



Board Report

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Agenda Number: 3

REVISED
SAFE BOARD MEETING
JUNE 23, 2016

**SUBJECT: SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA 511 TRAVELER INFORMATION SYSTEM NEXT
GENERATION 511 INTERACTIVE VOICE RESPONSE SERVICES**

ACTION: APPROVE RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATIONS

AUTHORIZE the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to:

- A. AWARD a four-year firm fixed price, Contract No. PS5295500, to IBI Group Inc., in the amount of \$4,150,000 for the development, deployment and operation of the next generation **Southern California 511 (511) Interactive Voice Response (IVR) services.**
- B. APPROVE Contract Modification Authority specific to Contract No. PS5295500 in the amount of \$1,000,000.

ISSUE

The current and initial 511 system was deployed in June 2010. Pursuant to Board action in June 2015, the existing contract was extended 24 months, to June 30, 2017, in order to accommodate the procurement, development and seamless transition to a new system. This recommendation ensures that SAFE will be able to deploy a new IVR service by June 30, 2017.

DISCUSSION

Background

In July 2000, the Federal Communications Commission designated 511 as the national traveler information number. The purpose of 511 is to provide travelers with easy access to a variety of transportation related information. In 2005, the Federal government enacted the Federal Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), which contained a mandate to deploy 511 systems nationwide.

In response to this requirement, LA SAFE partnered with the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro), Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA), Ventura County

Transportation Commission (VCTC), California Highway Patrol (CHP) and the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) to develop and deploy the current Southern California 511 system. On February 28, 2008, the Board awarded a contract to IBI Group, Inc. for the development, deployment, operation and maintenance of the current 511 Motorist Aid and Traveler Information System (MATIS). 511 was deployed in June 2010 consisting of an automated IVR phone service and a website (Go511.com). The service provides users with real-time traffic information as well as transit, rideshare, and other related information. Since the deployment in June 2010, the system has supported over 18,000,000 users and has undergone a number of changes, such as the addition of real-time transit information, City of Los Angeles parking information and the deployment of a mobile app. In addition to the traveler information services, 511 also allows callers to request motorist assistance similar to using a roadside call box.

Next Generation 511 IVR Services

Technology has progressed to a point where the current IVR system is becoming outdated, difficult to maintain and increasingly challenging to ensure an optimal level of service and quality to our users. As reported to the Board in October 2015, staff conducted an evaluation of the current 511 system and presented the strategy regarding the replacement of the system. The core of the strategy was to focus on improved customer experience, increased flexibility, greater innovation and deployment of the latest technology. The strategy also called for the separation of the 511 system into two main contracts - 1) IVR services; and 2) Web/Mobile/Social Media services. The separation of the contracts would enable each contract to obtain subject matter professionals to focus on their area of expertise and improve innovation, customer service and oversight of the system by LA SAFE. Additionally, the separation of the services was anticipated to generate greater competition, which it did as the procurement for the old/current contract generated three proposals, while the procurements for the separated next generation contracts generated a combined total of 12 proposals.

The recommended contractor, IBI Group, Inc., has experience with LA SAFE as the current 511 provider; however, in the current 511 system, IBI acts as the prime contractor focusing on data integration and web services, while the operation of the IVR is managed by its sub-contractor. As the current contractor, IBI Group has experienced both the ups and downs of developing and deploying a consolidated 511 system for the first time in this region. The current IVR, being an older system and managed by a sub-contractor, has experienced some issues with its voice/speech recognition as well as being agile and stable enough to implement timely improvements. Under the new IVR contract, IBI will be solely focused on providing and managing their own hosted IVR service, which they procured, developed and improved subsequent to being awarded the current contract. IBI's IVR service currently supports over five million annual users in New York, Massachusetts, and Alaska.

The award of this contract will ensure that LA SAFE is able to develop and deploy the next generation 511 IVR in a seamless manner by or before June 2017. The next generation IVR will utilize current and expandable technologies and be scalable to accommodate growth and other changes. The new IVR will be more agile, responsive, user-friendly and easier to maintain. In addition, the new system will be less costly to operate and maintain, saving approximately 25% compared to the currently monthly operating cost.

Some specific improvements to be realized with the next generation IVR service include:

- Personalization - ability of users to get more targeted/personalized information;
- Focus on “Transaction Completion Rate” - performance measure tracking the ability of the IVR to complete a caller’s request for information;
- Visual IVR - a new service allowing users to integrate the use of their smart phone with the IVR;
- Spanish IVR - development, testing and implementation of a Spanish language option on the IVR;
- Improve Speech Recognition - transitioning to the latest speech recognition platform;
- Improved Management and Administrative Controls - improves oversight of the operation of the system;
- Improved alert and emergency management capabilities;

LA SAFE has worked with and will continue to work with our stakeholder partner agencies in the development, deployment, management and operation of next generation 511 system. Involved stakeholders include Metro, Caltrans, CHP, OCTA, VCTC, Access Services, City of Los Angeles and Glendale BeeLine, City of Pasadena Transit and other regional agencies.

Contract Modification Authority

The increase of the delegated contract modification authority from \$500,000 to \$1,000,000 is requested to enable staff to respond to new and unforeseen developments during the term of this contract. The experiences of the current 511 system demonstrate that over the course of the term of the contract, any number of new issues may arise. For example, the initial 511 system did not include real-time transit or the City of Los Angeles ExpressPark information as they were not available at the time. The contract modification authority will enable LA SAFE to respond to the availability of new and relevant information as well as adapt to new technologies or services as they are identified.

DETERMINATION OF SAFETY IMPACT

A critical role of effectively managing freeway incidents is the prompt and accurate dissemination of information to the public. This action will enable NextGen 511 IVR Services to improve its operations and provide enhanced and more actionable information to the public thereby reducing congestion and possible safety impacts.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Funding in the amount of \$3,535,000 in cost center 3351, project 300209, has been included in SAFE’s FY17 budget request. This funding is specially identified to support the development efforts and activities associated with the transition to the next generation 511 system. Since this is a multi-year contract, the cost center manager and Executive Officer will be accountable for budgeting the cost in future years.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

The Board may elect not to approve these recommendations. This option is not recommended as SAFE will no longer be able to provide this service on which over 300,000 monthly users and many partner agencies rely.

NEXT STEPS

Upon approval by the Board, staff will execute Contract No. PS5295500 with IBI Group, Inc. to begin development, implementation and deployment of the Next Generation 511 IVR system.

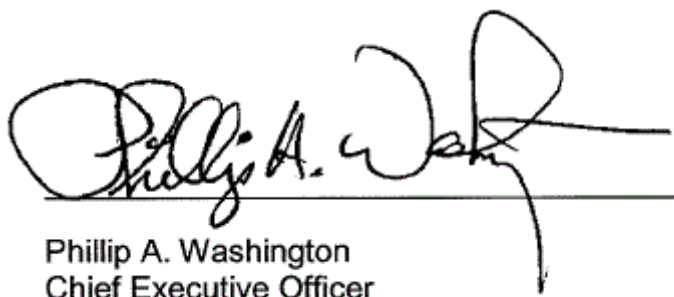
ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A - Procurement Summary

Attachment B - DEOD Summary

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