

SUPPORTING STATEMENT

BAA and RFI Proposal Collection System

(OMB No. 1640-NEW)

A. Justification

1. The Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) 15.201(e) authorizes Federal agencies to issue Requests for Information (RFIs) when an agency “does not presently intend to award a contract, but wants to obtain price, delivery, other market information, or capabilities for planning purposes.”

FAR 6.102(d)(2)(i) identifies a Broad Agency Announcement (BAA) as one of the competitive procedures that may be used to promote and provide for full and open competition.

FAR 35.016 authorizes Federal agencies to use BAAs to “fulfill their requirements for scientific study and experimentation directed toward advancing the state-of-the-art or increasing knowledge or understanding rather than focusing on a specific system or hardware solution.”

Federal agencies who issue RFIs accept responses from the public in response to those RFIs. Similarly, Federal agencies who issue BAAs accept white papers and proposals from the public in response to those BAAs.

2. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Science and Technology (S&T) Directorate issues RFIs in accordance with FAR 15.201(e) and accepts responses to those RFIs from the public.

DHS S&T also issues BAAs in accordance with FAR 6.102(d)(2)(i) and FAR 35.016 and accepts white papers and proposals from the public in response to those BAAs.

DHS S&T evaluates white papers and proposals received from the public in response to a DHS S&T BAA using the evaluation criteria specified in the BAA through a peer or scientific review process in accordance with FAR 35.016(d). White paper evaluation determines those research ideas that merit submission of a full proposal and proposal evaluation determines those proposals that merit selection for contract award.

Unclassified white papers and proposals are typically collected via the DHS S&T BAA secure website, while classified white papers and proposals must be submitted via proper classified courier or proper classified mailing procedures as described in the National Security Program Operating Manual (NISPOM).

3. Information technology will be used in the collection of RFI responses and unclassified white papers and proposals to reduce the data gathering and records management burden. DHS S&T will provide a secure website through which the public can (1) submit responses to RFIs, (2) register to submit a white paper or proposal in response to a specific BAA and (3) submit the white paper or proposal by the deadline specified in the BAA. The data collection forms will standardize the collection of information that is both necessary and sufficient for the DHS S&T Directorate to record and track the receipt of RFI responses and unclassified white papers and proposals. The DHS S&T Directorate will accept RFI responses and white papers and proposals via its secure website to reduce burden and improve records management by (1) eliminating the cost and delay associated with the submission of RFI responses and white papers and proposals via non-electronic means, (2) facilitating timely review of RFI responses and white papers and proposals, and (3) improving the accuracy of records management for RFI responses and for white papers and proposals.
4. DHS S&T found no duplication of efforts, and there are no similar forms currently available that can be used for this system. The information being collected is either being submitted by the public at the voluntary initiation of the public (e.g., RFI response voluntarily submitted in response to an RFI or a white paper or proposal voluntarily submitted in response to a BAA) or is respondent-identifying information that is necessary for the DHS S&T Directorate to (1) contact RFI respondents for additional information and (2) evaluate white papers and proposals in an objective and timely manner and to provide respondents the results of those evaluations. Since any person or organizational entity may respond to a DHS S&T RFI or submit a white paper or proposal in response to a DHS S&T BAA, there is no other accurate, current source of this information than the respondents themselves.
5. Collection of this information via a secure website is intended to minimize burden for small businesses and other small entities. Small businesses and other small entities, which do not have access to the Internet, can request that hard copies of forms be mailed or faxed to them for completion and they can return these hard-copy forms to the DHS S&T Directorate.
6. The DHS S&T Directorate collects only information that is both necessary and sufficient to (1) receive and review responses from the public to a DHS S&T RFI and (2) receive white papers and proposals from the public in response to a DHS S&T BAA, evaluate those white papers and proposals in accordance with the criteria stated in the BAA, and provide the respondents with the results of the evaluation. Failure to collect respondent-identifying information when an respondent submits an RFI response or a white paper or proposal will prevent the DHS S&T Directorate from (1) properly attributing RFI responses and white papers and proposals to respondents, and (2) communicating effectively with respondents concerning their RFI responses and white papers and proposals. Failure to collect RFI responses would defeat the intent of the RFI and failure to collect white papers and proposals would place the DHS S&T Directorate in violation

of its BAAs.

