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# **Statement Of Objectives (SOO) Information Guide**

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# Statement of Objectives (SOO) Information Guide

## 1. Introduction:

This document provides guidance for the preparation of a Statement of Objectives (SOO). ***This guide is not meant to be a checklist and it contains guidance only.***

## 2. Purpose:

The Statement of Objectives (SOO) identifies the broad, basic, top-level objectives of the acquisition and is used as a focusing tool for both the Government and offerors. In a competitive source selection environment a SOO is an integral part of the RFP streamlined development process (see Figure 1). A SOO supplements a performance based Government requirements document and is developed after performing a risk assessment that highlights the high and moderate risks in the areas of business, programmatic, and technical identified on the program (see paragraph 3 below) against the requirement document. There are many Myths surrounding the SOO concept and some are highlighted in Figure 2.

## 3. SOO Development Process:

The SOO is both a ***Process*** and a ***Product***. The ***Process*** begins with the identification of requirements, receiving direction to proceed, and funding for the project. The first and most important step is to complete a performance based Government requirements document. Once this is accomplished a program risk assessment needs to occur to determine the risks associated with the effort. This assessment determines the probability of occurrence and the impact each event would have to your program should they occur. Reviewing the requirements, identifying and classifying risks then helps develop the key objectives of the program that need to be stated in the SOO.

***Remember a SOO is NOT a Statement of Work (SOW), it results from the identification of risks based on the requirements document.*** It is important to ensure a relationship between program direction, risks, and objectives are established, and that your focus is on the risks having the most critical impact. ***We want to focus on the high and moderate risks; high and moderate impact areas*** because that is where we want to put our management attention, precious people, and dollar resources. The SOO will help convey this message to the offerors. Once have identified risks and developed program objectives you will be able to complete your acquisition strategy, Request for Proposal (RFP) documentation, and identify post award planning and risk mitigation activities. The output of this effort will identify to your team the critical program discriminators that will make up the evaluation criteria. Upon identifying the ***critical discriminators*** it is logical to determine how the Source Selection Evaluation

Team will evaluate these and what the offerors must include in their proposals to support the evaluation. When these steps are accomplished and the RFP is released, the offerors will provide their Contractor SOW with their proposal.

However, the SOO is not a simple combining of the requirements document and risk assessment. Rather, it becomes a function of the two in which your requirements are stated in context with those risks that must be managed. It tells the offeror's what is an absolute must have and what can be sub-optimized to meet cost, schedule, or performance requirements (trade space). The Government will normally include a SOO as part of the RFP, listed in Section J, attached at the end of the RFP, or referenced in Section L or M. However, not every RFP will have a SOO. For example, a lowest price and technically acceptable buy may not need a SOO. Also, SOOs are not generally placed on contract.

A SOO is developed to be compatible with the Mission Need Statement (MNS); the Acquisition Strategy, technical requirements; and the draft Work Breakdown Structure (WBS) and dictionary. The SOO is then used, by offerors, to develop the Contractor Statement of Work (CSOW), and the Contract Work Breakdown Structure (CWBS), and other documents supporting and defining the contractors proposed effort. SOO content should be tailored to the type and phase of the program. The key is to keep the SOO clear, concise, and provide potential offerors with enough information and detail to structure a sound program, designed to be executable and satisfy Government objectives. The SOO as a part of the RFP or solicitation has value to both industry and the government. Many programs are successfully using the SOO process. Also, the SOO process supports the integrated program development process.

