

## F6 Questions and Answers

To submit a formal question to the F6 Program Office, please send it by email to the BAA Mailbox [BAA07-31@darpa.mil](mailto:BAA07-31@darpa.mil)

### Questions for Clarification:

1. Q: If a cheap launch is not available will the program launch multiple spacecrafts on one LV?

A: DARPA prefers to utilize multiple low cost launches; if unavailable a consolidated launch will be considered.

2. Q: Do you have a customer/end-user in mind or identified?

A: No

3. Q: Which Government entities/agencies have you socialized F6 with and what were the reactions?

A: DARPA has discussed the F6 concept, and the response has been positive.

4. Q: How will the Government determine capability of “value”. Will it be at a Mission level (communication, PNT, Missile warning, space environment) or other?

A: Per the BAA, “each responder has been asked to clearly explain their method of defining and quantifying value.”

7. Q: Will a list of attendees be provided to help with teaming discussions?

A: Yes (*Note: now available at [www.darpa.mil/tto/solicitations.htm](http://www.darpa.mil/tto/solicitations.htm)*)

8. Q: Will Owen’s presentation material be made available?

A: Yes (*Note: now available at [www.darpa.mil/tto/solicitations.htm](http://www.darpa.mil/tto/solicitations.htm)*)

9. Q: How does the Space Surveillance network play with F6?

A: The standard products of the current US space surveillance capabilities may be leveraged by an operator in support of future F6 demonstrations.

12. Q: How much commercial off the shelf (COTS) are you asking for in the nodes?

A: Per the BAA, this is left up to individual proposers.

13. Q: Could you please comment about the funded studies that have been conducted in support of the program to this point?

A: DARPA does not intend to release these internal study materials to proposers.

14. Q: What do you envision for micro-propulsion in the F6 program?

A: This is left for the individual proposers to decide.

15. Q: As modules get smaller, new on-board thrusters should have ~1-10 Kg mass yet offer good thrust/mass, thrust/power & impulse bit control. Micro-electric propulsion is one such technology. Are we allowed to propose such innovative thrusters for the F6 program?

A: The F6 BAA seeks system solutions. Propulsion decisions may be part of a system solution. Propulsion design decisions are left to individual offerors.

16. Q: Do you envision Spacecraft that use COTS hardware and non-conventional electronics and components to speed design and production and technology implementation as well as reducing cost?

A: The BAA contains no restrictions on using such approaches..

17. Q: Is the end goal system of value only if it is GEO-capable?

A: As stated in the BAA, a variety of orbits, including lower orbits, are acceptable. Executing a low orbit demonstration for a planned high orbit solution is also acceptable.

20. Q: First launch is 4 years after “program start”, what constitutes “Program Start”?

A: Start date is date of contract award.

21. Q: If an interesting idea/concept (but not a full system concept) were proposed and was meritorious, could it be funded as a stand-alone effort?

A: This BAA solicits an F6 system. Proposals addressing only subsystem technology concepts will be considered unresponsive to this BAA. Other DARPA solicitations may be more appropriate for sub-system concepts..

22. Q: The BAA states that modified legacy solutions are all submitted with certain government rights. How does this work with respect to intellectual property developed with private funds that may be modified for F6?

A: You may propose any intellectual property rights that you can justify. They will, of course, be evaluated on their merits and utility to the Government. If the Intellectual property rights are considered overly restrictive, they may be evaluated negatively.

23. Q: Can 10pt font be reduced to 8pt in figures and tables?

A: No. Follow the BAA sizing guidelines.

24. Q: Can more than one classified addendum of 50 pages be attached?

A: No. The intent is that only one classified addendum will be permitted per proposal.

25. Q: Would the Government be willing to cost spare spacecraft test facilities to allow entry by smaller companies who do not have their own thermal-vac systems?

A: You can propose to use Government facilities based on their availability. Any requested GFE should be identified and costed as requested in the BAA.

26. Q: How hostile is the operating environment (Jamming, Spoofing, Physical Destruction), and what availability is required in spite of hostile denial attempts?

A: There are no implied hostile activities included in the mission availability number of 99%. However, the BAA does include a statement of resilience in the presence of inadvertent ground-based RF interference.

27. Q: Is there a network reference model insinuated (TCP/IP)?

A: No.

28. Q: Define Node failure.

A: Node failure is the inability of an individual node in an F6 ensemble to provide its specified services to the rest of the F6 ensemble.

29. Q: How will the Government determine incremental utility?

A: Incremental utility is based on the value-centric calculation of quantified utility components proposed by the performer.

30. Q: How do the 3 technical areas (Areas of Interest) specified on page 5 map to the more numerous technology areas described in section 8?

A: The three key technical areas of interest provided should not be taken to imply that there are no other areas of technical interest with respect to the F6 program. Section 8 provides the most thorough description of the technical challenges for this program. This issue is addressed in the amended version of BAA 07-31.

31. Q: What is the definition of 99% mission availability?

A: Total system functionality is available 99% of the time over a 31 day month (24 hours a day).

32. Q: Should the interface specifications be non-proprietary?

A: Yes. One of the key aspects of the System F6 program is to enable an architecture which allows for interaction of components developed at different times and by different sources.

33. Q: Would this BAA categorize the second SpaceX Falcon launch as successful?

A: DARPA views the second SpaceX launch as successful because all goals for test flight were met. However, since the payload did not reach its objective orbit, this would not qualify as a successful launch in the context of the requirements in this BAA.

34. Q: What is meant by launch vehicle manufactured in US?

A: Manufactured and sold by a corporation based in the US.

35. Q: Does the ground station have to be of US manufacture?

A: No.

36. Q: Will there be multiple proposers in Phase III?

A: The government reserves the right to make single, multiple or no awards at any phase of this effort.

37. Q: How do stakeholder buy-in and mission criteria play into the selection process?

A: Proposals will be evaluated according to the criteria specified in section 5 of the BAA.

38. Q: Should performer teams assume the dollar amount listed in publicly available budget documents for F6 is the maximum limit DARPA will allocate towards this project?

A: Proposers should identify and cost the work required to respond to the technical criteria of the BAA. We are not providing a target cost to proposers in this BAA or in any other document.

39. Q: The F6 BAA states the system lifetime as one year on-orbit after the final spacecraft is launched. What assumptions can be made regarding the expected launch intervals between successive spacecraft launches?

A: Proposers should make reasonable assumptions based on their objective system, expected CONOPS, and their proposed launch concept.