# Waterways Commerce Cutter (WCC) Frequently Asked Questions

## Contents

## Acquisition Process, Contracting, and Schedule; Industry Engagement

### 1. What is the WCC alternatives analysis (AA), and what does it include?

The WCC AA is an independent analysis of potential ways to meet the mission need. This AA satisfies the statutory requirement for the program's analysis of alternatives as required by 14 U.S.C. § 1132 and will identify and document viable solutions to meet the Coast Guard's aids to navigation (ATON) mission needs currently covered by the inland tender fleet.

The overarching goal of the WCC AA is to assess potential solutions, including a mix of materiel and non-materiel solutions, e.g., new cutters, electronic ATON, leased vessels and ATON maintenance contracts, among other options. The AA results will allow the Coast Guard to make an informed acquisition decision based on cost and performance trade-offs among different types and combinations of materiel and non-materiel solutions.

The WCC Program has partnered with the Naval Sea Systems Command (NAVSEA) to conduct the AA and ensure its independence, as required by statute. In addition, the Coast Guard and NAVSEA have designated an AA study plan director from the Research and Development Center to serve as a liaison to the AA team.

The analysis of the alternative to buy new cutters was completed in mid-2019. The full AA is planned for completion in 2020.

### 2. Will the WCC be a monohull ship, tug and barge, or some combination of these ship types? How many WCC variants will there be?

The Coast Guard is planning to acquire three variants of monohull ships. The river buoy tender and inland construction tender variants are expected to be common except for their hull lengths; working deck layouts; and deck equipment, including cranes designed for their mission set. These two variants will be acquired under one contract.

The third variant covers the inland buoy tending mission set, which will be acquired separately from the other two variants.

### 3. How many WCCs is the Coast Guard acquiring?

The current inland tender fleet comprises 35 cutters of various sizes and configurations. While the WCC Program has not yet determined the number of WCCs that will be needed, the number will not be greater than 35. The number and types of WCCs to be acquired will be finalized after completion of the AA and a Coast Guard fleet mix analysis.

### 4. What is the WCC Program's anticipated schedule, including request for proposal (RFP) releases and contract award dates?

| Notional Date | Event |
|---|---|

| | |
|---|---|
| **2021** | River buoy tender/inland construction tender RFP release |
| **2021** | River buoy tender/inland construction tender contract award |
| **2022** | Inland buoy tender RFP release |
| **2023** | Inland buoy tender contract award |
| **2025** | Initial operational capability* – achieved following post-delivery availability, test and evaluation, and certification that the first hull of each WCC variant satisfies all key performance parameters, or threshold requirements without which the ATON mission cannot be performed. |
| **2030** | Full operational capability* – achieved following delivery and shakedown of the last cutter. |

*Initial and full operational capability dates are in accordance with the WCC Operational Requirements Document.

**5. Is the Coast Guard planning to release a five-year budget profile to help industry determine the risk of bidding?**

The Coast Guard has released an Acquisition Planning Forecast System announcement with rough cost estimates for the river buoy tender and inland construction tender acquisition (F2019047728) and the inland buoy tender acquisition (F2019047737).

**6. Will the WCC acquisitions be small business set-asides?**

The acquisition of the river buoy tender and inland construction tender will be a small business set-aside in accordance with Federal Acquisition Regulation 19.5.

The Coast Guard is still determining the inland buoy tender acquisition strategy.

**7. Is there any way for large businesses to participate in the river buoy and inland construction tender acquisition now that it has been declared a small business set-aside?**

Large businesses may still participate in the river buoy and inland construction tender acquisition by teaming with a small business; however, small business must be responsible for 51 percent of the total cost of the contract.

**8. Does the government plan to fund industry design development via industry studies or a down-select?**

No.

**9. Will the Coast Guard require bonding or performance guarantees? If so, to what level?**

No.

