PEO-SW: Distributed Micro Sensors
Q&A Telecon Transcript
19 August 2026

1. Can a U.S. person submit a technology on behalf of a foreign-owned allied company, or must the submitting entity be a U.S.-incorporated company?

Yes, you can respond if your U.S. company actively enhances the product (value-add development), you are considered a legitimate technology partner rather than a technology broker.
Any foreign ownership, parent organizations, or foreign influence (FOCI) must be disclosed as early as possible—typically during the initial submission, but required immediately upon downselect. All FOCI mitigations must be finalized and active prior to contract award.

Note: All physical on-site attendees for the Phase 4 Assessment Event must be validated U.S. persons (U.S. Citizens or Permanent Residents/Green Card holders) to comply with foreign disclosure regulations and export controls (ITAR/EAR). On-site attendance is limited to a maximum of three (3) represent.

2. Is this topic appropriate for an innovative solution involving wireless mesh networks and sensor integration?

Yes. The panel said innovative solutions involving wireless mesh networks and sensor integration are appropriate, provided they are higher TRL and ready to go.

3. May a single respondent submit against more than one Technology Focus Area, and does each require a separate white paper and quad chart?

Yes. A respondent may submit against more than one technology focus area. If one white paper and quad chart can clearly and succinctly tell the full story, that is acceptable. If more detail is needed, separate white papers and quad charts may be submitted. The panel said there is no limit.

4. Will USG consider submissions that address an enabling subsystem, such as data egress, power, or sensor host platform, rather than a complete sensor node?

Yes. The panel said the goal is to see what is available from a microsensor perspective and that they are interested in solutions from subcomponents through system-level capabilities. Enabling subsystems such as data egress, power, or host platforms may be worth submitting, particularly where they can support teaming opportunities.

5. How important is communications resilience to electronic warfare

Communications resilience to electronic warfare is moderately important. GPS, position, and timing protection were described as especially important. The panel said respondents are not expected to solve a fully denied or actively jammed communications environment for this event.

6. Should offerors with capabilities beyond sensor payloads—deployment, data exfiltration, comms—address those in this submission?

Yes, they may address those capabilities. The panel said it is taking a broad-net approach and is open to subcomponents, systems-level capabilities, and modular or integrating platforms, though the solicitation focus remains sensors.

7. The criteria target ≤$200/sensor. How should offerors delivering sensing/data as a service rather than hardware address this?
Offerors should address the cost in the manner they believe appropriately reflects the value of their sensing/data-as-a-service capability versus hardware. The panel said a service offering may not have the same bill-of-materials cost structure as hardware, so the offeror should price what it would charge the Government for that service.

8. How will USSOCOM transition successful AE technologies into funded prototypes, fielding, and follow-on acquisition?
USSOCOM has several transition paths depending on maturity and need, including O&M, R&D, procurement experimentation, agreements, FAR-based contracts, and other SOFWERX mechanisms. Successful technologies may also be evaluated by interested USSOCOM, Army, and Chem-Bio Defense programs.

9. Are systems that are < TRL 5 able to be submitted if the manufacturer plans on having them TRL 5+ by the October event?
Yes. Systems below TRL 5 may be submitted if the manufacturer expects them to reach TRL 5+ by the October event. The panel said the claim would be considered during evaluation and would need to be proven at the later event.

10. Does the $200 unit cost apply to a complete node, including the sensor, or is the sensor considered separately?
The $200 target applies to the sensor itself. Other node components will be evaluated separately based on their cost and the value they provide.

11. Will Phase 4 include live demonstrations, briefings only, or both?
Phase 4 is primarily a briefing event, with limited or localized demonstrations if practical. The panel described a typical format of approximately 45 minutes: about 30 minutes to brief the capability and about 15 minutes for Q&A. Respondents may bring working technology if it can be accommodated in the meeting rooms, but this is not a full operational range demonstration.

