



**Headquarters Supreme Allied Commander Transformation  
Norfolk Virginia**

**REQUEST FOR INFORMATION RFI-ACT-SACT-20-31**

This document contains a Request for Information (RFI) Call for Industry Involvement in NATO Crisis Management Exercise 2021 (CMX21)

Suppliers wishing to respond to this RFI should read this document carefully and follow the guidance for responding.

<b>General Information</b>	
<b>Request For Information No.</b>	20-31
<b>Project Title</b>	Call for Industry Demonstrations During NATO Crisis Management Exercise 2021 (CMX21)
<b>Due date for submission of requested information</b>	1 July 2020
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## **Call for Industry Demonstrations During NATO Crisis Management Exercise 2021 (CMX21)**

### **Description**

1. HQ Supreme Allied Commander Transformation (HQ SACT) is issuing this Request For Information (RFI) announcement in order to determine what level of interest may exist for industry demonstrations during Crisis Management Exercise 2021 (CMX21).
2. This RFI DOES NOT constitute a current Request For Proposal (RFP) or a commitment to issue a future RFP. HQ SACT is not seeking proposals at this time and will not accept unsolicited proposals with respect to this RFI. Respondents are advised that HQ SACT will not pay for any information or administrative costs incurred in responding to this RFI or participating in CMX21, if selected. 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.

### **Purpose of the RFI (Problem Statement)**

3. The purpose of the RFI is to demonstrate state of the art technology during CMX21 that can assist with strategic political/military and operational decision-making and the preparation for and conduct of the CMX. Any demonstration contemplated must be on a non-interference basis with the exercise.

### **Expected Input From Industry**

4. The expected input from industry is to confirm their interest in participating in demonstrations during CMX21 by completing the attached template. In general, the template asks questions related to their product or service and how their product or service could contribute to assisting decision-making and training at the strategic political/military and operational levels.
5. ACT values ideas and information provided by industry and seeks their demonstration of knowledge during CMX21 to be as close as possible to political/military operations realities and challenges. CMX21 is an exercise held at NATO Headquarters (HQ) in Brussels, Belgium and in all the NATO capitals as well as participating military headquarters. It is expected that industry will only be invited to demonstrate at NATO HQ. The exercise is classified up to NATO Secret.
6. For selected companies the activities include:
  - a. Demonstrating your assisting decision-making or training technology to all exercise participant, and
  - b. An opportunity to meet your national representatives to NATO,

### **Framework For Collaborative Interaction**

7. 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>.

### **Political Decision Making in NATO<sup>1</sup>**

8. 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.
9. 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. Commands, committees and planning groups have since been created to support the work of the Council or to assume responsibility in specific fields.
10. 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 common consent. 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.
11. 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 Organisation'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.
12. When decisions must be taken, action is agreed upon on the basis of 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.

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics\\_49763.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_49763.htm)

## **NATO Crisis Management Process**

13. 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 Management Process (NCMP) 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 to predict, the NCMP ensures the Alliance is prepared to perform the whole range of possible Article 5 and Non-Article 5 missions.
14. Clearly each circumstance will dictate the exact steps, but the NCMP 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.
15. The NCMP also provides a procedural structure that allows the Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) to undertake some prudent preparatory planning activities in light of a developing or actual crisis in a reasonable time frame and, subsequently, to provide strategic assessments and advice, including on operations planning and throughout the execution of a mission.
16. The NCMP consists of six phases. For the purposes of this RFI, NATO is interested in companies that can contribute to solutions for the first four phases being:
  - a. Phase 1 - initial situational awareness of a potential/actual crisis,
  - b. Phase 2 - strategic assessment,
  - c. Phase 3 - military response options development,
  - d. Phase 4 - strategic plan development.
17. These phases are well explained in Allied Command Operations Comprehensive Operations Planning Directive COPD Interim V2 found at [https://www.act.nato.int/images/stories/events/2016/sfpdpe/copd\\_v20\\_summary.pdf](https://www.act.nato.int/images/stories/events/2016/sfpdpe/copd_v20_summary.pdf)

## **Operational Planning and Decision-Making in NATO<sup>2</sup>**

18. Operations planning requires specific practices and procedures for each level and the establishment of clear links between actions, effects, objectives and the end state and, where possible, the harmonization of military, political, civil and economic planning.
19. Regardless of the situation, the underlying premise for operations planning is that military operations are required to counter threats, from opposing forces or other sources, or to contain violence and hostilities. This pertains to both Article 5 Collective Defence and Non-Article 5 Crisis Response and encompasses conventional, unconventional and asymmetric threats. Our opponents, including political leaders, the population and the military, possess their own “will”, influenced by their own culture, perspectives and vital interests, to pursue goals in opposition to our own. It is therefore imperative during all operations planning to attribute to

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<sup>2</sup> Taken from document at [https://www.act.nato.int/images/stories/events/2016/sfpdpe/copd\\_v20\\_summary.pdf](https://www.act.nato.int/images/stories/events/2016/sfpdpe/copd_v20_summary.pdf)

our opponents and opposing factions the potential to willingly oppose our operations with their full potential when their aims conflict with our own.

