PEO-M Undersea Test Shape and Cradle Assessment Event (AE)
Q&A Telecon Transcript
03 NOVEMBER 2026

1. What is the desired operational sea state?

The maximum sea state for launching and recovering the test shape is Sea State 3. The cradle must be capable of securing the shape to the vessel deck in conditions up to Sea State 8, consistent with the assessment criteria.

2. When will the Government-furnished drawings be released?

The Government-furnished drawings will be released upon contract award.

3. What components, subsystems, and systems will the Government-furnished drawings cover?

The Government-furnished drawings will cover the lifting lugs, D-rings, steering planes, and tail structure.

4. Are the provided drawings intended to be manufactured exactly as provided, or may vendors propose alternate fabrication approaches?

Alternate fabrication approaches are acceptable provided all applicable assessment criteria and specifications are satisfied.

5. Will a 3D CAD model be provided?

No. A 3D CAD model will not be provided.

6. Are there any classified, export-controlled, or distribution-limited drawings involved?

Yes. The drawings are controlled and will not be released before contract award.

7. Is the exterior shape required to replicate a specific system profile, or is dimensional compliance sufficient?

Dimensional compliance with the assessment criteria is sufficient. The required cylindrical configuration must be maintained.

8. Are ballast, trim, and steering controls Government-furnished equipment (GFE) hardware or Government-furnished information (GFI) design and software/firmware?

Ballast, trim, and steering control hardware and software are not required for this effort. The primary requirement is development of the physical test shape.

9. What is the plan for controlling the shape? Will control be provided from the towing vessel via cable or wireless connection?

No active control functionality is required. The shape is intended to serve as a test object for evaluating the feasibility of lowering and recovering a load using a single-point lifting system.

10. Is steel the assumed material, or are aluminum, composite, or hybrid solutions acceptable?

Alternative materials, including aluminum, composite, and hybrid solutions, are acceptable provided the design satisfies the assessment criteria and can withstand exposure to seawater.

11. What corrosion-life expectancy is desired?

No specific corrosion-life expectancy has been established. The shape is expected to withstand repeated lowering and recovery operations without significant degradation. Approximately 100 cycles were identified as a preliminary design consideration.

12. Are there any transport weight restrictions imposed by JEB Little Creek facilities?

No

13. Will Government assets be available for use to facilitate delivery of the shape and cradle?

No. The contractor is responsible for delivery as specified in the Performance Work Statement (PWS).

14. Can the cradle and shape be delivered via barge or boat?

No.

15. Will the cradle be used only ashore and on barges, or aboard Navy vessels as well?

The current intended applications include barges and offshore vessels. There are no current plans to use the cradle aboard Navy vessels.

16. Are there specific vessel deck interface requirements that the cradle must accommodate?

No. The shape and cradle must be able to be secured to the deck of a vessel or barge.

17. Are there dimensional constraints for transportation or storage of the cradle?

No specific dimensional constraints were identified. The cradle should be designed for practical transportation, handling, and maneuverability aboard the intended barges/vessels.

18. Can final assembly or welding be completed at JEB Little Creek?

No.

19. Is vendor support required during the first launch and recovery operations?

No.

20. Does the Government expect training, manuals, or sustainment documentation?

The Government expects a maintenance/sustainment manual and will modify the PWS upon award.

21. Are spare parts or replacement steering planes required?

Yes. 2 sets of spare (3 sets total) steering planes will be required. Govt will modify the PWS upon award.

22. Will the Government lead or perform testing with contractor witnessing, or will the contractor lead?

No. Govt will approve the test plan and require the OQE documentation resulting from the vendor testing.

23. Describe the PEO-M approval process for exiting Critical Design Review, Manufacturing Readiness Review, Test Readiness Review, and final acceptance.

Response pending further clarification.

24. What is the preferred method of delivery for the shape and cradle?

Delivery by truck is the only method of delivery.

25. What is the minimum allowable material thickness?

No minimum material thickness was specified. The design must allow for structural integrity during repeated deployment from a single point lift at SS3.

26. Will the Government provide drawings showing the equipment or structures with which the shape and cradle must interface?

No.

27. Are small permanent fittings added to the shape's underside beyond those listed in the criteria acceptable for fore-and-aft restraint in the cradle?

Yes. Additional permanent fittings are acceptable provided the completed design meets all assessment criteria and specifications.

28. Can the tail cone take any cradle bearing or restraint load? If so, what are its allowable loads?

No.

