

National Aeronautics and Space Administration  
Ames Research Center  
Moffett Field, CA 94035-0001

Selection of Contractor  
For  
Ames Research Center Information Technology Support & Services 3  
(ACITS 3)  
NNA10301939R

May 14, 2013

On April 10, 2013 the SEB presented the findings from its Initial Presentation to me, the Source Selection Authority (SSA), and we discussed those findings to assure that I had a full understanding of its evaluation.

I assessed the SEB's findings and reviewed proposals. This Source Selection Statement reflects my independent judgment, which I based upon a comparative assessment of the relative strengths and weaknesses of the proposals and the evaluation criteria prescribed in the Request for Proposal (RFP). My selection decision is set forth below.

Procurement Description

ARC has a continuing need for information technology (IT) support services that will provide IT capabilities and expertise in the form of applied research, engineering, maintenance, and operations for the Center and the Agency. The services provided will support all organizations and employees at ARC as well as other Centers within the Agency and Government partners of ARC. While support is most often needed at ARC at Moffett Field, it may be provided at remote sites in some instances. The resultant contract will provide support in the following areas:

- IT Systems and Governance Support
  - Project Management
  - System Administration
  - Data Center
  - Facility Support
  - Hardware/Software Maintenance
  - Data Storage Retrieval and Archival
  - IT Governance and Policy Analysis
  - Technical Planning and Analysis
  - Records Management and Vital Records Management for Continued Operations
- IT Security
  - Patch Management and Deployment
  - Vulnerability Scanning Systems

- Intrusion Detection and Intrusion Prevention
- Incident Response Life Cycle
- Security Forensics
- Certification and Accreditation Consulting and Auditing Support
- Perimeter Firewall Systems
- Antivirus (AV) Services
- Host-Based Intrusion Detection and Prevention
- Content Monitoring & Filtering
- Full Packet Capture and Flow Monitoring
- Event Log Collection & Correlation
- Network Access Control
- Penetration Testing
- Organization Computer Security Official (CSO) Support
- Classified Security Collaboration
- Board Participation
- Remote Access Services
- IT Security Consultation and Engineering
- Security Programming
- Certifications
- Network and Communication Systems and Support
  - Network Services
  - Network and Communications Infrastructure
  - Distributed Systems
  - Audio, Video, and Voice Communication Systems
    - Audio Systems
    - Video Systems
    - Voice Communication Systems
  - Radio Frequency (RF) and Emergency Communication Systems
- Application Management and Support
  - IT Support to Financial Services
  - IT Support to Human Resources, Personnel Security and Logistics
  - IT Support to Business Systems and Infrastructure
  - Web Applications
  - Collaborative and Information-Based Systems
  - Application Management
  - Data Management and Analysis
  - Application Testing
- Scientific Computing Systems & Support
  - Scientific Applications
  - Data Acquisition & Analysis
  - Modeling & Tool Development

- Innovation and Emerging Technologies
  - IT Security Innovation
  - Cloud Computing
  - Emerging Network Technology
  - Evaluation of New and Emerging IT Security Tools and Technology
- Outreach/Informational Systems and Support
  - Customer Support
  - IT Security Outreach, Training and Communications
  - Library Systems
  - Conference/Presentation/Advocacy Support

This procurement was conducted as a total small business set-aside. The Government anticipated the procurement would result in a single award, hybrid Indefinite-Delivery, Indefinite-Quantity (IDIQ) contract with Firm Fixed Price (FFP) as well as Cost Plus Fixed Fee (CPFF) task orders. The minimum amount of supplies or services that would be ordered during the effective period of this contract is \$100,000, and the maximum amount would be \$403,400,000. The period of performance would consist of a two-year base period (including a 60-day phase-in period), and three one-year options, resulting in a maximum performance period of five years.

#### Evaluation Procedure

Proposals were evaluated in accordance with the requirements of FAR Subpart 15.3, "Source Selection," as supplemented by NFS Subpart 1815.3, "Source Selection." Section M of the solicitation, paragraph M.2, Evaluation Approach, advised Offerors that the Government may award a contract based solely on the initial offers received and without discussion of such offers. Accordingly, each Offeror was required to submit its initial proposal to the Government using the most favorable terms from a technical and cost/price standpoint. However, the Government reserved the right to hold discussions if award on initial offers was determined not to be in the best interest of the Government.

The RFP identified the following evaluation factors in descending order of importance: Mission Suitability, Past Performance, and Cost/Price. Mission Suitability and Past Performance, when combined, were significantly more important than Cost/Price.

The Mission Suitability Factor consists of three Sub-factors. The Sub-factors are shown on the following page with their respective point allocation, which signifies their weight.

<b>MISSION SUITABILITY</b>	
<b>Sub-factors</b>	<b>Assigned Weight</b>
1. Technical Understanding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Overall Understanding and Approach</li> <li>b. Response to Case Study A</li> <li>c. Response to Case Study B</li> <li>d. Response to Task Orders</li> </ul>	<b>500</b>
2. Management Approach <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Organizational Structure and Partnering Approach</li> <li>b. Response to Case Study C</li> <li>c. Total Compensation Plan, Staffing, and Recruitment</li> <li>d. Phase-In Plan</li> <li>e. Key Personnel</li> <li>f. Organizational Conflicts of Interest Avoidance Plan</li> </ul>	<b>400</b>
3. Safety and Health Plan	<b>100</b>
<b>TOTAL POINTS AVAILABLE</b>	<b>1000</b>

Overall, Offerors' Mission Suitability proposals were evaluated based on their abilities to efficiently fulfill the technical requirements while meeting quality, schedule, and safety requirements. The compatibility between the proposed management and technical approaches to accomplish the work was an important consideration in the evaluation of this Factor. In addition, proposal risk was evaluated with respect to cost, performance, technical approach, and management approach. The RFP stipulated that the overall Mission Suitability Factor would only receive a numerical score, and the Mission Suitability Sub-factors would be assigned adjectival ratings and numerical scores. In accordance with NFS 1815.305(a)(3), "Technical Evaluation," the following were the potential Mission Suitability adjectival ratings: Excellent, Very Good, Good, Fair, and Poor. In Section M, paragraph M.2, Evaluation Approach, the RFP defined these adjectival ratings as well as provided applicable percentile ranges at each rating level.

For the Cost/Price Factor, the SEB assessed what each Offeror's proposal would cost the Government should it be selected for award. The overall evaluated cost/price for selection purposes was determined by the sum of the cost/price proposed for the price for fixed price IDIQ work as proposed in the ISPTFP and the probable cost and fee for CPFF IDIQ work as proposed in the ISCTCR. The proposed Phase-In cost was evaluated for reasonableness, but it was not included in the total evaluated cost/price.



