

**REQUEST FOR INFORMATION FOR**

**511PA PHONE SYSTEM**

**ISSUING OFFICE**

**PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
BUREAU OF OFFICE SERVICES**

**RFI NUMBER**

**3517RFI01**

**DATE OF ISSUANCE**

**November 15, 2017**

**REQUEST FOR INFORMATION**

**FOR**

**511PA PHONE SYSTEM**

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## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Activity	Responsibility	Date
Please monitor the eMarketplace website for all communications regarding this RFI.	Responding Entity	<b>On going</b>
<p><b><u>Electronic responses</u></b> may be sent to the Issuing Office via email to <a href="mailto:joromberge@pa.gov">joromberge@pa.gov</a> no later than the date and time established on this Calendar of Events. The Issuing Office reserves the right to accept untimely submissions.</p> <p><b><u>Paper responses</u></b> may be sent to the Issuing Office by the date and time established on this Calendar of Events:</p> <p>Pennsylvania Department of Transportation            Bureau of Office Services            ATTN: John Romberger, Issuing Officer            400 North Street, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor            Harrisburg, PA 17120</p> <p>*Due to increased security requirements in the Commonwealth's mail processing operation, all incoming mail to the Keystone Building is routed, scanned, and sorted at an off-site location prior to delivery. This includes overnight deliveries. Be aware when submitting proposal documents via overnight delivery services that there is no guarantee that proposal documents will be received in the Issuing Office when required. Proposals which are received late will be rejected regardless of the reason for late arrival. Offerors are advised to allow extra time to ensure timely delivery. Receipts for all hand-delivered packages must be obtained and signed by the Issuing Officer or their designee to verify date and time of delivery.</p>	Responding Entity	<b>December 4 , 2017</b>

## PART I

### GENERAL INFORMATION

#### I-1. Purpose

This Request for Information (“RFI”) provides an opportunity for interested entities (hereinafter “Responding Entities”) to provide input into the future direction of PennDOT’s 511PA telephonic traveler information system, specifically its interactive voice response (IVR) component. The purpose of this RFI is to obtain information from Responding Entities to assist PennDOT’s understanding of options to improve the current 511PA phone system to potentially issue a future procurement.

#### I-2. Issuing Office

PennDOT’s Bureau of Office Services issued this RFI on behalf of the Commonwealth. The sole point of contact in PennDOT for this RFI shall be the Issuing Officer, Viola Pressley, PennDOT, Bureau of Office Services, Commonwealth Keystone Building, 400 North Street, 5th Floor, Harrisburg, PA 17120-0041, [joromberge@pa.gov](mailto:joromberge@pa.gov) . Please refer all inquiries to the Issuing Officer. **ANY QUESTIONS PERTAINING TO THIS RFI SHALL BE DIRECTED IN WRITING TO THE ISSUING OFFICE IDENTIFIED IN THIS SECTION I-2; PHONE CALLS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.**

#### I-3. Background

PennDOT launched its 511PA traveler information service in September of 2009. The service included a traveler information website, an interactive voice response (IVR) phone system, and a personal alert service that allowed users to register for personalized traffic information to be delivered directly to their email or phone. In 2014, the service was updated to include a hands free, eyes free mobile application available for Android and iOS devices.

511PA provides current, up to date traveler information to the public 24/7/365 through its various systems. Traffic information and conditions are available on all state-owned roads, as well as all Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission (PTC) routes via the 511PA website and mobile application. The IVR phone system and personal alerts system provide traffic information and conditions on a subset of routes that includes interstates, PTC routes, and other major state and US routes.

In an average month, the 511PA website receives 200,000 visits from roughly 100,000 unique visitors. The number of unique visitors and total visits nearly triple in winter months when there are major storms. The IVR phone system receives roughly 20,000 calls a month from an average 10,000 unique callers. Call volume increases by 50% in the event of a major winter storm. The personal alerts service currently has approximately 35,000 subscribers and the mobile application has been downloaded by 185,000 users across both iOS and Android devices.

#### **I-4. Objectives**

PennDOT is currently developing the scope and defining the requirements for the next 511PA Traveler Information service contract. PennDOT's goal is to continue to provide accessible information to travelers while making efficient use of taxpayer dollars.

Since the PennDOT 511PA service was launched, the IVR phone system has consistently been the most expensive of the existing services to build, operate, and maintain. The IVR phone system usership is low and PennDOT has seen a slow but steady decline in usage over the last several years. With the continued advancement and penetration of mobile technology that allows users improved access to traveler information, PennDOT is evaluating if the more conventional IVR phone system should be included in the new contract. PennDOT recognizes that there still is a small user base for the conventional IVR phone system and that some of these users may not have easy access to the other services. Therefore, PennDOT is seeking information on how to continue to meet the needs of the conventional IVR phone system users in a more cost effective manner, whether this is by continuing with a conventional phone service or by replacing this service with a less costly phone-based alternative.

#### **I-5. Addenda to the RFI**

If the Issuing Office deems it necessary to revise any part of this RFI before the response date, the Issuing Office will post an addendum to the DGS website at <http://www.emarketplace.state.pa.us>. It is the Responding Entity's responsibility to periodically check the website for any new information or addenda to the RFI.

#### **I-6. Requirements**

Responding Entities may elect to provide a response either by paper or electronically via email.

**Electronic responses** shall be emailed to [PDRFPQuestions@pa.gov](mailto:PDRFPQuestions@pa.gov) no later than the date and time established on the **Calendar of Events**.