12. Does the panel envision sensors operating independently or as part of a networked architecture?
Both are of interest, but the larger goal is a networked architecture. Standalone sensors may still be valuable if they do one thing well. The panel emphasized that being capable of being networked and already being networked are different categories; the desired long-term goal is autonomous communication through a mesh network.

13. What funding or acquisition pathways are planned for solutions that demonstrate operational value?
This was addressed with the transition question. The panel said multiple acquisition pathways are available, including O&M, R&D, procurement experimentation, agreements, FAR-based contracts, and other SOFWERX mechanisms, depending on the maturity and value of the solution.

14. What criteria will determine which sensor solutions advance from AE to prototype or field experimentation?
The panel did not give a formal ranking of advancement criteria. It repeatedly described evaluation factors such as operational value, maturity/readiness, cost as an independent variable, sensor modality, SWaP, detection capability, ability to support mission needs, and ability to demonstrate the stated capability.

15. Is the 0.1 Hz to 6 GHz detection range the union across all modalities, or a requirement on a single sensor?
The 0.1 Hz to 6 GHz range does not have to be covered by a single sensor. Multiple sensors may collectively cover the range. A single sensor that can cover multiple ranges in real time with low latency may be advantageous, but it is not required.

16. Does a mesh routing node or a gateway count against the $200 limit and the size limit? Or does the limit apply only to the sensors?
The panel said the sensor is the primary item for the cost and size target. A mesh routing node or gateway would generally be treated as a separate component and would not count against the sensor size limit.

17. Does the sensor operate under FCC Part 15, or on assigned government spectrum?
The sensor should be able to operate within applicable spectrum requirements. Because the sensors are intended for OCONUS use, applicable spectrum constraints depend on deployment location. Respondents should focus on describing the wavelengths or frequency ranges their systems can use rather than trying to predict a specific FCC Part 15 or government-spectrum assignment.

18. What supply chain evidence do you expect at this maturity? Do you require a Section 5949 statement per part number?
A Section 5949 statement per part number is not required for this event. At this maturity, the panel expects respondents to show they can build enough prototypes for an assessment event. More formal supply-chain risk management requirements may be included in any later award.

19. Is there a target range for data transmission from sensor to gateway?
There is no specific target range for data transmission from sensor to gateway. It depends on the sensor modality, detection range, scenario, and the type of data being collected. Longer range is not automatically better because it may increase detectability and vulnerability.

20. How many sensors do you expect to scatter, and over what area? After a scatter, is it acceptable that some isolated sensors never join the network?
There is no fixed number of sensors or fixed area. The answer depends on mission, desired coverage, route or area geometry, detection range, and modality. Generally, the panel wants scattered sensors to connect to a self-healing network, but isolated sensors may be acceptable if they are isolated by design or communicate through another path.

21. Do you have any requirement for a captured node, such as tamper detection or erasure of stored data?
It depends on what the sensor is detecting and how sensitive the information is. For high-consequence sensors, the panel would look for tamper detection and erasure of stored data. However, lack of those features at submission would not automatically exclude a respondent; they could be addressed during down-select, assessment, or follow-on work.

22. Will sensor systems above 200 dollars be considered?
Yes. Sensor systems above $200 will be considered. The panel said the goal is cheap and disposable, but cost will be evaluated independently as a value variable.

23. What communications range is expected between sensor nodes and between the sensor network and its gateway under representative operational conditions?
The panel did not provide a single expected communications range. It said transmission range is mission-, modality-, and sensor-dependent, and that longer range is not always preferable because emissions may become discoverable or vulnerable.

24. Can we submit a sensor is trl4 now but could be trl6 in 26 months
No for this event. A TRL 4 sensor that would reach TRL 6 in 26 months is outside the timeline for this event. The panel suggested putting that lower-TRL sensor into Vulcan or connecting with other sensor efforts focused on earlier-stage technologies.

