

**FLORIDA STATE COURTS SYSTEM**

**Office of the State Courts Administrator**

**REQUEST FOR INFORMATION (RFI)**

**REMOTE COURT INTERPRETING TECHNOLOGY**

**RFI# 12-001-PH**

**Submission Deadline: March 11, 2013 @ 4:00 PM EDT**

## **I. Introduction**

The Florida State Courts System (SCS) hereby releases this Request for Information (RFI) to collect information, options and solutions related to the development, implementation, operation, maintenance and/or procurement of a technological solution for remote simultaneous interpretation<sup>1</sup>, specifically audio and video, which will connect courtrooms and hearing rooms across jurisdictions using a centralized interpretation capability (e.g. statewide hosting site). This RFI is issued solely for information and planning purposes and it does not constitute a competitive solicitation, or a promise to issue a competitive solicitation in the future. This RFI does not commit the SCS to contract for any service or proposed solution whatsoever. Responses to this Request for Information are not offers and may not be accepted by the SCS to form a binding contract.

## **II. Scope**

The SCS is seeking information regarding a technological solution for remote simultaneous interpretation, specifically audio and video, which will connect courtrooms and hearing rooms across jurisdictions using a centralized interpretation capability (e.g. statewide hosting site). The court system is also seeking current cost information from vendors regarding: 1) implementation of a coordinated statewide system; and 2) installation of remote simultaneous interpreter equipment within courtrooms, hearing rooms, and interpreter offices. The pricing should include, if available, the cost of planning, installation, and training services.

The courts anticipate an installation of equipment in approximately twenty circuits. For informational purposes, Florida has sixty seven counties, twenty judicial circuits, and numerous courthouse locations throughout the state.

Information gathered through this RFI will be used to assist the trial courts in their planning efforts, including cost benefit analyses on possible future implementation. If a cost benefit is demonstrated, it is anticipated, through subsequent procurement processes,

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<sup>1</sup> Simultaneous interpreting is rendering an interpretation continuously at the same time someone is speaking. Simultaneous interpreting is intended to be heard only by the person receiving the interpretation and is usually accomplished by speaking in whispered tones or using equipment specially designed for the purpose in order to be as unobtrusive as possible. National Center for State Courts. (1995) *Court Interpretation: Model Guides for Policy and Practice in the State Courts* (Publication No. R-167). Williamsburg, VA.

the courts will seek vendors' best price as a discount from published equipment prices for up to a three-year period.

### **III. Information Requested**

The SCS has determined a number of objectives to be met by a technological solution. The objectives, as noted below, should be addressed by vendors in their response. When providing the response, please include information related to whether or not the objective has been or could be met, and any associated financial or cost information. The vendor is not required to provide prices for any solutions described. However, general cost estimates for services similar in scope and size would be valuable as the SCS proceeds in reviewing its options. Any prices or figures provided are not binding to the company.

### **IV. Objectives**

- A.** The solution should be a scalable remote audio and video interpreter system that provides clear, audible communication between a remotely located interpreter and the court in proceedings held in multiple counties and court locations throughout Florida in a cost effective and reliable manner. Further, the solution should allow for a simultaneous mode of communication.
- B.** The solution should include an ad-hoc scheduler (i.e., call center) to enable on-demand interpreting services.
- C.** The solution should be able to operate on a variety of communications technology, (i.e., VOIP telephone systems), as well as TCP/IP connections.
- D.** The solution should provide administrative reports for tracking and usage data.
- E.** The solution should possess expansion capability. Currently, the solution is anticipated to be installed initially for proceedings of short duration. However, it is preferable that the solution possess the future capabilities to enable the expansion into more complex proceeding types (e.g., proceedings in which two interpreters are needed to provide interpreting services. For example, one for a witness and one for a defendant).
- F.** The solution should contain features which protect the integrity of the communication between specific parties.
- G.** The solution should allow for "confidential" communications between at least two (2) individuals located at a remote location. For the purposes of this document, confidential communication is defined as attorney/client communication and the ability to keep certain conversations off the record.

- H.** Once installed, the system should require little additional maintenance from either in-house or vendor staff. To minimize down time, the vendor should provide a schedule of recommended spare parts to be kept on the court's site.
- I.** The solution should be capable of integrating with the court's existing sound reinforcement systems and digital recording systems.
- J.** The solution should provide a visual indication that each channel is receiving a signal.
- K.** The solution should allow an interpreter to switch headphone audio and monitor video among circuit courtrooms using only the vendor's software application.
- L.** The video should allow the interpreters using the remote system to see the individuals they are interpreting for. Likewise, the system should allow the individuals needing interpreting services to see the interpreter.
- M.** The video camera should provide interchangeable view capability controlled by the interpreter via vendor's software interface to allow full view of the proceedings and focused view on the parties needing interpreting services.
- N.** Headsets should meet general hygiene requirements of equipment being worn by multiple parties.
- O.** Headsets should include only a single interconnection or be wireless. If wireless, the vendor should provide for charging stations within location of use.
- P.** The solution should have the ability to set a default bandwidth utilization for each call connection. Each call will use the default bandwidth for Video and Audio of 384Kbps + 20% overhead or (460,800bps) per connection. For per call planning purposes, 500Kbps will be used as default bandwidth.
- Q.** The solution should support the following for prioritization and allocation of bandwidth in the existing WAN infrastructure:
  - 1.** Allocate a minimum and maximum bandwidth utilization cap guarantee.
  - 2.** Stream audio only call in the same manner as a video call with audio. Packets will be tagged as AF41 (DSCP 34) in order to work with existing infrastructure.
  - 3.** Mark all packets with DSCP/DiffServ QoS tags in accordance with RFC 2474 and 2475 Differentiated Services Codepoint (DSCP).
  - 4.** Mark Video packets as AF41 (DSCP 34) on all traffic that is sent across the LAN/WAN.
  - 5.** Mark Audio only packets as EF (DSCP 46) on all traffic that is sent across the LAN/WAN.

