

DoD Point of Need Challenge webinar questions – America Makes

1. How is data transmitted to the FOB ?

Due to the limited timeframe, DoD networks will not be used. So, proposers should use commercial networks. Proposers should also bring remote network access with them (for example: SATCOM).

2. What are the specific operation conditions at the FOB sites?

Conner: On slide 16, there's a list of operational environment considerations that has been posted that just went out this morning to the MII. So, if you want to get a sense for the operational environment considerations, go check out that document there. That gives you real physical information as to temperature and humidity conditions for both the cold weather environment as well as the hot and humid environment.

3. Who has engineering release authority ? (local or decentralized)

Conner: It depends on the service and the part that you're operating in. Some services actually have a local authority that's given to the commander, especially for battle damage assessment repair. There are other things where you're dealing with something that's, let's say, airworthy and flight critical, where it's going to reside with the engineering authority for that particular weapon system. Now, for the sake of this challenge, I really would not worry about that per se. I think we want to be as innovative as possible. I think we would want to, in this case for a FOB situation, maybe we want to have the commander of the file have the authority to do what they need to do to continue operations in a potentially logistically constrained situation here.

4. Is there a limit on the amount of cost share and can it be in-kind?

JW: There is a per hour agreement there. There is no constraint if someone wanted to propose 2 to 1 in order to demonstrate this capability and in years past and as we have our agreement constructed, there's nothing that would prevent them from doing so. So, it is not required, but welcomed.

5. The "Build the FOB" challenge calls for the use of locally available materials. Should we include logistical costs to transport our own materials (not the equipment) to the demo site, or will the DoD provide logistical help?

Conner: I would recommend including that to err on the conservative side and include the cost of being able to bring materials to that location just in case. Keep in mind that that is written not as an obligation to use local materials, but that may be preferred to a certain extent. If we needed to, we could use materials that exist at that location versus having to haul in materials because again, we are anticipating this could be a logistically constrained situation.

6. Is there the list of repair parts available for the Class IX stay in the fight?

DoD is collecting the parts list currently. We will provide general information on the part description, the boundary box, and material type. It might not be possible to share the drawings themselves until the contract award.

7. Who will be running the demonstration equipment?

Conner: That's going to be largely up to the proposers. We are not requiring that DoD personnel operate it. I understand that there would be some good reasons not to let DoD personnel operate per se, but there may also be a desire to have DoD personnel operate it.

8. What is the level of energy (electricity or other fuel) availability at a FOB?

Conner: At a typical FOB, you are considering something like generator-based electricity. Obviously here we do have aspects of this challenge where we're looking at – could you generate fuel-based products but maybe not necessarily under the America Makes MII space and could be a different MII looking at that. It could be looking at the generation of clean electricity – solar, wind, and so forth at the FOB but usually you're looking at something like a generator type capability.

9. For budget reasons do we have to consider Alaska as a potential demonstration site? We assume funding for moving the equipment is a part of our budget estimate.

Conner: Yes, funding for moving the equipment is part of the budget estimate. The transportation and personnel to operate the equipment is part of the budget estimate. It should be conservative in nature. I don't know whether we are considering Alaska at this point as part of a demonstration site, but you want to be a bit conservative on your estimate for moving things to the site.

10. Is the expectation that in 6 months and for \$500K that you deliver the final desired outcome of this challenge, or that you deliver proof of concept that the ultimate idea appears feasible? Assuming the latter, if successfully demonstrated would this potentially lead to additional development work?

Conner: The expectation is that we demonstrate the technology in this operationally relevant environment at the location that we're selecting. What that might look like depends on the technology and could be more "proof-of-concept" based as long as it can be demonstrated in that environment under the conditions that we could be anticipating there. We do expect that likely you're not looking at a final completely integrated technology ready to be put in an acquisition program ready to be put in the field at the end of this.

11. Is there a specific part or part family that needed to be made by AM technology or just a concept and tool?

Conner: We are trying to pull together a list of relevant parts, preferably not export controlled parts that we could work on as part of this activity. I just received a list of parts that is way, way too much. So, I'm trying to scale that back a little bit and we'll try to get that out there as soon as possible.