20. During the conduct of operations planning, it is important for commanders at all levels to properly appreciate the relevant information environment and its potential impact on the planning for and conduct of military operations. Commanders need to be fully cognisant of how military activities, especially those involving the use of force, may communicate strategically and influence perceptions of a wide variety of audiences. In the design of operations, commanders and their staff need to consider various ways to create the desired effects, including both lethal and non-lethal measures as appropriate, to ensure those selected support the overall strategic intent.
21. Set within the context of a NATO contribution to a comprehensive approach, the purpose of this Allied Command Operations (ACO) Comprehensive Operations Planning Directive (COPD) is to outline the military procedures and responsibilities governing the preparation, approval, implementation and review of operation plans to enable a common approach to operations planning. This includes the associated documents which are required in order to execute the mission allocated to SACEUR and subordinate operational commanders. The COPD is NATO Unclassified to permit distribution within the international military community, where appropriate, to offer a set of common principles and an approach to operations planning and training.
22. The COPD is applicable to all operations planning activities at the NATO strategic and operational levels of command and can be adapted to the component/tactical level in order to enhance collaborative planning activity.

**Crisis Management exercises**

23. An excellent article describing Crisis Management Exercises may be found here <https://www.nato.int/docu/review/articles/2020/02/07/nato-crisis-management-exercises-preparing-for-the-unknown/index.html>

**Areas of interest**

24. Specific areas where NATO is seeking information are as follows:

STRATEGIC QUESTIONS	ENABLING FUNCTIONS/ <i>EXEPECTED EFFECT</i>	STAFF SUPPORTING TASKS
What is happening?	Situational awareness  <i>NATO identifies potential threats at the speed of relevance</i>	Horizon scanning Shared situational awareness – red, blue, white pictures Trend analysis Indications and Warnings Anomaly detection Alerting
Why is it happening?	Assessment	Analyse adversary strategic intent Determine whether this is a potential issue for NATO

What is the consequence?	<i>NATO understands the reason and implications of potential threats</i>	Assess own capabilities to counter
What should be our response?	Response Options <i>NATO identifies response options to potential threats</i>	Development of comprehensive response options Predicted impact/consequences of actions Decision support – options analysis and recommendation Plans development
What should we be planning for next?	Anticipation <i>NATO plans and executes response options to potential threats</i>	Predict crisis trajectory Anticipate future decision points Asses termination criteria

### Technologies

25. As with all In addition to the areas of interest above, HQ SACT is also interested in several technologies. Annex B contains a non-inclusive list.

### Practical Considerations

26. As with all such events, there are practical considerations to consider:

- a. As the actual event is not until February/March 2021, and the Final Planning Conference will not be held until late 2020, 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 and possible integration will be at NATO HQ, Brussels, Belgium.
- c. Selected companies must agree to participate under the principles of FFCI. A simplified, event-specific agreement will be offered to document agreement on the details of participation under these principles.
- d. Industry visitors are responsible for their own transportation to and from the exercise site. ACT will facilitate access to NATO HQ via NATO Request For Visit procedures.
- e. Visitors are responsible to pay for their own meals and accommodations.
- f. CMX21 is classified as NATO SECRET; therefore, all participants and demonstrators must be able to prove that they have this clearance and access.
- g. The CMX21 scenario is NATO SECRET. Thus, the scenario cannot be shared in this RFI. At Annex A, you will find a possible scenario location and list of threats that can be used in your demonstrations. It is expected that companies selected to demonstrate will receive demonstration scenario updates in due course.

## **Selection Criteria**

27. 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. To ensure transparency and fairness for companies, HQ SACT will use two categories of solutions. The solutions will be either assisted decision-making or training eg preparation for and conduct of CMX21. HQ SACT will use the following criteria to qualify and rank applying companies for selection. This recommendation will then be sent to NATO HQ for final selection by representatives from national delegations. Companies may reply to either category or both:

### **a. Assisted Decision-Making**

- i. Does the company deal with and conduct business in the strategic decision-making or operational planning realm? If so, what is the product or service provided?
- ii. Is there a strong connection between the problem statement and the product being presented eg does the company present a product considered to be part of column three in the table above?
- iii. Does the company present a finished and viable product for review and demonstration?
- iv. Is the product considered to be inventive, innovative, or disruptive?
- v. Is the product compatible with existing defence technologies and processes? Please provide a use case that supports this claim.
- vi. For technology solutions, is there an open API that is robust?
- vii. Are there existing use cases that prove the worth of the product?
- viii. Is the company headquartered in a NATO Nation? If the answer is no, the company will be considered administratively non-compliant.
- ix. Does the company have the requisite facility security clearance, and do proffered industry participants have the requisite personal security clearance and access? If the answer is no, the company will be considered administratively non-compliant.

### **b. Training**

- i. Does the company deal with and conduct business in the training realm? If so, what is the product or service provided?
- ii. Is there a strong connection between the problem statement and the product being presented eg does the company present a product considered to be part of column three in the table above?
- iii. Does the company present a finished and viable product for review and demonstration?



