

**Evaluation of Strategies to Improve DRE Officers' Performance and Law Enforcement Agencies' DRE Programs**

**ACTIVE**

**Contract Opportunity**

**Notice ID**

693JJ923RQ000327

**Related Notice**

**Department/Ind. Agency**

TRANSPORTATION, DEPARTMENT OF

**Sub-tier**

NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

**Office**

693JJ9 NHTSA OFFICE OF ACQUISITION

**General Information**

- **Contract Opportunity Type:** Sources Sought (Original)
- **All Dates/Times are:** (UTC-04:00) EASTERN STANDARD TIME, NEW YORK, USA
- **Original Published Date:** Apr 11, 2023 03:17 pm EDT
- **Original Response Date:** Apr 20, 2023 02:00 pm EDT
- **Inactive Policy:** 15 days after response date
- **Original Inactive Date:**
- **Initiative:**
  - None

**Classification**

- **Original Set Aside:**
- **Product Service Code:** AS12 - Transportation R&D Services; Surface transportation, public transit, and rail; Applied Research
- **NAICS Code:**
  - 541720 - Research and Development in the Social Sciences and Humanities
- **Place of Performance:**

Washington , DC 20590

USA

**Description**

Action Code: S

Classification Code: AS12, Transportation R&D Services; Surface transportation, public transit, and rail; Applied Research

Solicitation: 693JJ923RQ000327

Agency/Office: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)

Location: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration HQ

NAICS Code: 541720, Research and Development in the Social Sciences and Humanities, \$28.0M

Point of Contract: Vincent Lynch, Contracting Officer, ph(202) 366-9568

Title: Evaluation of Strategies to Improve DRE Officers' Performance and Law Enforcement Agencies' DRE Programs

**Description(s):**

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) is issuing this Sources Sought Notice to identify potential qualified Small Business (SB), Small Disadvantaged Business (SDB), 8(a) Certified SDB, HUBZone SB, SDVOSB, or WOSB concerns that may be interested in and capable of performing the work described herein to increase the efficiency, completeness, and consistency of DRE officers' individual efforts, and the efforts of law enforcement agencies by evaluating the efforts under NHTSA's existing project, Strategies to Improve DRE Officers' Performance and Law Enforcement Agencies' DRE Program.

NHTSA welcomes all qualified certified Small Business concerns with the appropriate NAICS Code and past experience to submit their Corporate Capability Statements that demonstrate their ability to successfully accomplish the goals of the proposed project as listed below. In addition to soliciting on the open market, the government may decide to later limit its competition to those qualified GSA OASIS or MAS Schedule holding contractors. NHTSA does not intend to award a contract on the basis of responses to this notice or otherwise pay for the preparation of any information submitted. Acknowledgement of receipt of responses will not be made; and no formal evaluation of the information received will be conducted by NHTSA. NHTSA may; however later on issue a Request for Proposals (RFP). However, should such a requirement fail to materialize, no basis for claims against NHTSA shall arise as a result of a response to this notice.

**BACKGROUND:**

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) is an agency of the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT). NHTSA's mission is to save lives, prevent injuries and reduce traffic-related health care and other economic costs. The agency develops, promotes and implements effective educational, engineering and enforcement programs with the goal of ending preventable tragedies and reducing economic costs associated with vehicle use and highway travel.

Impaired driving resulting from cannabis or other drug use poses challenges for our nation's law enforcement officers, prosecutors, toxicologists, highway safety offices, and other safety advocates in implementing effective countermeasures to reduce crashes, injuries, and deaths. In jurisdictions that participate in the Drug Evaluation and Classification (DEC) Program, an arresting officer may request an evaluation by a Drug Recognition Expert (DRE). This program, developed by the Los Angeles Police Department in the 1970s, trains officers to recognize the signs and symptoms of drug use as an aid to investigating suspected drug-impaired driving cases. The program is now managed nationally by the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) with technical assistance from NHTSA. Since the program's inception, it has continued to grow. At the end of 2020, there were 7,354 credentialed DREs across the country. While the IACP delivers, and supports the national DEC Program, each State has its own program, which is funded by its Highway Safety Office (HSO). The HSO appoints a State DRE Coordinator who oversees the program.

Although the program is based on a systematic and standardized approach of training and protocols, States vary in program functions. This is due to funding, the structure of agencies, number of DREs, individual laws, and other factors. Some States have strengthened their programs with the addition of technological tools and other strategies.

A DRE performs a Drug Influence Evaluation (DIE) on a driver suspected of a person arrested for impaired driving to determine whether the impairment observed from the arresting officer is likely due to drug use, and if so, what category drug(s); or whether the impairment is due to neurological conditions, illness, or disease. The DRE, or in cases where no DRE is available, the arresting officer, also obtains a biological sample (blood or urine) from the suspect, which is sent to a toxicology lab to determine the presence of a drug, and if so, the type.