25. Which fielded delivery systems must the payload mate with? Is there a dimensional or mass interface standard we should design to?
There is no single delivery system or dimensional/mass interface standard to design to. The panel wants options that can be delivered from manned and unmanned platforms across ground, air, and subsurface environments. Small payloads are preferred, but compatibility depends on the proposed platform and sensor capability.

26. Are there target/example sUAS/UAS or UGV or weapon systems that you all are prioritizing?
No specific sUAS, UAS, UGV, or weapon systems are being prioritized for entry into the assessment event. The panel said they are casting a broad net and can adjust the delivery mechanism if a sensor provides the desired value.

27. Have minimum detection ranges for footsteps, vehicles, UAVs and other threat targets, been defined and if so can these be shared?
Minimum detection ranges have been defined, but they cannot be shared in an open solicitation. Respondents should provide what their systems can do, and the Government will evaluate that against controlled or classified requirements internally.

28. Is there a specific mesh network and/or backhaul comms tech/standard that you'd prefer or say stay away from?
No specific mesh network or backhaul communications technology standard was preferred or ruled out. The panel said all communications approaches are on the table, including BLE, Wi-Fi, UHF, VHF, HF, SHF, and satellite communications.

29. Will there be a well-defined process for subcomponent providers to team with others participating in this event, or will that be company by company and ad hoc?
The panel indicated that collaboration through SOFWERX can enable business-to-business teaming opportunities after the event, particularly where one company has a partial solution or subcomponent rather than a complete system. The exact teaming process was not defined as a formal process in the transcript.

30. For seismic sensing, are you open to low cost MEMS accelerometers with onboard signal processing, or are you seeking development of new sensors?
Yes. Low-cost MEMS accelerometers with onboard signal processing are acceptable if they are capable now. The event is focused on available capabilities that can be rapidly prototyped and operationally evaluated, not on starting a 5- to 10-year new sensor development effort.

31. For the evaluation, what criteria will matter most to stakeholders? Are you willing to be flexible on SWaP if you can get more precision on CBRNE detection?
The panel said criteria depend on modality and mission need. For many microsensor applications, simply detecting a relevant signature or hazard at a location may be more important than precise identification. Some precision may be traded for lower SWaP, although precision may carry more value for some modalities.

32. We're demonstrating a relevant capability at USSOCOM TE 26-3. How can we connect USG assessors at the event with you?
Include the TE 26-3 demonstration information in the white paper, including who is assessing the capability and any relevant Vulcan information. The team can use that information to reach out to the assessors rather than trying to coordinate point-to-point during the event.

33. For the "Seismic" technology area can you share more details about what range of seismic activity you want to sense (e.g., person, vehicle, earthquake, etc)?
For seismic sensing, the panel said it is interested in a broad range of activity, including foot traffic, vehicles, heavy equipment, earth-moving, digging, and similar events. Specific detection distances depend on the environment and background noise and were not provided in the open solicitation.

34. For seismic sensing, what events and detection distances are you targeting, such as personnel, vehicles, equipment, or digging?
All listed seismic events are of interest, including personnel/foot traffic, vehicles, heavy equipment, earth-moving, and digging. Detection distance depends on the environment, such as dense urban areas, rural roads, or industrial areas, and the amount of background seismic noise. Specific parameters would be more appropriate after the assessment event or during follow-on activities.

35. For ROM, is a broad estimate w/ key assumptions and cost drivers sufficient, particularly where partner costs aren't firm,or need detailed incremented estimate?
A ROM should be based on the information available, with assumptions clearly spelled out. The panel said more detail is better, and fewer assumptions make the ROM easier to evaluate because cost is an independent evaluation variable.

36. Is a modular platform integrating multiple partner sensors of interest, or is the focus primarily on individual sensor modules?
Yes. A modular platform integrating multiple partner sensors is of interest. The solicitation primarily focuses on sensors rather than delivery platforms, but modular platforms that can integrate multiple partner sensors are worth submitting and evaluating.

