

How does your organization transition to future operations based on cultural change within VA and across the nation?

We are in the midst of a large digital transformation and modernization effort that provides us the organizational framework and the processes to work shoulder to shoulder with industry and government stakeholders and scale to stay ahead of their demands.

With your organization in the middle of a digital transformation and modernization effort, what have you learned going through this pandemic?

Working shoulder to shoulder with industry and government stakeholders, we can understand their business practices. With our OIT organizational framework, processes, and relationships, and customer service orientation we can stay ahead of their demands.

Since VA and DOD IT are increasingly entwined, is VA/OIT reaching out to Nicolas Chaillan, the Air Force Chief Software Officer, to find ways to leverage each other's ideas and capabilities?

On an enterprise level, VA and DOD are working together through VA's Office of Electronic Health Record Modernization (OEHRM), Office of Enterprise Integration (OEI), the Veterans Health Administration, the Office of Information and Technology (OIT), and other stakeholders to help implement the largest EHR system in the nation.

If you have a product that meets an immediate need, but is a capability that is going to be brought forward by a major initiative (FMBT, EHRM, VALOR) and in industry is used instead of or alongside the commercial version of that platform, would you put it in place?

Each situation is different. We would be happy to meet with you to understand your capability. Contact our Vendor Management Office at ITVMO@va.gov.

Is there an opportunity to talk about provider and patient workflow and experiences as you think about the Cerner EHR modernization project? There is a lot to think about with usability that we would like to understand and see if surveys have been conducted to understand the pain points.

We would be happy to meet with you to understand your capability. Contact our Vendor Management Office at ITVMO@va.gov.

What considerations are being given to user adoption for EHRM to ensure planning goes beyond technology?

The considerations are being driven by VA's Office of Electronic Health Record Modernization (OEHRM), OEI, VHA, OIT, and other stakeholders to plan, coordinate, and execute. Considerations of note are high-quality care, timely access to information from clinicians, pharmacies, and labs, and providing clinicians with complete health records and the tools needed to care for the Veteran patient population.

What is the VA doing relative to contact tracing as you continue to bring employees back to work? Are you interested in seeing demos of contact tracing capabilities and solutions?

The department is leveraging our health care experts in VHA who are working across VA to reopen. If you have a contact tracing application, we encourage you to use it.

How do you submit an idea that is not COVID-related?

If the idea is in its beginning stages, please visit the [VA Center for Innovation](#) for consideration. However, if the idea is a fully formed solution, please contact group that considers those solutions as OIT seeks to evolve our capabilities. The Account Management Office (AMO) does not yet have a core capability within our office to independently evaluate and consider business ideas/solutions; that said, we are looking to build that capability in our future organization.

Did your team experience any risks with your vendors' supply chains due to the pandemic? If so, how did you mitigate these risks?

Yes, we experienced supply chain challenges in the early response stage. Our response included prioritizing use of on-hand "customer support" quantities and allowance of alternate means of remote connection, while we tirelessly worked with our vendor and Office of Strategic Sourcing teams to shore up the supply pipeline. Today, we have fully restored provisioning pipelines for laptops, iPhones and specialty infrastructure components.

As VA continues to address COVID-related concerns and in preparation for future global/national emergencies, regarding gaining visibility into the medical supply chain, what are VA's top IT priorities to gain transparency into medical supplies/equipment locally and at the enterprise level?

VA OIT supports the business partnership with our Office of Logistics in their roll-out of the new Defense Medical Logistics Supply Systems modernization. OIT does not specifically track medical supplies.

We are reaching out to other agencies to develop and implement our National Medical Device Patch-Management System and medical device security assessments. Mr. Jack Galvin may remember the medical device security assessment process/configuration guidance documents that we (the VA HISD) produced back in the early 2000s. We are now working with UL (Underwriters Lab) to implement a national medical device security assessment. Who would be a VA POC to work with at this time?

Please contact Mr. Woodie Robinson, Director of Security Systems of OIT's Office of Information Security.

With the additional funds, how are you handling proper oversight and reporting of the funding stream?

Because of the additional funding we received, we understood the need for transparency and the need to be accountable for every dollar. Our Office of Strategic Sourcing and Office of IT Resource Management quickly stood up acquisition and funding dashboards to ensure accurate tracking of our IT spend.

How did you manage the visibility of your acquisitions?

To improve our acquisition visibility, Office of information and Technology implemented a comprehensive review process in accordance with Federal Information Technology Acquisition Reform Act (FITARA). Our process ensures requirements are collaborated among senior executive leadership and approved by the Chief Information Officer CIO, ensuring transparency and accountability.

Did your team experience any risks with your vendors' supply chains due to the pandemic? If so, how did you mitigate these risks?