The development of the SOO **Product** begins with a systematic process. The development of this product should bring together industry, the user, and the buying office early in the acquisition cycle to ensure that the RFP, proposals, and the source selection are all focused on the same concerns. After the source selection, during program execution, the objectives of the SOO will be where the program will focus their attention. A notional Statement of Objectives (SOO) format is shown in Figure 3 and example SOOs are shown in Figure 4. The following are steps that are an integral part of developing the SOO **Product**:

- a. Conduct market research to determine whether commercial items or non-developmental items are available to meet program requirements. One possible tool to use is the "Market Research/Analysis Guide" and it is available at this web address: <http://www.aflma.hq.af.mil/lgc/projects/market/market.html>. Another tool is the "AFMC Commercial Acquisition Guide" and it is available at this web address: <https://www.afmc-mil.wpafb.af.mil/HQ-AFMC/PK/pkp/polvault/guides/comacq02.doc>.

b. Review the requirements documents which authorize the program, various DoD, services, joint services requirements documents for program management and acquisition management impacts to the program.

c. Prepare a bibliography citing the specific portions of all applicable governing instructions, directives, specifications and standards with which the program must comply. Keep these requirements to the absolute minimum.

d. Develop the program objectives (SOO) by completing a risk assessment that highlights the high and moderate risks in the areas of business, programmatic, and technical identified on the program based on the requirements in the requirements document. The “Risk Radar” tool is an excellent means to document the program risks identified. The “Risk Radar” tool is available at: <https://wwwmil.tinker.af.mil/AE/risk/Documents/RR2000.exe>. “Risk Radar” is a risk management database that helps project managers identify, prioritize, and communicate project risks in a flexible and easy-to-use form. Risk Radar provides standard database functions to add and delete risks, together with specialized functions for prioritizing and retiring project risks. Each risk can have a user-defined risk management plan and a log of historical events. A set of standard short- and long-form reports and viewgraphs can be easily generated to share project risk information with all members of the development team.

## 4. SOO Applicability:

### Sole Source:

Use a Solicitation along with a SOO to communicate program objectives to the contractor. The Government performance based requirements document (SOW, PWS,) should be used to convey to the contractor the Governments total performance requirements. Include minimum CDRLs, with contractor option to propose alternates and additions. A tool that is developed that streamlines this process is the “One-Pass Process Guide” and it can be downloaded at the following web address:

[http://www.hanscom.af.mil/ESC-PK/onepass/guide\\_v2.pdf](http://www.hanscom.af.mil/ESC-PK/onepass/guide_v2.pdf). One Pass is a streamlined process to define and scope requirements; prepare contractual documents; generate contractor proposals; and negotiate definitive contract actions for contract changes and new sole source contracts. **One Pass is not appropriate for competitive contract actions since these actions are priced based upon competitive market forces.**

### Competitive:

When technical evaluation of contractor’s proposals is planned, use a SOO in the RFP to communicate program objectives to the contractor. Contractor prepared SOWs/Appendix A will be evaluated. Include minimum CDRLs in the Government requirements document, with contractor option to propose alternates and additions.

When **no** technical evaluation of contractor’s proposals is planned (Low Risk, Low Dollar), use a streamlined Government SOW/Appendix A in the RFP. The Government SOW developed can be streamlined by reducing or eliminating Military Specifications and Standards. Use performance based or industry specifications and standards as much as possible. Include minimum CDRLs in the Government requirements document, with contractor option to propose alternates and additions.

### Government SOW Streamlining Guidance:

- Delete all “non-applicable” language.

- Delete or consolidate repetitive language. Ensure tasking language appears in the requirements section.

- Delete all inactive or cancelled Military Specifications and Standards. Cite Industry alternates.

- Pull relevant language out of the military specification or standard and incorporate into SOW.

- Describe requirements in performance terms.

- For other cited Military Specifications and Standards consider:

  - Citing Industry alternates.

  - Pulling relevant language out of the Military Specifications and Standards and incorporating into SOW.

Describing requirements in performance terms.