37. I am a USA company that is contracted by a European company to do worldwide biz dev. They develop the product, I enhance it. Can I respond to this solicitation
Yes, you can respond. Because your U.S. company actively enhances the product (value-add development), you are considered a legitimate technology partner rather than a technology broker.
Any foreign ownership, parent organizations, or foreign influence (FOCI) must be disclosed as early as possible—typically during the initial submission, but required immediately upon downselect. All FOCI mitigations must be finalized and active prior to contract award.

Note: All physical on-site attendees for the Phase 4 Assessment Event must be validated U.S. persons (U.S. Citizens or Permanent Residents/Green Card holders) to comply with foreign disclosure regulations and

export controls (ITAR/EAR). On-site attendance is limited to a maximum of three (3) representatives per team.

38. If a U.S. entity is required for a subsequent award, can the technology developer participate through its U.S. reseller/representative?
Yes. A U.S.-incorporated entity (holding a valid UEI and CAGE code) wholly owned or partnered with an allied foreign parent is eligible to submit.
However, any foreign ownership, parent organizations, or foreign influence must be disclosed as early as possible—typically during the initial submission, but required immediately upon downselect. All FOCI mitigations must be finalized and active prior to contract award.

Additionally, all physical on-site attendees for the Phase 4 Assessment Event in October must be validated U.S. persons (U.S. Citizens or Permanent Residents/Green Card holders) to comply with foreign disclosure and export control (ITAR/EAR) regulations. Physical attendance is limited to a maximum of three (3) representatives per team.

39. We're a US entity (UEI & CAGE) under AUS parent, submit thru a U.S. employee. Tech transfers under AUKUS framework. Any FOCI or US person attendance req in Oct?
Yes. A U.S.-incorporated entity (holding a valid UEI and CAGE code) wholly owned or partnered with an allied foreign parent is eligible to submit. However, any foreign ownership, parent organizations, or foreign influence must be disclosed as early as possible—typically during the initial submission, but required immediately upon downselect. All FOCI mitigations must be finalized and active prior to contract award.

Additionally, all physical on-site attendees for the Phase 4 Assessment Event in October must be validated U.S. persons (U.S. Citizens or Permanent Residents/Green Card holders) to comply with foreign disclosure and export control (ITAR/EAR) regulations. Physical attendance is limited to a maximum of three (3) representatives per team.

40. Does US Persons Only restriction apply to the submitting entity, individual, or both?

Yes. A U.S.-incorporated entity (holding a valid UEI and CAGE code) wholly owned or partnered with an allied foreign parent is eligible to submit. However, any foreign ownership, parent organizations, or foreign influence must be disclosed as early as possible—typically during the initial submission, but required immediately upon downselect. All FOCI mitigations must be finalized and active prior to contract award.

Additionally, all physical on-site attendees for the Phase 4 Assessment Event in October must be validated U.S. persons (U.S. Citizens or Permanent Residents/Green Card holders) to comply with foreign disclosure and export control (ITAR/EAR) regulations. Physical attendance is limited to a maximum of three (3) representatives per team.

41. Is a US-incorporated entity able to have an individual from the foreign parent present with the US individual for the orals?

No. All physical on-site attendees for the Phase 4 Assessment Event must be validated U.S. persons (U.S. Citizens or Permanent Residents/Green Card holders) to comply with foreign disclosure and export control (ITAR/EAR) regulations.

Representatives from a foreign parent company who do not meet these U.S. person requirements are not permitted to attend the closed on-site presentations. Any requests for exceptions must be submitted

immediately upon downselect for formal USSOCOM J2 Foreign Disclosure Office review; exception approval should not be assumed.

42. Is a foreign ownership, control, or influence disclosure required at submission, at downselect, or at award?

Foreign ownership disclosure, parent organizations, or foreign influence should be disclosed as early as possible typically during the initial submission but required immediately upon down select. FOCI must be finalized and active prior to contract award.

