REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

LIMS/PIMS – System and Compliance Reporting Assessment Project
Phase I

May 11, 2015

This Request for Proposal (RFP) is being sent to firms interested in proposing on providing services for project and program management, a needs assessment analysis and documenting the current functionality of the District’s current laboratory information management system and pretreatment information management system (LIMS/PIMS) and associated processes including data storage and compliance reporting. The information generated from this assessment will assist the District in evaluating and selecting a software system(s) to replace the current LIMS/PIMS system (LABLynx). The selected consultant will be expected to provide program management services during the initial phase of assessment, through implementation, and post implementation.

This is the first phase of a multi-phase effort and a strong emphasis will be placed on the selected Consultant’s experience with LIMS/PIMS applications and implementation along with their ability to provide program management services throughout all phases of the project. Additional details related to the project objectives and the desired project delivery approach is outlined within subsequent sections of this RFP.

Proposals for providing these services will be received until 3:00 p.m. on Wednesday, June 3, 2015. Late submittals will not be considered. Proposals are to be delivered to:

Humberto Sanchez, Director of Information Technology
Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District
3900 Euclid Avenue
Cleveland, OH 44115-2504
Attn: John Healey, Manager of IT Project Management Services

A mandatory pre-proposal meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 19, 2015 at 11:00 a.m. in Conference Room D at the NEORSD Environmental and Maintenance Services Center (EMSC), located at 4747 East 49th Street, Cuyahoga Heights 44125. A teleconference session will be established for firms that are located out of town.

Questions regarding this RFP shall be directed to John Healey by calling (216) 881-6600, ext. 6860 or at healeyj@neorsd.org. Questions related to the RFP will be answered through May 26, 2015. The District will attempt to respond to e-mail within one (1) business day. The District shall not be responsible for any costs incurred in relation to the preparation of the proposals. The District reserves the right to reject all proposals.

Throughout this document, the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District will be referred to as the “District”. Consulting firms submitting proposals shall be referred to as the “Consultant”.

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LIMS/PIMS - Compliance Reporting Assessment Project

- 1 -
Minimum Qualifications: Consultants must meet or exceed the minimum qualifications listed below and are asked to clearly demonstrate this in their proposal. In the event the Consultant does not clearly demonstrate that it meets or exceeds the minimum qualifications, the proposal will be rejected.

- Previous experience with water/wastewater utilities providing services as noted in this RFP.
- Have staff members that have knowledge of laboratory operations including but not limited to instrumentation, test methods, workflows, compliance reporting (eDMR), chain of custody and quality control practices.
- Have staff members that have knowledge of the EPA Industrial Pretreatment Program including, but not limited to, compliance inspections and associated workflow, categorical discharge standards, local limitations, significant non-compliance, document tracking, and reporting.
- Demonstrated knowledge of water quality monitoring and water quality standards including, but not limited to, water chemistry data, biological surveys and data (fish and macroinvertebrates), and habitat data.
- Demonstrated knowledge and experience with the functionality of the various LIMS/PIMS software used in the industry.
- Demonstrated experience managing the configuration and implementation of a LIMS/PIMS system for a similar sized laboratory.
- Demonstrated experience with assessment and analysis methodologies that will help facilitate the decision-making and planning process for the next phase of this project.

This RFP is organized as follows:

SECTION I. INTRODUCTION
SECTION II. SCOPE OF WORK
SECTION III. SCHEDULE
SECTION IV. PROPOSAL FORMAT AND REQUIRED INFORMATION
SECTION V. EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS
SECTION VI. SELECTION PROCESS

Figures and Attachments

The following attachments and appendices are included in this RFP:

- Attachment A, NEORSD Standard Clauses for Professional Services Agreements
- Attachment B, Task/Hour Summary Form (LIMS-PIMS)
- Appendix A, District’s Information System Environment
- Appendix B, Business Analysis - The need for an Automated 4500 Reporting Solution
- Appendix C, ODMS Data Entry and EDMR Reporting Standard Procedures
SECTION I - INTRODUCTION

Project Goals

This is the first phase of a multi-phased project. The goal of this phase of the project (Phase I) is to conduct a needs analysis and current state assessment of the District’s current LIMS/PIMS system and associated processes. The District’s current system is functioning and stable but the software vendor has announced limited support for newer platforms from a browser and operating system perspective.