- iv. Is the product considered to be inventive, innovative, or disruptive?
- v. Is the product compatible with existing defence technologies and processes?  
Please provide a use case that supports this claim.
- vi. Is the product able to:
  1. Generate realistic threats or indications of threats related to the exercise scenario according to training objectives.
  2. Represent the dynamic situation of the exercise scenario allowing the realistic assessment of threats, comparison of response options and assessment of plans
  3. Generate realistic media and strategic communication events and material related to the exercise scenario
  4. Provide a collaborative environment for the conduction of the exercise, including preparations, execution, lessons learn and reporting.
- vii. For technology solutions, is there an open API that is robust?
- viii. Are there existing use cases that prove the worth of the product?
- ix. Is the company headquartered in a NATO Nation? If the answer is no, the company will be considered administratively non-compliant.
- x. Does the company have the requisite facility security clearance, and do proffered industry participants have the requisite personal security clearance and access? If the answer is no, the company will be considered administratively non-compliant.

### **Security Clearance**

28. Industry participants to this exercise will require a NATO SECRET security clearance.

### **Timeline**

29. The following timeline will be used:

- a. In lieu of written questions and answers, HQ SACT will conduct two gotomeeting sessions to provide answers to any questions. The dates are:
  - i. 27 May 2020 beginning at 0900 hrs Eastern Daylight Time. Companies must send attending company representative emails by 26 May 2020 EDT to the technical representative so that a meeting request may be sent, and
  - ii. 17 June 2020 beginning at 0900 hours Eastern Daylight Time. Companies must send attending company representative emails by 16 June 2020 EDT to the technical representative so that a meeting request may be sent.

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- b. 1 July 2020– RFI response submission due to HQ SACT;
- c. First two weeks of July – internal down selection and narrowing of field applying prescribed criteria in paragraph 27,
- d. Week of 13 July2020 – selected companies invited to demonstrate product via VTC or PPT and telephone call;
- e. Week of 20 July 2020 – second round of down selection applying prescribed criteria in paragraph 27,
- f. 27 July 2020 – nominated company names forwarded to NATO HQ;
- g. 24 August 2020 – approximate date that companies notified of invitation to demonstrate during CMX21;
- h. 23 February – 4 March 2021 – CMX21 in Brussels.

### **Technical Specifications**

30. Technical specifications are still being determined with NATO HQ and will be shared with companies selected to participate.

### **Requested Information**

31. See attached template to be completed.

### **Handling of Proprietary information**

32. Proprietary information, if any, should be minimized and clearly marked as such. Please be advised that all submissions responsive to this RFI become HQ SACT property and will not be returned. HQ SACT will handle and dispose of proprietary information with due care, preventing public or competitor disclosure.

### **Questions**

33. Questions of a technical nature about this RFI announcement shall be asked and answered during the two gotomeeting sessions as per the above timeline. There will be no other sessions.

### **Response Date**

34. Received by email no later than 1700 hours Zulu or Greenwich Mean Time on 1 July 2020.

### **Summary**

35. THIS IS A REQUEST FOR INFORMATION (RFI) ONLY. The purpose of this RFI is to involve industry, through collaboration, in CMX21. It does not create contractual rights or obligation nor does responding to the RFI confer any advantage on future solicitations or RFPs.

36. 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.

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## Annex A – Examples of Possible Threats

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.

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.

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.

In general, the demonstration scenarios could contain any of the threats that NATO nations may need to deal with. These could include:

- Asymmetric threats coming from terrorist activities in a Nation/Nations
- General cyber activity
- Virus outbreak (pandemic)
- Denied infrastructure and Resilience related National capabilities as effect of opposing forces activities in cyber and physical domain
- Massive disinformation campaign against a Nation/Nations/NATO
- Hybrid threats
- Space related threats
- Resilience
- A2AD
- Arms Control
- CBRN and pandemic
- Deterrence and Comprehensive Deterrence
- Article 4 to Article 5

From NATO Strategic Foresight Analysis

- The Redistribution of Geostrategic Power
- Use of Power Politics
- Non-state Actor Influence in Domestic and International Affairs
- Challenges to Governance
- Public Discontent/Disaffection and Polarization
- Asymmetric Demographic Change
- Increasing Urbanization
- Fractured and/or Polarized Societies

- Increasingly Connected Human Networks
- Rate of Technology Advance
- Access to Technology
- Global Network Development
- Dominance of Commercial Sector in Technological Development
- Technological Dependencies
- Globalization of Financial Resources
- Geopolitical Dimension of Natural Resources
- Increased Global Inequality
- Defence Expenditure Challenges in the West
- Environmental and Climate Change
- Natural Disasters

## Annex B – Possible Technologies

The following is a non-inclusive list of technologies that HQ SACT is interested in investigating:

- Big Data
- Open Source Data
- Computational Intelligence
- Modelling and Simulation
- Collaboration/Info Sharing Environments
- Data Science/Statics
- Modelling and Simulation
- Data Science/Statics
- Collaboration Environments
- Training
- Modelling and Simulation
- Operations Analysis
- Computational Intelligence
- Wargames
- Collaboration Environments
- Modelling and Simulation
- Operations Analysis
- Wargames
- Collaboration Environments
- Training