**10. Is the Coast Guard considering acquiring the WCCs via block buys?**

At this time, the Coast Guard is not considering block buys as part of the WCC acquisition strategy.

**11. Is the Coast Guard considering a single-source vendor?**

There will be two solicitations: one for the river buoy tenders and inland construction tenders and one for the inland buoy tenders. Both will be competitive. There will be two contracts. It is possible that the same company could be awarded both contracts.

**12. Is there a list of proposed prime vendors to allow interested suppliers to begin planning teaming arrangements?**

No, not at this time.

**13. Can I still submit information or feedback related to a previously released request for information (RFI) or special notice?**

The Coast Guard is still accepting responses to the WCC RFIs related to cranes and training, as well as feedback on the river buoy tender and inland construction tender draft specification and inland buoy tender top-level requirements. Instructions for submitting information are located on the new System for Award Management (SAM) website, the General Services Administration eBuy website (training RFI only).

***WCC RFIs:***
WCC construction crane specification RFI (June 2019)
RFI to gauge industry interest, capability and capacity to design and build the WCCs (September 2019)
WCC training RFI (Reference ID RFQ1396764 – September 2019)
WCC inland buoy tender commercial vessel RFI (January 2020)

***WCC Special Notices:***
River buoy tender and inland construction tender draft specification (October 2019)
Inland buoy tender top-level requirements (November 2019; requirements updated in January 2020 RFI)

NOTE: The Coast Guard uses contracted support to assist with its acquisition programs, and these contractors are prohibited from disclosing source selection sensitive information. If you consent to the Coast Guard's contracted support accessing any submitted proprietary information, please note that in your submission.

**14. Will the Coast Guard accept information such as white papers and capability statements from industry? Where can I send this information?**

The Coast Guard is not actively requesting information outside of the RFIs it has released. While industry members may submit information to wcc@uscg.mil, the Coast Guard is not currently providing feedback on information submitted.

**15. Will the program provide additional industry engagement opportunities? If so, what type and when?**

The WCC Program currently plans to hold a cutter visit for industry members tentatively anticipated for late summer/early fall of 2020. Any information related to this visit or other industry engagement will be announced via the SAM website and this website.

## Requirements/Specifications

**16. Will the WCC be required to follow any classification society rules?**

The WCC will be built to American Bureau of Shipping (ABS) rules and classed by ABS, as required by 14 U.S.C. § 1133(c)(3)(A).

**17. How will the ships be classed? Will an ABS representative provide oversight during the production process?**

The ships will be built to the ABS Rules for Building and Classing Steel Vessels Under 90 Meters in Length, and the Coast Guard will provide project peculiar documents (PPD) with deviations from the rules. An ABS representative will monitor the shipbuilding process and perform surveys to ensure each vessel meets applicable requirements.

**18. Will individual ship components need to be classed, or just the ship? Will all ships need to be classed, or just the first ship in each class?**

All WCCs will need to be classed. Type approval for certain components will be required as per ABS standards.

**19. Within the specifications, which objective values are higher priority?**

The request for proposal will provide the Coast Guard's criteria for evaluating designs.

**20. Is the Coast Guard open to two inland buoy tender variants to optimize mission performance in the areas of operation?**

The Coast Guard is willing to consider two inland buoy tender variants if the variants maximize commonality.

**21. Is the Coast Guard open to other propulsion systems?**

Yes, however, the Coast Guard's extensive internal analysis has shown that direct drives will best meet operational requirements.

**22. Is the Coast Guard open to an aluminum hull?**

No. The Coast Guard is looking for a steel vessel that meets the ABS Under 90 Meter Rules.

**23. Is the Coast Guard open to an aft buoy deck?**

For the river buoy tender and inland construction tender, an aft buoy deck would not meet operational needs. The raked bow of the river buoy tenders allows them to get close to shore to stow and retrieve aids. The raked bow also allows both river buoy tenders and inland construction tenders to get close to fixed aids.

The Coast Guard may be open to an aft working deck on the inland buoy tender.

