Headquarters Supreme Allied Commander Transformation
Norfolk Virginia

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION
RFI-ACT-SACT-21-56
AMENDMENT 1 (ADDITIONS ARE IN RED)

This document contains a Request for Information (RFI) Call for Industry participation in NATO Crisis Management Exercise 2022 (CMX-22). Suppliers wishing to respond to this RFI should read this document carefully and follow the guidance for responding.

Call for Industry Demonstration during
NATO Crisis Management Exercise 2022 (CMX22)

HQ Supreme Allied Commander Transformation RFI 21-56 General Information	
Request For Information No.	21-56
Project Title	Request for industry input to NATO Crisis Management Exercise 2022
Due date for submission of requested information	**2 June 2021**
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ALL EMAIL CORRESPONDENCE MUST INCLUDE BOTH CONTRACTING AND TECHNICAL POCS LISTED ABOVE

INTRODUCTION

1. **Summary**. HQ Supreme Allied Commander Transformation (HQ SACT) is issuing this Request For Information (RFI) announcement to explore existing technologies, which can be used to assist in political and military strategic decision-making and to determine the level of interest within industry for showcasing technology demonstrations during NATO Crisis Management Exercise 2022 (CMX22) in March 2022.

2. HQ SACT Strategic Political and Military Assisted Decision Making (ADM) project aims to support NATO to maintain the Alliance's decisive edge by enabling the Alliance's political and military authorities to take timely and effective decisions.

3. CMX22 is an exercise that is designed to practice Alliance crisis management procedures at the strategic political level. It involves civilian and military staffs in

allied capitals, at NATO Headquarters, and in both Strategic Commands.[1] HQ SACT leads the experimentation and demonstration aspects of CMX22.

4. **Disclaimer**. This request for information does not constitute a commitment to issue a future request for proposal (RFP). The purpose of this request is to involve industry through collaboration, in an examination of existing technologies related to political strategic decision-making assistance.

5. HQ SACT has not made a commitment to procure any of the items described herein, and release of this RFI shall not be construed as such a commitment, nor as authorization to incur cost for which reimbursement will be required or sought. Further, respondents are advised that HQ SACT will not pay for any information or administrative costs incurred in responding to this RFI. The costs for responding to this RFI shall be borne solely by the responding party. Not responding to this RFI does not preclude participation in any subsequent RFP if issued in the future.

GENERAL BACKGROUND: ACT Framework for Collaborative Interaction (FFCI)

6. HQ SACT has implemented a Framework For Collaborative Interaction (FFCI) to increase opportunities for industry to contribute to ACT capability development efforts through collaborative work. Such collaboration enables HQ SACT and NATO, to benefit from industry models, advice, capabilities and experience during this work. In addition to the benefits ACT gains from such projects, this collaborative effort will provide industry with an improved understanding of NATO's capability requirements and associated issues and development challenges. Potential collaborative projects are on specific topics that are of mutual interest to both parties. Several mechanisms have been already developed to support the initiation of collaborative projects between industry and ACT ranging from informal information exchanges, workshops and studies to more extensive collaboration on research and experimentation. More detailed information on the ACT FFCI initiative can be found on the ACT web site at http://www.act.nato.int/ffci.

7. No FFCI agreement is required to respond to this RFI.

DESCRIPTION

8. **Background**. The Strategic Political and Military Assisted Decision-Making (ADM) program aims to enhance timely and effective decision-making at the North Atlantic Council (NAC) level through facilitating consensus. This program is one of the cornerstones to support the Alliance's ongoing efforts in improving responsiveness. As part of this program, ACT will demonstrate technologies that can assist political and military strategic decision-making during CMX22.