In accordance with FAR Subpart 15.4, the SEB conducted Cost/Price proposal evaluations. The SEB analyzed the proposed costs to determine the price and associated risks of doing business with each Offeror. In accordance with FAR 15.404-1(d)(3) and NFS 1815.305(a)(vi), the SEB performed a price realism analysis on the labor and non-labor resources proposed for the fixed-price task orders to ensure that the proposed resources are adequate and will not create a risk of quality or service shortfalls. In accordance with FAR 15.404-1(c), the SEB performed an analysis to assess the cost realism of the proposed IDIQ direct labor rates and develop a probable cost estimate CPFF model. This evaluation of cost factors resulted in a probable cost which is reflective of the Government's best estimate of the cost of any contract that is most likely to result from an Offeror's proposal. The proposed Fully-Burdened Rates for the entire potential period of performance were evaluated, as was the reasonableness of the indirect rates applied to non-labor resources and the proposed fee.

With regard to the Past Performance Factor, the RFP stated that the evaluation would be an assessment of the Government's level of confidence in the Offeror's ability to perform the solicitation requirements. The past performance evaluation was based on the information provided by the Offeror in its Past Performance (i.e., Volume II of its proposal) and on the assessment of customer questionnaires submitted on behalf of each Offeror and of its major subcontractors. Section M, paragraph M.2, Evaluation Approach of the RFP identified and defined the confidence ratings for the Past Performance Factor: Very High Level of Confidence, High Level of Confidence, Moderate Level of Confidence, Low Level of Confidence, Very Low Level of Confidence, and Neutral. By acquiring and reviewing information from a variety of sources, the SEB evaluated each Offeror's suitability to fulfill the requirements of this contract.

The SEB evaluated the currency and relevancy of the information, source of the information, context of the data, and general trends in performance of the Offeror, major subcontractors, predecessor companies, key personnel with relevant experience, and any organization(s) that would substantially contribute to the proposed contract, or would have the potential to significantly impact performance of the proposed contract. Further, for each Offeror and its major subcontractors, the SEB evaluated overall past performance for relevance by comparing contract size, scope, and complexity with the requirements of the current acquisition. The SEB evaluated the depth of the Offerors' relevant past performance and gave credit for both the quantity and quality of the Offerors' examples of past performance. This factor provided an opportunity to evaluate the quality of goods and services that the Offerors provided to the Government and other organizations as either a prime contractor or a subcontractor.

#### Solicitation and Receipt of Proposals

In an effort to better inform industry of NASA's requirements and to improve communications between all parties, ARC issued a draft Request for Proposals (RFP) on October 4, 2010, that allowed for industry recommendations and comments on all aspects of the Government's proposed approach in satisfying the requirements. A Government response to each recommendation or comment was prepared and was made available electronically to the

public. The recommendations and comments received from industry in response to the draft RFP were carefully evaluated and incorporated in the final RFP, as appropriate.

All documents pertinent to the acquisition were posted electronically on the NASA Acquisition Internet Service (NAIS) Business Opportunities portal ([http://prod.nais.nasa.gov/cgi-bin/nais/link\\_syp.cgi](http://prod.nais.nasa.gov/cgi-bin/nais/link_syp.cgi)) as well as the Federal Business Opportunities web portal (<https://www.fbo.gov>). The RFP was released on November 23, 2010. Two (2) Amendments were posted to NAIS and FBO. Amendment 1 was posted on December 9, 2010, and it contained revised solicitation clauses and corrections and updates to the RFP. Amendment 2 was posted on December 16, 2010, and it contained questions and answers regarding the RFP. Amendment 3 was posted on December 13, 2010, and it contained questions and answers regarding the RFP. Proposals in response to the RFP were due on December 23, 2010.

Seven proposals were received in response to the RFP by the specified closing time and date. The Offerors' names and addresses (listed alphabetically) are as follows:

ActionNet, Inc. (ActionNet)  
2600 Park Tower Drive  
Suite 1000  
Vienna, VA 22180

ASRC Research and Technology Solutions (ARTS)  
6300 Ivy Lane  
Suite 130  
Greenbelt, MD 20770

Caelum Research Corporation (Caelum)  
1700 Research Boulevard  
Suite 250  
Rockville, MD 20850

Maden Technologies (Maden)  
2110 Washington Boulevard  
Suite 200  
Arlington, VA 22204

Mission Critical Technologies, Inc. (MCT)  
2041 Rosecrans Avenue  
Suite 220  
El Segundo, CA 90245

OpalSoft, Inc. (OpalSoft)  
1288 Kifer Road  
Suite 201  
Sunnyvale, CA 94086

SaiTech, Inc.  
10411 Motor City Drive  
Suite 670  
Bethesda, MD 20817

### Evaluation Process

After receipt of proposals, the SEB members individually reviewed each proposal and met to establish consensus findings and develop narratives on the various elements of the Mission Suitability proposals, including strengths and weaknesses. The identified strengths and weaknesses were categorized as a “Significant Strength” or “Significant Weakness” or, if not significant, as a “Strength” or a “Weakness.” Following NFS 1815.305, strength and weakness findings were used to establish adjectival ratings and numerical scores consistent with the technical narratives for each Mission Suitability Sub-factor. Then, a numerical score was assigned for the overall Mission Suitability Factor. The SEB identified “Deficiency” findings in the Mission Suitability proposals of ActioNet, Caelum, Maden, MCT, OpalSoft, and SaiTech.

The Price Analyst reviewed all of the Cost/Price proposals in coordination with the SEB. In accordance with FAR 15.4, the SEB and the Price Analyst evaluated cost realism and price reasonableness for each proposal. Cost/Price was neither scored nor assigned an adjectival rating. The team developed a Level of Confidence (LoC) for the Probable Cost (PC) for each of the CPFF portions of the Cost/Price Proposals. All Offerors received “High” PC LoC with the exception of MCT, who received a “Medium/High” LoC.

The SEB’s evaluation documented each Offeror’s relevant past performance and the currency of the past performance to assess the Offeror’s overall confidence rating. The SEB assigned overall confidence ratings to each Offeror based on the provided information.

The SEB briefed me on its initial findings on April 10, 2013. I reviewed the findings, the proposals submitted by each of the seven Offerors as well as the February 6, 2013 Contracting Officer’s memorandum documenting her conclusions concerning the prospective MCT Organizational Conflict of Interest (OCI). I fully considered all of this information prior to making my final selection decision.

## Evaluation Findings of the SEB

### *Mission Suitability Factor*

The following addresses the Mission Suitability findings for the seven Offerors.

#### **ActionNet**

The ActionNet Mission Suitability proposal received 310 points (out of a possible 1000 points)—tied for the third lowest score among all Offerors.

