



UNCLASSIFIED

27 July 2007

Information Paper

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Lightweight Exposure Suit



Requirement:

USMC Cold Weather ORD NO LOG 42.4 w/chg 1, 2, 3

Description:

Personnel operating in the mountain environment must carry a variety of clothing and equipment items to adapt to rapidly changing conditions. USMC requires lightweight, low volume rain protection. The jacket and trouser must be durable over garments, enabling Marines to quickly don wind and rain protection that is both water vapor permeable and minimizes overheating from strenuous activities.

Background:

USMC adopted Extreme Cold Weather Clothing System (ECWCS) in 1985 to replace Korean War era Cold Weather (EW) Clothing. Over the last 20 years USMC made periodic low risk product changes to improve material performance of selected layers with only minor design changes. Recent conflicts have identified needs to provide our Marines with better "Systemized" equipment and clothing.

Fielding Status:

Initial AO: 20,000

Final AO: 35,000

Gear to be fielded to the STAP's

- In Nov 06 the Lightweight Rain Suit parka and trousers were issued to the Mountain Warfare Training Center and to the Marine Reserve unit at Elmendorf AFB in Alaska for field evaluations.

- Deliveries to the STAP in Camp Pendleton, CA began in Dec 06.

- Nov 06 conducted Industry Information/Market Research Conference in support of M/CW clothing procurement effort under GSA blanket purchase agreement.

- Jan 07 conducted midpoint data collection to validate baseline clothing system. Industry participated in user discussions; the information collected was incorporated into garment improvements

- Feb 07 Draft solicitation forwarded to Natick Contracting for review.

- Mar 07 completed final user evaluations at Mountain Warfare Training Center, Bridgeport, CA. Data collected was used to finalize salient characteristics.

Production:

Vendor: GSA Blanket Purchase Agreement

Manufacturer: Propper International

Test Unit Production began Sep 2006

Delivery of 4000 jackets and trousers completed Dec 06.

Programmatic:

- Jun 07 Pre-Solicitation Notice Posted

- Jul 07 IDIQ contract solicitation delays

- Jul 07 decision was made to procure initial MCW items via GSA Advantage program.

- Nov 07 Incremental deliveries begin

- Expect follow-on quantities will be procured under a Natick IDIQ contract in FY08 pending availability of funds.

Issues:

- Incorporate final design changes into salient characteristics prior to contract award.

- Maintaining shade standards will be critical. Shade testing requirements have been included in the solicitation and spectral reflectance values are included in the salient characteristics. All proposals received will be tested to ensure conformance with shade standards.



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- Jul 07; due to the IDIQ contract solicitation delays, decision was made to procure initial MCW items via GSA Advantage program.
- Incorporated final design changes into salient characteristics prior to contract award.
- Maintaining shade standards will be critical. Shade testing requirements have been included in the solicitation and spectral reflectance values are included in the salient characteristics. All proposals received will be tested to ensure conformance with shade standards.
- Availability of funds
- Jun 07; the Mountain Cold Weather pre-solicitation notice was posted for the IDIQ contract
- Jul 07; due to the IDIQ contract solicitation delays, decision was made to instead procure MCW items via GSA.
- Ability to award contracts before losing funds.
- Industry is continuing to develop materials/technologies that may warrant further testing.
- Follow-on Natick IDIQ contract in FY08 dependent on funding
- How will MARFORRES units be funded

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