

Section I

General Background Information

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION.....	1
PURPOSE OF THIS REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL.....	1
GENERAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION	1

INTRODUCTION

Raytheon Polar Services (RPS or Charterers) solicits proposals for a charter with an option to buy an Antarctic Research and Supply Vessel (ARSV) with icebreaking capability to operate in support of the United States Antarctic Program's (USAP) research activities in and around the waters of the Southern Ocean.

PURPOSE OF THIS REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

RPS currently charters and provides science support staffing on the R/V LAURENCE M. GOULD and the R/V NATHANIEL B. PALMER for the National Science Foundation, an agency of the U.S. Government. It is on their behalf that RPS pursues the charter of a vessel to meet requirements for scientific research in the Antarctic Peninsula area and logistics support of Palmer Station of the USAP. The preferred charter duration is a 10 year base period with two successive five-year options. However, we encourage bidders to propose the most cost effective charter periods keeping the preferred option in mind. The purpose of this procurement is to charter a vessel to continue the services currently being provided by the R/V LAURENCE M. GOULD.

GENERAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION

A unique feature of the oceans surrounding Antarctica, collectively called the Southern Ocean, is a seasonally varying sea ice zone, which at maximum extent covers 15,000,000 square kilometers. The study of this region is by nature interdisciplinary in scope, and includes marine biology, chemical and physical oceanography, sea-ice dynamics as well as marine geology and geophysics.

The vessel will be required to operate frequently in ice, with the crossing of the often extremely stormy waters of the Drake Passage south of Cape Horn, and to provide logistic and oceanographic research support for Palmer Station, located on Anvers Island in the Antarctic Peninsula. It must be seaworthy and fully found, providing a safe and stable platform from which to conduct research and comfortable enough to support personnel at sea for extended periods. The vessel must be capable of year-round operations in the area of the Antarctic Peninsula, with the potential to call at Palmer Station at any time of the year. The vessel must also be capable of supporting small boat operations as may be necessary to deploy, support and effect personnel and resupply operations at remote field camps in the Peninsula area.

Although the vessel will be employed largely in the southern latitudes for the duration of this charter, the vessel will also make occasional cruises to U.S. waters and ports at the discretion of the Charterers, and may conceivably be employed for occasional cruises to Arctic regions. Further detail of the purpose, area and concept of operation, science mission summary and vessel size estimates can be found in the Technical Requirements in this RFP.

Bidders are not restricted in the manner to which they may respond to this RFP, recognizing the minimum Technical and General Requirements. Existing vessels, modified or converted, or new-build proposals are welcomed. Bidders may submit more than one proposal following the above options.