In the Technical Understanding Sub-factor, ActionNet received an adjectival rating of Poor with a numerical score of 150 points (out of a possible 300 points). Two (2) Strengths, one (1) Significant Weakness, one (1) Weakness, and one (1) Deficiency were identified. The two Strengths were assigned for: (1) ActionNet's approach to Case Study B, where it would leverage the existing environment to expand on service delivery, and (2) its responses to Sample Tasks, which were thorough and leveraged automation tools. The Significant Weakness was assigned for the Offeror's proposed approach for staying abreast of and implementing innovative practices and emerging technologies on the contract, which would be primarily assigned to non-major subcontractor partners and was not accompanied by a clear infusion strategy. The Weakness was assigned for the Offeror's proposal to rely on overtime for customer support software applications for the cloud computing team, without associated rationale or indication of some reasonable level of "core" support. The SEB assigned a Deficiency to the response to Case Study A, where ActionNet did not describe a mitigation approach for its two relevant success limiters as required by the RFP. The ActionNet proposal would not be acceptable for award without major revisions to address this Deficiency.

In the Management Approach Sub-factor, ActionNet received an adjectival rating of Poor with a numerical score of 105 points (out of a possible 400 points). Two (2) Strengths, two (2) Significant Weaknesses, one (1) Weakness, and two (2) Deficiencies were identified. The Strengths were assigned for: (1) the Offeror's approach to Phase-In, where it would assign a full-time staff led by a single POC and supported by its corporate HQ, and (2) its proactive processes and approach to training employees to effectively identify and address potential OCIs. The two Significant Weaknesses were assigned for: (1) the Offeror's unreasonable and ineffective approach to the organization and coordination of all performing entities, in particular as related to its coordination with non-major subcontractor partners, leveraging of short-notice external support, and infusion of IT best practices from partner organizations, and (2) its response to Case Study C, which was not supported to an effective approach to addressing changes during transition or evidence of a comprehensive relationship to the subcontractors which it proposed would provide primary support. The single Weakness was assigned for the Offeror's proposed assignment as Technology and Innovation Manager responsible for Statement of Work (SOW) area C.3.1.6 an employee of a non-major subcontractor who had provided no assurances of commitment to the relationship. The SEB

assigned two Deficiencies to the ActioNet proposal in this area due to its failure to respond to RFP requirements in the following instances: (1) due to the proposed expectation on the part of two of four team members that uncompensated overtime would be performed, without identification of quantity to support any determination that the effort would be non-material, and (2) the lack of any rationale for the level of commitment of key personnel and impact of such commitment on contract performance. To produce a proposal acceptable for further consideration, major changes would be required of ActioNet.

In the Safety and Health Plan Sub-factor, ActioNet received an adjectival rating of Good with a numerical score of 55 points (out of a possible 100 points).

## **ARTS**

The ARTS Mission Suitability proposal received 920 points (out of a possible 1000 points)—the highest score among all Offerors.

In the Technical Understanding Sub-factor, ARTS received an adjectival rating of Excellent with a numerical score of 475 points (out of a possible 500 points). Two (2) Significant Strengths and three (3) Strengths were identified. The Significant Strengths were assigned for: (1) the Offeror's approach to integrating requirements across the entire SOW while aligning with Agency strategy to institutionalize continuous improvement through its establishment of a matrixed Innovation and Governance Office, and (2) its approach to Case Study B, where it underscored its deep understanding of the NASA environment, alignment with NASA strategies and objectives for leveraging the cloud, and which was marked with a design strategy that would consider IT security in development of a cloud solution and leverage relationships to develop solutions that would be responsive while mitigating mission impact risks. The Strengths were assigned for: (1) the Offeror's proposed approaches for identifying and managing risk, which was supported by a robust continuous risk management process that would be well-aligned with current policy and would allow for enhanced insight into risk avoidance, neutralization, or mitigation, which increases the likelihood that quality services would be provided safely, on schedule, and within budget, (2) its response to Case Study A, where it highlighted its use of a repeatable and automated process, a clear understanding of the stakeholders critical to NextGen program success, and a strategy for delivering surge support from technical experts, and (3) its response to the two Sample Tasks, which was marked by a thorough understanding of the requirements, highlighted synergistic opportunities between the task orders, and incorporated SME and stakeholder feedback at key development points while leveraging modular software design practices to streamline development and avoid cost and schedule impact.

In the Management Approach Sub-factor, ARTS received an adjectival rating of Very Good with a numerical score of 360 points (out of a possible 400 points). Three (3) Significant Strengths and three (3) Strengths were identified. The Significant Strengths were assigned for (1) the Offeror's empowerment of its onsite staff to obtain corporate support and the commitment of



corporate to provide that support, including an \$80K annual consultation budget to be provided without additional direct cost to the contract, (2) the exceptionally comprehensive, efficient, and effective approach it proposed to employ in response to Case Study C, which would leverage an insightful phasing plan, integrated ITIL processes, and routine meetings with stakeholders, and (3) the Offeror's ability to infuse best practices using a process-focused, automated approach and matrixed Innovation and Governance Office focused on their infusion to improve the integration of technology, provide consistent architecture, and improve the institutionalization of continuous improvement and the standardization of service delivery across the organization. The Strengths were assigned for (1) ARTS' proposed approach to staffing and recruitment, even on short-notice in support of emerging and surge requirements and across tasks (supported by its Integrated Managements System) or through its FlexForce program, (2) its proposed shortened phase-in period supported by a detailed plan, cost ceiling, full-time transition manager and support team, and (3) the highly-qualified team of key personnel proposed.

In the Safety and Health Plan Sub-factor, ARTS received an adjectival rating of Very Good with a numerical score of 85 points (out of a possible 100 points). One (1) Significant Strength was identified. The Significant Strength was assigned for the Offeror's particularly effective approach to infusing a safety culture throughout its workforce, supported by a proposed safety and health program that would be particularly effective at reducing accidents and their related costs, and at ensuring the safety of all personnel, contractor and Government, thereby enhancing the likelihood of successful contract performance.

## **Caelum**

The Caelum Mission Suitability proposal received 310 points (out of a possible 1000 points)—tied for the third lowest score among all Offerors.

In the Technical Understanding Sub-factor, Caelum received an adjectival rating of Poor with a numerical score of 150 points (out of a possible 500 points). Two (2) Significant Strengths, one (1) Strength, and one (1) Deficiency were identified. The Significant Strengths were assigned for: (1) the Offeror's approach for remaining on the forefront of IT technologies, sharing and integrating that information, and providing robust reachback capabilities, and (2) its response to the Sample Tasks, which was marked by an exceptionally sound understanding of the problem domain and incorporated the use of automation tools and an iterative software development process that would include stakeholder feedback. The Strength was assigned for Caelum's response to Case Study A, where it highlighted its use of a repeatable, standardized approach, a notable understanding of the problem domain, and a firm understanding of applicable NASA processes. Caelum's proposal was assigned a Deficiency for its response to Case Study B, where it did not define resource requirements associated with its proposal as required by the RFP. This definition, were it to be incorporated, would represent a major change to the proposal.