## 5. RFP Relationships:

### a. Section L:

Section L of the RFP must include instructions to the offerors that require using of the SOO and requirements document to develop and submit a Contractor SOW and CDRLs. A sample of potential Section L wording is:

The Statement of Objectives (SOO) and Government requirements document, included as [*cite location of SOO in the RFP*], provides the Government's overall objectives and performance requirements for this solicitation. Offerors shall use the SOO and Government requirements document, together with other applicable portions of this RFP, as the basis for preparing their proposal, including the CWBS, CSOW, and CDRLs. The offeror shall ensure all aspects of the SOO Government requirements document are addressed. The CSOW should specify in clear, understandable terms the work to be done in developing or producing the goods to be delivered or services to be performed by the contractor. Preparation of an effective CSOW requires both the understanding of the goods and services that are needed to satisfy a particular requirement and an ability to define what is required in specific, quantitative terms. The offerors understanding of both required goods and services, work effort required to accomplish should be fully demonstrated in the offeror's proposed CWBS, CSOW, and CDRLs. The offeror's CSOW shall include appropriate compliance and reference documents. All documents that are included shall be listed to properly identify the revision that will be used, and shall contain appropriate tailoring. As a minimum, the offeror's CSOW shall include the compliance documents listed in the RFP, including tailoring. The offeror may propose additional compliance documents. The offeror may obtain information from referenced guidance documents, but is not required to comply with any requirement in a reference guidance document. The offeror's CSOW shall include the following statement (or one substantially written as such) in Section 2, Applicable Documents:

Only those military, federal, and contractor specifications cited, down to and including the equipment and product specifications and there first-tier references shall be mandatory for use. Lower tier references will be for guidance only and will not be contractually binding unless raised to the direct cite level.

**NOTE:** For complex interrelationships among RFP and contract documents, use of a cross-reference matrix should be utilized (see Figure 5).

The offeror shall use his proposed CSOW to prepare CDRLs including appropriately tailored data item description references. The requirements listed below (if any) are known minimum Government data requirements. The offeror may include additional data requirements. All data requirements shall be traceable to specific tasks defined in the CSOW.

- (1) (cite minimum data requirements here if any)
- (2) ...
- (3) ...

#### **END OF SECTION L EXAMPLE WORDING**

#### **b. Section M:**

Section M, Evaluation Factors for Award, should include sufficient criteria to:

- (1) Evaluate the offeror's ability to successfully achieve the SOO objectives,
- (2) Clearly define Factors proposals will be evaluated against,
- (3) Ensure a sound approach is proposed,
- (4) Verify that all requirements can be met.

#### **c. Contract Data Requirements List (CDRL):**

When using the SOO, the Government will usually only prepare CDRL requirements for those data items that the Government knows it must have at the time when the RFP is being prepared. All data requirements shall be traceable to specific tasks defined in the SOW. The offerors will be expected to propose other data items beyond the Government-prepared CDRL for those items necessitated and consistent with the offeror's proposed SOW. For the contract award vehicle, the Government must ensure the CDRL and contractor SOW are consistent with one another.

#### **d. Specifications:**

A performance-based specification provides the technical requirements stated in terms of required performance requirements and interface compatibility. The SOO highlights to the Government and the offerors the key objectives of the program. These objectives, in concert with the performance based specification, will enable the offerors to propose the Contractor Statement of Work (CSOW) tasks to meet the requirements cited in the specification.

#### **e. Work Breakdown Structure (WBS)- Not applicable for many acquisitions:**



The SOO identifies the concept, which is then translated into the contractor-proposed CSOW. Included in the RFP is the Government-generated WBS, which is derived from the performance based specification and overall concept of the effort. The contractor begins program definition with a Contractor WBS (CWBS), which becomes the basis for the contractor proposed CSOW.

**f. Required Reviews/Approval Coordination's:**

The SOO should be compared to Section M (Evaluation Factors for Award), the evaluation factors, and Section L (Proposal Preparation Instructions) to ensure that there are no inconsistencies or conflicts between these elements. A cross reference matrix is a useful tool in accomplishing this task (see Figure 5).

Involve the user and supporting activity in the development and review of the SOO and other supporting contract documents. These documents describe the user's needs and all parties must agree they are correct and clear.