7. Only if a respondent submits a classified white paper or proposal is he or she required to submit a hard copy of that white paper or proposal. Classified submittals must include ten printed copies and one electronic copy on compact disc recordable media.

Respondents may submit company-proprietary information. All such sensitive but unclassified (SBU) material is safeguarded as outlined in Department of Homeland Security Management Directive Number 11042.1, Safeguarding Sensitive But Unclassified (For Official Use Only) Information.

8. By notice in the Federal Register on August 17, 2007 at 72 FR 46231, DHS S&T notified the public that it was requesting comments on this information collection. The notice allowed for a 60-day public comment period. No comments were received. Additionally, by notice in the Federal Register on October 31, 2007 at 72 FR 61662, DHS S&T notified the public that it was requesting comments on this information collection. The notice allowed for a 30-day public comment period. No comments were received. No consultations with people outside the agency have been conducted. No consultations with representative of those whose information we are requesting have been consulted.
9. DHS S&T does not provide payments or gifts to respondents in exchange for a benefit sought.
10. The DHS S&T Directorate states in each RFI that information submitted in response to the RFI will be protected from disclosure outside the government. The DHS S&T Directorate states in each BAA that proposal submissions will be protected from unauthorized disclosure in accordance with FAR 15.207, applicable law, and DHS regulations. Respondents are directed to appropriately mark each page of their submission that contains proprietary information. The Privacy Act of 1974 (Public Law 93-589) mandates that personal information solicited from individuals completing Federal records and forms be kept confidential. A Privacy Threshold Analysis was completed and required the submission of a Privacy Impact Assessment, which was accepted as complete. They are included in the submission package.
11. There are no questions of a sensitive nature in this information collection.

12. Estimated Annualized Burden Hours and Costs

Form Name	No. of Respondents	No. of Responses per Respondent	Avg. Burden per Response (in hours)	Total Annual Burden (in hours)	Average Hourly Wage Rate	Total Annual Respondent Cost
RFI Response Form	35	1	.25	8.75	\$100	\$875

BAA Web Site Registration Form	1,500	1	.25	375	\$100	\$37,500
BAA Registration Form	2,000	1	.25	500	\$100	\$50,000
White Paper and Proposal Submission Form	1,330	1	.5	665	\$100	\$66,500
Total	4,865			1,548.75		\$154,875

Annual Reporting Burden and Respondent Cost: The total estimated ICR Public Burden in hours is 1,548.75. This figure was derived by summing the total annual burden hours from all forms. **The total annual number of respondents is 4,865.** This figure was derived by summing the number of respondents to each form.

13. There are no capital or start-up costs associated with this information collection. There is no fee charge of for filing and of the information collection forms. Any cost burdens to respondents as a result of this information collection are identified in Item 14.

14. **Government Cost**

Estimate annual cost to the federal government in relation to this information collection is \$796,250. The annualized Operations and Maintenance (O&M) cost of the DHS S&T BAA Program is for the following:

- \$318,750 for government salaries
- \$337,500 for program office contractor support
- \$50,000 for supplies, printing, and travel
- \$90,000 for BAA website operation and maintenance
- \$796,250 TOTAL

Public Cost

The total estimated annual public reporting cost is \$154,875. This figure was derived by summing the estimated annual respondent costs for all forms.

15. This is a new information collection.

16. DHS S&T does not intend to employ the use of statistics or the publication thereof for this information collection.

17. DHS S&T will display the expiration date of OMB approval for this information collection.

18. DHS S&T does not request an exception to the certification of this information collection.

Collection of Information Employing Statistical Methods.
Not Applicable.