



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
Solicitation Number: R-15-005-PC

2015 METER READING SERVICES PROGRAM

Addendum 1 – | August 11, 2015

This Addendum includes provides responses to questions and changes to the RFP.

Questions and Answers

Q1: Under what conditions will the SAWS PM request Saturday Overtime work?

A1: None.

Q2: If OT is requested by SAWS, is that an expression of preference or a mandatory directive?

A2: SAWS will not request overtime.

Q3: Please confirm that any records collected but not sent by 7 PM the same day will not be billable to SAWS, with no exceptions?

A3: This is correct. However, please see the modification to the data submission deadline, which has changed per #5 – Changes to the RFP of this Addendum.

Q4: Within what time window can the file be posted or submitted to SAWS?

A4: They cannot be submitted any earlier than three (3) days in advance of the data submission deadline on the date the cycle is due. Please note the data submission deadline has changed, per #5 – Changes to the RFP of this Addendum.

Q5: Please clarify our understanding that any read found to be in error warrants non-payment for that account regardless of overall QA defect rate?

A5: Correct. Once the threshold, as identified on page 2, C. Scope of Services, 2., has been reached.

Q6: Can you provide the current meter skip rate with skip reasons by route for routes assigned in this RFP?

A6: This information is not available at this time.

Q7: Can you provide the process to resolve HTA or Skip reasons at or above the .5% threshold?

A7: A legitimate skip/trouble code indicates that action is required from SAWS and generates a work order for SAWS staff to process. The Respondent is not responsible for resolving issues resulting from skip codes.

Q8: How many field attempts are expected/required to obtain a reading for situations with access issues?

A8: Two (2).

Q9: Will we have access to incumbent staff currently reading meters?

A9: No.

Q10: What is the read window length per route?

A10: It varies. Meters can be read within an 8 hour work day, but it may take less time or more time depending on the variables.

Q11: How many meter readers currently read routes assigned in the RFP?

A11: SAWS currently has a total of 44 meter readers responsible for reading all routes.

Q12: Are routes designed to be complete within a 8 hour work day?

A12: Please reference response to Q10.

Q13: Will SAWS be providing the Meter Reading Handhelds?

A13: No. The Respondent will need to provide their own devices.

Q14: Is it a requirement to supply meter readers with newer model company owned fleet?

A14: No.

Q15: Will the contractor be required to provide uniforms?

A15: Yes, the uniform should clearly identify the contractor's employer and state "SAWS Contractor". The uniform must be approved by SAWS prior to awarding of the contract.

Q16: Will there be any union, prevailing wage or other wage determinants?

A16: This is not a requirement of the contract, but rather will be at the discretion of the Respondent.

Q17: Can SAWS supply an accurate reading limits for low and high reads to be validated for all accounts?

A17: Respondent will only be provided with the previous meter read.

Q18: Can the Project Manager work from the contractor location or will they be required to report to the SAWS facility?

A18: Please reference #5 – Changes to the RFP of this Addendum.

Q19: What percentage or number of routes fall within the acquired Bexar Met territory?

A19: Approximately 14%.

Q20: How many accounts within the identified contractors work are not able to be located?

A20: This information is not available at this time.

Q21: Does adequate meter location information exist to find meters within this scope of work or is the location knowledge based on personnel experience?

A21: Yes, the information exists and is not based on personnel experience. The selected Respondent will be provided with this information.

Q22: How will SAWS assist the contractor for meters that are difficult to locate where location information is not sufficient (especially in the former Bexar Met areas)?

A22: SAWS will provide support for the first cycle month. After that time, it will be up to the Respondent to know where the meter is located.

Q23: Does SAWS require contractor to maintain a physical facility location to perform the work?

A23: Respondent shall provide their own facilities. Please also see #5 – Changes to the RFP of this Addendum.

Q24: Do any commercial or residential meters require confined space procedures to obtain a meter reading?

A24: No.

Q25: Will SAWS be providing customer door tags for access issues?

A25: Yes.

Q26: Will any communications materials (including mailings) be required of the contractor, if so please identify?

A26: No, other than customer door tags, which SAWS will provide.