43. Must all Phase 4 attendees be U.S. persons, and is there a limit on how many people a respondent may bring?

Yes. All physical on-site attendees for the Phase 4 Assessment Event must be validated U.S. persons (U.S. Citizens or Permanent Residents/Green Card holders) to comply with foreign disclosure regulations and export controls (ITAR/EAR) governing sensitive military technologies.

Due to physical space constraints and scheduling limitations at the SOFWERX facility, attendance is strictly limited to a maximum of three (3) representatives per respondent team.

44. We're a US entity (UEI & CAGE) under AUS parent, submit thru a U.S. employee. Tech transfers under AUKUS framework. Any FOCI or US person attendance req in Oct?

Yes. A U.S.-incorporated entity (holding a valid UEI and CAGE code) wholly owned or partnered with an allied foreign parent is eligible to submit.
However, any foreign ownership, parent organizations, or foreign influence must be disclosed as early as possible—typically during the initial submission, but required immediately upon downselect. All FOCI mitigations must be finalized and active prior to contract award.

Additionally, all physical on-site attendees for the Phase 4 Assessment Event in October must be validated U.S. persons (U.S. Citizens or Permanent Residents/Green Card holders) to comply with foreign disclosure and export control (ITAR/EAR) regulations. Physical attendance is limited to a maximum of three (3) representatives per team.

45. Is NIST SP 800-171 compliance required at award, or must it be demonstrated earlier?

NIST SP 800-171 compliance is required at the time of contract award, not at the initial submission phase.

To clarify current DoD policy and enforcement:

1. Strict Enforcement: The DoD strictly enforces NIST SP 800-171 compliance for any contract that involves the processing, storage, or transmission of Controlled Unclassified Information (CUI), which includes the "operationally sensitive adversary information" collected or handled by these systems (Page 3).
2. Contractual Vehicle (DFARS): Enforcement is dictated by DFARS Clause 252.204-7012 (Safeguarding Covered Defense Information and Cyber Incident Reporting).
3. Verification Prior to Award (SPRS): Under DFARS 252.204-7019 and 252.204-7020, offerors must conduct a self-assessment against the 110 controls of NIST SP 800-171 and post their assessment score in the Supplier Performance Risk System (SPRS). This score must be in SPRS prior to contract award to be eligible for selection.

For the initial SOFWERX submission: Offerors do not need to prove active compliance to submit a white paper. However, they should state their current compliance posture and confirm their ability to meet these DFARS/NIST requirements prior to any subsequent Phase 5 awards.

46.For a teamed submission, does the prime alone submit, or do both parties need to be registered?

For the initial submission, the designated Prime Contractor alone submits the white paper and quad chart package on behalf of the team. The submission should follow the templates on the event page and must contain sufficient technical detail for the government to adequately assess the capability.

Any foreign ownership, teaming arrangements, or foreign influence within the team must be disclosed at the initial submission phase or immediately upon downselect. If selected for the Phase 4 on-site event, all physical attendees must be individually registered and must be validated U.S. persons (U.S. Citizens or Green Card holders). FOCI mitigations must be finalized and active prior to any contract award.

47. Is a U.S.-incorporated entity with UEI and CAGE, wholly owned by an allied foreign parent, eligible to submit?

Yes. A U.S.-incorporated entity (holding a valid UEI and CAGE code) wholly owned or partnered with an allied foreign parent is eligible to submit.

However, any foreign ownership, parent organizations, or foreign influence must be disclosed as early as possible—typically during the initial submission, but required immediately upon downselect. All FOCI mitigations must be finalized and active prior to contract award.

Additionally, all physical on-site attendees for the Phase 4 Assessment Event in October must be validated U.S. persons (U.S. Citizens or Permanent Residents/Green Card holders) to comply with foreign disclosure and export control (ITAR/EAR) regulations. Physical attendance is limited to a maximum of three (3) representatives per team.

48. For acoustic sensor submissions, does PEO-SW expect the offeror to deliver the complete distributed node.

No, we do not expect the offeror to deliver a proprietary or complete distribution node. We are focused on sensor payloads and modular open architecture.

