RFQ #24-42-IT

City of Superior: NOC Services

Date: October 29, 2024

Name of Company: EPB Broadband Solutions

Contacts:

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Street Address:
10 West MLK Blvd.
Chattanooga, TN 37402

Cover Letter

City of Superior
1316 N 14th Street
Superior, WI 54880

We appreciate the opportunity to respond to your request for a quote to deliver NOC services for Connect Superior as you continue to provide critical infrastructure for your community and provide innovative communications solutions for your customers. We feel this represents a great opportunity for EPB to partner with the City of Superior for this occasion as well as opening the door to future opportunities for additional projects.

As an electric and broadband provider, EPB is aligned with the City of Superior's mission to serve our communities. We are driven to improve the quality of life for our customers, while we are singularly focused on providing outstanding services and recognize delivering excellent customer service as the most important competitive differentiator in the market. Our commitment to you is to treat your network with the same level of care as we provide to our own. We are proud to have won several awards in recognition of our commitment to customer service from organizations that include J.D Power, Consumer Reports, and our local newspaper, the Times Free Press.

Our methodology is centered around delivering exceptional customer experiences through customer centricity, operational efficiency, troubleshooting capabilities, analytics-driven insights, and leveraging our industry expertise as operators. We prioritize customer needs, optimize operational processes for cost savings, excel in issue resolution, and offer tailored solutions to provide a competitive edge. By choosing us, you gain a partner with a deep understanding of the industry, committed to customer satisfaction, efficiency, troubleshooting, analytics, and expertise. Here are some key benefits that differentiate our solution from the competition:

- Customer Experience: Our unwavering commitment to exceptional customer service translates into tangible outcomes such as customer satisfaction, loyalty, and reduced churn. By prioritizing the needs of our customers, we create an environment where their satisfaction is paramount.
- Efficiency and Cost Savings: By leveraging our experienced resources, your organization can optimize operational efficiency and achieve significant cost savings. We maximize the expertise and skills of our team, streamlining processes, improving productivity, and making the most efficient use of available resources.
- Troubleshooting and Issue Resolution: Our skilled agents excel in providing quick and accurate troubleshooting capabilities and minimizing downtime associated with technical issues. They are expertly trained to identify and resolve customer problems, enhancing overall customer satisfaction by less frequent service disruptions.
- Analytics and Insights: Our service encompasses an intuitive online portal called Fi Hub, providing our broadband partners with seamless access to efficiently manage their Network Operations Center. With this powerful tool at their fingertips, partners can effortlessly monitor and oversee support operations, ensuring their staff receive highly responsive and comprehensive assistance. You will gain valuable analytics enabling your operation to make informed decisions that aid in providing the best quality of support services to your staff.
- Knowledge and Experience: By harnessing our internal expertise, we offer a clear competitive edge. We provide valuable knowledge and deliver solutions tailored to meet the specific needs of your deployment. Our belief in sharing experiences and insights fosters collaboration and strengthens partnerships, driving mutual success within the industry.

By providing these key benefits, our solution stands out from the competition, empowering operators to achieve operational excellence, deliver exceptional customer experiences, and stay ahead in the dynamic broadband space.

We look forward to the possibility of working with you and if we can answer any questions that are not adequately addressed within this RFQ, please reach out.

Sincerely,

Katie Espeseth
Vice President, New Products

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Statement of Qualifications (Referencing Section 4)

4.1   State the name, address, and a company profile, including size, qualifications, technical capabilities, etc.

Electric Power Board of Chattanooga - EPB
10 W. MLK Blvd. Chattanooga, TN 37402
Number of Employees: 734 *(as of September 2024)*
Electric Services Established: 1939
Fiber Services Established: 2009

US-based call center:
EPB's call centers are both located downtown in Chattanooga, Tennessee. Our main building houses our Technical Support group while our Distribution Center houses our Network Operations Center to include Fiber Systems Support and Engineering groups.

