USAF Prepares for Phase 2 of Multi-Function Tactical Radar Program

The US Air Force is in the planning stage for the next phase of its Multi-Band Multifunction Tactical Radar System (MB-MTRS). The Air Force Life Cycle Management Center's (AFLCMC) Electronic Systems Directorate, Aerospace Management Systems Division (HBA), Air Traffic System Branch (HBAA), Air Traffic Control (ATC) Future Technology (AFT) Program Management Office (PMO) at Hanscom AFB, Massachusetts, has issued a Request for Information (RFI) for the Phase 2 of the MB-MTRS to gather industry input ahead of an expected solicitation. Phase 1 of the program, which is being conducted under Other Transaction Authority acquisition guidelines, was completed in February.

The MB-MTRS is being developed to perform four missions: ATC surveillance, Battle Management Command and Control (BMC2), Counter small Unmanned Aircraft Systems (C-sUAS) and Weather Sensing. (A fifth requirement, for a Precision Approach Radar function, was dropped ahead of Phase 2.)

According to the RFI, "The Department of Defense (DOD) transformation vision relies heavily on more expeditionary and agile joint forces which in turn places increased emphasis on aviation assets for deployment, employment, sustainment, and redeployment. To support this vision, the Air Force requires the ability to launch and recover sorties from an agile network of airbases with varied capabilities in all weather conditions while also providing localized situational awareness for the protection of those airbases. Future ATC systems adaptability is critical to meet short and enduring missions. The MB-MTRS shall detect airborne targets and produce data for varied systems to enable timely and relevant

BMC2 actions (Air Traffic and Airspace Control) and defensive decisions against threats. The MB-MTRS shall provide real-time Doppler weather information including Next Generation Weather Radar (NEXRAD) Level II base products (reflectivity, mean radial velocity, and spectrum width) that are crucial for meteorological analysis and weather forecasting. The MB-MTRS sensors shall support all four mission functions individually and simultaneously."

The RFI adds, "The MB-MTRS shall provide the scalable sensor coverage for rapid decision-making and improve situational awareness needed to support Adaptive Operations in Contested Environments (AOiCE). To support the emerging AOiCE Concept of Operations (CONOPs), the MB-MTRS shall be capable of withstanding world-wide deployable environmental conditions and the unique rigors of repeated world-wide deployable cycles in a reliable and sustainable manner."

In terms of expected minimum performance, the RFI states, "The Air Force requires the ability to launch and recover sorties from an agile network of airbases with varied capabilities in all weather conditions while also providing localized situational awareness for the protection of those airbases. In order to execute the scheme of maneuver inherent with Agile Combat Employment (ACE) while contributing to the theater sensing grid in support of Advanced Battle Management System (ABMS), lightweight multifunctional sensors are required. These sensors must enable effective terminal ATC, airspace warning, weather processing, BMC2 and response to threats operations while supporting the maneuverability and survivability required. As a multifunction platform, the MB-MTRS is intended to reduce the volume of logistical support for inter/intra theater airlift, supply chains and support personnel and result in a reduction of electromagnetic interference from disconnected/independent systems trying to work simultaneously." The RFI also describes requirements for radar performance, transportability, set-up and tear-down

times and power. It adds that the Air Force prefers a commercial off-the-shelf solution.

The Notice ID is RFI_MBMTRS_FA2330, and the program point of contact is Mike Robblee, Program Manager, 1-380-456-4925 (TEAMS), e-mail Michael.robblee.3@us.af.mil. Responses to the RFI are due by May 1. *—JED Staff*