**24. The top-level requirements for all three variants call for a beam no wider than 35 feet, inclusive of appendages. Does this include fixed fendering?**

Yes. Thirty-five feet is the maximum beam based on the distance between bridge abutments in the tenders' areas of operation.

**25. What Dynamic Positioning System (DPS) level does the Coast Guard require for the inland buoy tender?**

If used, the Coast Guard would require DPS Level 1. However, spuds would also be an acceptable solution.

**26. Where will copper nickel piping be used?**

Section 505 of the river buoy tender and inland construction tender draft specification provides piping requirements, including copper nickel piping.

**27. The river buoy and inland construction tender specification includes a separate and highly detailed noise requirement section. Why doesn't the Coast Guard use ABS habitability notations?**

Overall, the WCC and ABS requirements are very similar; however, the Coast Guard has tailored the ABS standards to address issues the Coast Guard has encountered on previous cutters.

**28. What are the emissions requirements?**

The WCC will be required to meet current engine emission requirements. See 40 CFR 1042 – Control of Emissions from New and In-Use Marine Compression-Ignition Engines and Vessels.

**29. Will there be any work with C3CEN (Command, Control and Communications Engineering Center) or the C4IT (Command, Control, Communications, Computers and Information Technology) Service Center on electronics systems or subsystems?**

The WCC Program is working with these organizations to determine the requirements for electronics systems.

**30. Will the WCC include SeaWatch?**

There are no plans for the WCC to include SeaWatch.

## Logistics, Government-Furnished Property, and Sparing

**31. Does the government expect to provide government-furnished property (GFP) and/or information for the ships? If so, what would be provided?**

The Coast Guard Electronic Chart Display and Information System (CG-ECDIS) will be furnished to the contractor as government-furnished information 13 months post-award.

The specification and statement of work will provide the parameters necessary to ensure the cutters are able to support the cutter boat embarkation, deployment, and sustainment. The Coast Guard will provide the data required to support the sustainment of the cutter boats and develop the required integrated logistics support products for sustainment.

**32. What kind of cutter boat(s) will the WCCs have? Do you have dimensions/specifications/a detail design for the cutter boats? Will the boats be provided by the government or the shipbuilder?**

The Coast Guard is developing preliminary requirements for these boats. More information will be provided as it becomes available.

**33. Will the Coast Guard provide a maker's list or an approved vendor list of equipment to be installed on the WCC?**

The specification may include some requirements to include items made by a specific vendor (e.g., watertight doors); however, the Coast Guard is not developing a maker's list or approved vendor list at this time.

**34. To facilitate the design process, does the Coast Guard plan to release a list of items with which the ship will need to be outfitted?**

Yes, the Coast Guard will eventually release a list of items needed for outfitting.

**35. What is the Coast Guard's definition of "initial spares"? What are the Coast Guard's initial spares requirements?**

Initial spares will be driven by a reliability-centered maintenance analysis of the component selection.

## Operations/Miscellaneous

**36. What do spuds allow inland tenders to do?**

Spuds allow the current inland construction tenders and river buoy tenders to remain in fixed positions. They allow inland construction tenders to be more precise when constructing fixed aids and allow river buoy tenders to hold position when pushing into a bank or using their jetting system.

The current inland buoy tenders also have spuds to maintain position; however, DPS could also provide this capability for this variant.

**37. What is your relationship with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)? Do they notify you with changing channel depths?**

Operationally, the Coast Guard works hand in hand with USACE to understand flood levels and the corps' dredging plans.

Additionally, the USACE Marine Design Center is performing engineering trade studies to inform development of the WCCs.

**38. Does the Coast Guard or USACE service lights on bridges?**

Lights on bridges are not serviced by the Coast Guard or USACE.

**39. There is a push in the Navy to unmanned and autonomous vehicles. Are there currently any plans or requirements to use these types of vehicles for ATON work?**

No.