The information generated from the Phase I assessment and analysis will result in the development of requirements, a request for proposal for a combined or separate software application(s), a short list of vendors that can provide such software, management of the software demonstrations and the evaluation process, and development of a project plan that will road map the implementation process. If it’s determined that one system can’t meet all the District’s requirements, then a recommendation that supports evaluating multiple solutions for separate LIMS and PIMS systems should be made.

The Phase I needs assessment has an estimated completion date of September 30, 2015. Following the needs assessment, the District will negotiate/initiate two contracts:

- A separate contract for the procurement and implementation of the new system(s) with a software vendor(s); and
- Upon successful completion of Phase I with the selected Consultant, initiate Phase II of the LIMS/PIMS System and Compliance Reporting Assessment Project, which will consist of continued program management services, including post implementation support and system stabilization after the new system goes live.

The District would like responding Consultants to provide a proposal and an estimate of hours for program management services for Phase I and Phase II of this project. At the end of Phase I, both the Consultant and the District will have the opportunity to review the proposal and program management hours estimated for Phase II to determine if the knowledge gained during the assessment will have an impact on the original level of effort that was estimated for Phase II program management services. After the review, the District and the Consultant may enter into a negotiation and subsequent contract modification for program management for Phase II provided the Consultant’s performance during Phase I meets the District’s expectations. The original hourly rates that were quoted for program management services shall remain unchanged. Performance metrics for Phase I will be determined when the contract is negotiated with the selected Consultant, and may include:

- Schedule management
- Scope management
- Issue/Risk management
- Quality of deliverables
- Responsiveness to District needs and requests
For planning purposes, the goal is to start the implementation of a new LIMS/PIMS product by the end of the year. The objectives that need to be addressed in this phase of the project are outlined in the Scope of Work section in this RFP.

The District’s Office of Contract Compliance has not established an MBE/WBE/SBE goal for this project. However, the District strongly encourages proposing firms to identify opportunities within the project to partner with local MBE/WBE/SBE firms. For a list of District-certified MBE/WBE/SBE firms, please contact the Office of Contract Compliance (216-881-6600 or at http://www.neorsd.org/businessopportunityprogram.php).

Business Overview

The Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District is a political subdivision of the State of Ohio created and operating under Chapter 6119 of the Ohio Revised Code. Originally named Cleveland Regional Sewer District, it was created in 1972 to assume ownership, operation and management of wastewater collection, treatment and disposal facilities serving the member communities in the Cleveland metropolitan area.

District Administration is located at 3900 Euclid Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio 44118. This location also includes the Engineering & Construction, Operations & Maintenance Administration, Employee Resources, Finance, Law and Information Technology Departments.

In addition to the District Administration Building, the District owns and operates an Environmental and Maintenance Services Center (EMSC) and the following three wastewater treatment facilities:

- Westerly Wastewater Treatment Plant, located at 5800 West Memorial Shoreway, Cleveland, 44102 (near Edgewater State Park)
- Southerly Wastewater Treatment Center, located at 6000 Canal Road, Cuyahoga Heights, 44125 (near the Interstate 77/Interstate 480 intersection)
- Easterly Wastewater Treatment Plant, located at 1402 Lakeshore Boulevard, Cleveland, 44110 (near the Cleveland/Bratenahl border)

The Environmental and Maintenance Services Center (EMSC), located at 4747 East 49th Street, Cuyahoga Heights 44125 (north of the Southerly Wastewater Treatment Center) houses the Sewer Maintenance & Control Department, the Water Quality & Industrial Surveillance Department, Analytical Services, and Fleet Services.

Water Quality and Industrial Surveillance (WQIS) conducts environmental sampling and monitoring of streams, rivers and near-shore Lake Erie within the District’s service area. Environmental monitoring includes: sampling for water chemistry, bacteriological sampling, habitat assessments, electrofishing surveys and macroinvertebrate sampling. The industrial monitoring program provides plant support through its control and oversight of approximately 170 Significant Industrial Users (SIUs), 163 Industrial Surcharges, 129 Categorical Industrial Users (CIUs), 752 general industrial users, 438 dental offices, and 13 hospitals. WQIS administers business programs for industrial users, works with Finance to ensure that industrial
users are billed appropriately, and investigates water leaks. Additionally, WQIS provides 24-hour emergency spill response and/or mitigation to chemical products accidentally or deliberately discharged to the collection system and area waterways.

