RFP 60-25-01 Reciprocal Exchange Data Sharing Between Systems

Questions & Answers

1. How will the new system ensure consistent data validation across all Reciprocal Systems, given the differences in data formats and schedules? Could real-time reconciliation be a solution?

   Validation at entry or upload will likely be most effective.

2. From the RFP : On page 3 "The selected responder will not be allowed to use any subcontractors to provide any of the services as outlined in the RFP and resulting contract." Can SURS clarify if the vendor staff who work directly for the vendor as independent (1099) contractors, not corporations that are owned or managed by others, are acceptable?

   Although SURS typically does not allow the use of subcontractors in its procurement matters, SURS would allow the selected vendor to use individual 1099 independent contractors who are hired by the vendor and would be working directly for the vendor on this procurement matter.

3. Is SURS open to provide a platform (on premise or cloud) for vendors to develop and the solution?

   Because this system is shared between many Reciprocal Systems, dependencies on SURS infrastructure is less desirable. So, while it is possible to envision a system that utilizes SURS' infrastructure (on premise or in cloud), SURS prefers a system that is managed completely externally to all Reciprocal Systems.

4. Would the past performance of one of the delivery team members considered?

Yes, past performance of team member delivery will be considered. Per Appendix A, SURS requests a minimum of two project references, similar in design and scope.

5. Would Past performance from Commercial clients be accepted?

Yes, past performance from commercial clients will be accepted. Per Appendix A, SURS requests a minimum of two project references, similar in design and scope.

6. Does SURS prefer the tools and technologies that will be used?

SURS does not have a preference on tools and technologies used to provide the proposed solution.

7. What is the size of the dataset that the new system will host?

The current database is just under 600 MB in size, with around 2.9 million individual records. Currently, SURS replaces all records each quarter but would like the new system to retain history. The new system database would likely be less than 60 GB in size.

8. Are You looking for any analytics capabilities?

The Reciprocal Systems will need the ability to run relatively simple reports. There is not an expected need for advanced analytics at this time.

9. How frequently will the participating agencies upload data to the new system?

Standard and additional data can be submitted on any frequency, but must be submitted at least quarterly by each Reciprocal System.

10. How frequently will the participating agencies download/pull data from the new system?

Reciprocal Systems will have the ability to download/pull data from the new system at any moment.

11. Is the data to be stored structured or unstructured?

Data could be stored in either structured on unstructured manners.

12. Are the participating agencies expected to grow?

Membership in each of the agencies grows all the time. The combined record count has grown approximately 0.97% over the past year.

13. Training: Does SURS need in-person or online training? How many users and Admins to train?

The training approach/framework for impacted stakeholders is flexible. It is anticipated that each System will have roughly 2-4 Superusers and up to 100 Advanced and Basic Users.

14. Will there be a secondary project at a later time to integrate the Reciprocal Data Exchange ""Future State"" with Project Velocity?

It is expected the integration will be sufficient for all Reciprocal Systems. If in the future, a Reciprocal System needs to reintegrate, support for the existing integration points may be needed. SURS going live with Project Velocity is an example of where additional support may be needed, but a full project for reintegration is not anticipated.

15. Will the existing data in current Reciprocal Data Exchange require migration?

No, data migration will not be required.

16. a) Does SURS require disaster recovery testing before Go Live?

The RFP did not specify disaster recovery testing occurring before Go-Live. The RFP does require disaster recovery within an SLA time period. Respondents should include their testing strategy in the proposal.

b) Will SURS require yearly disaster recovery testing or an alternative frequency that needs to be included in the Vendor's contract?
For reference - Appendix K - Req_LC9: "Awardee contract must include any additional costs for scalability, SLA variance, disaster recovery, and compliance audits."
For reference - Appendix K - Req_LC12: "It is anticipated that SURS will enter into a three (3) year contract..."

The RFP did not specify disaster recovery testing requirements. Respondents should include their testing strategy in the proposal, including DR testing frequency.

17. Are you expecting the role of the Solutions Specialist to be separate from a Project Manager role?

The Solutions Specialist, provided by the vendor, may also be a project manager. SURS will provide a project manager to partner with the vendor's resources to ensure successful planning, execution and completion of the project.

18. Which cloud providers are currently being utilized by SURS?
The solution is expected to be entirely managed by the vendor. Therefore, SURS experience should not be a factor in the solution.

19. Does SURS have a specific cloud provider in mind for the Reciprocity Data Exchange?

Because this is expected to be entirely managed by the vendor, SURS does not have a specific cloud provider in mind.

20. Can SURS provide examples of "additional" data, and of what additions or alterations a participating system might make?

Additional data fields are a *new* file format. There is flexibility in how it can be defined. The selected vendor will validate the final additional file formats with the project team during the design phase of the project.