49. Is there a specific requirement for wireless range, latency, or data rate? If so, what is it?

No. There are no pre-prescribed requirements for wireless transmission range, latency, or communication data rates. Submissions should consider the following:

- Low bandwidth exfiltration (data rate) (page 3-4)
- Non-bluetooth mesh (range) (page 3)
- Detection time (operational latency) (page 3)
- Security & resiliency (page 3)

50. How will USSOCOM integrate selected sensors into existing C2, mesh networks, and FbIP architectures?
Integration of the selected sensor payloads into existing C2, mesh networks, and the FbIP architecture will be achieved by leveraging open, non-proprietary standards.

Specifically, sensor data must be ISA-compliant (desired) to allow automated registration and discovery across the network, and must map to standard Cursor-on-Target (CoT) schemas to enable seamless, plug-and-play integration with ATAK (Page 3). Communication backhaul will utilize secure, low-power mesh waveforms optimized for contested environments.

51. What frequency bands are authorized at the assessment venue, and what bands do you expect for operational use? Is there a prohibited band list?

Authorized transmission frequencies for the Phase 4 Assessment Event will be coordinated directly with the venue's spectrum manager and provided to downselected participants.

Clarification: Please note that the frequency range of 0.1 Hz to 500 Hz (minimum) / 0.1 Hz to 6 GHz (desired) specified on Page 3 refers to the sensor's passive detection/collection capability, *not* the wireless communication link. The operational wireless link must utilize a Non-Bluetooth mesh network (minimum) leveraging low-power, secure, and Low Probability of Intercept (LPI) exfiltration waveforms. Spectrum allocation and frequency clearance for operational use (Phase 5) will be addressed during subsequent contract awards.

52. Are there interoperability requirements beyond ATAK that offerors should design toward?

Yes, beyond ATAK interface, offerors should design their system to meet the criteria mentioned on page 3 (ISA compliance, physical delivery mating, and open architecture and modular APIs).

53. For a sensor that is not recoverable, do you read "rechargeability" as energy harvesting? Or do you want a charge port for reuse before emplacement?

Rechargeability as mentioned on page 2 (SWaP) refers to the power requirements for emplaced sensors. Submitters should describe how their technical approach meets the defined minimum operational duration (8 hours) and the desired extendable duration (up to 3 weeks) through power-aware management, programmable power modes, or other innovative power solutions.

54. What C2 interoperability requirements should be met, and will an open API with sensor ID, location, timestamp, classification and confidence data be sufficient?

Yes. An open API or data model that provides Sensor ID, Location, Timestamp, Classification (e.g., target type), and Confidence data is highly sufficient and directly aligns with our interoperability objectives.

These specific data fields are the exact baseline parameters required to generate standard military Cursor-on-Target (CoT) messages for ATAK integration and to achieve ISA-compliance (desired) (Page 3).

Submitters should ensure their open API is well-documented and utilizes lightweight, low-power data structures suitable for secure, low probability of intercept exfiltration over the mesh network (Page 3).

55. Is the Gov interested in RF-silent line-of-sight alert mechanism where a material reversibly changes its NIR reflectance so a sensor can read low-bit alerts?

Yes, we are interested in novel, passive, and RF-silent exfiltration mechanisms.

A Near-Infrared (NIR) optical reflectance-change mechanism directly aligns with several key criteria in the solicitation (LPI/LPD exfiltration – page 3, SWaP & attritability – page 1):

Submitters proposing such solutions should explain how the NIR state change is triggered, how it is read by standard fielded optical/IR recovery platforms (e.g., sUAS or ground sensors), and how it performs in degraded weather or obscured atmospheric conditions.

56. What interoperability standards will USSOCOM require to avoid vendor lock-in across the FblP sensor ecosystem?

To ensure a modular, plug-and-play sensor ecosystem and prevent proprietary vendor lock-in, the required standards are detailed on page 3 (ISA compliance, open architecture and documented APIs, and ATAK/Cursor-on-Target (CoT) integration).