Figure 1 - STREAMLINED ACQUISITION PROCESS

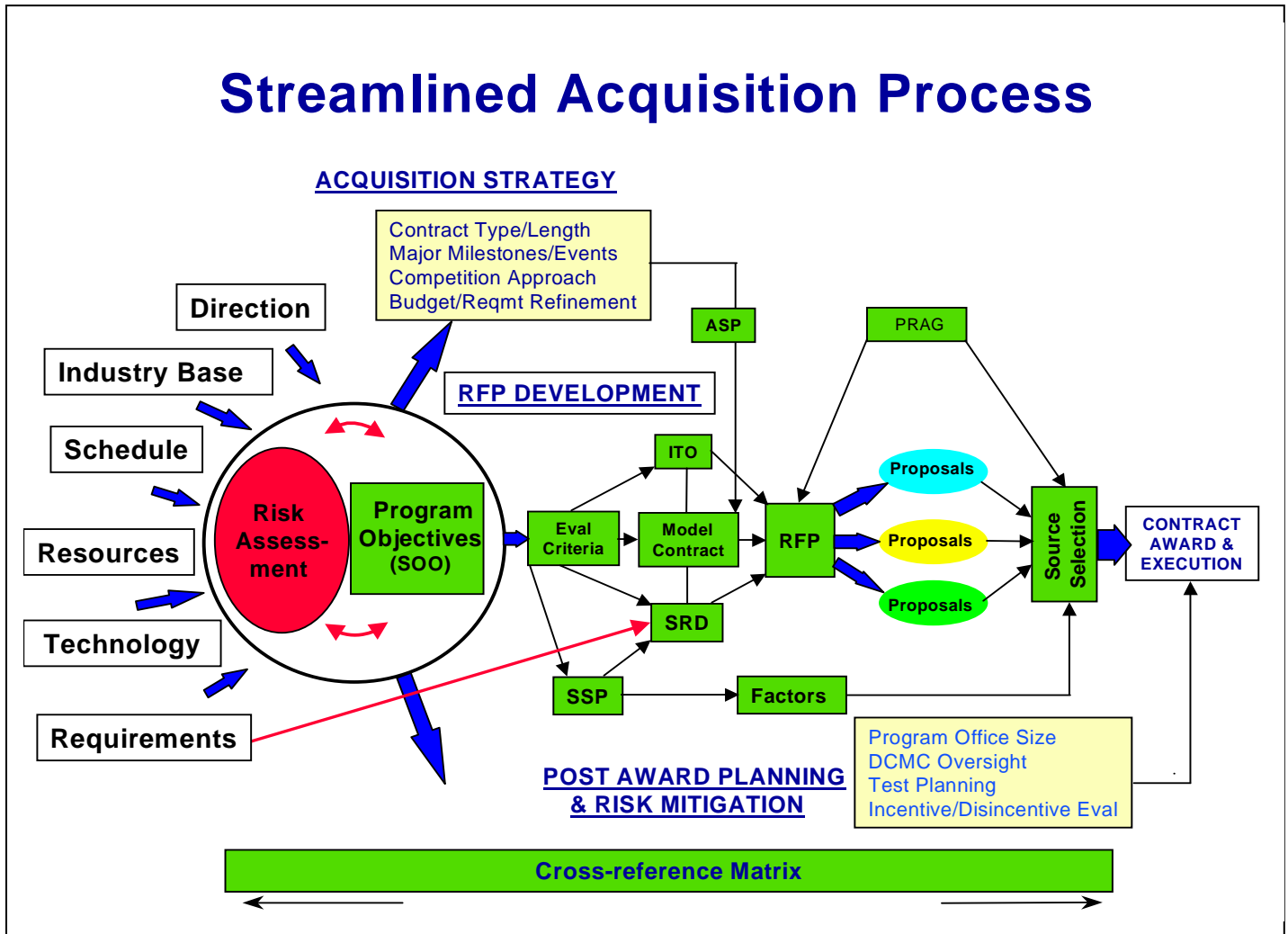
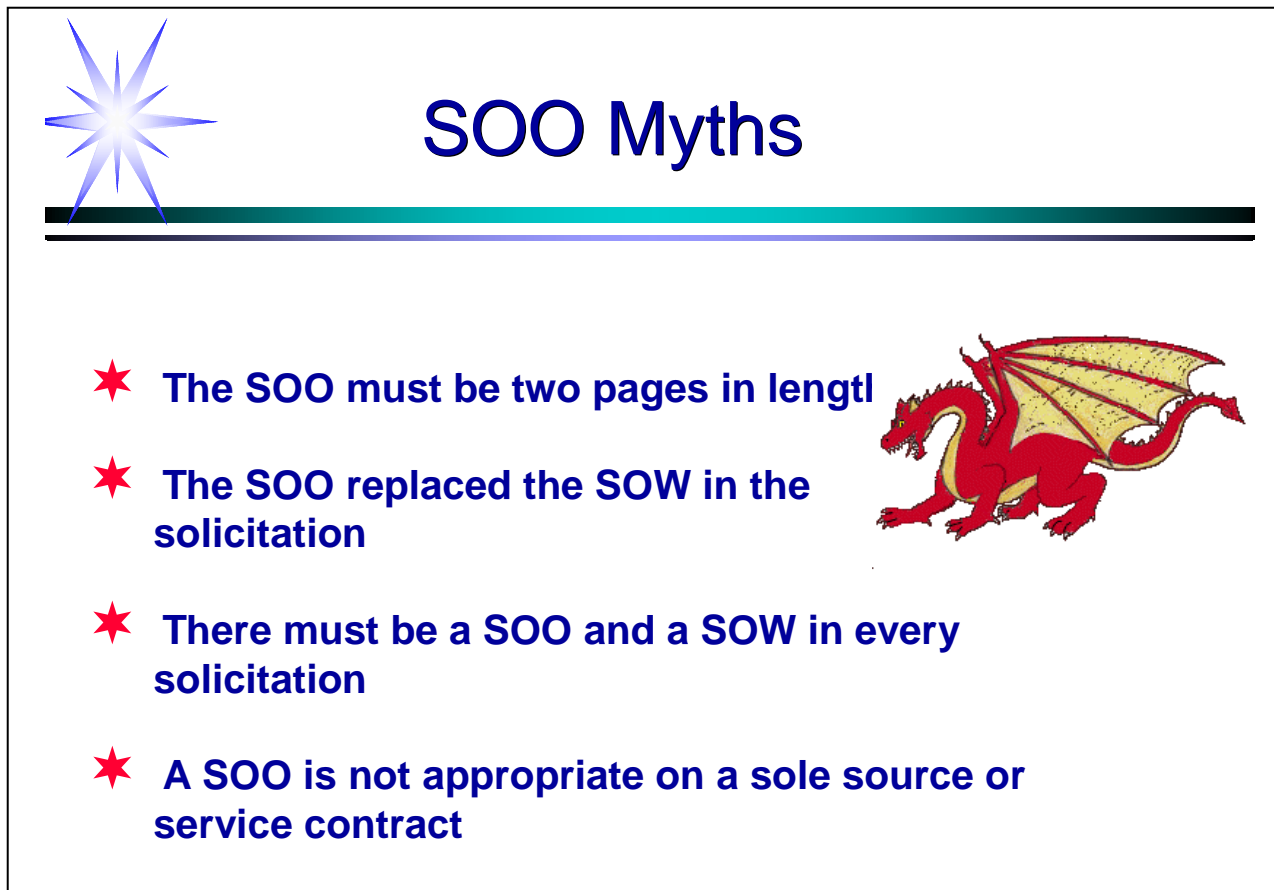