EPB, Main Building
10 W M.L.K. Blvd
Chattanooga, TN 37402

EPB, Distribution Center
1401 Oak Street
Chattanooga, TN 37404

All EPB employees that work remotely must live within a 60 miles radius. We recognize ourselves as first responders, acknowledging the importance of being readily available to the community. During outages, our team can seek assistance from overflow agents, team leads, and coaches. Additionally, those who are off shift are prepared to join queues and contribute when they are available and called upon.

Technical Support:
- 43% Full Time in office
- 34% Full Time work from home
- 23% Hybrid *(office 3 days/ home 2 days)*

FSS, Fiber Systems Support:
- 53% Full Time in office
- 21% Full Time work from home
- 26% Hybrid *(office 3 days/ home 2 days)*

NOC, Network Operations Center:
- 100% Full Time in office, but staff do have the ability to work remotely if needed.

4.2   Include a list of the key personnel and manager of the firm. Provide a summary of the assigned project team, field staff, and their capabilities and relevant experience. Also note their ability to meet the project workload within the timelines established.

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The employees listed below are dedicated to the onboarding process. You can contact any of the contacts below to discuss any matters related to this project. Also, do not hesitate to contact your account manager for further assistance. We recognize the significance of being easily accessible and acting as first responders to ensure a smooth onboarding experience.

Katie Espeseth
VP, New Products
Started EPB in 2004
Experience/Qualifications: Business Development Manager, VP Fiber Optics
Contact: 423-648-3297 espesethkg@epb.net

Rich Carpenter
VP, Communications and IT Operations
Started EPB in 2005
Experience/Qualifications: Switch Technician, Supervisor Network Operations, Senior Supervisor Network Operations, Manager of Technical Operations, Senior Manager of Technical Operations, AVP of Technical Operations
Contact: 423-648-1562 carpenterrt@epb.net

Dustin Keith
Wholesale Account Manager, Primary
Started EPB in 2009
Experience/Qualifications: Field Contractor, Technical Support, NOC Engineer, NOC Supervisor, New Products/Wholesale Account Manager
Contact: 423-667-3843 keithdl@epb.net

Danielle Edwards
Wholesale Account Manager
Started EPB in 2010
Experience/Qualifications: Customer Service, Technical Support, Field Services, New Products/Wholesale Account Manager
Contact: 423-463-6060 edwardsdd@epb.net

Jason Hastings
Lead, Network Operations Center
Started EPB in 2016
Experience/Qualifications: Field Services Technician, FSS Senior Support Technician, FSS Team Lead, NOC Team Lead
Contact: 423-648-1685 hastingsjr@epb.net

Brandon Holmes
Manager, Network Operations Center and Fiber System Support
Started EPB in 2014
Experience/Qualifications: Field Contractor, Fiber Optic Troubleshooter/Splicer, NOC Engineer, NOC Team Lead, NOC Senior Supervisor
Contact: 423-648-1618 holmesb@epb.net

Our Network Operations Center (NOC) team consists of 11 professionals. We have 7 Engineers who monitor and maintain our network systems, ensuring everything runs smoothly. There are also 2 Escalation Engineers who step in when more advanced troubleshooting is needed. The team is led by 1 Team Lead who manages daily operations, and 1 Senior Supervisor/Manager who oversees the entire team and makes

sure we are meeting our goals. Together, the team is committed to keeping our network up and running, quickly responding to alarms and outages to maintain reliable service.

4.3 **Provide examples of related experience performed by the firm during the previous five (5) years (projects with services similar to those outlined in Section 5, Scope of Services). The firm and key personnel must have no less than three (3) years' actual business experience in the services to be provided.**

We have been providing NOC services within our deployment in Chattanooga TN since 2009. We currently support over 130,000 Fiber Customers. Within our deployment, we have:

- Deployed and supported: GPON, NG-PON2, 25G PON, and XGS-PON
- Supported Nokia equipment such as: ONTs, OLTs, LTs, and core infrastructure
- Utilize Juniper edge equipment
- Used Netcool for alarm aggregation and LibreNMS for performance monitoring