In the Management Approach Sub-factor, Caelum received an adjectival rating of Poor with a numerical score of 90 points (out of a possible 400 points). One (1) Significant Strength, one (1) Strength, one (1) Significant Weakness, four (4) Weaknesses, and one (1) Deficiency were identified. The Significant Strength was assigned for the Offeror's integrated and comprehensive approach to Case Study C, which was supported by an automation tool that would leverage Earned Value Management metrics to measure performance, utilize existing governance and PM methodologies, leverage regular meetings, and allow for enhanced flexibility and agility in response to changing requirements. The Strength was assigned for the Offeror's proposed development of a service catalog, with documented offerings and interdependencies, and Operational Level Agreements to prevent service degradation during transition as envisioned in Case Study C. The Significant Weakness was assigned for Caelum's proposed assignment of the key individual responsible for continuous improvement on ACITS 3 with the integration project management abilities, which the SEB assessed as having the potential to adversely impact service, either to ongoing ACITS 3 effort or to transition effort, given that the Offeror proposed no approach to mitigate risk in associated with SIM bandwidth. The Weaknesses were assigned for: (1) the Offeror's proposal for managing subcontractor effort, which lacked clear lines of authority and responsibility, (2) its approach to phase-in, which it proposed during a two-week period without any risk-based approach to target critical personnel first and for which it assumed normal weekly transition meetings outside the normal workday, thereby complicating communications between the Government and the contractor, (3) the Offeror's sequencing of subcontract negotiation prior to task negotiation during phase-in, and (4) its proposal to backfill with corporate support in the absences of both the Program Manager (PM) and Deputy Program Manager, without evidence of cross-training of supporting corporate personnel. The Deficiency was assigned because the Offeror's proposal did not address its approach to supporting projects having durations of less than one year as required by the RFP.

In the Safety and Health Plan Sub-factor, Caelum received an adjectival rating of Good with a numerical score of 70 points (out of a possible 100 points).

## **Maden**

The Maden Mission Suitability proposal received 360 points (out of a possible 1000 points)—the third highest score among all Offerors.

In the Technical Understanding Sub-factor, Maden received an adjectival rating of Fair with a numerical score of 225 points (out of a possible 500 points). One (1) Significant Strength, one (1) Strength, two (2) Significant Weaknesses, and three (3) Weaknesses were identified. The Significant Strength was assigned for the Offeror's approach to Case Study B, which would leverage existing cloud architecture while integrating emerging technologies, best practices, and IT security considerations within a clearly-understood NASA and ARC environment. The Strength was assigned for its particularly effective approach for identifying and integrating new and emerging technologies for its customers. The Significant Weaknesses were assigned for the



Offeror's responses to (1) Case Study A, where it proposed one mitigation strategy that the SEB deemed practically impossible due to IT security challenges and did not propose mitigation approaches to address its two other self-identified success limiters, and (2) Case Study B, where it did not identify resource requirements or milestones associated with obtaining and integrating customer feedback during the development of Platform as a Service within the cloud. The Weaknesses were assigned for (1) Maden's unclear and inconsistent approach to organizing itself to manage the broad spectrum of technical areas in the SOW in a coherent, integrated manner, (2) its risk management approach to enable quality contract performance and customer satisfaction, which was assessed as lacking in flexibility and adaptability, and (3) its response to Case Study A, which was not supported by a defined, repeatable, and standardized approach.

In the Management Approach Sub-factor, Maden received an adjectival rating of Poor with a numerical score of 80 points (out of a possible 400 points). Three (3) Significant Weaknesses and two (2) Deficiencies were identified. The Significant Weaknesses were assigned for (1) the Offeror's proposed approach for obtaining external support and technical manager authorities and responsibilities, and the unclear role of the proposed West Coast manager in the process, (2) the lack of a comprehensive approach to the integrated, efficient management of all entities as proposed in response to Case Study, and (3) the proposed approach to phase-in, in which the Offeror envisioned obtaining advance approval of all activities from NASA and did not provide specific detail regarding day-to-day operations. The Deficiencies were assigned because the Offeror did not satisfy the RFP requirements in that it: (1) did not clearly identify proposed key personnel, instead identifying different lists of individuals as "key" in various parts of its proposal, or providing rationale to support designation of positions as key; and (2) did not propose actual time commitments for its key personnel, a rationale for levels of commitment, or the impact of such commitment on contract performance. Major proposal revisions would be necessary to resolve the noted Deficiencies.

In the Safety and Health Plan Sub-factor, Maden received an adjectival rating of Good with a numerical score of 55 points (out of a possible 100 points).

## **MCT**

The MCT Mission Suitability proposal received 490 points (out of a possible 1000 points)—the second highest score among all Offerors.

In the Technical Understanding Sub-factor, MCT received an adjectival rating of Good with a numerical score of 300 points (out of a possible 500 points). Three (3) Significant Strengths, one (1) Strength, and one (1) Significant Weakness were identified. The Significant Strengths was assigned for (1) the Offeror's approach for leveraging leaders in industry and academia to remain on the forefront of emerging IT and sharing knowledge both internally and with ARC, (2) its response to Case Study B, which was marked by a comprehensive understanding of the requirement and ARC environment, and (3) its response to the two Sample Tasks, where it

highlighted its exceptional understanding of the NextGen strategic plan, use of automated processes and subject matter experts, and demonstrated the reasonableness of its staffing plan. The Strength was assigned to the Offeror's proposed risk management approach, which would be supported by automation tools and integrated into daily performance. The Significant Weakness was assigned for MCT's response to Case Study A, where it did not demonstrate an understanding of the criticality of stakeholder engagement or the resources necessary to implementation and operation phases of its approach.

In the Management Approach Sub-factor, MCT received an adjectival rating of Poor with a numerical score of 120 points (out of a possible 400 points). Three (3) Significant Strengths, two (2) Strengths, two (2) Significant Weaknesses, one (1) Weakness, and one (1) Deficiency were identified. The Significant Strengths were assigned for (1) the Offeror's proposed approach to Case Study C, where it would optimize the transition process and continuity of service by leveraging a project management approach supported by the use of agreements, training, communication, and an embedded approach to validating IT security, (2) its establishment of a Continuity of Operations Plan as an element of its response to Case Study C, where it would incorporate an iterative approach to incorporating IT security verification and transition prior to transition of operations, making embedded IT security a key responsibility in transition technical task managers and base operations on two inviolate key principles: continuity of operations over transition, and transition only after verification and transition of IT security, and (3) its approach to succession planning, which would incorporate two alternates for each key position, a robust cross-training approach, and integration of PM absences into its schedule. The Strengths were assigned for (1) MCT's proposed use of repeatable processes, use of automation to manage performance across the contract while providing government insight, and ability to process task requests within three days—exceeding the RFP requirements, and (2) its approach for obtaining additional support and for the proven capabilities of its major subcontractors experienced in major transitions that it would use in support of Case Study C. Significant Weaknesses were assigned for (1) MCT's assumptions regarding its phase-in approach, including its reliance on ARC issuance of task orders within four days of proposal receipt, its unclear requirement that the government review subcontract consent packages given its stated approved Purchasing System, and its reliance on the government to vet potential incumbent employees, and (2) its OCI Avoidance Plan as related to potential conflicts of interest associated with its Chief Technology Officer's potential financial holdings and outside employment that were not addressed. The SEB assigned a Deficiency to the MCT proposal because it did not include a Total Compensation Plan covering one of its major subcontractors as required by the RFP. This shortcoming could only be overcome by a major change to the Offeror's proposal.

