to complete this project
 - A. The name and address of the contracting firm, together with the name, telephone, and e-mail address of the primary contact person for purposes of this proposal
 - B. A listing of any proposed subcontractors
 - C. See Attachments A&B

2. **CONTRACT PRICE:** Proposals should indicate the cost of services to be provided broken down by:
 - A. Exercise Design: Material review and Exercise evaluation and information gathering development
 - B. Exercise Execution including costs per Facilitator, Evaluator, and Hotwash
 - C. After-Action Meeting and AARs/IP Development
 - D. Total Cost

3. **QUALIFICATIONS:** Proposals should indicate the qualifications of the proposer in planning and execution appropriate to this project. A brief narrative (two pages maximum) regarding the contractor’s capabilities to carry out this exercise project including areas of expertise and relevant tools which the contractor may have access. Proposals should also include:
 - A. Proposed methodology to accomplish the work,
 - B. A listing of similar exercise projects undertaken within the last five (5) years, by proposing contractor, showing contract amounts and description of work performed,
 - C. Resumes of key professionals and staff who will be assigned to this project,
 - D. References

4. **AFFIRMATIVE ACTION CHECKLIST:** If applicable, proposers must complete and enclose with their proposal the company’s Affirmative Action Plan (see *Attachment A*).

5. **CERTIFICATION REGARDING DEBARMENT:** Each proposer is required to certify by signing the “Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, and Other Ineligibility and Voluntary Exclusion” (*Attachment B*). “Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, and Other Ineligibility and Voluntary Exclusion” is a certification that the proposer is not on the U.S. Comptroller General’s Consolidated Lists of Persons or Firms Currently Debarred for Violations of Various Contracts Incorporating Labor Standards Provisions.

H. SELECTION PROCEDURE

The selection committee will review the responses received against the criteria and determine if follow-up telephone interviews are desired and decide or decide to conduct follow-up interviews. If follow-up interviews are warranted, they will be scheduled for the week of March 24.

MARC reserves the right to negotiate a contract, including a scope of work, and contract price, with any proposers or other qualified party.

This Request for Proposal does not commit MARC to award a contract, to pay any cost incurred in preparation of a response to this Request, or to procure or contract for services or supplies. MARC reserves the right to accept or reject all responses received as a result of this Request or cancel this Request in part or in its entirety if it is in the best interests of MARC to do so. Proposers shall not offer any gratuities, favors, or anything of monetary value to any officer, employee, agent, or director of MARC for the purpose of influencing favorable disposition toward either their proposal or any other proposal submitted because of the Request for Proposal.

MARC reserves the right to suggest to any or all proposers to the Request for Proposals that such proposers form into teams of firms or organizations deemed to be advantageous to MARC in performing the Scope of Work. MARC will suggest such formation when such relationships offer combinations of expertise or abilities not otherwise available. Proposers have the right to refuse to enter any suggested relationships.

All Proposals submitted hereunder become the exclusive property of MARC.

I. PROPOSAL EVALUATION CRITERIA

The proposals submitted by each Contractor will be evaluated according to the following factors, in order of priority:

- A) Specialized experience and technical competence of the contractor and assigned staff relative to the scope of work and task requirements outlined in this RFP.
- B) Understanding the nature of the project
 - 1) Understanding the proposed scope of work
 - 2) Understanding the required elements
 - 3) General understanding of the regional nature of the project
 - 4) General organization and clarity of the proposal
- C) References reflecting previous work experience of the project team and satisfactory accomplishment of contractor responsibilities.
 - 1) Quality of final product
 - 2) Ability to meet work schedules.
 - 3) Responsiveness to client input
- D) Project cost, schedule of persons
 - 1) Project schedule and timeliness of products
 - 2) Total project cost

J. INTERVIEW/PRESENTATION

The project selection team may require a virtual interview/ presentation from contractors submitting a proposal.

K. CONTRACT AWARD

MARC will notify the selected candidate by telephone and email. Following verbal notification, MARC will negotiate a standard professional service agreement with the selected candidate. The selected candidate’s proposal will be incorporated by reference in the contract. Additionally, MARC will notify, via email, the candidates who are not selected.

L. PROTEST PROCEDURES

In the course of this solicitation for proposals and the selection process, a proposer (bidder of offer or whose direct economic interest would be affected by the award of the contract) may file a protest when in the proposer’s opinion, actions were taken by MARC staff and /or the selection committee which could unfairly affect the outcome of the selection procedure. All protests should be in writing and directed to Mr. David Warm, Executive Director, Mid-America Regional Council, 600 Broadway, Suite 200, Kansas City, MO 64105. Protests should be made immediately upon the occurrence of the incident in question but no later than three (3) days after the proposer receives notification of the outcome of the section procedure. The protest should clearly state the grounds for such a protest.

Upon receiving the protest, MARC’s Executive Director will review the actual procedures followed during the selection process and the documentation available. If it is determined the action(s) unfairly changed the outcome of the process, notifications with the selected proposer will cease until the matter is resolved.

M. PROCUREMENT SCHEDULE

The following is a tentative schedule for the Contractor selection process:

Activities	Schedule
RFP issued	February 26, 2025
Proposals Due	March 21, 2025
Interviews as needed	TBD (if needed)
Selection	March 31, 2025
Contract Execution	Immediately after contract negotiation
Project Completion	September 1, 2025

ATTACHMENT A: AFFIRMATIVE ACTION CHECKLIST

Federal regulations require that any firm of 50 or more employees soliciting an assisted federally funded contract must have an affirmative action program. If applicable, please provide a brief response to the following items that would typically be covered in any such program. You may provide a copy of your program and reference appropriate pages.

1. The date plan was adopted.
2. Name of Affirmative Action Officer
3. Statement of commitment to affirmative action by the chief executive officer
4. Designation of an affirmative action officer, assignment of specific responsibilities, and to whom the officer reports.
5. Outreach recruitment
6. Job analysis and restructuring to meet affirmative action goals.
7. Validation and revision of examinations, educational requirements, and any other screening requirements.
8. Upgrading and training programs
9. Internal complaint procedure
10. Initiating and ensuring supervisory compliance with affirmative action program
11. Survey and analysis of entire staff by department and job classification and progress report system
12. Recruitment and promotion plans (including goals and timetables)

ATTACHMENT B: Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility, and Voluntary Exclusion

This Certification is required by the regulation implementing Executive Order 12549, Debarment and Suspension, 29 CFR Part 98 Section 98.510, Participants' responsibilities. The Regulations are published as Part II of June 1985, Federal Register (pages 33, 036-33, 043)

Read instructions for Certification below prior to completing this certification.

1. The prospective proposer certifies, by submission of this proposal that neither it nor its principals are presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participating in this transaction by any Federal department or agency.
2. Where the prospective proposer is unable to certify any of the statements in this certification, such prospective proposer shall attach an explanation to this proposal.

Date

Signed – Authorized Representative

Title of Authorized Representative

Instructions for Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility, and Voluntary Exclusion:

1. By signing and submitting this agreement, the proposer is providing the certification as set below.
2. The certification in this clause is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was entered into. If it is later determined that the proposer knowingly rendered an erroneous certification, in addition to other remedies available to the Federal Government, the department, or agency with which this transaction originated may pursue available remedies, including suspension and/or debarment.