Nokia Equipment - EPB			
ONT Models			
O-421E-B	I-040G-B	O-821G-D	I-010G-B
I-241G-B	G-240G-A	O-221H-P	XS-250X-A
XS-230X-A	Y-010Y-B		
Access Network			
7360 ISAM FX16	ISAM FANT-H	ISAM FWLT-C	7210-SAS-M
7210-SAS-Mxp	7210-SAS-Sx		
Core Equipment			
7750 SR2s	7750 SR7	Nokia ESA 100G	7750 SR-12
7250 IXR-e	7250 IXR-R6	7705 SAR08	
Control Systesm			
NSP/NFMP	AMS	Altiplano *(launching soon)*	

EPB started offering Technical Support and NOC Monitoring services to other companies in 2012. Today we support 30 communities via Technical Support services and three communities via NOC Services, with one in onboarding status. Some of the NOC services that we provide to our partners include:

- Adtran and Nokia ONTs, OLTs, LTs, and Cisco core infrastructure
- Opening tickets for upstream providers and following up on a recurring basis
- Provide assistance with customer-reported resale circuits domestically and internationally
- Metrics and analytics for reported alarms via Fi Hub

We offer two models to support NOC deployments, they are listed below:

Alarm Monitoring with Notification Only (24/7/365):
- Description of Services/Definitions

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- o Process alarms generated from network monitoring software platform and other sources determine the scope of alert and respond according to Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).
- o The SOPs are generated and provided by the Operator and contain steps that need to be taken by our Engineers to notify the Operator of the alarms.
- o EPB tracks critical, major, minor, warning, and informational alarms for metric purposes but only performs notification of alarms using the provided SOPs on critical and major alarms.
- o Continuous live network monitoring
- o SOP adherence
- o Alarm identification
- o Scope identification
- o Alarm escalation
- Service Levels
  - o Critical, major, minor, warning, and informational alarms
- Requirements
  - o Alarms reviewed will be logged via Fi Hub cases.
  - o Case metric reports will be provided in Fi Hub
  - o Escalations will be defined within SOPs provided by the Operator and established during onboarding.

Alarm Monitoring with Resolve Actions (24/7/365):
- Description of Services/Definitions
  - o Process alarms generated from network monitoring software platform and other sources determine the scope of alert and respond according to Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).
  - o The SOPs are generated and provided by the Operator and contain steps that need to be taken by our Engineers to attempt to resolve the alarms.
  - o EPB tracks critical, major, minor, warning, and informational alarms for metric purposes but only performs resolve actions using the provided SOPs on critical and major alarms.
  - o Continuous live network monitoring
  - o SOP adherence
  - o Alarm identification
  - o Alarm resolution
  - o Scope identification
  - o Alarm escalation

4.4   Provide information as described in Section 5.

Reference Scope of Services section starting on page 7.

4.5   Provide a list of all subConsultants, proposed duties and functions, qualifications, contact information, etc.

EPB will not be utilizing subConsultants to perform this level of support.

4.6   The respondent shall include a statement that he/she made their own examination, investigation and research regarding the method of doing the work, all conditions

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affecting the work to be done, the labor, equipment and materials, and the quantity of the work to be performed. The Proposer agrees that it has satisfied itself by Proposer's own investigation and research regarding all of such conditions, and that Proposer's conclusion to enter into the Service Agreement and based upon such investigation and research, and that Proposer shall make no claim against the City because of any of the estimates, statements or interpretations made by any officer or agent of the City which may prove to be erroneous in any respect.

EPB has reviewed this RFQ and recognizes that we have evaluated the requirements outlined for Connect Superior, making certain exceptions in our responses. Given our extensive history of supporting Nokia within our own deployment, we believe we are uniquely qualified to provide this level of support to Connect Superior.

Scope of Services (Referencing Section 5)

EPB agrees with the Scope of Services referenced in Section 5 outlined below unless specified otherwise within our responses.

Service Desk

The service desk component describes the coordination center for the NOC services. The NOC function must provide the following capabilities:
- Perform **Event and Incident Management** functions, including:
  - Monitoring of the Nokia Internet Protocol (IP) Core and Subscriber Access (OLTs, ONTs) environment and all associated service endpoints.

    EPB Response: Agree, but we do need devices to send alarms via SNMP, Syslog, Webhooks, ping, etc.
  - Generate alerts when any component of the ConnectSuperior IP Core and Subscriber Access exceeds manufacturers operational parameters.