In the Safety and Health Plan Sub-factor, MCT received an adjectival rating of Good with a numerical score of 55 points (out of a possible 100 points).

## OpalSoft

The OpalSoft Mission Suitability proposal received 225 points (out of a possible 1000 points)—the lowest score among all Offerors.

In the Technical Understanding Sub-factor, OpalSoft received an adjectival rating of Fair with a numerical score of 155 points (out of a possible 500 points). One (1) Significant Strength, and five (5) Significant Weaknesses were identified. The Significant Strength was assigned for the Offeror's response to the two Sample Tasks, which was marked by a particularly detailed overview of the current state of ATM efforts and a profound understanding of associated technologies. Three of the five Significant Weaknesses were assigned for the Offeror's response to Case Study B, which (1) demonstrated a narrow focus on governance and strategic planning at the expense of effective and efficient implementation and inappropriately shifted burden for cloud security considerations to NASA, rather than acknowledging its responsibility for IT security performance, (2) was lacking with regard to resources that would be required and the scope of effort that they would perform, and (3) was not well-integrated with the Customer Experience requirements outlined in the SOW. The remaining two Significant Weaknesses were assigned because (1) the Offeror's approach for integrating broad technical areas of the SOW lacked detail and was not supported by a clear organizational structure, and (2) its proposal for offsite performance of Sample Task effort was not accompanied by an approach for addressing Principal Investigator oversight or IT security concerns.

In the Management Approach Sub-factor, OpalSoft received an adjectival rating of Poor with a numerical score of 40 points (out of a possible 400 points). Four (4) Significant Weaknesses and two (2) Deficiencies were identified. The Significant Weaknesses were assigned for (1) the Offeror's proposed approach for subcontractor and quality assurance management, where the SEB noted concerns related to interactions between the CTO and subcontractors supporting SOW area C.3.1.6, (2) the lack of a defined approach that the Offeror would use for obtaining and integrating best practices from its partners, (3) OpalSoft's unclear approach to Case Study C, where it did not define an approach for obtaining subcontractor support (despite heavy reliance on subcontractors), lack of information regarding how and how quickly it could obtain corporate support, and assumptions that were out of alignment with a risk mitigation strategy, and (4) its unreasonable reliance in its phase-in proposal on critical personnel to engage in hiring while continuing performance, inappropriate suggestion that the government issue unilateral task orders to mitigate the risk associated with completion of negotiations prior to Week 3, assumed subcontract negotiation within four days of task order negotiation, and the absence of defined mitigation strategies associated with the Offeror's proposal to expedite phase-in. The Deficiencies, which could only be addressed were OpalSoft to make major proposal revisions, were assigned because the Offeror did not satisfy the RFP requirements in that it: (1) did not propose an operational schedule in response to Case Study C, and (2) proposed a key individual without requisite experience and certification, provided an incomplete backfill approach for key personnel, and failed to provide a rationale for key personnel time commitments or the impact of these commitments on performance.

In the Safety and Health Plan Sub-factor, OpalSoft received an adjectival rating of Poor with a numerical score of 30 points (out of a possible 100 points). One (1) Weakness and one (1) Deficiency were identified. The Weakness was assigned because OpalSoft's proposed safety program detailed its plans to provide reports to the Langley Safety and Facilities Branch without adequately demonstrating an understanding of the required reporting at ARC. The Deficiency was assigned because the proposal did not identify the Offeror's procedures to assure that its procurements are reviewed for safety considerations as required by the RFP.

## **SaiTech**

The SaiTech Mission Suitability proposal received 280 points (out of a possible 1000 points)—the second lowest score among all Offerors.

In the Technical Understanding Sub-factor, SaiTech received an adjectival rating of Poor with a numerical score of 155 points (out of a possible 500 points). Two (2) Strengths, two (2) Weaknesses, and two (2) Deficiencies were identified. The Strengths were assigned for (1) the Offeror's proposed implementation of a very high-quality Quality Assurance process that would incorporate formal corrective action planning to its customer, and (2) its approach to Case Study B, which would integrate particularly effectively in the ARC environment and be focused on IT security management, to include a philosophy that would "build security into the system lifecycle." The Weaknesses were assigned for (1) its non-comprehensive management approach that would increase the likelihood that the Offeror's management and implementation of new services would not be fully and comprehensively supported by a robust and effective governance process, and could result in reduced efficiency marked by the need to perform costly system retrofits to incorporate compliance rather than designing it into the services delivered, and (2) for the lack of support it provided for its deviation from historical pricing without explanation on one of the Sample Tasks. The Deficiencies were assigned for the lack of schedule and resource detail in its proposal supporting its responses to (1) Case Study A, and (2) Case Study B. These Deficiencies could only be resolved were SaiTech to engage in a major revision to its proposal.

In the Management Approach Sub-factor, SaiTech received an adjectival rating of Poor with a numerical score of 60 points (out of a possible 400 points). One (1) Strength, five (5) Significant Weaknesses, one (1) Weakness, and two (2) Deficiencies were identified. The Strength was assigned for the Offeror's identification of alternates for all key positions and its proposal to develop Individual Development Plans (IDPs) and use training, cross-training, mentoring, and temporary duty assignments to appropriately prepare staff members to very effectively backfill for key personnel. The Significant Weaknesses were assigned for (1) the Offeror's proposal of an organizational structure which lacked clarity surrounding and effective approach for subcontractor and quality management, as well as with regard to the interaction between the individuals managing program management, government, and technology infusion activities and the remainder of the organization, (2) the Offeror's proposed approach for coordinating major subcontractor performance and integrating best practices from one of its major subcontractors which was not supported by clear evidence, despite the fact that it proposed



that 45 percent of the requirements would be performed by subcontractors, (3) its proposed focus on schedule attainment over support to ongoing operations and transition activities in response to Case Study C, (4) the proposal of a Total Compensation Plan that did not address specific effective recruitment or retention plans or an approach to supporting short-notice requirements, personnel gaps, or staffing of projects of less than one year duration while establishing use of uncompensated overtime for one major subcontractor without addressing the impact of this approach among its team members, and (5) the Offeror's inclusion in the proposed phase-in plan of an unclear and unrealistic timeline, which relied on expedited hiring and did not include a timeline for subcontract negotiation and provided no mitigation strategy or probability/impact assessments for technical risks. The Weakness was assigned for the Offeror's inclusion in its proposal of an out-of-date commitment letter for one of the Offeror's proposed key employees. The Deficiencies were assigned because the Offeror did not satisfy the RFP requirements in that it: (1) did not propose required resources in response to Case Study C, and (2) provided incomplete information regarding the rationale for and availability of personnel during phase-in. As with its Deficiencies in the Technical Understanding subfactor, SaiTech would have to make major changes to its existing proposal to resolve them.