Q27: Who will be responsible for addressing any safety issues identified in the field (i.e. broken boxes, unleveled pits, missing pit lids, etc.)?

A27: Respondent shall enter trouble codes, which will generate a work order for SAWS crews to make the necessary repairs. On the larger vault lids, Respondent will need to notify the SAWS designated point of contact who will arrange for repairs.

Q28: Can SAWS provide time study information for all routes under this RFP?

A28: This information is not available at this time.

Q29: Can a respondent offer an alternative proposal in addition to the base bid?

A29: No.

Q30: Can pricing associated with an alternative proposal be offered with the base pricing?

A30: No.

Q31: Should any alternative pricing be included in the separate envelop with the base pricing?

A31: No.

Q32: What is average hourly rate of pay for current SAWS meter readers?

A32: \$12.98 per hour.

Q33: What is the average seniority of the meter reading staff?

A33: The average seniority is 6 to 8 years.

Q34: (Ref: pg 1, Project Information / Section C. Scope of Work / Item 1.) For the approx. 61,400 meters to be read per month by the Respondent (ref: grand total of 184,200 meters divided by 3 months), please provide the approx. total and/or % of “mobile” drive meters versus manually read “walking” meters.

A34: Roughly less than 1% will require driving to obtain the reads.

Q35: (Ref: pg 1, Project Information / Section C. Scope of Work / Item 1.) It is our understanding that the approx. 61,400 meters for the pilot phase would remain static for the Respondent

should SAWS elect to proceed with the subsequent 9 month term (versus an additional increase to the monthly total meter reading service requirement). Please confirm.

A35: Correct.

Q36: (Ref: pg 1, Project Information / Section C. Scope of Work / Item 1.) It is our understanding that the Respondent is to provide the manual meter reading system for the purposes of this contract (ref: both 3 month pilot and subsequent 9 month term). Please confirm.

A36: Correct. Respondent will be required to use their own technologies.

Q37: (Ref: pg 1, Project Information / Section C. Scope of Work / Item 1.) It is typical where the Respondent is to provide the manual meter reading system that the contract term is much longer than the potential one (1) year term as noted herein to allow for recovery of the capital expenditure (e.g. minimum three (3) year term). Would the SAWS consider amending this agreement allowing for a minimum three (3) term to better accommodate this requirement?

A37: No, not at this time since this is a pilot program as indicated in the RFP.

Q38: (Ref: pg 1, Project Information / Section C. Scope of Work / Item 1.) If SAWS is not willing to extend the term here, would the SAWS agree to compensating the Respondent for the remaining netbook value of the meter reading system at the end of the one (1) year term?

A38: No.

Q39: (Ref: pg 1, Project Information / Section C. Scope of Work / Item 1.) Are the Liquidated Damage penalties to be implemented immediately or will there be a grace period of (e.g.) one (1) or more months to allow for the start-up phase (ref: hiring / training new staff, route familiarity, etc.)?

A39: The Liquidated Damage penalties will be implemented immediately.

Q40: (Ref: pg 2, Project Information / Section C. Scope of Work / Item 3.) Please confirm if the customer door hangers are to be left on-site in conjunction with the regular monthly meter reading schedule (ref: single site visit) or is this function to be performed independent of the meter reading schedule?

A40: The door hangers will only be used when encountering possible skips during the regular monthly reading schedule.

Q41: (Ref: pg 3, Project Information / Section E. Estimated Timelines) If the Respondent is to be responsible for the provision of the manual meter reading system, the timeframe as noted between "Recommended Firm(s) Notified" and the "Start Work" date does not allow for sufficient time to (1) receive / set-up the hardware and (2) complete the interface testing / compliancy requirements (typically 60-90 days requirement for here). Would SAWS consider a revision to this section to allow for sufficient time to implement new system (e.g. January 1/16 start date)?

A41: SAWS intends to adhere to the estimated timeline on page 3 of the RFP.

Q42: (Ref: pg 18, Attachment 1 “Compensation Proposal” / 1.5” to 8”) Are all meters “blended” and read concurrently within the same route/route sequencing structure (ref: residential and commercial metering applications)? If commercial is read independent of the residential requirement, please provide the associated details regarding commercial read separate (ref: associated cycle/route numbers).