    EPB Response: Alerts will be generated automatically via SNMT (or other probe type) to EPB's Netcool Environment which will auto-create a case into EPB's Fi Hub portal. The alerts/cases are reviewed by our NOC and the corresponding resolve action (MOP or SOP) will be utilized.
  - Provide first-tier incident response, including creation, assignment and tracking of incident response tickets as appropriate based on generated alerts or other notifications from ConnectSuperior staff.

    EPB Response: Alerts will be generated automatically via SNMT to EPB's Netcool Environment which will auto-create a case into EPB's Fi Hub portal. The alerts/cases are reviewed by our NOC and the corresponding resolve action (MOP or SOP) will be utilized.

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- Provide granular and targeted notification outage events or other service impacts to affected users and ConnectSuperior staff.

EPB Response: If we have a customer list, we can email outage events to targeted affected customers.

- Provide online accessible and real-time status updates for ongoing incidents with appropriate informational view for ConnectSuperior staff and partner ISPs.
- Close incident response tickets upon service restoration, including timely notification as appropriate to affected parties.
- Develop playbook and manage major incident communications accordingly and as requested. For major incidents, participate in post-incident root cause analysis (RCA) and process improvement determinations conducted by Connect Superior.

EPB Response: Agree but we would require City of Superior to assist with generating the initial playbook (SOPS/MOPS/Resolve Actions) for alarms and provide unique details to resolve them.

- Publish daily status report of incident status to operational dashboard at connectsuperior.com/outage report.

EPB Response: We provide status reports in real-time via our online portal. If it needs to be published daily on the website above, we would like to explore automation to fulfill that need.

- Develop and provide regular summary of incident management activities to operational management staff.

EPB Response: This will be available via Fi Hub in real-time.

- Escalate unresolved issues to appropriate ConnectSuperior escalation point.

- Perform **Change Management** functions, including:
    - Develop and participate in ConnectSuperior change management process to determine maintenance windows, planned outages, or other service-impacting activities.
    - Creation and tracking of change control tickets from internet service and transport providers.
    - Issue granular and targeted notification of maintenance windows and planned outages to ConnectSuperior staff and stakeholders.
    - Close change control tickets upon completion, with timely notification to affected parties.
    - Status reporting of change management status to operational management staff at ConnectSuperior.

○ Real-time reporting of change management activities via connectsuperior.com/change management.

EPB Response: We can provide change management activities in real-time via our online portal. If it needs to be published daily on the website above, we would like to explore automation to fulfill that need.

● Provide **Web-accessible Interface** for Connect Superior staff with visibility into current and historical incident management, service requests, and change management activities.

● Additionally:
  ○ Service Level Agreements (SLAs) will be jointly developed by the NOC and Connect Superior to monitor infrastructure and service performance to trigger appropriate alerting or other notifications. It is expected that the awardee, would present a Standard Service Level Agreement (SLA) as a starting point. This mechanism would define any customized processes, roles and responsibilities for making updates, including training for its staff and lifecycle management of SLA documents.
  ○ The NOC must implement a modern and comprehensive service management mechanism to support and proactively improve processes and procedures. Proposals will need to detail not only the processes and procedures, but also how they are managed, continuously improved and communicated. For example, in the RFP evaluation process, Connect Superior will want to understand how the NOC manages its policies and procedures for incidents, problem, request, change, introduction of new services, etc. Connect Superior will expect the NOC to have mature processes and communications plans for each process.

EPB Response: At the core of this topic for our solution is Fi Hub. Fi Hub is the portal that we have developed utilizing Salesforce. Fi hub will receive all alarms via Netcool, our alarm aggregator. When we receive an alarm, Fi Hub creates a case for every alarm. We would work with Connect Superior to classify all alarms into one of five categories. They are:
  ▪ Critical
  ▪ Major
  ▪ Minor
  ▪ Warning
  ▪ Informational

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Our NOC responds/works all Critical and Major alarms according to the Knowledge Articles (MOPs/SOPs/Resolve Actions) stored within Fi Hub. All Knowledge Articles would be approved by Connect Superior prior to launch. We would ask Connect Superior to review and approve each new Knowledge Article created after launch, and many times will be involved in the creation of them.