In the Safety and Health Plan Sub-factor, SaiTech received an adjectival rating of Good with a numerical score of 70 points (out of a possible 100 points).

#### *Past Performance Factor*

The following addresses the Past Performance findings for the seven Offerors. In accordance with NFS 1815.305(a)(2)(A), strengths or weaknesses were not assigned.

#### **ActionNet**

The evaluation of ActionNet's Past Performance resulted in a Very High Level of Confidence. The following finding was made in the past performance evaluation: the Offeror demonstrated exceptionally meritorious past performance that is very highly pertinent to the ACITS 3 requirements, and has received primarily Excellent ratings and recommendations from its customers that demonstrate its record of timely, efficient, and economical performance. Its particularly relevant past performance appreciably increases the probability that the Offeror will be able to satisfy the Government's requirements.

#### **ARTS**

The evaluation of ARTS' Past Performance resulted in a Very High Level of Confidence. The following finding was made in the past performance evaluation: the Offeror demonstrated exceptionally meritorious past performance that is very highly pertinent to the ACITS 3 requirements, and has received primarily Excellent ratings and recommendations from its

customers that demonstrate its record of timely, efficient, and economical performance. Its particularly relevant past performance appreciably increases the probability that the Offeror will be able to satisfy the Government's requirements.

### **Caelum**

The evaluation of Caelum's Past Performance resulted in a Moderate Level of Confidence. The following finding was made in the past performance evaluation: the Offeror demonstrated very effective past performance that is pertinent to the ACITS 3 requirement, and has received Very Good to Excellent ratings and recommendations from its customers. Its record of past performance provided limited evidence of past experience in managing large numbers of complex tasks of varying sizes and identified a reportable problem that had little identifiable effect on contract performance but was administratively addressed with a contract penalty. Because of this, the SEB has a moderate level of confidence that the Offeror will be able to satisfy the Government's requirements.

### **Maden**

The evaluation of Maden's Past Performance resulted in a Moderate Level of Confidence. The following finding was made in the past performance evaluation: the Offeror demonstrated effective past performance that is pertinent to the ACITS 3 requirement, and has received Good to Excellent ratings and recommendations from its customers. Its record of past performance provided limited evidence of past experience in managing large numbers of complex tasks of varying sizes. Because of this, the SEB has a moderate level of confidence that the Offeror will be able to satisfy the Government's requirements.

### **MCT**

The evaluation of MCT's Past Performance resulted in a Moderate Level of Confidence. The following finding was made in the past performance evaluation: the Offeror demonstrated effective past performance that is pertinent to the ACITS 3 requirement, and has received Satisfactory to Excellent ratings and recommendations from its customers. Although its record of past performance provided limited evidence of past experience in managing large numbers of complex tasks of varying sizes, the Offeror demonstrated the use of an automation tool that it would be able to leverage to provide insight into multiple tasks being performed simultaneously and compensate for its relative lack of experience in this area. There were reportable problems involving one of the Offeror's major subcontractors but little identifiable effect on contract performance. The SEB has a moderate level of confidence that the Offeror will be able to satisfy the Government's requirements.

## **OpalSoft**

The evaluation of OpalSoft's Past Performance resulted in a Low Level of Confidence. The following finding was made in the past performance evaluation: the Offeror demonstrated acceptable past performance that is pertinent to the ACITS 3 requirement, and has received Satisfactory to Excellent ratings and recommendations from its customers. Its performance record highlighted some pockets of unsatisfactory and inconsistent performance that resulted in reportable and identifiable, but not substantial, effects on overall performance. Its past performance decreases the probability that the Offeror will be able to satisfy the Government's requirements.

## **SaiTech**

The evaluation of SaiTech's Past Performance resulted in a High Level of Confidence. The following finding was made in the past performance evaluation: the Offeror demonstrated very effective past performance in all relevant areas of the ACITS 3 requirement, and has received Good to Excellent ratings and recommendations from its customers. Its past performance increases the probability that the Offeror will be able to satisfy the Government's requirements.

## *Cost/Price Factor*

The SEB evaluated each Offeror's Cost/Price proposal, including all required Cost/Price Templates. This included verifying the following for each Offeror: (1) compliance with the RFP requirements, (2) evaluating the reasonableness of the proposed rates, fringe benefits, overhead, G&A rates, and profit; and (3) ascertaining that proposed labor rates are reasonable for the labor market in which the contract will be performed. The cost elements were analyzed, including subcontractors' costs, proposed labor rates and skill mix, indirect rates, and applicable fees. Each Offeror's Cost/Price proposal was deemed to be reasonable and realistic. Cost adjustments were made by the SEB for two of the seven Offerors as outlined below, and a Level of Confidence was developed for the resulting Probable Cost (PC) for each Offeror:

**ActionNet** had the fourth lowest total proposed Cost/Price. However, due to a formula error in the Offeror's spreadsheet, the composite rate for each labor category was calculated using the subcontractors' Fully Burdened Rates without this burden applied. The SEB made an adjustment to the formula to compute composite rates with the appropriate burden, resulting in an increase of \$957,385 in cost and fee. An additional adjustment was required because the Offeror's IDIQ Cost Summary Template-Cost Reimbursable (ISCTCR) showed rates, but no costs, for material/subcontract handling and G&A expense related to Other Direct Costs. The ISCTCR also contained a statement that referred to the ODC plug numbers and stated that they are inclusive of these indirect costs. This is contrary the intent of the Government—the RFP stated that any indirect costs and fee related to the ODC plugs should be shown in the ISCTCR. Furthermore, the Phase-in Template (PIT) of the Offeror's proposal showed indirect costs and fee applied to Other Direct Costs. Consequently, the SEB made an adjustment by applying the



Offeror's material/subcontract rate and G&A to the ODC plug numbers, resulting in an increase of \$9,869,615 in cost. No fee was added as the Offeror's ISCTCR showed fee of 0% related to these costs. After adjustments, ActioNet's total PC was the fourth lowest among the Offerors. Level of Confidence in the total PC is High.

**ARTS** had the highest total proposed Cost/Price. No adjustments were made to its cost/price proposal. Its total PC was the highest among the Offerors. Level of Confidence in the ARTS PC is High.

**Caelum** had the second highest total proposed Cost/Price. No adjustments were made to its cost/price proposal. Its total PC was the second highest among the Offerors. Level of Confidence in the Caelum PC is High.