A42: All meters are blended into the routes. Please see 1, 2, 4, 6, 7 and 8 – Changes to the RFP regarding commercial meter reads.

Q43: (Ref: pgs. 20 – 24, Attachment 3 “Meter Count Per Cycle and Route”) How many meter reading personnel are currently being utilized to accommodate the approx. 61,400 monthly meter reads as noted within this section?

A43: Please see response to Q11.

Q44: (General) Are there any daily work assignment restrictions (e.g. maximum one (1) route per day/per meter reader)?

A44: SAWS does not have any restrictions. Daily work assignments will be at the Respondent’s discretion.

Q45: (General) Please provide the approx. total number and/or percentage of in-town residential metering applications where the meter reader would require the use of a vehicle from premise to premise to ensure efficiencies (ref: lot frontage greater than 300’).

A45: None.

Q46: (General) Please provide the approx. total number and/or percentage of rural metering applications where the meter reader would require the use of a vehicle from premise to premise to ensure efficiencies (ref: large and/or small farms).

A46: None.

Q47: (General) Please provide the approx. total number and/or percentage of residential metering applications with lot frontage ranging from 100’ to 300’ (ref: estate lots/subdivisions).

A47: None.

Q48: (General) Please provide the approx. total number and/or percentage of residential metering applications which would be considered as “hard to access” and/or inaccessible (e.g. backyards, gate access required, etc.).

A48: There are no “hard to access” meters.

Q49: (General) Please provide the approx. total number of small commercial metering applications (e.g. strip malls, convenience stores, etc.).

A49: Refer to Attachment 3, Meter Count per Cycle and Route, for this information.

Q50: (General) Please provide the approx. total number of large industrial commercial metering applications (e.g. factories, schools, mills, etc.).

A50: Refer to Attachment 3, Meter Count per Cycle and Route, for this information.

Q51: (General) Is the Respondent going to be required to accommodate any unique meter reading routes that are read independently of the regular routing structure (e.g. “Sprinkler”, “Large Industrial”, etc.)? If yes please provide associated details including total applicable per month meter reading totals.

A51: Only 2 of the 140 plus routes.

Q52: (General) It is our understanding that SAWS will be providing small office space at their facility to both house the manual meter reading system and for the Respondent’s daily route assignment purposes. Please confirm.

A52: Please refer to #5 of Changes in the RFP of this Addendum.

Q53: (General) Is the current meter reading route sequencing structure considered as efficient allowing for optimal in-field productivity (e.g. sequenced “door-to-door” with no skips and minimal “dead walks”/downtime)? If no, please provide associated details.

A53: Yes.

Q54: (General) Are there account specific notes (special instructions) and codes that are currently being maintained and passed down to the manual meter reading system indicating physical meter locations, access issues, safety issues/alerts, etc. (e.g. “bad dog”, “meter in backyard”, etc.)?

A54: SAWS will provide specific notes within the electronic data file provided through a FTP site.

Q55: (General) Is it mandatory for the purposes of this contract that all meter reading personnel have cell phones or just the associated management personnel?

A55: No. Cell phones shall be at the discretion of the Respondent.

Q56: (General) If applicable, please provide the approx. time requirement for any mandatory SAWS hosted training sessions / seminars (e.g. ½ day Health & Safety orientation)?

A56: SAWS will not provide training of any kind.

Q57: Is the selected respondent to provide the meter reading system (PCs, servers, handhelds, etc.)? If yes, What is the current meter reading system in use? Are there any meter reading vendor proprietary radio frequency devices deployed or expected to be deployed in the field? Are there any meter probing devices required or planned to be required to read any meters in the field?

A57: Reference response to Q36. SAWS currently uses the Datamatic System.

Q58: Is the vendor permitted to use personal vehicles?

A58: Yes.

Q59: How do we get the files?

A59: Please reference response to Q54..

Q60: How many resources do you anticipate are necessary for the proposed project?

A60: Though SAWS anticipates an estimated number of 5 to 8 meter readers in order to complete 3,000 reads per cycle, it is the responsibility of the Respondent to determine the appropriate resources to perform the work.