The NEORSD Analytical Services Department main purpose is to provide analytical testing services for the three wastewater treatment facilities owned and operated by NEORSD to document operational effectiveness and regulatory compliance. Additionally, the laboratory provides testing services for the WQIS, Engineering and Construction and other NEORSD departments. The laboratory uses methods approved under the Clean Water Act and listed in 40 CFR Part 136. These methods include inorganic, organic, and microbiological testing for various environmental programs including NPDES, the Ohio EPA Drinking Water Program, sewage sludge regulations, and various other programs. The laboratory also performs analytical testing for various external customers including, Cuyahoga County Board of Health, Cuyahoga County Sanitary Engineers, Ohio Department of Health, City of Solon WWTP, North Royalton WWTP, Lake County Department of Health, and various watershed groups and commercial laboratories.

The laboratory analyzes approximately 20,000 samples a year totaling approximately 200,000 analyses. The laboratory uses various automated analyzers include GC, GC/MS, UHPLC, LC/MS/MS, ICP, ICP-MS, and various flow injection analyzers. Additionally, the laboratory has various automated workflows for report generation, bar-code scanning and label generation.

The laboratory is certified by the Ohio EPA Division of Drinking Water, Center for Disease Control (CDC) Environmental Legionella Isolation Techniques Evaluation ELITE Program, and the National Environmental Laboratory Program (NELAP).

**Information Technology Environment**

The District’s information system infrastructure consists of two physically separated networks: the business network and the process control network. The process control network support plant automation and control processes at the District’s wastewater treatment plants and collection system.

The District business network environment is the platform for the District’s business information systems supporting many District departments, including Finance, Human Resources, Operations & Maintenance, Engineering & Construction, Safety & Security, Purchasing, Regulatory Compliance, Analytical Services, and Customer Service. Key enterprise applications at the District are as follows:

- **Oracle eBusiness** - Human Resources, Organizational and Employee Development (OED), Finance, and Purchasing
- **Oracle Work & Asset Management** – Operations & Maintenance
- **Kronos** – Finance, HR and all other departments
- **GIS (Geographical Information System)** – Watersheds and various departments,
- **LABLynx (Laboratory Information System)** – Analytical Services
- **ODMS (Operational Data Management System)** – Operation & Maintenance
• SharePoint – Engineering & Construction, Purchasing, Regulatory Compliance, Safety & Security, and IT

Payroll services are provided by ADP. The District runs an interface with ADP to provide employee timekeeping and salary data. The District maintains maintenance and support agreements with our application vendors to have access to application patches and upgrades.

Customer billing is currently performed by four billing agents, the largest being Cleveland Department of Public Utilities using the Oracle Customer Care & Billing System (CC&B). The District bills a small subset of customers directly leveraging the basic functionality of Oracle EBS.

Finally, there are several interfaces providing data exchange amongst the District business systems.

An overview of the District’s systems and interfaces is provided in Appendix A.

Additional information about the District, its history and operations is available at the District’s Internet site at www.neorsd.org.

SECTION II – SCOPE OF WORK

The approach to execute the scope of work and to provide the deliverables outlined below shall be inclusive of all the various District departments that interact directly or indirectly with the processes associated with the data management and generation of the 4500 Report. In addition, the approach shall also be inclusive of other District information systems that interact, directly or indirectly, with the LIMS/PIMS/eDMR systems and related processes.

The LIMS/PIMS - Compliance Reporting Assessment Project shall include the following tasks and deliverables:

A. A “Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats” (SWOT) analysis of the current environment based on key stakeholder and subject matter expert feedback. This will be accomplished by interviewing and involving all key stakeholders and subject matter experts from the District that use the current LIMS/PIMS system and/or are involved with any of the key associated processes outlined in this RFP. The SWOT analysis shall include the following items at a minimum:

• Assessment and documentation of the current data workflows and data sharing and management workflows through the existing LIMS/PIMS application, and related systems.

