

Sources Sought for Satellite Data Processing

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Related Categories: Communications Services, Satellite Communications, Big Data/Analytics, Department of Commerce

The National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) recently issued a sources sought notice for data center processing to support satellite constellations expected to be launched in the next five years.

The National Environmental Satellite, Data, and Information Service (NESDIS) [notice](#) outlined a potential requirement to support and provide the Constellation Observing System for Meteorology, Ionosphere, and Climate (COSMIC-2 (C2)) processing system. The follow-on contract to the current COSMIC constellation includes two constellations, each comprised of six satellites. Launches for the two constellations are planned for 2016 and 2018. The first constellation, to be launched in 2016, will be an equatorial orbit providing increased observation over the tropics. The second constellation, to be launched in 2018, will be in a polar orbit, similar to the predecessor COSMIC constellation, providing data with global coverage. The performance period for the effort could stretch FY 2014 to FY 2022. Development efforts would stretch the first two years of that span, followed by operations and maintenance as well as post-processing and archiving work beginning in FY 2016.

The sources sought notice calls for a contractor to provide a mature, fully automated Global Navigation Satellite System Radio Occultation (GNSS RO) data processing, distribution, and archival system by May 2016. Like other weather satellites, these systems collect data that enable longer lead times on severe weather warnings and more accurate forecasts. As government agencies work to make information machine readable and publicly available, the data generated and disseminated by weather satellites is often highlighted as a potential source of economic fuel. Yet even these programs do not escape budget pressure.

The FY2015 budget requested some **\$6.8 million for COSMIC-2**. Down the line, additional funding for the program is expected come from an international partnership with Taiwan, which has pledged around \$100 million towards construction costs for the second satellite constellation. Recent debate around NOAA's various satellite systems has raised questions about prioritizing funding. At the same time, the full cost and operation of the 12-satellite COSMIC-2 is expected to be a fraction of other satellite programs, like the Joint Polar Satellite System (JPSS). Recently, the Senate subcommittee approved \$51 billion for Commerce, Justice, and Science. The bill is expected to go before the full Senate Appropriations Committee on June 5, 2014, removing the current guesswork about competing programs and potential spending caps for the satellite programs.

Responses to the notice are due by June 30, 2014. Updates and additional information is available through the GovWin opportunity database (opportunity ID: 114905).

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