We use the other alarm types to help correlate and identify a larger outage from multiple minor alarms using their time stamps and trending them on our alarm dashboard for collecting metrics to analyze. After launch, we will have weekly calls with Connect Superior to review services rendered. When comfortable, we would change these to bi-weekly calls, then monthly. We have built features into Fi Hub to allow Connect Superior to be involved as little or as much as desired with reviewing our processes and knowledge articles. Additionally, coaching opportunities can be submitted by Connect Superior within Fi Hub, or via email-to-case creation.

- ○ The NOC may also be requested to collaborate with Connect Superior's Network team to review and improve end-user satisfaction, plan new features and to review and plan process and communications improvements, including:
    - ■ Coordinating service support objectives
    - ■ Reporting NOC statistics on incident management, service request, and change control activities. Such reports should include
    - ■ Analyze trends or emerging issues that should be tracked and acted upon, if any;
- ○ Complete timely RCA on major incidents or problems, which will include plans for future response improvements and other mitigation strategies; and
- ○ Conducting weekly review session including periodic discussions on process improvement or other relevant issues.

- ● Respondent will provide information on how its systems can be linked to Connect Superior's source-of-truth (SOT) regarding internet service providers, customer premise equipment, and third-party vendors. Connect Superior requires the respondent to state whether their systems have the capability, via API's to:
    - ○ accept data from Connect Superior's SOT,

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- the capability to access the SOT for various types of information that can be leveraged to increase operational posture

EPB Response: Our portal is built on Salesforce and can utilize APIs. We have previously communicated with COS about integration and look forward to having a mutual customer with them and developing connectivity.

Break/Fix

As part of the proposal, it is expected that the NOC will coordinate and deliver a Break/Fix component that will:

- Provide supporting engineers trained to troubleshoot and repair problems with the deployed components and configurations of the Connect Superior network and/or compute platforms.

EPB Response: We can provide this service via our Network Engineers. This would be in addition to our standard NOC solution and would need to be scoped separately.

- Monitor the deployed components and configurations of Connect Superior's network infrastructure, detect routine operational failures.
- Undertake appropriate restorative actions in response to operational failures to return functionality to originally deployed and configured levels and communicate such actions to Connect Superior.
- Where unable to repair an impaired or down service within a set service level expectation, escalate to Connect Superior on-the-ground staff to assist in repair.
- When escalation to Connect Superior staff is required to assist in break/fix repairs, participate in documentation, training and other activities to assure the NOC can repair identified recurring issues independently during future incidents.
- Examples of expected break/fix support include:
  - Monitoring alerts, system logs, and system telemetry, and recognizing indicators of a deviation from expected state required to identify failed hardware and associated service impacts.

EPB Response: We will want to automate the deviation indicators and set them up to alert our NOC via Fi Hub.

  - Diagnosing failed components within an SLA.
  - Diagnosing circuit failures, or other physical impairments to the network and coordinating with the associated vendors within an SLA to open and track tickets for the outage or service degradation.
- Engaging remote smart hands assistance for problem identification where necessary.
- Engaging in a portion of the Return Merchandise Authorization (RMA)

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process.

- Writing and/or executing replacement Methods of Procedures (MoPs) to direct remote hands in failed part replacement and managing the execution of MoPs to successful conclusion.
- Documenting failure resolution and communication of failure and remedy details to ConnectSuperior staff.
- Engaging escalated support (ConnectSuperior, Nokia, Internet Service Providers) when necessary, from ConnectSuperior technical resources in a timely manner, when established break/fix procedures cannot identify and/or remedy the issue.
- Engaging with third-party suppliers including maintenance contract providers i.e. Outside Plant maintenance vendor, fiber providers, circuit providers, colocation providers, and other ConnectSuperior contractors as needed to completely resolve identified issues.
- Working with ConnectSuperior staff to continuously improve documentation and processes to better prevent the occurrence of and break/fix support for future failures and related incidents.

The NOC would be required to develop run books and provide staff training based on the above information.