The DEC Program is a key effort by NHTSA in its efforts to decrease impaired driving. The Agency is interested in developing strategies to increase the efficiency, completeness, and consistency of DRE officers' individual efforts, and the efforts of law enforcement agencies. Incomplete evidence is sometimes an issue in moving an arrest toward prosecution and conviction. Some law enforcement agencies have observed benefits of using tablet computers containing specifically designed software to aid officers in gathering evidence for their impaired driving cases. This technology appears to assist officers in their investigations of drug-impaired driving cases as the software progresses the user through the steps of the DRE protocol, and highlights if there is missing information. Thus, these tablets, which the officer can carry with them and enter data into directly during the investigation, allow officers the ability to enter and transmit data as they obtain it. This provides efficiency, consistency, and completeness to the officers' evidence gathering and report writing. These are important components for providing in-depth information to agency supervisors, State Coordinators and to prosecutors. The tablets then aid the officer in preparing for court appearances, as there is complete information about the arrest. The software also allows a rolling log for officers to place their evaluations across all their DRE cases, which is beneficial to the officer themselves, to their DRE program managers, and also for input into the National DRE Data System. A benefit is the ability to submit information to the data system in real-time, which informs the national program. It is hoped the efficiencies gained by use of tablets will allow DREs more time for their other duties, including increasing time on active patrol or assisting on other DRE cases.

Another strategy used in some States to increase DRE program efficiency, frequency, and consistency is a “callout” system. These alert systems address the issue of an arresting officer who is requesting DRE assistance being unable to reach an available DRE due to poor communication networks. In these cases, the drug arrest may not be able to move forward to prosecution if there is insufficient evidence of type of drug use. It may be that a DRE is available and nearby, but there is no process that allows for the DREs to be alerted to assist with requests for assistance. These systems have the potential to increase the efficiency and consistency of contacting DRE Officers and increasing the likelihood of the DRE evaluation be conducted in a timely manner. Again, this may increase the efficiency of individual DREs, and for law enforcement agencies.

A concern for law enforcement agencies is the time it takes to complete the arrest process. This is especially true if a suspect refuses to provide a blood sample, or the incident takes place far from a police station, jail, or other setting used by the police to gather blood samples for testing. In these instances, if an officer wants to pursue a warrant to obtain this evidence, it is necessary to drive to the jurisdiction’s court, provide a judge with the arrest information, and request a warrant. This creates a time delay, perhaps several hours, for when the blood sample can be obtained. During this time the suspect’s body is metabolizing any consumed drug substance, thereby reducing the amount that will be then be detected in a test. It also may deter officers from seeking the warrant and pursuing the collection of this evidence.

A third strategy used in some States to increase efficiency, completeness, and consistency of drug-impaired driving cases is use of electronic warrant or “e-warrant” systems. A study by Symoun, et al (2021) documented use of warrant systems in four States to expedite the time between request and approval. In these jurisdictions, systems had been implemented to allow the officer to fax or call a judge to request a warrant. These programs allow officers to immediately transmit the case’s probable cause electronically for a search warrant to a judge, thus, gaining efficiency and consistency. In States with phlebotomy programs that allow trained police officers to conduct blood draws, the addition of e-warrant systems could reduce the collection of critical, perishable evidence from hours to minutes.

In September 2021, NHTSA awarded a task order for a Contractor to work with selected sites to implement one or more of these strategies to improve operations of their DRE programs. The current project is to evaluate the efforts of that ongoing effort. The contractor of this task order shall work with the contractor of the implementation task order and the selected sites to obtain data about the implementation process and also measures of the impact of the strategies. At this time of this solicitation, NHTSA has not yet chosen the sites. More information about the number and locations of the sites will be available to the Evaluation Contractor when the sites have been determined.

Law Enforcement Agencies are eager for strategies to improve their efficiency, consistency, and completeness of their respective DRE programs, which are a critical part of a State’s efforts to reduce impaired driving. This contract will evaluate the efforts under NHTSA’s existing project, Strategies to Improve DRE Officers’ Performance and Law Enforcement Agencies’ DRE Program (see the attached contract in Section J-List of Attachments). The Contractor shall work with the NHTSA COR and the Implementation Contractor to address the objectives of this project.

**OBJECTIVE:**

The objectives of this project are to facilitate greater interaction between NHTSA and the Toxicology community, to increase the efficiency, completeness, and consistency of DRE officers' individual efforts, and the efforts of law enforcement agencies.

#### **Capabilities:**

The corporate capability statement must address the capabilities necessary to accomplish the scope outlined above as well as the additional tasks listed in the attached draft SOW.

#### **Format of Corporate Capabilities Statement:**

Any interested qualified Small Business (SB), Small Disadvantaged Business (SDB), 8(a) Certified SDB, HUBZone SB, SDVOSB, or WOSB concerns should submit their Corporate Capability Statement, which demonstrates the firm's ability and past experience in no more than 10 pages to perform the key requirements described above to the identified NHTSA point of contact listed herein.

Any proprietary information should be marked as such. All respondents are asked to certify the type and size of their business organization is in-line with the requirements of this Sources Sought Notice, and must be received no later than the closing date of this notice.

#### **Attachments/Links**

Download All Attachments/Links

Attachments

Document	File Size	Access	Updated Date
<a href="#">Draft SOW - (693JJ923RQ000327) Evaluate DRE Strategies.pdf (opens in new window)</a>	348 KB	Public	Apr 11, 2023

#### **Contact Information**

##### **Contracting Office Address**

- OFFICE OF ACQUISITION MANAGEMENT 1200 NEW JERSEY AVE SE, ROOM W51-30
- WASHINGTON , DC 20590
- USA

##### **Primary Point of Contact**

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