29. Will the Government supply a spreader bar for the combined shape-and-cradle lift, including geometry and rated capacity, or is a single-hook bridle expected?

No. The govt will provide rigging drawings upon award.

30. Can the removable steering planes be taken off for the combined shape-and-cradle lift and for transportation?

For transportation only.

31. Is there a maximum overall height or width for the shape on its cradle during transport and deck stowage? If so, what are the limits?

No additional maximum overall height or width was specified. The design must remain consistent with the assessment criteria.

32. Which standard or design accelerations govern securing the shape for Sea State 8, and is any friction credit allowed between the shape and cradle?

ABS or other IACS standards. Friction credit is allowed between the shape and cradle.

33. Does the 1,200-PSF deck bearing limit include the cradle's own weight, and what vessel or deck type will carry the shape and cradle?

The shape and cradle are intended for use aboard a barge and an offshore vessel. This includes the cradle and shape together.

34. What dynamic or design factor applies to the cradle lift points for the combined lift, or should the design account for static weight only?

Static weight only for the cradle.

35. What is the rated load of the Government-furnished lifting lugs on the shape?

67,000lbs +5%.

36. Does the shape have four D-rings in total or four per side, eight in total?

4 per side at the dimension listed.

37. What are the nose radius and profile of the shape?

The shape is required to have a cylindrical configuration. Govt provided drawings will clarify upon award.

38. What tolerance applies to the required center-of-gravity position stated as approximately 15 feet, 10 inches?

The center of gravity should be as close as practical to the specified location. An exact tolerance was not established. Govt provided rigging drawings will clarify upon award.

39. Must both buoyancy states, positive 1,000 pounds and negative 1,000 pounds within 60 seconds, be demonstrated? How will each be measured?

Yes. Both buoyancy states must be demonstrated. The contractor may determine an appropriate measurement method, including the use of load cells or another technically suitable approach.

40. What seawater density should be used for design, and what tolerance applies to the negative 1,000-pound buoyancy state?

Chesapeake Bay seawater conditions were identified as representative of the anticipated test environment. A tolerance of plus or minus 5% for both positive and negative buoyancy states was suggested but was not formally established. A specific seawater design density was not provided.

41. Is 20 feet the maximum depth of the shape below the surface, or the water depth at the test site?

The 20-foot requirement refers to the maximum depth of the shape below the water surface.

42. Is a combination of sealed buoyancy compartments and free-flooding sections acceptable?

Yes. A combination of buoyancy compartments and free-flooding sections is acceptable provided the design satisfies the assessment criteria.

43. Are there limits on the size, number, or location of flood grates and vents to protect the shape's silhouette?

No specific limits were identified. The design must continue to meet the overall assessment criteria.

44. The criteria cite MIL-DTL-2441. Is MIL-DTL-24441 (epoxy-polyamide) the intended coating specification, and which type or formula is required?

Refer to the MIL-DTL-24441 standard.

45. Approximately how many lifting and submergence cycles are anticipated, and what service life does repeatable use imply?

No exact number of cycles was established. The shape should be capable of supporting approximately 100 lifting and submergence cycles as a preliminary design consideration. A formal minimum service life was not established.

46. Is CDR due 30 calendar days after Government approval of PDR, and how long will the Government take to review the PDR?

Yes. The government may take up to 10 days to approve.

47. What is the required delivery date for the shape and cradle at JEB Little Creek?

Delivery is required within 180 days after contract award.

48. Is delivery Free on Board (FOB) Destination, and will a crane be available to receive the shape and cradle at JEB Little Creek?

No cost to access JEB Little Creek. Vendor must arrange for a crane to offload shape and cradle at JEB Little Creek. Government will sponsor the vendor for crane approval, but vendor must fill out all appropriate forms and coordinate with NAVFAC Little Creek.

49. Where will proof-load, weighing, and float tests be witnessed: at the fabricator's site or JEB Little Creek? Is a Government test basin or pier available?

Testing is expected to be performed by the contractor before delivery, with supporting documentation provided to the government.

50. Is there a budget range or funding ceiling for this effort?

$500k (Defer to Meghan Saporito).

51. What file types and size limits does Submittable accept for the white paper and quad chart uploads?

PDF, MS Word, MS Excel and MS PowerPoint were identified as available upload formats. The maximum file size was not confirmed. Submission issues may be referred to SOFWERX for assistance.

52. Does HPU refer to a hydraulic power unit?

HPU is not a part of the project or the assessment criteria.

53. Will power be supplied by the end user, and what power is available, such as 480 VAC, three-phase, 100 kW? Is a generator required?