Q61: How are errors getting validated?

A61: The SAWS Reading Review Department reviews the meter reads and will validate errors.

Q62: Are there required certifications to be attained for meter readers to be qualified to perform the task of meter reading for SAWS? If so, which provider is recommended to evaluate personnel and issue these certifications?

A62: No, there are no required certifications.

Q63: How will routes be provided to the contractor? Which format or software is used to store, record reads, and transfer files?

A63: Please see response to Q59. SAWS does not file format information at this time, but will ensure the selected Respondent has all required data prior to performing the work.

Q64: We do perform pre-employment motor vehicle and criminal background checks, and drug screenings on our employees. They are also subject to random screenings and post-accident drug tests. Our company also requires valid driver's license, and social security, passport, or birth certificate documents. Are there further requirements to provide services to SAWS?

A64: Please reference Exhibit D, Security Procedures of the RFP.

Q65: The RFP stated that the project manager is expected to be on site at the Mission Road location continuously throughout the duration of the project. Are meter readers expected to report to this location daily to collect and deliver assigned routes?

A65: Please refer to Changes in the RFP #5 of this Addendum.

End Questions and Answers

Changes to the RFP

1. Page 1, the last sentence of A. Objective, last sentence of the paragraph - Insert the word commercial to the following sentence to read:

The firm selected will provide water meter reading services for approximately 184,200 residential **and commercial** water meters during a pilot program of 90 days, with an option to add an additional 552,600 residential **and commercial** water meters during an additional period of nine months.

2. Page 1, C. Scope of Services 1, first bullet – Insert the word commercial to the following sentence:

Provide a skilled, capable labor workforce to complete meter reading activities of varying size meters (5/8” to 8”) for approximately 61,400 residential **and commercial** water meters monthly for a total of 184,200 during the 90 day contract period with the option to read an additional total of 552,600 residential **and commercial** water meters during the extended nine month contract period.

3. Page 1, C. Scope of Services 1., sixth bullet – Replace the time from 7:00 PM (CT) to the following:

Selected respondent is expected to provide SAWS on a daily basis by **6:30 PM (CT)** with electronic data transfers of all data collected during each meter reading route. Respondent shall be responsible for uploading data daily to a designated FTP and understands that data not provided prior to **6:30 PM (CT)** will warrant non-payment for that meter reading route.

4. Page 2, C. Scope of Services 5., first bullet – Replace the word residential with the word commercial in the following sentence:

The Respondent will be expected to read approximately 3,000 meters per route for 20 routes per month of residential meters between the sizes of 5/8” to 1” and approximately 1,400 meters per route for 20 routes per month of **commercial** meters between the sizes of 1.5” to 8”. The routes have been identified and are displayed on the SAWS webpage that contains this RFP.

5. Page 2, C. Scope of Service 1, third bullet – Delete in its entirety.

Selected respondent’s project manager is expected to be on site in the Mission Road location continuously throughout the duration of the project, except for vacations and illness, during which the respondent shall provide a qualified substitute.

6. Page 3, C. Scope of Services 5., fourth bullet – Replace the word residential with the word commercial in the following sentence:

The estimated volume during the Service Test Period is estimated as:

Meter Type	Number of Meters
Residential 5/8” to 1”	180,000

Commercial 1.5” to 8”

4,200

7. Page 3, C. Scope of Services 6., first bullet – Replace the word residential with the word commercial in the following sentence:

Should SAWS use the optional extended period, the Respondent will be expected to read approximately 3,000 meters per route for 20 routes per month of residential meters between the sizes of 5/8” to 1” and approximately 1,400 meters per route for 20 routes per month of **commercial** meters between the sizes of 1.5” to 8”, for an additional nine (9) months. The routes have been identified and are displayed on the SAWS webpage that contains this RFP.

8. Page 3, C. Scope of Services 6., second bullet – Replace the word residential with the word commercial in the following sentence:

The estimated volume during the Optional Extended Period is estimated as:

Meter Type	Number of Meters
Residential 5/8” to 1”	540,000
Commercial 1.5” to 8”	12,600

End Changes to the RFP