• Identify new modules or functionality needed for efficient operation of the departments including report generation and storage for internal and external clients, remote or mobile access for data entry and access to client reports.
• Evaluate the need and benefits for pursuing a combined LIMS/PIMS application or two separate applications.

• Review current laboratory instrumentation and document the requirements needed for instrument interfacing, and recommend a solution to develop and maintain instrument interfaces as an integrated solution or third party application.

• Document the data processing, data management and reporting process functional and technical requirements that will serve as the basis for a selection of a new LIMS/PIMS application(s).

• Evaluate historical data and the need to regenerate historical compliance reports and recommend alternatives for the integration of historical data.

B. Consultant will assess and document the current processes for compliance reporting required by the District’s NPDES permits and the State of Ohio Electronic Discharge Monitoring (eDMR) application. Review and document data flow within applications and departments, approval processes, report generation and management, and make recommendations to make the process efficient and consistent.

C. Assessment and documentation of the current data workflows and data sharing and management workflows through the existing LIMS/PIMS application, and related systems.

D. Assessment of the current infrastructure supporting the LIMS/PIMS system, including hardware, network, and interfaces/integrations with other District information systems such as SCADA, Operational Data Management System, and others. An overview of the District’s information system environment is included in Appendix A.

E. Assessment and documentation of the current workstation policies and business practices for all computers in the laboratory controlling instrumentation. Evaluate departmental needs and desktop security policies and make a recommendation on the most efficient and effective way to integrate these PC’s into the business network without sacrificing network security and allowing for efficient laboratory operations, disaster recovery and the use technologies like remote desktop management within the laboratory and off-site.

F. Development and delivery of a gap analysis that addresses the current and future data, workflow and process needs for the data management and report generation associated with the 4500 Report.

G. Development and delivery of a gap analysis that addresses current and future needs of the programs managed through the use of the LIMS/PIMS system, e.g. the industrial pre-treatment program, chemical analysis for third parties, etc., including recommendations for potential business process improvements.

H. Documenting the data processing, data management, reporting processes, and the functional and technical requirements that will serve as the basis for a selection of a new LIMS/PIMS, including electronic data reporting tools.

I. Identification of a list of software products and vendors that can potentially meet the functional and technical requirements identified in this project.
J. Develop and deliver an evaluation and selection methodology that will enable the District to select a software vendor(s) that best meets its needs for a LIMS, PIMS and eDMR solution and the associated data management processes.

K. Develop the RFP, in collaboration with the District, for software selection and implementation services to be released to the identified potential software vendors.

L. Develop a budget and roadmap for the implementation and on-going maintenance costs, inclusive of program management services to manage the implementation and to oversee a post-implementation phase of support and system stabilization after it goes live.

M. Facilitate the RFP selection process and provide guidance to the District during the evaluation process towards the selection of the best fit software.

N. Perform project management functions using PMI standards throughout the life cycle of the project (a detailed project plan that articulates how the project will be managed and delivered will be developed, with the selected vendor, in collaboration with the District prior to the start of the project. The District will appoint a PM to manage District resources and to oversee the delivery of this project).

All deliverables will be generated using the MS Office Suite when applicable. For planning purposes, deliverables will include all the items outlined above and should clearly address the following components:

- Functional requirements
- Technical requirements
- Security requirements
- Regulatory requirements
- Business requirements
- Key processes and procedures
- Identified Gaps based on Current Technology
- System Specification Requirements to include the Following:
  - System Requirements
  - Process Flow Diagrams
  - Suggested Workflow Changes (if applicable)
  - Interface Design(s)
  - Report Designs
  - System Architecture
  - System Topology
  - Security Model and Recommendations
- A recommended roadmap for the future deployment of the new system
- An executive summary that clearly articulates the findings and the Consultant’s recommendations for Phase II based on the assessment results
- A formal presentation of the findings, options and recommendations
The Consultant shall provide details as to the method of accomplishing the Scope of Work for each of the tasks and deliverables noted. The Consultant’s proposal shall address all of the objectives for each task as outlined in the Scope of Work.

SECTION III - SCHEDULE

Project Schedule

The project is envisioned as a three month effort. A detailed schedule for the RFP evaluation and selection process is outlined below. The District reserves the right to change this schedule for any reason.