**Maden** had the lowest total proposed Cost/Price. However, the SEB noted significant errors in its development of its cost proposal. The Offeror assumed that the ODC plug number for "Subcontracts" was meant as a ceiling on the amount of the cost for teaming subcontractors that are proposed to perform a portion of the hours shown in the ISCTCR. This assumption is incorrect and in contrast to the directions for completing the ISCTCR that were provided at L.8(c)(3) of the RFP. The ODC plug is in addition to subcontract costs for the hours in the ISCTCR. Consequently, the SEB made an adjustment to include the ODC plug number for subcontracts plus applicable G&A expense and fee on the additional G&A expense, resulting in an increase of \$79,140,900 in cost. Additionally, the Offeror (in sum with its subcontractors) proposed fewer hours than required by the RFP. The RFP at L.8(c)(3) required all Offerors to price the hours and the skill mix provided in the ISCTCR pricing model. The SEB made an adjustment to price out the proper hours using the Offeror's rates and factors, resulting in an increase of \$2,405,879 in costs. After adjustments, Maden's total PC was the lowest among the Offerors. Level of Confidence in the Maden PC is High. Despite the SEB's Level of Confidence, major revisions to Maden's Cost/Price proposal would be required before the proposal could be considered for award.

**MCT** had the second lowest total proposed Cost/Price. The SEB noted that although the Offeror proposed the number of hours and the skill mix required by the solicitation, its average composite direct labor rate (prime and subs combined) is approximately 15% below the mean for all Offerors and appears to be unrealistically low. However, the SEB determined that this is not sufficient justification, at this time, to make an adjustment to the Offeror's cost/price proposal. Accordingly, no adjustments were made. MCT's total PC was the second lowest among the Offerors. Due to concerns about the average composite direct labor rates proposed, Level of Confidence in the MCT PC is Medium to High.

**OpalSoft** had the third highest total proposed Cost/Price. No adjustments were made to its cost/price proposal. Its total PC was the third highest among the Offerors. Level of Confidence in the OpalSoft PC is High.

SaiTech had the third lowest total proposed Cost/Price. No adjustments were made to its cost/price proposal. Its total PC was the third lowest among the Offerors. Level of Confidence in the SaiTech PC is High.

**SELECTION DECISION OF THE SOURCE SELECTION AUTHORITY FOR AMES RESEARCH CENTER  
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT & SERVICES 3 (ACITS 3)**

FAR 15.308, "Source Selection Decision," states: "The source selection authority's (SSA) decision shall be based on a comparative assessment of proposals against all source selection criteria in the solicitation. While the SSA may use reports and analyses prepared by others, the source selection decision shall represent the SSA's independent judgment. The source selection decision shall be documented, and the documentation shall include the rationale for any business judgments and tradeoffs made or relied on by the SSA, including benefits associated with additional costs. Although the rationale for the selection decision must be documented, that documentation need not quantify the tradeoffs that led to the decision."

My selection decision represents my independent judgment. I carefully reviewed all of the SEB's findings as well as read all of the Offerors' FPRs to ensure a full understanding thereof. I did not simply count and compare the numbers of Significant Strengths and Strengths; rather, I considered the narratives developed for each factor and subfactor as well as the potential impact of characteristics of the various proposals and their relevance to this proposed effort, against the selection criteria prescribed in the RFP.

**Assessment of the SEB's findings**

After careful study of the SEB's findings as well as a review of the various Offerors' proposals, I am fully satisfied that the SEB conducted a thorough and cogent analysis of each of the proposals submitted and that their findings are appropriate and reasonable. As the SSA, I hereby adopt all of the findings of the SEB.

**Selection**

To reiterate, the evaluation factors in descending order of importance were Mission Suitability, Past Performance and Cost/Price. Mission Suitability and Past Performance, when combined, are significantly more important than Cost/Price.

Among the seven Offerors, only ARTS submitted a technically acceptable proposal. The solicitation at paragraph L.1 included FAR 52.215-1, Instructions to Offerors – Competitive Acquisition (Jan 2004), outlining the Government's intent to evaluate proposals and make award without discussions. Thus, only ARTS would be eligible for award without discussion.

Given the potentially significant expenditure of Government funds during the prospective five-year period of performance, the question at hand is whether another Offeror might represent a better value as a consequence of discussions. As illustrated below, I found that no other Offeror could correct its deficiencies sufficiently to compensate for ARTS superior technical merit. That is, there was no rationale for conducting discussions.

When reviewing the least important Factor, Cost/Price, I find that the SEB properly determined that all Offerors with the exception of MCT earned a High Level of Confidence (LoC) rating, with MCT's slightly lower at Medium/High. I further note that the range of Probable Cost (PC) for all Offerors is within 15 percent of the lowest Offeror's PC. After removal of the MCT PC, which has the lowest LoC and is two standard deviations from the mean value of the offers received, that range decreases to six percent. Based on the foregoing, I consider the six Offerors other than MCT, including the prospective awardee, to be fair and reasonably priced.

As referenced above, of these two remaining Factors, Mission Suitability was the most important.

ActionNet had the third weakest Mission Suitability proposal, as reflected in its score of 310 points. While it met the RFP requirements in many areas of the SOW, none of its four (4) Mission Suitability Strengths identified above, although admirable, rose to the level of "Significant." In addition, these Strengths were offset by two (2) Weaknesses, three (3) Significant Weaknesses, and three (3) Deficiencies. These were spread across the Technical Understanding and Management Approach subfactors. In my judgment, ActionNet's earned rating of Very High in the Past Performance subfactor, although notable, does not offset the Poor ratings it received in the Technical Understanding and Management Approach subfactors to Mission Suitability, the most important evaluation Factor. Therefore, I could not select ActionNet for discussions as one of the most highly rated proposals.

Caelum's Mission Suitability proposal was equally weak, as reflected in its score of 310 points, tied with ActionNet as the third lowest of the seven Offerors. In contrast to ActionNet, Caelum submitted a proposal that was stronger in the Technical Understanding subfactor than it was in the Management Approach subfactor. In all, Caelum's proposal received three (3) Significant Strengths, two (2) Strengths, four (4) Weaknesses, and two (2) Deficiencies. Despite the fact that three of its commendable Strengths rose to the level of "Significant," these are offset by its receipt of two (2) Deficiencies—one each in Technical Understanding and Management Approach—and a Moderate rating in the Past Performance Factor reflecting limited evidence of past experience in managing large numbers of complex tasks of varying sizes, a reportable problem that had little identifiable effect on contract performance but that was administratively addressed, and Very Good to Excellent ratings from its customers. Therefore, I could not select Caelum for discussions as one of the most highly rated proposals.

Maden had a Mission Suitability proposal that reached the level of Fair in the Technical Understanding subfactor while being evaluated as Poor in the Management Approach subfactor and Good in the Safety & Health subfactor. It received the third highest Mission Suitability

score of 360 points. Of its two (2) Mission Suitability Strengths, one was “Significant.” It is notable that these two Strengths are offset by eight (8) Weaknesses, five (5) of which were “Significant,” and two (2) Deficiencies, and that in the Management Approach area, no Strengths were identified. Further, Maden received a Moderate rating in the Past Performance Factor reflecting limited evidence of experience in managing large numbers of complex tasks of varying sizes and Good to Excellent ratings from its customers. In my judgment, the relatively weak Management Suitability rating earned by Maden, combined by its comparably low rating in the Past Performance subfactor, combined with the significant adjustment that was made to bring its Cost/Price Factor to a High LoC, do not justify award to Maden, despite its deceptively low proposed cost—the lowest by far amongst the Offerors, as a result of significant proposal errors discovered during evaluation. Therefore, I could not select Maden for discussions as one of the most highly rated proposals.