57. What is the anticipated funding range or ceiling for Phase 5 awards under this effort?

It is premature to discuss specific funding ranges or ceilings for potential follow-on (Phase 5) awards at this stage.

As noted on pages 1 and 4 of the criteria, this event is designed to identify promising technologies (TRL 5–7) for prototyping, experimentation, and near-term incremental acquisition (FY27/28). Any subsequent funding or follow-on contracts will be determined on a case-by-case basis and will depend on the operational value demonstrated during the assessment event, available government resources, and the specific transition pathway selected.

58. How are you defining "microsensor"?

For this event, "microsensor" is defined by the physical, cost, and operational constraints detailed on page 1 and 2 of the assessment criteria.

59. Target cost for device is $200 in small quantity, $100 in deployment. What about made-in-USA acquisition requirements? PCBA in USA will blow the BOM cost > 200.

Sourcing and design trade-offs are a critical part of this challenge, and solving this cost-versus-compliance constraint is precisely the purpose of this assessment event.

The target unit cost of less than or equal to $200 at assessment and reduceable to less than or equal to $100 at full maturity (Page 4) assumes high-volume, mass-production quantities, which significantly lowers manufacturing and printed circuit board assembly (PCBA) costs.

Offerors must balance their supply chain design to meet both cost targets and federal compliance mandates—such as DFARS supply chain security (SCRM) and NDAA sourcing restrictions—by leveraging innovative automated assembly, commercial-off-the-shelf (COTS) component selection, and scalable U.S. or allied-nation manufacturing partnerships.

60. Is the 30-second detection goal measured at the sensor, or from the event to the operator display, including every mesh hop? Z

The 30-second desired (and 2-minute minimum) "Sensor detection time (time to detect threat)" specified on page 3 refers to the time from the physical event occurrence to the sensor node successfully detecting, processing, and classifying the threat.

The subsequent transmission latency (time required to route the alert over the non-Bluetooth mesh hops, through the gateway, and onto the operator's display) is evaluated separately under our data exfiltration and network interoperability criteria (Page 3). However, for tactical utility, the ultimate end-to-end latency to the operator's display should be kept as low as operationally feasible.

61. We read "mesh" as true multi-hop routing that forms itself after a scatter. Is a star network with a placed gateway ever acceptable?

No. A pure star network is not acceptable as the baseline solution.

As specified on Page 3 of the criteria, sensors must utilize a "Non-Bluetooth mesh (minimum)".

Because these sensors are designed to be "scattered" and distributed in mass quantities over varied terrestrial land environments (such as urban, wooded, and littoral areas), we cannot guarantee direct line-of-sight to a single, placed gateway. True self-forming, multi-hop mesh routing is required to ensure that randomly dispersed nodes can daisy-chain their alerts back to the operator's display (ATAK).

Note: A hybrid approach—where a scattered mesh network of sensors routes data back to a localized mesh gateway node, which then backhauls the aggregated data to the operator—is acceptable and expected.

62. Should the ROM represent the Government's expected cost to mature and demonstrate the proposed capability, or estimated unit procurement cost?

The ROM should address both cost structures, but they must be presented as separate, clearly defined line items to assist the government in its lifecycle budgeting:

1. Maturation and Demonstration ROM (RDT&E): Provide the estimated cost to mature the proposed technology from its current TRL (minimum TRL 5) to a fully demonstrated, field-ready state (desired TRL 7) within the designated 12–18 month near-term prototyping window (Page 2, 4).
2. Unit Procurement ROM (PROC): Provide the estimated per-unit production cost based on the targets outlined on Page 4 (<= $200 at assessment, reduceable to <= $100 at full maturity). Consistent with high-volume, mass-production assumptions (which significantly lower PCBA and assembly costs), submitters must explicitly state the estimated minimum order quantities (MOQs) or price-break thresholds required to achieve these target price points.