

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

FOR

THE

PENNSYLVANIA CHIEFS OF POLICE

ASSOCIATION'S

TRAINING IMPROVEMENT

E-LEARNING

AND

VIRTUAL TRAINING ACADEMY

INITIATIVES



RESPONSE DATE/TIME:

All submissions must be delivered before 5/19/2010, TIME 4:00 PM

All submissions must be delivered via email as a PDF attachment to:

Contact Person:

Christopher J. Braun

Email: cjbraun@pachiefs.org

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Article I. GENERAL INFORMATION

Section 1.01 REASONS FOR REQUEST

The Pennsylvania Chiefs of Police Association (PCPA) is coordinating initiatives to improve training, establish e-learning courses, and examine the benefits of creating a virtual training academy. PCPA is administering grants from the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD). While PCCD is providing funds administered by PCPA, the work is guided by a steering committee of law enforcement professionals and assisted by the PCCD's Local Technology Workgroup. This is a cooperative effort between the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency, the Pennsylvania State Police, the Pennsylvania Chiefs of Police Association, local law enforcement, and victim service providers.

The economic down turn of the last several years has resulted in reduced State and local budgets. Justice practitioners today are asked to perform their duties in a complex, ever-changing environment. They constantly face a resourceful, unscrupulous adversary. The rules of engagement are in continuous flux as laws, policies, sentencing guidelines, criminal activities and public pressures evolve.

Maintaining proficiency through knowledge of current law, policy and procedures is a major challenge for operatives in justice and public safety, be they police officers, corrections officers, district attorneys, judges, parole officers, victim services or a person in one of a host of related fields.

For these professionals, information and training is a constant and essential need. They may spend a good portion of their time searching for information, often without finding it. When classroom training is available, they may lose time traveling to training locations. This is time taken from their duties, in a period when criminal activity persists and budgets for public safety are under increasing pressure.

The situation is most prevalent at the county and local government level, where the need is great and the resources are less available. To date, justice professionals have been asked to seek and participate in whatever training is available, when and where it is available. This may mean considerable expense and time away from the job. Also, there are many sources for justice training of which everyone may not be aware. There is a clear need for a means for law enforcement professionals to find and obtain training in a timely and efficient manner.

While police and law enforcement training in Pennsylvania has traditionally relied on an instructor led classroom model, many other professions and police in other states have begun using distance learning strategies, especially online courses, to reduce cost and expand their training opportunities.

Based on these facts PCPA is seeking a better approach to assist criminal justice practitioners meet their training needs. PCPA has been working diligently to identify

alternative means by which to provide the training to the Commonwealth's municipal police. In this time of economic downturn, several issues require consideration:

1. Is training being delivered in the most efficient and cost effective manner?
2. Is the training being delivered in a consistent manner?
3. Is the training relevant?
4. Is there a cost effective way to deliver information in a more timely manner so that officers can be better informed as soon as it is practically possible after changes in the law occur?
5. Does the "one size fits all" approach work, or is there a cost effective alternative, which could deliver a series of elective courses geared more for special assignments/units and the type of agencies where officers work.

Possible answers to these questions can be found in solutions like these:

- Web-based training modules
- Downloadable training modules or reference documents
- Webinars – Web-based instructional presentations
- Video conferences
- Audio conferences
- Media by mail – Training DVDs, tapes or documents

Therefore, PCPA seeks information on services and products that would support improving police and criminal justice training in Pennsylvania.

Section 1.02 BACKGROUND

The first step toward improving training, establishing e-learning courses, and creating a virtual training academy is information gathering. PCPA has conducted stakeholder's surveys; had a professional analysis of potential commercial and state operated learning management systems; and a professional study of an approach to create a virtual training academy. PCPA now seeks to create a training strategy that will improve training, use e-learning courses, and deploy a virtual training academy by procuring services and products.

Section 1.03 TYPE OF INFORMATION REQUESTED

- (a) PCPA is working with the steering committee to conduct a thorough review of the current training requirements, courses, and delivery methods with the belief that some training may lend itself to be delivery through distant learning strategies. These distant learning strategies may include synchronous training where the instructor and student interact at the same time but use technology like the internet, web meetings, or video/telephone conferencing to connect. Asynchronous training where the instructor and the student interact with the instructional material at different times and places. These could be from recorded presentations delivered by tape, DVD, or CD or a complete self paced online course with scored tests. Blended training is where both synchronous and asynchronous training are used. Most current training is delivered synchronously by an instructor in a classroom, although PCPA and PCCD have delivered informational presentations asynchronously using webinars.