MCT had the second strongest Mission Suitability proposal, as demonstrated by its score of 490 points. While its nine (9) Strengths included six (6) that reached the level of “Significant,” these were offset by three (3) Significant Weaknesses and one (1) Deficiency. Additionally, MCT received a Moderate rating in the Past Performance Factor reflecting reportable problems involving the past performance of one of the Offeror’s major subcontractors that had little identifiable effect on contract performance and Satisfactory to Excellent ratings from its customers. In my judgment, the moderately strong Mission Suitability rating, combined with its Moderate rating in Past Performance and lowest Level of Confidence Probable Cost assessment, do not merit consideration of MCT as one of the most highly rated Offerors, given ARTS technical superiority.

OpalSoft’s Mission Suitability proposal was the weakest among the seven offers evaluated, as reflected in its score of 225 points. Its single Significant Strength was offset by ten (10) Weaknesses, of which nine (9) were “Significant,” and three (3) Deficiencies. Additionally, it received a rating of Low in the Past Performance subfactor, pockets of unsatisfactory and inconsistent performance that resulted in reportable and identifiable—but not substantial—effects on overall performance, and Satisfactory to Excellent ratings from its customers. Therefore, I could not select OpalSoft for discussions as one of the most highly rated proposals.

SaiTech’s Mission Suitability proposal was the second weakest among the seven offers evaluated, as reflected in its score of 280 points. None of its three (3) identified Mission Suitability Strengths, although admirable, rose to the level of “Significant.” In addition, these Strengths were offset by three (3) Weaknesses, five (5) Significant Weaknesses, and four (4) Deficiencies. These were spread across the Technical Understanding and Management Approach subfactors. In my judgment, SaiTech’s earned rating of High in the Past Performance subfactor, although notable, does not offset the Poor ratings it received in the Technical Understanding and Management Approach subfactors to Mission Suitability, the most important evaluation Factor. Therefore, I could not select SaiTech for discussions as one of the most highly rated proposals.

ARTS had the strongest Mission Suitability proposal, and received the highest Mission Suitability score of 920 points—far superior to any other Mission Suitability proposal evaluated. Of its twelve (12) Mission Suitability Strengths, six (6) were “Significant.”

While the number of Significant Strengths is reflective of the merits of the ARTS Mission Suitability proposal, I consider the uniform strength in all three of the Mission Suitability subfactors – Technical Understanding, Management Approach, and Safety and Health Plan, particularly telling. ARTS is the only Offeror to receive Significant Strengths in all three subfactors, and it earned the highest scores in each of those three subfactors.

Most important of all, its Significant Strengths reflect distinctively innovative and effective approaches to contract performance coupled with superior management and staffing approaches. ARTS would combine an organizational structure that vests its managers with broad local authority, control, and responsibility while providing them with deep support from the robust corporate infrastructures of both the Offeror and its major subcontractor. These managers would implement a particularly appropriate process-focused approach, supported by the exceptionally efficient use of automation tools and a highly effective matrixed organization focused on infusion of best practices culled from industry and integrated with NASA initiatives. The ARTS approach appreciably increases the likelihood that ARC would benefit from tailored and particularly appropriate resource leveling to achieve highly notable efficiencies marked by reduced cost and more flexible resource-sharing, greater on-time delivery, and the breakdown of stovepipes. This would in turn greatly improve performance effectiveness, resulting in improved the integration of technology, consistent architecture, and the institutionalization of continuous improvement and standardization of service delivery to customers.

I primarily base my selection decision on the markedly stronger approaches proposed by ARTS in each of the Mission Suitability subfactors, while noting that it also received the highest possible rating in the Past Performance Factor. ARTS is the only Offeror to achieve ratings of Very Good or higher in each of the Mission Suitability subfactors, and no other Offeror was able to achieve a rating in any subfactor that exceeded Good, making the ARTS proposal far superior.

The RFP stated that “[t]he Offeror's proposal will be evaluated based on the Offeror's ability to fulfill the technical requirements while meeting quality, schedule, and safety requirements and the Offeror’s management and business approaches. The compatibility between the proposed technical and management approaches, and the overall resources proposed to accomplish the work will be an important consideration in the evaluation of this factor. In addition, proposal risk will be evaluated with respect to cost, performance, technical approach, and management approach.”

ARTS satisfies, and singularly exceeds, this prescribed synergy in the RFP amongst technical and management/business approaches, resources, and risk. ARTS’ approach to integrating the entire SOW was uniquely holistic and reasonable, would allow it to manage service delivery, ensure its alignment with Agency strategy, and institutionalize continuous improvement under



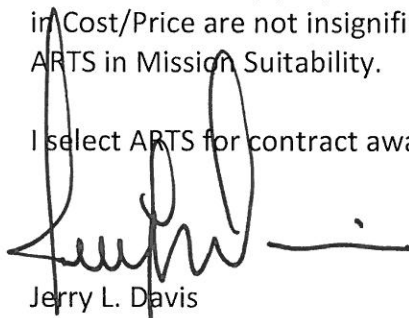
the contract. The proposed approach would appreciably increase the likelihood that the prospective Offeror would minimize stovepipes and improve its integration of technology on the ACITS 3 contract while applying consistent Information Technology (IT) architecture to improve the quality and consistency of service delivery to its customers.

As stated above, ARTS submitted the superior Mission Suitability proposal – 430 points higher than the next highest Offeror – with the strongest, and most integrated, approaches in Technical Understanding, Management Approach, and Safety and Health Plan. This, in my opinion, will translate into better risk avoidance and management. In my opinion, the overall approach proposed by ARTS will be more executable in the day-to-day operation of this contract. The entire ARTS proposal is highly credible based upon my review of ARTS Technical Understanding and Management Approach volumes in light of its proposed Cost/Price while its matrixed integration efforts will increase the likelihood of prospective cost efficiencies.

The other Offerors each propose a lower overall Cost/Price, and the SEB found none of them to be unrealistic or unreasonable. However, in my judgment as SSA, each of these lower Cost/Price proposals carries some level of performance risk, does not merit inclusion as the most highly rated Offerors, and would not be comparable with ARTS without major revisions to their proposals.

Mission Suitability is the most important Factor, and ARTS submitted the very best Mission Suitability proposal. ARTS closest competitor in the area of Mission Suitability, MCT, is a distant second in this area and falls well behind ARTS in the second most heavily weighted factor, Past Performance. Its nearest competitor in the area of Past Performance, ActioNet, submitted a Mission Suitability proposal of significantly lower quality. The differences amongst the Offerors in Cost/Price are not insignificant but do not, in my judgment, offset the distinct superiority of ARTS in Mission Suitability.

I select ARTS for contract award.



Jerry L. Davis  
Source Selection Authority