

DOD Awards 17 BPAs for RFID Services

The Department of Defense has granted Blanket Purchase Agreements allowing its branches to contract RFID technical engineering services from a number of firms.

By Mary Catherine O'Connor

July 29, 2005—A total of 17 companies may compete for contracts to provide the U.S. military with RFID technical engineering services, thanks to Blanket Purchase Agreements (BPAs) awarded through the Department of Defense's Information Technology, E-Commerce and Commercial Contracting Center (ITEC4) last week.

The ITEC4's primary mission is to establish master contracts to acquire IT products and services. According to the BPA specification document posted online, technical engineering services include those required for passive RFID EPC Class 0 and Class 1 equipment integration, as well as site assessments, system installation, uninstallation and relocation; problem-solving; training; software development; communications; interfaces with other government systems; equipment and systems engineering services; and systems integration.

On July 18, *RFID Journal* reported that Unisys was awarded a BPA to provide technical engineering services, in partnership with ODIN Technologies, which will act as a subcontractor. (See DOD Taps ODIN, Unisys For Services.)

The 16 other companies awarded BPAs all provide systems integration, consultation, testing, software platforms or software development services for RFID deployments. They consist of Anteon, Automated Tracking Solutions, BearingPoint, Booz Allen Hamilton, CDO Technologies, CODEplus, Concurrent Technologies Corp., IBM, INTECS International, Intermec Technologies, Maden Technologies, Northrop Grumman, Savi Technology, Sys-Tec, SYTEX, and VeriSign.

To be considered for the BPA, each of these companies submitted a proposal listing specific products and services for contract. CODEplus says it has been authorized to provide its eManageIT RFID Tag & Ship Solution and eManageIT RFID Network Health Monitor software packaged solutions, as well as an array of technical engineering services including software development, system integration, training and deployment. The eManageIT RFID Tag & Ship Solution combines software and consulting services to help DOD agencies and suppliers comply with the department's RFID tagging mandate. The eManageIT RFID Network Health Monitor is a Web-based system enabling end users of RFID to monitor a network of RFID hardware, such as printers and interrogators, and to remotely diagnose malfunctioning hardware. Savi Technology has been authorized to supply the Savi SmartChain Site Manager and Savi SmartChain Enterprise Platform, both part of its EPC integration platform to help end users of RFID deploy EPC tagging systems.

RFID systems integrator RFID Global Solution helped six of the awarded firms develop their respective BPA proposals. These firms are Bearing Point, IBM, Maden, Savi, Sys-Tec and Verisign. The integrator plans to partner with these firms on contracts with DOD agencies, offering a range of EPC passive RFID technology services, such as RFID system architecture and implementation, project management, training support, and hardware maintenance.

The BPAs expire in June 2007 and have a cap for single purchases of \$5,000,000.

A number of the firms listed above have also been awarded BPAs for RFID passive EPC tags (see [DOD Awards Contracts for EPC Tags](#)) and interrogators (see [DOD Awards Reader Purchase Agreements](#)) earlier this year.

Intermec and CDO (which is teaming with strategic partners [Symbol Technologies](#) and [CSC](#) to deliver RFID engineering services) have been awarded BPAs for tags, as well. Sys-Tec was awarded a BPA for readers, in addition to this BPA for technical engineering services.

The DOD is expected to award two more sets of BPAs this year. One will cover RFID printers, while the other will specify portable and handheld RFID readers. The current awarded contracts are posted on the Web site of the U.S. Army's [Communication-Electronics Command](#). The DOD also plans to publish additional information on the [Product Manager, Joint-Automatic Identification Technology \(PM J-AIT\)](#) and [Program Executive Officer, Enterprise Information Systems \(PEO EIS\)](#) Web sites.

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