9. **Areas of Interest**. Specific areas where NATO is seeking information are as follows:

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[1] An excellent article describing Crisis Management Exercises can be found here: 'NATO crisis management exercises: preparing for the unknown' (7 February 2020), https://www.nato.int/docu/review/articles/2020/02/07/nato-crisis-management-exercises-preparing-for-the-unknown/index.html

STRATEGIC QUESTIONS	ENABLING FUNCTION/EXPECTED EFFECTS	EXPECTED BENEFITS
What is happening? PHASE I	**Situational Awareness** NATO identifies potential threats at the speed of relevance	• *Improved situational awareness. The data of the NATO security environment is visually represented with the ability to aggregate and disaggregate it as required by the user. The most current data is represented to ensure dynamism over time* • *Ability to build comprehensive patterns over time to reduce statistical uncertainty* • *Timely recognition of anomalies within 'routine' patterns such as Hybrid Warfare activity detection, identification and alerting*
Why is happening and what are the consequences? PHASE II	**Assessment** NATO understands the reason and implications of potential threats	• *Improved analysis and assessment capability* • *Improved support to perform specialist and comprehensive analysis and assessment across military and political/civil domains*
What should be our response? PHASE III	**Response Options** NATO identified response options to potential threats	• *Improved response options analysis, evaluation and visualization in the military and political/civil domains* • *Ability to visualize and analyse the impact of NAC decisions to draw strategic lessons learned and perform post-exercise/crisis analysis*

Figure 1: Areas of Interest

10. **Purpose of the RFI**. The purpose of the RFI is to seek industry participation in demonstrating state of the art technology during CMX22 that can assist with political military strategic decision-making of NAC. Any demonstration contemplated must be on a non-interference basis with the exercise.

11. **Expected benefits to respondents**. Industry participants will have the opportunity to expose and introduce their technologies to the NAC, Military Committee (MC) and other NATO personnel.

12. **Expected inputs from industry**. The expected input from industry is an introduction of their technology and confirmation of their interest in participating in demonstration during CMX22 by completing the attached Excel Response Sheet. The Excel Response Sheet consists of questions related to the product/service and how it can assist political military strategic decision-making.

REQUESTED INFORMATION

13. **Responses to the RFI.** See Excel Response Sheet. Responses must be sent in the unlocked excel spreadsheet file.

14. **Follow-on**. In lieu of written questions and answers, HQ SACT will conduct two GoToMeeting sessions to provide answers to questions regarding this RFI. Both of the sessions will be stand alone sessions – interested candidates may choose either of the dates or attend both of them. Each session will have the same structure by answering questions paragraph by paragraph. The dates are:

    a. First Q&A session. 26 April 2021 beginning at 0900 hrs Eastern Daylight Time. Register details below:

    Please register for RFI CMX22 Industry demonstrations: Q&A session I on Apr 26, 2021 9:00 AM EDT at:

    https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/7383318851384887053

    After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

    b. Second Q&A session. 3 May 2021 beginning at 0900 hrs Eastern Daylight Time. Register details below:

    Please register for RFI CMX22 Industry demonstrations: Q&A session II on May 3, 2021 9:00 AM EDT at:

    https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/7847620621562203149

    After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

15. **Handling of proprietary information.** Proprietary information, if any, should be minimized and clearly marked as such. Please be advised that all submissions become HQ SACT property and will not be returned.

16. **Questions**. All questions of a technical nature about this RFI announcement shall be asked at the online Q&A sessions noted above. The noted sessions will be recorded and Q&A will be posted on the HQ SACT P&C website at: http://www.act.nato.int/contracting.

17. **Response date**. Received no later than 1700 hours Zulu or Greenwich Mean Time on **2 June 2021**.

18. **Timeline**. The following timeline will be used:

    a. 2 June 2021– RFI response submission due to HQ SACT,

    b. Week of 20 June 2021 – down selected companies invited to demonstrate the ADM functionalities to HQ SACT via VTC or PPT and telecom,

    c. Week of 18 July 2021 – approximate date that companies notified of invitation to demonstrate during CMX22,

    d. 10 – 16 Mar 2022 – CMX22 in Brussels.

19. **Practical considerations**. As with all such events, there are practical considerations to consider:

    a. As the actual event is not until March 2022, some aspects of activities and dates may change. Security and other arrangements are still being finalised and will include a non-disclosure agreement.

    b. The location of the exercise, demonstrations will be at NATO HQ, Brussels, Belgium.

    c. Selected companies must agree to participate under the principles of FFCI.

    d. Industry visitors are responsible for their own transportation to and from the exercise site. ACT will facilitate access to NATO HQ.

    e. Visitors are responsible to pay for their own meals and accommodations.

    f. CMX22 is classified as NATO SECRET, therefore all participants must be able to prove that they have this clearance.

    g. The CMX22 scenario is NATO SECRET. Thus, the scenario will not be shared with Industry. At Annex B, you will find a possible scenario location and list of threats that can be used in your demonstrations.