6. Provide some buffering internally within the device to assist in order prioritizing packet flows.
7. Not tunnel traffic. Tunneling hides the distinguishing characteristics of each flow.
8. Capable of providing a stable, reliable and secure interface for configuration and control via HTML or SSH.
9. Support IP routing RFC 2474-4.2.2, Voice RFC 3246, Interactive Video RFC 2597, and Best Effort RFC 2474-4.1.
10. Have the ability to send system log data to a syslog collector with ability to review local log buffer via html or SSH interface.
11. Audio Codec's should be the latest industry standard to ensure high quality sound utilizing the minimum bandwidth necessary. Codec's should be reverse compatible with legacy equipment.
12. Minimum Audio Codec's supported should be [G.711](#), [G.729](#), [G.729a](#), [G.723.1](#), [G.726](#), [G.722](#), [G.728](#), [Speex](#), [AAC-LD](#).
13. Minimum Video codec's supported should be: [H.261](#), [H.263](#), [H.264](#).
14. Network Signaling: H.323, H.245, H.225.0, SIP (RFC 3261).
15. Network Interface: 10/100 auto NIC (RJ45).

## V. Process

The SCS will review and analyze the information received from this RFI to determine the best option(s) to address SCS needs. Responses to this request will be reviewed for informational purposes only and will not result in the award of a contract. Vendors submitting a response to the RFI are not prohibited from responding to any related subsequent solicitation. Not responding to this RFI does not preclude participation in any future procurement, if any is issued.

## VI. Response Date

Responses must be submitted via e-mail by 4:00 PM EDT on March 11, 2013.  
Responses should be directed to:

Steven Hall  
Chief of General Services  
Office of the State Courts Administrator  
500 South Duval Street

Tallahassee, FL 32399-1900

[halls@flcourts.org](mailto:halls@flcourts.org)

## **VII. Response Format**

Responses to this RFI should be submitted in Searchable PDF format. Potential vendors should, at a minimum, include the following sections in their submission:

- Introduction and Executive Summary
- Background
  - Company Overview, History, Experience and Organizational Structure
  - List of federal, state, county or municipal government entities, court systems and other organizations, including contact information, where the vendor may have implemented, performed or provided a similar service or solution.
- SCS Objectives
  - Responses to the objectives outlined in Section IV. Please respond in the order listed.
- Additional Information
  - Include any pertinent information related to such a technological solution not provided elsewhere in the response.

## **VIII. Questions**

Questions regarding this RFI shall be submitted in writing by e-mail to [halls@flcourts.org](mailto:halls@flcourts.org). Verbal questions will NOT be accepted. Questions will be answered by sending questions and responses to respondents; accordingly, questions shall NOT contain proprietary or classified information. All questions must be received by March 4, 2013 at 4:00 PM EST. Responses to questions will be provided by March 6, 2013 by close of business unless otherwise indicated. All questions and responses will be posted to [http://www.flcourts.org/gen\\_public/purchasing/index.shtml](http://www.flcourts.org/gen_public/purchasing/index.shtml), by close of business March 7, 2013.

## **IX. Public Records**

All information obtained shall become the property of the SCS upon receipt and will not be returned. Florida law expansively defines what constitutes a public record; see, for example, Rule 2.420, Florida Rules of Judicial Administration and section 119.07, Florida Statutes. Vendors must indicate which portions, if any, of the information being provided is proprietary or confidential by clearly segregating and marking each page

upon which such information appears (for example, materials may be placed in a separate electronic file including the word “confidential” in the filename). Briefly describe in writing the grounds for claiming exemption from the public records requirements, including the specific statutory authority citation for such exemption. Failure to do so will result in all information submitted being subject to public disclosure in accordance with applicable rules and laws. The information request may be used to develop specifications for a solicitation.

**X. Vendor Costs**

Vendors are responsible for all costs associated with the preparation, submission, and any potential meeting to discuss this RFI. The SCS will not be responsible for any vendor related costs associated with responding to this request.

**XI. Addendum**

Any clarification or additional information that may substantially affect the outcome of this RFI will be provided in the form of a written addendum. All addenda will be posted on the SCS website at:

[http://www.flcourts.org/gen\\_public/purchasing/index.shtml](http://www.flcourts.org/gen_public/purchasing/index.shtml)

**NOTICE TO PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES IN NEED OF REASONABLE**

**ACCOMMODATION:** Please contact Steven Hall to make your request at [halls@flcourts.org](mailto:halls@flcourts.org) as soon as possible before the deadline for submittal.