The Office of Information and Technology proactively engaged with the federal and industry community to identify any potential delivery challenges that might impact our ability to support the COVID19 response. As a result of this strategy, OIT successfully mitigated numerous supply chain challenges and ensured that senior leadership was informed and immediately engaged where necessary. Additionally, OIT solicited its federal partners to understand supply chain challenges and how we could partner to preclude any disruption to the COVID-19 response. We extend our sincerest thanks to our industry federal partners during this trying time.

Similar to the other question, most of the COVID work thus far seems to be by extension of current contracts. How do we contribute in this space if we are not on a current contract?

Existing contracts such as T4NG allow for teaming opportunities. T4NG prime contractors can team with companies who offer a value to their team. We encourage companies to reach out to prime contractors on current active contracts and seek sub-contracting opportunities. Prime contractors are always looking to put together the best competitive proposals and are always seeking to strengthen niche capabilities that other companies not on the contract vehicle may offer. Visit [VA's Office of Procurement, Acquisition, and Logistics site](#) for a list of T4NG points of contact.

VA reports all actions over \$25,000 to its Forecast of Contracting Opportunities. Visit [VA's Forecast of Contracting Opportunities](#) to gather information on all known opportunities. In addition, monitor beta.sam.gov for any RFI announcements. There have been numerous hardware and software buys related to COVID that were not awarded as extensions of current contracts.

Can the acquisition email be provided that Luwanda mentioned? Or is that the same as the COVIDIdeas@va.gov?

Innovative ideas for COVID support should be sent to COVIDIdeas@va.gov. Do not send unsolicited proposals to this mailbox. [Unsolicited proposals should be sent to VACOVAOFFA@va.gov](#).

OIT vendor inquiries may be sent to ITVMO@va.gov.

Can you provide any updates on the VECTOR IDIQ On-Ramp awards and when those might be released?

Please send questions pertaining to the requirement to Joshua Dean, Vector POC at the Strategic Acquisition Center (SAC), at Joshua.Dean@va.gov and reference solicitation 36C10X20R0011.

There appears to be unprecedented demand on the TAC for order processing. Any plans to ramp up as we approach the end of FY2020?

The fourth fiscal quarter is always a busy time of year for OIT and the TAC. The groups will continue to collaborate to meet the demand, but OIT is currently on track to meet all of our execution needs for the fiscal year.

Have you considered always doing Status Updates to RFIs? Frustrating to not know. Plus bothers your organization with needless phone calls.

Requests for information are a vital tool VA utilizes for market research and to assist in acquisition strategy formulation. We continue to encourage companies to provide responses to RFIs as their responses can impact the acquisition strategy.

How can we get on the WIFI IDIQ?

The WiFi multi-year refresh project is currently a requirement for FY21. The acquisition strategy has yet to be determined. Please continue to monitor its status through [Contract Opportunities](#) at beta.sam.gov.

What is the typical timeline from an RFI to a corresponding RFP?

This timeline is dependent on many factors as there are different types of RFIs. Some RFIs determine what contract vehicle will be used while others are evaluated to help VA make decisions on a final specification. It can take several weeks to several months based on the requirement itself. As a best practice, the TAC generally updates each RFI posting to inform industry of the potential acquisition strategy.

Can the VA specifically address if it plans or is considering VETS2 as a contract vehicle for future procurements?

VA has a number of different contract vehicles we can and have used to satisfy IT needs. Market research is conducted for each acquisition and VETS2 is a contract vehicle that receives consideration.

What processes are in place at the RFI stage that determines that a small business CAN do the work stated in the RFI and can PROVE that they can do the work small business responding with a "Yes we can" to activate the rule of Two in Kingdomware?

OIT technical subject matter experts review each RFI for technical feasibility/capability. The Rule of Two states that an effort should be set aside if two or more companies are technically capable of meeting the requirements, so each RFI response needs to document an offeror's technical approach on "how" the need will be met, and not simply just restate the requirement. Set-asides for verified SDVOSB and VOSB are mandatory whenever a contracting officer has a reasonable expectation of receiving two or more competitive offers/quotes at a fair and reasonable price that offers best value to the Government

Can you address Data Governance, Compliance Reporting, and Risk Management Initiatives?

The Office of Information and Technology has developed a Governance Framework that ensures that IT decision making is aligned with strategic vision. Within the framework there are multiple councils that govern how OIT addresses a variety of areas including Architecture and Data Management, Standards and Architecture, Quality and Risk Performance, and IT Program and Acquisition Council.

Data Governance is represented in two (2) areas with the IT Governance Framework; the Architecture and Data Management Committee is where oversight of policies and compliance with Laws, Regulations and Policy occurs for Standards and Architecture while the Analytics and Performance Management Committee (APMC) focused on the quality of the data as an information resource.

I heard Luwanda Jones state the OIT has engaged with around 275 small business/vendors. How would I as a small business development representative have the opportunity to speak with members of OIT?