Backoffice Systems

To increase reliability and security of the ConnectSuperior infrastructure and aid in the timely resolution of impairment issues, ConnectSuperior will provide Altiplano access to the awardee. The respondents should document support in the following areas related to their operational tooling:

- Backoffice systems to support a modern operational regime that combines ticketing, monitoring, alerting, SLA tracking and configuration management information necessary to provide operational break/fix support.
  EPB Response: Alerts will be generated automatically via SNMP to EPB's Netcool Environment which will auto-create a case into EPB's Fi Hub portal. The alerts/cases are reviewed by our NOC and the corresponding resolve action (MOP or SOP) will be utilized. In addition, each case is tagged with data and time stamps and status history with them. Reports would be generated according to the agreed SLAs for review monthly.
- High-availability approach that assures necessary 100% availability and security. The NOC will be responsible for providing secure access i.e. as multiple geographically distributed instances, maintained with a regular backup rotation, with documented processes in place to handle common scenarios like Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS) attacks, ransomware threats, and other commonly-recognized security issues. ConnectSuperior will expect to review the respondent's

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business continuity and disaster recovery plans as they are relevant to services covered under this RFP.

EPB Response: We have a disaster recovery site that hosts multiple backups of our critical systems which include NICE InContact, Metaswitch (NICE backup), Netcool, Servers, and Fi Hub. Some of which include redundancy in the Cloud. Additional information can be shared if we are awarded.

- The NOC will be responsible for coordinating with ConnectSuperior staff in performing regular backup verification tests, including annual failover/disaster recovery drills as required to confirm process and implementation support for those scenarios.

Security of NOC and Connect Superior Operational Environment

- The NOC and ConnectSuperior staff will collaborate to produce security plans designed to protect both the Connect Superior environment and the operational support systems. For example, plans should address vulnerability management processes that reduce the time to patch, anomaly detection such as Crowdstrike, protections against ransomware, and implementation of a zero-trust architecture.

- All NOC systems used to support ConnectSuperior environment and services will include a dedicated instance for ConnectSuperior. Access controls must be in place to prevent staff without a ConnectSuperior relationship from accessing or viewing data on these systems.

- ConnectSuperior requires that providers have and share a security and continuity of business plan for the operational support systems it provides to ConnectSuperior. These plans must include at minimum the ability to sustain operations during attacks and other emergencies that could impact the systems or the facilities they reside in.

- ConnectSuperior will require the provider to detail its plans for major incidents, attacks and events that could affect the systems or facilities used by the provider. At minimum, we would expect to see evidence that the provider has clear plans for DDoS, ransomware, catastrophic destruction or access restriction at one of its data centers and related contemporary scenarios.

EPB Response: If awarded, we can provide our most recent SOC 2 Report after an NDA is executed. The services we will provide would only be Network Operation Center work and would not include Security Operation Center responsibilities except for the connection between Connect Superior and EPB, which would preferably be an IPsec tunnel for EPB to receive the alarms.

- ConnectSuperior requires immediate notification of any security breach/event/incident that jeopardizes the confidentiality, integrity, availability, or

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control of the operational support systems used to support ConnectSuperior or possibly exposes our data to unauthorized individuals.

- In support of continuous security monitoring, the NOC will provide ConnectSuperior with continuous and unfettered direct access and system logging feeds for all systems and devices used to support the ConnectSuperior network and service.

  EPB Response: If awarded, EPB will collaborate with Connect Superior to establish a process that meets the security standards of both companies.

- The NOC will follow ConnectSuperior security policies such as security incident management (covering suspected or active attacks, or intrusions against the ConnectSuperior network).

  EPB Response: We will need to review these policies before making a commitment.

- NOC and ConnectSuperior will perform quarterly security risk assessments of support systems, processes, and personnel. The NOC will make recommendations at each security assessment. Recommended improvements identified by the security risk assessment will be developed jointly by the NOC and ConnectSuperior. Ultimately it will be ConnectSuperior leadership that decides the resolution of identified risks (e.g., accepted or mitigated).

- The NOC staff working with ConnectSuperior will complete at least the same quarterly security awareness training as that of ConnectSuperior staff in addition to any training provided by the NOC itself.