The test shape does not require electrical power.

54. Are vessel scantling drawings, deck-load capabilities, deck weight distribution requirements, and deck space allowances available?

The Government has identified the vessels intended for testing. Release of vessel drawings and detailed deck-loading information remains may be released upon award pending approval from vessel/barge contractors.

55. What are the sea-state requirements, cradle shipping requirements, human occupancy rating, operational speed, and required support equipment or containers?

The maximum operational sea state for launch and recovery is Sea State 3. The cradle must support securing the shape to the vessel deck up to Sea State 8. The shape is not intended for human occupancy. The contractor is responsible for providing the necessary support equipment, including the cradle. The vessel/barge will be at bare steerage or stationary on DP2 or drifting with the current.

56. What support or operational equipment will be required, including electrical, compressed air, hydraulic, or umbilical systems? Are there size limitations for shipping?

None. No.

57. Can the full dry weight of 67,000 pounds be achieved using the shape weight plus additional temporary ballast added before operations?

No.

58. Is it acceptable to integrate the cradle functionality directly into the shape?

Yes subject to approval thru the PDR, CDR process.

59. Is the positive 1,000-pound buoyancy state meant to be a stable surfaced condition, or should the system always transition to a negative 1,000-pound buoyancy state?

Yes and Yes

60. To what extent are towing hydrodynamics a design driver for the shape? Does the Government envision towing the shape in the negative 1,000-pound buoyancy condition?

None. No.

61. Does the Government want proposals to include the plan and cost of delivery to Little Creek?

Yes. Proposals should include delivery planning and all associated costs to provide a complete accounting of the proposed effort.

62. Is there an estimated or recommended delivery date desired by the Government?

The test shape and cradle must be delivered no later than 180 days after contract award.

63. Will the Government specify the type of rigging used to lift the shape?

Yes. Drawings will be provided upon award.

64. The only corrosion-resistance requirement identified is the paint. What is the intended lifespan of the shape and expected duration of submergence?

The shape is expected to withstand approximately 100 operational cycles as a preliminary design consideration. Submergence is expected to be relatively brief, with the shape recovered after satisfying the applicable buoyancy test criteria.

65. Is there a prohibition on the use of anodes?

No.

66. Must the cradle accommodate the test shape with the forward steering planes installed?

Yes. The cradle must accommodate the shape with the forward steering planes installed.

67. Will Government-furnished drawings of the tail structure, steering planes, lifting lugs, D-rings, and rigging arrangement be provided before proposal submission?

No.

68. What testing and certification must be completed before delivery, and what may be performed at JEB Little Creek?

All items in the test plan must be completed with OQE documentation prior to delivery. No items may be performed at JEB Little Creek.

69. What percentage of the shape's length is constant diameter, and where does the tail taper begin?

27' from the nose is where the tail begins to taper. Govt drawings will provide insight upon award.

70. Is the shape expected to withstand hydrodynamic loads from towing, or only static and low-speed movement?

Only static and low speed movement.

71. Does the 60-second requirement begin at first water contact or when the shape is fully submerged?

Begins at first water contact.

72. Can the Government provide the lifting appliance specifications, including safe working load, hook height, geometry, and dynamic operating limits?

Release of vessel drawings and lifting appliance specs may be released upon award pending approval from vessel/barge contractors..

73. Do the steering planes and tail section need to function as actively controlled surfaces, or are they intended to be static fixtures?

The steering planes and tail section are intended to be static fixtures. Active control functionality is not required.

74. Will all Q&A responses be distributed in writing, and will clarifications be incorporated into revised assessment criteria before submissions are due?

A reviewed and approved Q&A transcript will be posted to the event webpage following Government review and approval. Whether clarifications will be incorporated into revised assessment criteria before the submission deadline was not confirmed.

75. Are the steering planes static or stowable while on deck, or must they be movable and remotely controlled once in the water?

The steering planes will be static. Remote control or active movement is not required.

76. Is buoyancy established on deck or after the shape enters the water?

The negative buoyancy condition is established in the water.

77. Is buoyancy based on the internal ability to flood and pump, or on an external feed to displace water?

The Government anticipates an internal flooding approach with no support equipment needed and no moving parts.

78. Is there a deck laydown requirement for attaching the cradle to the deck?

No specific deck laydown attachment requirement was identified. Standardized securing arrangements are preferred to support ease of Government use.

