

# DOD Awards Passive RFID Contract to Six Vendors

The contracts have the potential to provide the military with \$75.5 million worth of products and services during the next six years.

By Beth Bacheldor

Oct. 10, 2008—The U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) has awarded six companies multiyear contracts that, when combined, have the potential to provide the military with \$75.5 million worth of products and services. Such products include EPC Class 1 Gen 2 tags, fixed and handheld interrogators and label printer-encoders.

The contracts were awarded to systems integrators Northrop Grumman Information Technology, ODIN Technologies and CDO Technologies; RFID printer and label provider Lowry Computer Products; RFID logistics and supply chain solutions provider CODE Plus; and automated data collection and RFID provider SYS-TEC.

The six contractors have been awarded what the Defense Department calls Passive Radio Frequency Identification (pRFID) Indefinite Delivery, Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ) contracts. These will cover three years of products and services, followed by three years of maintenance. An IDIQ contract basically provides for an indefinite quantity of supplies or services during a fixed period of time. The DOD's pRFID standard calls for a Class 1 Gen 2 tag with 96 bits of readable data that also has a unique ISO-approved DOD-format Electronic Product Code (EPC) allowing the tag to be used universally within the Defense Department. The DOD EPC utilizes a format different than that found in passive EPC RFID tags employed in non-military applications.

The contracts were awarded by the U.S. Army Product Manager for Joint-Automatic Identification Technology (PM J-AIT), part of the Program Executive Office, Enterprise Information Systems (PEO EIS) at Fort Belvoir, Va., as part of the Defense Department's Information Technology, E-Commerce and Commercial Contracting Center (ITEC4). ITEC4 contracts basically establish master contracts to acquire IT products and services; the DOD has been awarding similar contracts for passive RFID products and services for several years (see DOD Awards 17 BPAs for RFID Services and DOD Awards BPAs for Handheld Readers).

Companies awarded such master contracts can bring in subcontractors to supply products and services to meet the DOD's needs. CDO Technologies, for instance, as a prime contractor, has awarded a sub-contract to XIO Strategies, which specializes in supply chain management and communications consulting services to the government and military in particular, but also to commercial organizations.

RELATED\_ARTICLES ODIN Technologies' president, Patrick Sweeney, said in a prepared statement that because pRFID standards have stabilized and technology has improved, adoption is currently growing. "The Department of Defense is setting their sights on nothing short of the most efficient supply chain in support of the war fighter," he said, "and ODIN is proud and honored to be selected as a prime contractor on this mission."

According to Sweeney, the contract from PM J-AIT will provide acquisition support and technical expertise for the military, federal agencies, NATO and multi-national forces using a contract model that makes procurement easier. "It's one-stop shopping for passive RFID," he stated.

Copyright ©2005 RFID Journal, Inc. All Rights Reserved