- Issue RFP to Consultant Short-List: May 11, 2015
- Mandatory Pre-proposal Meeting: May 19, 2015
- Questions Deadline: May 26, 2015 at 3:30 p.m.
- Consultant Proposals Due: June 3, 2015 at 3:00 p.m.
- Notify the short-list of top qualified Consultants: June 11, 2015
- Proposal presentations and Consultant interviews: June 18, 2015
- Consultant Contract Award – Notice to Proceed: July 16, 2015
- Perform Scope of Work: July 20, 2015 to October 30, 2015

Consultants are to include a detailed preliminary project schedule in their proposal. The project schedule shall include anticipated completion dates for key task items. Consultants are free to include discussion on any recommended schedule modifications, citing reasons for any recommended schedule modifications.

SECTION IV - PROPOSAL FORMAT AND REQUIRED INFORMATION

Each Consultant shall submit ten (10) printed original proposals and one (1) copy on CD-ROM or a USB drive using Microsoft Word or Adobe Acrobat file format. Proposals shall be no more than 30 printed pages and the font size shall be equivalent to Times New Roman 12 pt. or larger. The proposal must be formatted as follows:

Cover Letter

Executive Summary

Section 1 - Company History

Section 2 – Anticipated Approach to the Project
Discuss the anticipated approach to the project, including an outline of the key activities to complete the project and the proposed deliverable to meet the District requirements as outlined in Section II - Scope of Work. This part of the proposal will be used to evaluate the extent to which the Consultant understands the project, its magnitude and its complexity.

Section 3 – Consultant Qualifications

A statement of the Consultant’s qualifications, including a list of four (4) of the most recent projects in providing assessment and product evaluation services, as well as program management for LIMS implementations. The following information shall be included for each project:

- Start and end dates of the project;
- Consultant’s role in the project, and similarities with this project and product selected/implemented
- Original project cost
- Final project cost
- Contact information (name, address, phone number) of individual responsible for the project at the contracting agency.

Section 4 – Consultant Personnel

Summary of qualifications of the key Consultant members to work on the project. Detailed resumes should be attached as appendices to the Consultant’s proposal.

Section 5 – Preliminary Schedule

A preliminary schedule showing the key tasks and activities and anticipated dates necessary to meet the project deadline identified in Section III - Schedule.

Section 6 – A statement confirming the following:

Statements confirming that no personal or organizational conflicts of interest are known to exist between the District and the Consultant and Sub Consultants.

A statement confirming that Attachment A - NEORSD Standard Clauses for Professional Services Agreement was reviewed and any potential items for discussion are noted in the proposal.

Section 7 – Task/Hour Summary

A Task/Hour Summary Form (Attachment B) will be completed for each activity necessary to fulfill the terms of this RFP. An electronic file spreadsheet in Excel format of these proposal forms accompanies the RFP for the Consultant to use in their proposal. The Consultant shall break the project down by the tasks identified in the Scope of Work. The total of the hours for
all tasks shall accurately reflect the total effort needed to perform the entire project as outlined in the RFP. Hours in all tasks shall be identified by labor category for each activity.

The District will use this form to assist in evaluation of the proposals. The District reserves the right to request additional task / hour information. A prompt response of one (1) working day shall be adhered to in these requests.

Section 8 – Cost Proposal and Summary

One separate, sealed cost proposal (printed) will be submitted with the Consultant’s proposals and be clearly labeled “Cost Proposal”. The cost proposal will include the details outlined in the Task/Hour Summary and include the hourly fees for each of the proposed project team members. The cost proposal shall indicate the total cost of the project, including estimated Travel & Expense costs, any other reimbursable expenses, and any other direct costs.

A version using MS Excel format should also be placed on the CD-ROM or USB drive that contains the electronic version of the proposal.

SECTION V - EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS

Proposals submitted to the District for the project shall be evaluated by the Consultant Selection Committee utilizing the following criteria.

Pass/Fail Screening Criteria

Proposals not in compliance with the following pass/fail criteria may not receive additional consideration:

1. Avoidance of personal and organizational conflicts of interest as prohibited by State and local law.
2. Required information as specified in the RFP. **The District may reject incomplete proposals.**
3. Proposal conforms to Section IV. Proposal Format and Required Information. Emphasis will be on whether the proposal demonstrates an understanding of the project scope and the District’s needs and requirements as specified in the RFP.
4. Must be received on or before the deadline date.