79. Are there weight restrictions or requirements for the cradle?

No specific cradle weight restriction was established. The cradle must be capable of being loaded onto and offloaded from the intended offshore vessel and barge and properly secured to their decks. The cradle footings or any loaded cradle structures must distribute the weight of the cradle and shape NTE 1200lbs/sqft.

80. If steering planes and buoyancy change while in the water, is power expected to be delivered through an umbilical or from an onboard source?

No.

81. Are there any military-specific standards, material controls, inspection, or quality assurance requirements not listed in the assessment criteria?

No.

82. Are companies from allied nations eligible to respond to this Assessment Event?

No.

83. Beyond the tests specified, what additional testing will be required? Please clarify procedures, acceptance criteria, and Government witnessing requirements.

None. The vendor provides the PDR 45 days after award. Govt and vendor Teams call will approve/edit the PDR documents. 30 days later, the vendor provides the CDR. Govt and vendor Teams call will approve/edit the CDR. 40 days prior to delivery or sooner, vendor delivers test plan to govt. Govt and vendor Teams call to approve/edit the test plan. Vendor executes approved test plan and provides OQE documentation upon delivery.

84. Is the Government interested in an existing test shape that is longer or smaller in diameter than the specified shape, or are the dimensional specifications firm?

The Government prefers a shape that meets the published assessment criteria. An existing shape with different dimensions may be submitted for further consideration but carries a higher risk of rejection.

85. What specific engineering deliverables are expected at Preliminary Design Review (PDR) and Critical Design Review (CDR)?

PDR: Engineering drawings that meet as much of the assessment criteria as possible and a list of outstanding questions the government needs to answer and clarify that lead to the Critical Design review engineering drawings.

CDR: The final engineering drawings the vendor expects to use for construction.

86. Will transportation, offloading, and final placement at JEB Little Creek be Government-furnished or the contractor's responsibility?

Transportation, offloading, and final placement are the contractor's responsibility. Vendor must arrange for a crane to offload shape and cradle at JEB Little Creek. Government will sponsor the vendor for crane approval, but vendor must fill out all appropriate forms and coordinate with NAVFAC Little Creek.

87. Are the ballasting and deballasting operational capabilities intended to be passive or active? Will the flood grates have any internal or external capability requirements?

Passive. No moving parts.

88. What additional rules, standards, safety factors, and load cases apply? Will the Government provide Sea State 8 and combined-lift design loads, or is the contractor responsible?

None. Contractor is responsible.

89. Are the removable forward steering planes intended to be functional or representative only? If functional, what operating parameters apply?

The removable forward steering planes are representative only. Functional operation is not required.

90. Is the shape expected to operate in Sea State 8? What is the realistic sea state for launching and recovering the shape?

Launching and recovery operations are limited to Sea State 3. The cradle must be capable of securing the shape to the vessel deck in conditions up to Sea State 8, as specified in the assessment criteria.

91. Are any additional control surfaces or articulating flaps required for maneuvering control during towing?

No. Additional maneuvering control surfaces or articulating flaps are not required.

92. What is the anticipated follow-on production quantity if the prototype is acceptable, and what is the anticipated period of performance for production units?

Only one test shape is anticipated. No follow-on production quantity is currently planned. The anticipated testing period is approximately one year, depending on vessel availability and scheduling.

93. Can the Government further describe the vessel or identify which vessel will be outfitted with the stand?

The Government intends to use a barge and an offshore vessel. Release of vessel drawings and detailed deck-loading information remains may be released upon award pending approval from vessel/barge contractors..

94. Is a contract vehicle defined, such as an Other Transaction Agreement (OTA) or another acquisition mechanism?

No specific contract vehicle was identified during the teleconference.

95. Is the cylindrical shape a hard requirement, or may a different geometry be engineered if it meets the remaining test criteria?

A cylindrical shape is the expected configuration. An existing shape with different dimensions may be submitted for further consideration but carries a higher risk of rejection.

96. If crane support is coordinated through the Government, will the expense be borne by the contractor or the Government?

The contractor.

97. Is the 5,000-pound towing padeye capacity intended for axial towing loads only, or must the attachment accommodate off-axis loading?

Axial only.

98. Is the Performance Work Statement (PWS) published for vendor review?

The relevant requirements and assessment information are available through the event webpage. The PWS will be provided upon award.

99. Is there a requirement for multiple flood-and-vent cycles without removing the test shape from the water?

No. Multiple flood-and-vent cycles during a single submergence are not required. The shape must satisfy the negative 1,000-pound buoyancy requirement within 60 seconds of entering the water.

100. Who retains ownership of the shape and cradle at the completion of the period of performance?

Government.