The Office of information and Technology has a Vendor Management Office that conducts industry sessions and engagement calls during which companies present specific capabilities and demonstrate solutions to VA challenges. Please send all requests to ITVMO@va.gov.

Since so much of the work gets performed by contractors and partners, is there a mechanism for new small business partners to integrate with existing service providers through the VA?

Absolutely. Business relationships are a critical component to our success. There are several ways to build these partnerships, including the National Veterans Small Business Engagement (NVSBE), held by VA's [Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization](#)

(OSDBU). This conference is an opportunity to market your company and meet other IT companies that currently support VA. It is also prudent to reach out to OIT's VMO to discuss potential VA IT opportunities. The IT VMO can be reached at ITVMO@va.gov.

Capacity Planning does not scale horizontally. How does the SDVOB support the VA direction? Suppliers are generally not platform owners; they are leasers of infrastructure.

SDVOSBs can support VA for Capacity Planning by seeking innovation and leveraging emerging Machine Learning and Artificial Intelligence applications supporting large data sets, complex use-based data sets for applied forecasting models for future consumption.

When will the VA do a contract/onramp to existing contract for simply VOSB?

VOSBs can support VA for Capacity Planning by seeking innovation and leveraging emerging Machine Learning and Artificial Intelligence applications supporting large data sets, complex use-based data sets for applied forecasting models for future consumption.

With the Kingdomware Act in place, how do you see engaging in large businesses in order to receive best in class technologies and services that you would because looking at statistics, most work is being set aside for SDVOSBs?

Each project/acquisition is evaluated individually. Market research and technical analysis determines when a set-aside is appropriate. VA must comply with the Kingdomware U.S. Supreme Court decision and consider the Rule of Two. In determining the acquisition strategy applicable to a procurement requirement, the contracting officer shall consider the Veterans First Contracting Program's contracting order of priority, which states first, eligible small business concerns owned and controlled by service-disabled Veterans, followed by eligible small business concerns owned and controlled by Veterans. Set-asides for verified SDVOSB and VOSB are mandatory whenever a contracting officer has a reasonable expectation of receiving two or more competitive offers/quotes at a fair and reasonable price that offers best value to the Government

I understand you have a preference for SDVOSB. What opportunities do VOSBs have for set-asides and sole source contracts?

When the contracting office is evaluating a set-aside, the Rule of Two priority tiers first require a determination as to whether a set aside can be conducted among two (2) or more SDVOSBs. If not, the next step is to determine whether a VOSB set-aside is possible. One important point to consider is that if a VOSB set-aside is decided upon, SDVOSBs are also considered VOSBs. As for sole source contracts, SDVOSB/VOSBs can either demonstrate via RFI responses that they are the only source for a particular requirement or look into teaming with the vendor that is receiving the sole source award. Please keep in mind the importance of an SDVOSB/VOSB being

verified in the Vendor Information Pages (VIP) database to be considered for award. There is no current plan to target VOSBs for the T4NG onramp.

It has been our experience being simply a Veteran owned SB gets you nothing.

When the contracting office is evaluating a set-aside, the Rule of Two priority tiers first require a determination as to whether a set aside can be conducted among two (2) or more SDVOSBs. If not, the next step is to determine whether a VOSB set-aside is possible. One important point to consider is that if a VOSB set-aside is decided upon, SDVOSBs are also considered VOSBs. To be successful, VOSBs will need to demonstrate how their capabilities successfully support VA's requirements. Teaming arrangements should also be considered to gain exposure and obtain a better understanding of VA mission.

This is a question for VA's Office of Electronic Health Record Modernization (OEHRM). That office is working with the OEI, VHA, OIT, and other stakeholders to collectively implement the largest EHR system in the nation. Where you have systems that are very effective within the VA, how will you decide whether to use what is being brought forward with Cerner over 10 years, vice using what is working now and could be plugged in later?

OEHRM Communications interpretation of the question: For tools/software that work well within the VA system now, how will VA decide whether to continue using them or switch to the Cerner solution?

When initially deciding on EHR modernization, the VA looked at the entire suite of products offered by Cerner that might be applicable to the services we provide, with an eye on having a common platform and fully integrated data, as well as focusing on workflow standardization and data interoperability. This may mean sunsetting third-party solutions for Cerner provided functionality, developing interfaces to existing third party solutions or perhaps exploring brand new third party solutions based upon future workflows and evolving elaboration of VA functional requirements. Decisions as to what and when to migrate to a Cerner product, or a third-party product, include the future maintenance requirements and costs of VA systems vs. current and future capabilities of Cerner products. In addition, the ease with which a current VA product can be interfaced to Cerner and the potential enhanced or lost functionality of moving weighs into the decision of whether or not to keep or move. This will ensure responsible investments and delivery of functionality that improves the delivery of health care for our Veterans.