Proposals that comply with the above will be scored based upon the criteria presented below.

**Scoring Criterion I – 40% of total score**
*Method of accomplishing the Scope of Work*

Scoring will be based on consideration of the following:

1. Proposed organization of the work effort.
2. Innovative approaches to the Scope of Work as presented in the proposal.
3. Unique capabilities with likely high-impact applicability to the project.
4. Understanding of the appropriate levels of effort (hours) for various task areas.
5. Appropriate project management controls to include schedule, budget and quality management.

**Scoring Criterion II – 20% of total score**  
*Experience and past performance of the firm on similar projects*

This score will be based on:
1. The Consultant’s experience in conducting projects of similar nature and complexity.
2. The ability of the Consultant to draw upon this experience to benefit the project.
3. The Consultant’s history of innovations in applicable project areas.

**Scoring Criterion III – 20% of total score**  
*Experience, qualifications, and commitment of proposed key project personnel*

Scoring will be based on consideration of the following:
1. The experience of proposed project personnel.
2. The ability of the firm to provide appropriate back-up personnel for key project positions.
3. The degree to which the project personnel and team bring experience in the full range of skills needed to accomplish the Scope of Work.

**Scoring Criterion IV – 10% of total score**  
*Written quality of the proposal*

Proposals are expected to be organized, concise and well written.

**Scoring Criterion V – 10% of total score**  
*Quality of Proposal Presentation*

The District may allot up to 90- minutes for the presentation and interview, including a 30-minute question and answer period. Key project personnel will be expected to take the lead in presenting and answering questions regarding the technical proposal. Upon completion of the presentations, the District selection committee will score each firm according to the following criteria:

1. Quality and clarity of presentation.
2. Consultant’s ability to communicate project understanding.
3. Identification of project-specific risks and a plan to manage them.
4. Adequacy of response to District questions.
Scoring will consider the responsiveness of the proposal to the requests and requirements of the RFP.

SECTION VI - SELECTION PROCESS

Once all proposals have been received, the following steps will be followed to select the Consultant:

1. Proposals will be reviewed by the Selection Committee. Additionally, a phone survey may be conducted to evaluate the past performance of the participating Consultants on similar projects. This survey will be limited to the contacts provided in the proposal as required in Section IV, Consultant Qualifications.

2. Each member of the selection committee will evaluate the Consultants based upon the predetermined selection criteria outlined in Section V of this RFP. All consultants who meet the minimum qualifications and comply with the pass/fail criteria will be scored up to and including the fourth criteria outlined in Section V. Only the top three proposals, based on score, will be given the opportunity to be evaluated against criteria V. If you are amongst the top three (3) “short-list”, you’ll be notified by 3 p.m. on Thursday, June 11, 2015 of your assigned time and the location for the June 18th presentations. Consultants not selected for the presentation will be notified. After the presentations, the selection committee will then meet to conduct the final steps of the evaluation process. The selected consultant will be notified.

3. Negotiations will be conducted with the highest ranked firm to agree upon a final Scope of Work and the fees for those services as proposed in the Proposal. The selected Consultant must be prepared to immediately begin contract negotiations upon notification of the selection. If the Consultant is not able to begin contract negotiations, the District will disqualify the selected Consultant and begin negotiations with another Consultant-candidate. The District intends to negotiate a not-to-exceed price for this project.

   After the final Scope of Work and fees have been negotiated, the maximum not-to-exceed price of the contract shall not be increased without written authorization by the District. Upon satisfactory completion of the contract, the District shall retain all remaining unused funds.

4. A final recommendation to enter into a contract, based on the outcome of the selection process, will be made to the District’s internal Consultant Review Committee and Board of Trustees. The final recommendation to award the contract is subject to Board approval. All other finalists that were not selected will be notified via e-mail after the contract is awarded.
END OF RFP

ATTACHMENTS AND APPENDICES TO FOLLOW
Attachment A

NEORSD Standard Clauses for Professional Services Agreements
Attachment B
Task/Hour Summary Form
Appendix A
District’s Information System Environment
Appendix B

Business Analysis - The need for an Automated 4500 Reporting Solution
Appendix C
ODMS Data Entry and EDMR Reporting Standard Procedures