**Paper responses** may be provided but must have a complete and exact copy on a separate Flash Drive in Microsoft Office, Microsoft Office-compatible format, or Adobe Acrobat format. Electronic documents are not to be password protected. Responses must be received no later than the date and time established on the **Calendar of Events**.

#### **I-7. Information Handling**

Any information obtained from PennDOT by Responding Entities during the course of this RFI shall be considered confidential and shall not be disseminated nor discussed except as necessary to respond to this RFI or as required by law.

All responses and response deliverables, once submitted to PennDOT, become the property of PennDOT and PennDOT shall have unrestricted authority to reproduce, distribute, and use any submitted report or data designed or developed and delivered to PennDOT as part of the performance of this RFI.

#### **I-8. Cost**

Responding Entities shall refrain from providing any associated cost or dollar value in the response.

PennDOT shall not be liable for any costs or expenses incurred by Responding Entities in the preparation and delivery of their response to this RFI.

#### **I-9. PennDOT Questions for Response from Responding Entities**

Responding Entities shall develop responses to the following questions which must be from the Responding Entity's perspective in regards to PennDOT's option to issue a future procurement.

1. Given the increasing prevalence of smartphones and mobile technology and the availability of traveler information via apps and notifications on mobile platforms, is a conventional traveler information phone system still a valuable service for a traveler information program? Please explain your answer.
2. If a conventional traveler information phone system is still valuable, what are the current industry best practices for providing such a service in a way that meets user needs while making efficient use of funds?
3. Would having a conventional phone system that is only activated during winter events or other emergency situations offer a significant reduction in the level of effort required to support, maintain, and operate as compared to a service that is operational 24/7/365?
4. If a conventional phone system is no longer a valuable service, what are viable alternatives for providing accurate, current traffic information to users via the telephone? Are these solutions theoretical or have they been implemented? Please cite examples where possible.

**I-10. Response Instructions**

Responding Entities shall submit a response to this RFI. Responding Entities may submit additional information that they determine to be relevant.

The issuance of this RFI does not constitute a commitment from PennDOT to issue a future procurement. Submission of a response to this RFI does not guarantee that a Responding Entity will be selected for any subsequent competitive procurement, nor does it preclude any Responding Entity from responding to future procurement opportunities except as prohibited by law. Please note that Responding Entities should seek the advice of counsel, as necessary, and be cognizant of the State Adverse Interest Act, which prohibits recommending the making of a contract and participation in that subsequent contract. 71 P.S. §§ 776.1-776.8.

This RFI shall not constitute nor should it be construed as a solicitation or as an obligation on the part of PennDOT to issue a procurement or award a contract. The Commonwealth shall not pay for the preparation of any response or information submitted to the Commonwealth or for the Commonwealth's use of such information. The Commonwealth may, in its sole discretion, use information provided in response to this RFI; however, the Commonwealth is not obligated to use any information received in response to this RFI.

To the extent that information provided in response to this RFI may be considered as divulging a Responding Entity's intellectual property including copyrights and trade secrets or confidential proprietary information ("CPI"), the following shall apply:

- A. Confidential Information. CPI or trade secrets are not necessarily required to be submitted to PennDOT. However, information pertaining to emerging technologies, whether existing intellectual property including trade secrets or CPI, may be beneficial to PennDOT's and the Commonwealth's decision making as its personnel proceed with deliberations for future courses of action. A Responding Entity shall not label entire responses as confidential or proprietary or trade secret protected. Any Responding Entity which determines that it will divulge such information as part of its response should: 1) submit the signed written statement described in Subsection C. below; 2) note the parameters of any CPI or intellectual property (including trade secrets) in its response; and 3) provide a redacted version of its response, which removes only the CPI and trade secrets, for required public disclosure purposes.

- B. Commonwealth Use. All material submitted with the response shall be considered the property of the Commonwealth and may be returned only at the Issuing Office's option. The Commonwealth, including PennDOT, shall have the right to use any or all ideas, and concepts that are presented in any response, unless a Responding Entity, as part of its response, affirmatively notes any and all objections in its response regarding confidential information or trade secrets. Notwithstanding any proprietary or copyright notices contained on the face of responses, the Commonwealth shall have the non-exclusive right to reproduce and to distribute responses internally and to comply with public record or other disclosure requirements under the provisions of any Commonwealth or United States statute or regulation, or rule or order of any court of competent jurisdiction.
- C. Public Disclosure. All responses are potentially subject to disclosure in response to a request for public records made under the Pennsylvania Right-to-Know Law, 65 P.S. §§ 67.101, et seq. If a proposal submission contains CPI, information protected by intellectual property rights or trade secrets, a signed written statement to this effect shall be provided with the submission in accordance with 65 P.S. § 67.707(b) for the information to be considered exempt under 65 P.S. § 67.708(b)(11) from public records requests under the Right-to-Know Law.

In addition to Sections 707(b) and 708(b)(11) of the Right-to-Know Law, records protected by a privilege, federal or state law or regulations or judicial order or decree are exempt from the presumption that a record in PennDOT's possession is a "public record." 65 P.S. §§ 67.305 and 67.102. Furthermore, in the event of a conflict between the Right-to-Know Law, 65 P.S. set forth at § 67.3101.1 and the Pennsylvania Uniform Trade Secret Act (PUTSA) set forth at 12 Pa. C.S. §§ 5301 through 5308, PUTSA will control.