20. **Technical specification.** Technical specifications are still being determined with NATO HQ and will be shared with companies selected to participate. It is unlikely that companies will have internet access inside the HQ.

21. **Selection criteria.** HQ SACT will use the criteria below to qualify and rank applying companies for selection by nations.

    a. Due to the expected high volume of applicants and the limited available exercise space, there is a qualification procedure to be followed for identification of companies to attend.

    b. Note that consortiums of companies/institutions are eligible for applying and establishment of such consortiums is strongly encouraged and welcomed.

    c. Selection Board will consist of NATO personnel from HQ SACT and NATO HQ. Industry members are not involved in the selection.

        i. How can the presented product/service demonstrate its ability to support political military strategic decision-making? Explain, provide details.

    ii. Based on the specification in Figure 1, where do you see the benefits of your product/service?

    iii. Describe in detail what is going to be the visual output of your service/product presented to the NAC.

    iv. With reference to Figure 1, which one of the NATO crisis response process phases can your product/service support? Please, explain how (use the staff supporting task language if applicable).

    v. Does the company present a finished and viable product for review and demonstration?

    vi. How is the product considered to be inventive, innovative, or disruptive?

    vii. Are there existing use cases that prove the worth of the product? If so, please, describe.

    viii. Is the company headquartered in a NATO Nation? If the answer is no, the company will be considered administratively non-compliant.

    ix. Do the company participants to this exercise have a NATO SECRET security clearance? If the answer is no, the company will be considered administratively non-compliant.

22. **Security Clearance**. Industry participants to this exercise will require a NATO SECRET security clearance.

23. **Enclosures**.

    a. Annex A: NATO strategic decision-making and crisis management

    b. Annex B: Examples of possible threats

24. **Summary**. THIS IS A REQUEST FOR INFORMATION (RFI) ONLY. The purpose of this RFI is to involve Industry, through collaboration, in CMX22. It does not create contractual rights or obligation nor does responding to the RFI confer any advantage on future solicitations or RFPs.

25. HQ SACT has not made a commitment to procure any of the items described herein, and release of this RFI shall not be construed as such a commitment, nor as authorization to incur cost for which reimbursement will be required or sought. It is emphasized that this is a RFI, and not a RFP of any kind.

Annex A – NATO strategic decision-making and crisis management

POLITICAL DECISION-MAKING IN NATO[1]

1. The North Atlantic Council (NAC) has effective political authority and powers of decision and consists of permanent representatives of all member countries meeting together at least once a week. The Council has an important public profile and issues declarations and communiqués explaining the Alliance's policies and decisions to the general public and to governments of countries which are not members of NATO.

2. The Council is the only body within the Alliance which derives its authority explicitly from the North Atlantic Treaty. The Council itself was given responsibility under the Treaty for setting up subsidiary bodies. Many committees and planning groups have since been created to support the work of the Council or to assume responsibility in specific fields.

3. The Council thus provides a unique forum for wide-ranging consultation between member governments on all issues affecting their security and is the most important decision-making body in NATO. All member countries of NATO have an equal right to express their views round the Council table. Decisions are the expression of the collective will of member governments arrived at by consensus. All member governments are party to the policies formulated in the Council or under its authority and share in the consensus on which decisions are based.

4. When the Council meets at the level of ambassadors or permanent representatives of the member countries, it is often referred to as the "Permanent Council". Items discussed and decisions taken at meetings of the Council cover all aspects of the Organization's activities and are frequently based on reports and recommendations prepared by subordinate committees at the Council's request. Equally, subjects may be raised by any one of the national representatives or by the Secretary General. Permanent representatives act on instructions from their capitals, informing and explaining the views and policy decisions of their governments to their colleagues round the table. Conversely, they report back to their national authorities on the views expressed and positions taken by other governments, informing them of new developments and keeping them abreast of movement towards consensus on important issues or areas where national positions diverge.