FIGURE 1. Streamlined Acquisition Process.

**Figure 2 - STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES (SOO) MYTHS**



There is no predetermined length for the SOO. It should be a concise, cogent document of appropriate length.

The SOO is not a replacement for the SOW. The documents are different in scope and nature.

Some have thought that every solicitation must have both a SOO and a government SOW, not so. There are situations where a SOO should be used such as, on a service contract where a performance work statement is being used.

The SOO product may not be supplied in every sole source or service contract but the SOO process is always appropriate.


**FIGURE 2. Statement of Objectives (SOO) Myths.**

**Figure 3 - NOTIONAL STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES (SOO) FORMAT**

<p>1.0 Program Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(a) Multi-Phased Program</li><li>(b) One Program, Multi-Contractor</li><li>(c) One Phase Contract</li></ul> <p>2.0 Contract Objectives (WBS 00000)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(a) Objectives in paragraph 2.0 are traceable to level 0 WBS elements.</li><li>(b) For multi-phase programs, describe objectives for each phase in a format similar to an indentured list (clearly indicate which phases are part of the anticipated contract and any phases that will involve separate contracts).</li></ul> <p>3.0 Management Objectives</p> <p>The management objectives are to allow the offeror the maximum flexibility to innovatively manage the projected schedule, performance, risks, warranties, subcontracts, and data to provide the goods or services that satisfies the government's performance requirements. This is tailored to meet the specific program needs.</p> <p><b>NOTE:</b> The SOO should not address each WBS element, but each WBS element should be traceable to something in the SOO. For example, a SOO may instruct the bidder to address his engineering approach. That is not a particular WBS element, but several WBS elements might be created to breakout the engineering tasks. Generally, a broad and sweeping objective statement will trace to more WBS elements than would be the case for a very narrowly focused objective statement.</p>
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**FIGURE 3. Notional Statement of Objectives (SOO) Format.**

**Figure 4A - STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES EXAMPLE**



**Note:** There is no standard format for a SOO ↓

## ***SOO Example***

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**Program Objective:** The objective of the XYZ modification is for the offeror to design, test, and manufacture a modification that allows increased reliability and maintainability of the existing ABC system at the most affordable cost to the government.

**Contract Objectives:**

1.1 Establish the best commercial practices to build and install the XYZ modification on 95 ABC systems without impact to the operational readiness of the XXX fleet.

1.2 Provide flexibility to adapt to contingencies resulting from changing modification schedule and workload requirements.

**Management Objective:** The management objective is to allow the offeror the maximum flexibility to innovatively manage the projected schedule, performance, risks, warranties, subcontracts, and data to provide the XYZ modification that satisfies the government's performance requirements.

**FIGURE 4A. Statement of Objectives (SOO) Example.**

## **Figure 4B - STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES EXAMPLE**

### **1.0 Program Objective:**

The objective of [Program Name] is to design, test, and manufacture an [end item] to satisfy the user's need /performance requirements.

### **2.0 Contract Objectives.**

It is an objective of this program that the contract define, as a minimum:

#### **2.1 Design, Analysis, and Test:**

The design of an [end item] to satisfy the user's performance requirements [performance specification]. Performance of analysis and tests, as needed to aid the design process and to document the end item satisfies the user's performance requirements.

#### **2.2 Configuration Management:**

Establishment of a product baseline to define the configuration of the [end item] with a demonstrated capability to satisfy the user's performance requirements. Establishment and maintenance of a configuration management process to thereafter control the [end item's] configuration for the life of the contract. Documentation of the design of the [end item's] product baseline through the use of engineering data. Establishment and maintenance of an Integrated Product Team, to include government personnel, for insight into the design's progress.

#### **2.3 Quality Control:**

Development and maintenance of a quality program to ensure the [end item] is produced in accordance with the engineering data. Development and implementation of procedures to properly maintain measuring and test equipment. Development and implementation of procedures to ensure appropriate corrective action of nonconforming material.

#### **2.4 Logistics:**

Development and delivery of all data necessary to support the [end item] (including provisioning, installation, operational and repair manuals, and engineering data) consistent with the maintenance concept. Compatibility (form and format) of the data with existing government systems is fundamental.