NOC and Break/Fix Support SLAs

ConnectSuperior expects the NOC to maintain SLAs for key performance metrics. Submitted proposals must address the items in the list provided below as well as any additional information about standard offerings of the NOC's standard SLA's or Service Level Objective (SLO)s. Connect Superior will work with potential awardees to finalize a set of metrics and performance targets for the eventual contract.

- KPIs and metrics - include the KPI's and other related metrics supported by an SLA.
- Service levels, rankings, and priority - include a description of the services, severity levels of disruptions and target response times.
- Service response - include the service description, SLA target, Performance Metric(s), and method of measurement (e.g., MTTF).
- Exceptions and limitations - list any exceptions to the SLA conditions, scope, and application.
- Responses and responsibilities - define the responsibilities of both the service provider and the customer.
- Service Management - define the service management and support details

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applicable to the service provider in this section, such as hours of operation for each support service, (e.g., NOC Hours, On-Call hours, etc.).

EPB Response: Our Network Operations Center (NOC) delivers acknowledgment of critical and major alarms, maintaining an average response time of 5 minutes or less to ensure timely incident management. We actively monitor and report these alarms to enable swift resolution.

Through real-time monitoring and ticketing systems, we track key performance metrics and generate comprehensive reports to maintain transparency and operational efficiency. The Fi Hub portal provides clients with direct access to real-time data, reports, and all processed alarms, ensuring complete visibility in our alarm management processes.

Operating 24/7/365 with dedicated on-call support, our NOC has continuous availability for incident response. Each shift concludes with a structured handoff, securing consistent knowledge transfer and seamless transition between shifts.

Quarterly Reviews

ConnectSuperior requires an in-depth review of activity with the NOC at quarterly intervals throughout the year. The provider would need to agree to providing the following:

- Quarterly, ConnectSuperior and the NOC will meet to discuss upcoming activities, milestones, observations from the prior quarter, process improvements or changes, staffing, training and other strategic items.

Performance Management

The NOC will be responsible for providing and maintaining an escalation matrix from the shift management to senior executives within the providers' organization. An executive sponsor should be named as a liaison to ConnectSuperior senior management.

The NOC will be expected to manage its performance metrics and to regularly engage with ConnectSuperior related to areas of improvement for both the NOC and Connect Superior in tuning and ConnectSuperior continuously improving the services delivered to ConnectSuperior customers and the efficiency of activities between ConnectSuperior and the NOC.

EPB Response: After the launch of support, we will move weekly check-in calls to bi-weekly and eventually monthly once both companies are ready. During these calls we will have a dedicated team working with Connect Superior to discuss processes, SOPs/MOPs, performance metrics, and other items of importance.

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Onboarding Requirements

ConnectSuperior will be deploying Nokia IP core and subscriber access equipment. To facilitate their end of the NOC onboarding process, ConnectSuperior expects to enter into an agreement while the network is being deployed. Respondents need to provide an explanation of their onboarding process, including any system setup.

EPB Response: EPB will collaborate with Connect Superior to identify the optimal onboarding start date. The standard onboarding schedule spans roughly 10-12 weeks and would include weekly meetings. We acknowledge the potential need for flexibility, allowing adjustments to the timeline if necessary for either team. EPB will coordinate closely with your team to ensure timely receipt of all deliverables before the launch of support calls. If Connect Superior needs more time, the onboarding schedule can be adjusted accordingly, without additional charges beyond the Scope of Work.

Once all deliverables are confirmed, EPB requires a 2-week period to disseminate information to all personnel before the designated go-live date. Check-in calls will be initially conducted weekly, transitioning to bi-weekly for a few weeks' post-launch, and eventually settling into a monthly schedule once everyone is adequately prepared. Maintaining regular communication through check-in calls is pivotal for the project's success, ensuring smooth progress and ongoing support for your deployment. Furthermore, it plays a crucial role in fostering strong relationships with both teams.

Connect Superior will be responsible for helping EPB ingest alarm data, categorizing alarms, providing SOPs/MOPs for Fi Hub Knowledge Articles, and connecting to EPB's network via an IPsec tunnel for NOC Monitoring services at least two weeks prior to launch of support.