Examples of additional data are included in Appendix H – Reciprocal Exchange Future State Data Sharing Business Decision (pg 7 and 8). For instance, Refunded Service is not included in the Traditional Data file format, but it is an optional (additional) data field Systems can choose to include in a *new* file format.

SURS does not anticipate Reciprocal Systems making individual alterations to this system.

21. Please provide specific functional gaps that exist with respect to stakeholder engagement and shared decision making.
This question is in reference to the fourth bullet point in the "Primary Objectives" section: "Enhance stakeholder engagement and shared decision making amongst each Reciprocal System.

Currently, there are no known gaps with respect to stakeholder engagement and shared decision making. All 13 reciprocal systems are actively engaged and participate in the monthly project council meetings set up specifically for this project. Should there be an impasse, SURS will serve as a final decision-maker.

22. Are data corrections in the Reciprocal Data Exchange expected to propagate to the source system(s)?

This question is in reference to the seventh bullet point in the Interfaces and Reporting section: "Provide capability to correct or verify exceptions found in

exception reports before posting the associated data to member records" and the ninth bullet in the User Management section: "Provide capability to allow an authorized user to manually correct data, including salary and tier, providing an audit trail for internal control."

No, data corrections would simply exist in the data in this new system. Any reports or downloads following a correction would include the corrected data.

23. The items listed in the evaluation are not included in all of the proposal instructions in the Appendices. Please clarify the following:

a) Evaluation Criteria #1 - Technical Approach and Solution Design: "The vendor's understanding of project objectives, proposed methodology, technical solution architecture and compliance with cybersecurity standards will be assessed." Should this information be included in Appendix C or elsewhere? There is flexibility in where this information is included in the proposal. It would be appropriate to include it in appendix C or elsewhere. Please ensure that your proposal includes an indexed table of contents to facilitate the review process, as it will assist in clearly identifying all information.

b) Evaluation Criteria #3 - Experience, Expertise and Commitment to Diversity. Please advise where information about the project team should be located in the proposal. This information should be included in Appendix B of the proposal.

c) Evaluation Criteria #4 - Stakeholder Training and Support: "The vendor's plan for engaging stakeholders, providing training and delivering ongoing support throughout the project will be evaluated." Should this information be included in Appendix C or elsewhere? There is flexibility in where this information is included in the proposal. It would be appropriate to include it in appendix C or elsewhere. Please ensure that your proposal includes an indexed table of contents to facilitate the review process, as it will assist in clearly identifying all information.

d) Evaluation Criteria #5 - Project Management and Timeline: "The proposed timeline, resource availability, and the vendor's approach to managing communication, change, and administrative oversight will be examined." Should this information be included in Appendix C or elsewhere? There is flexibility in where this information is included in the proposal. It would be

24. Please confirm the scope of the RFP excludes the development of a tool or utility for the extraction and transformation of data from the participating systems to the Reciprocal Data Exchange file format.

   Each Reciprocal System is responsible for providing data in the indicated formats to the new system and consuming it in the supported formats. No tool is required to pull the data from each Reciprocal System. However, the selected vendor is not restricted from engaging with a Reciprocal System to provide such a service.

25. The RFP indicates a minimum frequency (quarterly). Will this be enforced by the system as part of an automated process, or by business rule only?

   The quarterly submission requirement will be a business rule only. Automated reminders from the selected vendor are ideal.

26. Three methods of input are requested (file import, manual, and web transmittal). Can SURS further define and differentiate the expectations around web transmittal and manual?

   File import would use an API interface over the web. Manual input would use a web interface to input and/or correct entries through a web browser. There should be only 2 methods of input specified.

27. Does SURS use an existing Identity and Access Management System (such as Active Directory) with which the Reciprocal Data Exchange Solution should integrate?

   It is not advisable to attempt to integrate with all 13 Reciprocal System Identity Management backends. Instead, the selected vendor should include their ID Management System, for their solution, and include pricing in their bid.

28. Are there specific output formats required by governing bodies from the Reciprocal Data Exchange?

   The defined file formats (Appendices I and J) are the specific output formats required by the 13 Reciprocal Systems.

29. Can you provide a data security scope document for super users, regular users, and any other tier of user in the system?

The selected vendor will provide role-based access control (RBAC) to limit access based on user roles and system. Examples were included in the RFP and are listed below. The scope for each of these users can be further defined after the project kick-off and in collaboration with the project team. At a high level, Superusers will have a larger scope of access as part of their responsibilities includes creating and updating users for their System.
- Basic User: read only
- Advanced User: Basic + upload and download files
- Superuser: Advanced + creation and updating of users for their reciprocal systems

30. Would SURS consider a "train the trainer" approach to training that creates an ongoing SME resource for SURS?

The training approach/framework for impacted stakeholders is flexible. A "train the trainer" approach would be considered.

31. Please clarify why the capability to correct data is necessary when it would be out-of-sync with the source system? Why wouldn't users correct data in the source system?

SURS would consider a requirement to force the data fix in the original file format.