### **3.0 Management Objective:**

The management objective is to allow the offeror the maximum flexibility to innovatively manage the program schedule, performance, risks, warranties, subcontracts, and data to produce an [end item] that satisfies the user's performance requirements. Another objective is to maintain clear government visibility into the program schedule, performance, and risk.

**FIGURE 4B. Statement of Objectives (SOO) Example**

**Figure 5 - CROSS REFERENCE MATRIX EXAMPLE**

SOO	WBS	REQUIREMENTS DOCUMENT	IMP	RISK ASSESS			RISK MITIGATION	EVALUATION CRITERIA	RFP - SECTIONS A-M													CLIN	CSOW	Technical Proposal
				Prob	Con	Rat			A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M			
1.0		3.3 Training		90%	S	H	Evaluation	Subfactor 2		X											X	001	3.3	3.3
N/A		3.1.1 Contract Personnel		25%	N	L	Contract Clause	Go/NoGo				X											3.1.1	3.1.1
N/A		3.2 Maintenance Support		20%	N	L	NA	Go/NoGo	X						X							002	3.2	3.2
1.0		3.1 Management	1.0	40%	MO	M	Contract Clause	Subfactor 4		X													3.1	3.1
2.0		3.4 Modifications	2.0	65%	S	H	Evaluation	Subfactor 3													X		3.4	3.4
2.0		3.2.1 Spares Replacements		45%	MO	M	Contract Clause	Subfactor 2				X											3.2.1	3.2.1
2.0		3.2.2 Circuit Cards		55%	MO	M	Qualification Data	Subfactor 2				X											3.2.2	3.2.2
2.0		3.2.3 Brakes	2.1	55%	MO	M	IMP	Subfactor 2					X										3.2.3	3.2.3
2.0		3.2.4 Memory Units		85%	S	H	Evaluation	Subfactor 2													X	003	3.2.4	3.2.4
2.0		3.4 New Development	2.2	65%	S	M	IMP	Subfactor 2										X					3.4	3.4
N/A		3.4.1 Central Computer		25%	N	L	NA	Go/NoGo					X										3.4.1	3.4.1
N/A		3.4.2 Signal Processor		25%	N	L	NA	Go/NoGo								X							3.5.2	3.5.2
N/A		3.4.3 Displays		15%	N	L	NA	Go/NoGo			X												3.4.3	3.4.3
N/A		3.4.4 Functional Test Bed		35%	MI	M	Test Report	Go/NoGo							X							004	3.4.4	3.4.4
3.0		3.5 Engineering Data	3.0	55%	MO	M	IMP	Subfactor 1			X				X							005	3.5	3.5
N/A		3.5.1 Product Specification		25%	N	L	NA	Go/NoGo										X					3.5.1	3.5.1
3.0		3.5.2 Interface Control	3.1	55%	MO	M	IMP	Subfactor 1										X					3.5.2	3.5.2
N/A		3.5.3 Version Descriptions		20%	N	L	NA	Go/NoGo												X			3.5.3	3.5.3
3.0		3.6 Systems Engineering		90%	S	H	Evaluation	Subfactor 1					X								X		3.6	3.6
3.0		3.7 Logistics	4.0	65%	MO	M	IMP	Subfactor 2		X													3.7	3.7
3.0		3.7.1 Technical Orders		60%	S	M	Contract Clause	Subfactor 2					X									007	3.7.1	3.7.1
3.0		3.7.2 Transportation		45%	MO	M	Contract Clause	Subfactor 2				X										008	3.7.2	3.7.2
N/A		3.7.3 Test Equipment		35%	MI	L	NA	Go/NoGo								X							3.7.3	3.7.3
N/A		3.7.4 Facilities		30%	MI	L	NA	Go/NoGo											X	X			3.7.4	3.7.4
							C=Critical																	
							S=Serious																	
							Mo=Moderate																	
							Mi=Minor																	
							N=Negligible																	
							Con=Consequence(importanmce)																	
							Prob=Probability																	
							Rat=Rating( High, Medium, or Low )																	

**FIGURE 5. Cross Reference Matrix Example.**