- (b) Currently, the training courses range from informational with no assessment, informational with post training non-scored assessment and no certification, and training that leads to a certification that requires minimum achievement on a testing instrument.
- (c) Today, the registration and record keeping for student records range the same way, from informal for informational to highly defined for training that result in credits, certification, or continuing educations.
- (d) PCPA has reviewed the current use of learning management or course management systems among the stakeholders and has not found one that meets the expected needs and demands of these initiatives. For courses that result in credits or certifications, there is a need to ensure that the system has controls to prevent fraud, maintain integrity, identify the student, and properly credit the student taking and completing the course.
- (e) The vision of a virtual training academy is a place where training providers can post schedules for all training; deliver online courses; store course material and media in a standard format that can be used by other course authors, modified for different audiences or updated with new information; allow students to register; keep student records; and serve multiple agencies.
- (f) PCPA has always valued face- to- face interactions and the benefits of social interactions between the instructor and their students and the peer- to- peer interactions. However, when faced with the need to create better delivery models, other possibilities must be explored. Today, social networking using internet technologies has expanded social interactions, and PCPA wants to make sure that potential use of professional social networking, as part of e-learning, is reviewed.
- (g) PCPA and several other agencies already use presentation and e-learning tools available in Adobe's e-learning suite and seek to build capacity for the various agencies to take full advantage of these tools to create, modify, or update training material stored in the virtual training academy.
- (h) Therefore, PCPA is seeking information about services and products that support the potential purchase of the following services and products:
 - a. Assessment of training needs – Review current job requirements and needed skills.
 - b. Course authoring – Course authors help SME's determine if the training and information can be delivered effectively through distance learning, either synchronous or asynchronous; determine the level then create a quality training and information on-line "course" to achieve the training and information outcomes through online instruction. The course authors use one or more of a set of industry standard "tools" provided by the VTA including courseware, Webinars, video classrooms, to create the proper learning experience for the subject and student population.
 - c. LMS – Learning Management System for scoring and record keeping.
 - d. CMS – Course Management System for presenting and storing courses.
 - e. LCMS- Learning Course Management System combines both function of and LMS and CMS.
 - f. SAAS – Software as a service to perform any of the functions of the above

- g. Criminal Justice training resources, stock photographs, video clips, courseware, or complete online courses.
- h. Training for Adobe's e-learning suite CS4.
- i. Any other service or product that can be presented to the steering committee that further these initiatives.

Article II. UNDERSTANDING OF THE CONDITIONS REGARDING SUBMITTALS

Section 2.01 CONDITIONS OF RESPONSE:

- (a) All costs incurred in connection with submitting information will be borne by the vendor.
- (b) It shall be the vendor's responsibility to review and verify the completeness of its Information.
- (c) The PCPA may request additional information or more detailed information from any vendor at any time, including information inadvertently omitted by a vendor.
- (d) All information becomes the property of the PCPA and will not be returned.
- (e) News releases (including, but not limited to, commercial advertising) pertaining to this project may not be made without prior written approval of the PCPA.

Section 2.02 PREPARATION COSTS

- (a) All documents submitted in response to this RFI shall be prepared at the sole expense of the vendor.
- (b) The vendors understand there may be no claims whatsoever for reimbursement from the PCPA for the expense of preparation.

Section 2.03 ERRORS AND OMISSIONS IN THE RFI

If any errors or omissions occur in this RFI, vendors are requested to promptly notify the PCPA of any errors, omissions, and inconsistencies that are discovered. Notice can be emailed to cjbraun@pachiefs.org.

Article III. REQUIREMENTS OF VENDORS/EQUIPMENT

Section 3.01 Vendor Qualification Requirements

- (a) Vendors responding to this RFI must be in the business of providing professional service and or products that are consistent with the services requested in this RFI. Vendors may be for-profit businesses, non-profit entities, or educational institutions.
- (b) Vendors should demonstrate that they have previous experience in providing professional services and/or products of a similar nature to the ones requested in this RFI.
- (c) Vendors must be able to provide contact information for customers that the vendor has provided similar services and/or products of a similar nature.

Article IV. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Section 4.01 Any vendor responding to this RFI must:

- (a) Clearly identify their information for services and products they provide solely, or if they provide third party items, as a prime contractor with total responsibilities.
- (b) Do not assume single source responsibility nor assume any vendor would be the sole point of contract for all services and/or products of a similar nature required.

Section 4.02 All submissions must:

- (a) Supply complete information, and
- (b) In an effort to present concise and consistent information to the steering committee, the information should be in the format specified.

Section 4.03 All information must be received by PCPA before:

- (a) Time 4:00 PM
- (b) Date 5/19/2010

Article V. INFORMATION SUBMISSION FORMAT

Section 5.01 Vendors should use the following format for information submission

All submissions will be submitted in Portable Document Format (PDF) as an email attachment and sent to cjbraun@pachiefs.org.

- (a) Section 1 will identify the vendor and must have complete company name, address, telephone/facsimile, and contact person and email address.
- (b) Section 2 will describe how the vendor is qualified to provide the requested services and/or products of a similar nature, describe if the vendor is willing to present additional information in a personal meeting in person or via web conference. Vendor should list several customers or contacts for reference.
- (d) Section 3 is where the vendor should place the information about the services and/or products they could provide. Wherever possible, costs and prices should be listed.
- (e) Section 4 is optional and may be used by the vendor to provide any other additional information to support their submission.

Article VI. INFORMATION USE

Section 6.01 I Review

- (a) Information provided will be used to inform the steering committee of potential solutions to reach their goals.
- (b) No purchases will be made based on any information provided in response to this RFI, but information will be used to guide the process of developing Request for Quotes, Request for Proposals, and Bids.

- (c) This RFI is only for purpose of providing information. All eventual procurements will be made as the result of competitive instruments.

Section 6.02 Vendor's Questions

- (a) Any question about this RFI may be submitted via email to cjbraun@pachiefs.org
- (b) The PCPA will make a good faith effort to answer legitimate questions but reserves the right not to answer questions it deems not relevant to the RFI.