5. When decisions must be taken, action is agreed upon on the basis consensus. There is no voting or decision by majority. Each member country represented at the Council table or on any of its subordinate committees retains complete sovereignty and responsibility for its own decisions.

NATO CRISIS RESPONSE PROCESS

6. The NAC will decide for each relevant crisis if NATO should act and, if so, in what manner. While every crisis is unique, the NATO Crisis Response Process (NCRP) is the process by which the Alliance addresses and, subject to decisions by the NAC, aims to manage and resolve a crisis. In circumstances that will be difficult

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[1] Text adopted from 'North Atlantic Council' (10 October, 2017),
https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_49763.htm

to predict, the NCRP ensures the Alliance is prepared to perform the whole range of possible Article 5 and Non-Article 5 missions.

7. Clearly each circumstance will dictate the exact steps, but the NCRP provides a default template from which deviations may be made by informed decisions. It is primarily designed to allow the relevant staffs and NATO Committees to co-ordinate their work and to submit comprehensive advice to the NAC in a timely and compelling way. In so doing, it facilitates grand strategic political decision-making by capitals, through the NAC), early in an emerging crisis, as well as throughout its life cycle.

8. The NCRP consists of six phases. For the purposes of this RFI, NATO is interested in companies that can contribute to solutions for the first three phases:

   a. Phase 1 – Indications and Warning (I&W)[2]

      i. Indications and warnings are given either by NATO's intelligence and warning system or by an Ally or a partner. With these, there are in theory four options the Council can choose from: (i) decide that there is no need for further consideration; (ii) direct focused NATO vigilance and more information for the Council; (iii) consider diplomatic, political and precautionary responses, including civil emergency response, and take into account military implications as appropriate; or (iv) decide to initiate a full assessment of the crisis situation and move to Phases 2 and 3.

   b. Phase 2 – Assessment[3]

      i. The Council tasks the relevant political and military committees to launch an assessment of the crisis and provide advice on the developing crisis situation, and its implications for Alliance security. This is the so called Political-Military Estimate (PME) process. At this stage, the Council also tasks SACEUR to develop a response strategy.

   c. Phase 3 – Response Options[4]

      i. Based on the results of the PME process, the Council may select one of the response options by providing formal political guidance to the NATO Military Authorities (NMA) to conduct operations planning for the chosen option. This decision moves the process to Phase 4. However, at this point, the process does not yet imply a decision by NATO to undertake military action. But, all the possibilities are on the table and political, diplomatic as well as civil measures may have been initiated, primarily under NAC direction.

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[2] Text adopted from 'NATO's assessment of a crisis and development of response strategies' (10 May 2011), https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_75565.htm
[3] *Ibid.*
[4] *Ibid.*

Annex B – Examples of possible threats

Possible setting

1. NATO's eastern and southern borders have been contentious for some time. To that end, NATO has enhanced its presence in the eastern part of the Alliance, with four multinational battlegroups in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland. These battlegroups, led by the United Kingdom, Canada, Germany, and the United States respectively, are multinational, and combat-ready, demonstrating the strength of the transatlantic bond. Their presence makes clear that an attack on one Ally will be considered an attack on the whole Alliance. NATO's battlegroups form part of the biggest reinforcement of NATO's collective defence in a generation.

2. Recently, NATO inaugurated the NATO Strategic Direction South Hub, a centre designed to promote and enhance cooperation amongst the Alliance and partners. This centre was built to face evolving security challenges and promote partnership, cooperation, and dialogue with Middle Eastern and North African partners.

3. The NSD-S Hub in Naples serves to challenge the current and evolving security issues that face the Alliance and partners. These issues include destabilization, terrorism, radicalization, migration, and environmental concerns. The plethora of issues that the centre is focusing on is considered the crucial starting steps for developing and deepening relationships with partners.

Possible threats

4. In general, the demonstration scenarios could contain any of the threats that NATO nations may need to deal with. NATO is interested in these threats:

    a. Terrorism

    b. Cyber attacks

    c. Virus outbreak (pandemic)

    d. Massive disinformation campaign against a Nation/Nations/NATO

    e. Space related threats

    f. A2AD

    g. Deterrence and Comprehensive Deterrence

    h. Article 4 and Article 5