

Firewall RFP Questions and Answers

Questions for week ending 9/19/14

Questions from DirSec, Inc:

Question: What is the current number and bandwidth of Internet connections at ESU 3 along with anticipated expansion to full 10Gb bandwidth?

Answer: The current Internet bandwidth running through the Cisco ASA5585 is 4 Gbps, running on average around 2 Gbps. The maximum number of connections per second is running around 3500.

Question: Please provide clarification of firewall features that need to be supported at a full 10Gbps throughput. The RFP explicitly mentions IPS at 10Gbps, but also mentions AntiVirus and Application Control.

Answer: The firewall needs to support a minimum of 10 Gbps throughput with all required services enabled. Please provide different options for flow-based and proxy-based anti-virus protection.

Question: Do Firewall and IPS functionality need to be on the same set of hardware or separate devices?

Answer: The firewall and IPS functions can be either on the same set of hardware or separate devices.

Question: What is the expected number of connections per second?

Answer: The current connections per second are running around 3500 now. We would anticipate considerable growth with many more devices in use every year in the schools.

Question: What is the expected number of simultaneous sessions on the firewall?

Answer: Here's an output from the current Cisco ASA5585:

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asa# sho xlate count  
100278 in use, 659546 most used
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Question: What is the number of unique internal IP addresses traversing the firewall?

Answer: This information is difficult to gather because many of the districts allow personal devices to be attached to segments of their network. All of this combined traffic will traverse through this firewall.

Question: Does ESU 3 desire redundancy for the Centralized Management platform?

Answer: This is not a requirement of this RFP.

Question: Does ESU 3 have a preference for physical or virtual appliances for management and logging? If virtual, please provide details as to the current hypervisor in use (ESXi, Hyper-V, etc.).

Answer: There is no preference for physical or virtual server for management and logging. If virtual is being proposed, we currently use VMware ESXi.

Questions from Sirius Computer Solutions:

Question: Do you have virtual resources to run the FireSIGHT management center in? If so, are they VMWare or HyperV?

Answer: We have a VMware ESXi virtual environment that can potentially be used for management/logging.

Question: If we split off the antivirus into a separate appliance, does the throughput still need to be 10Gbps?

Answer: Yes, we are requiring the solution to handle a minimum throughput of 10 Gbps with all required services enabled.

Question: Can the solution be on 2 separate solutions, 1 for IPS and 1 for the firewall function, or do you all need to be on one box solution.

Answer: The firewall and IPS functions can be either on the same set of hardware or separate devices.

Questions from Choice Solutions:

General

Question: Will there be a test plan setup to test each vendors product?

Answer: Currently, there is not a plan to evaluate the vendor products.

Question: How will the through put be tested? Will all features be enabled during this test such as IDS, Antivirus, Application ID etc?

Answer: We are requiring the solution to handle a minimum throughput of 10 Gbps with all required services enabled.

Question: Do you have a method to generate the required 10 Gbps traffic for eval purposes?

Answer: Currently, there is not a plan to evaluate the vendor products. We are requiring the solution to handle a minimum throughput of 10 Gbps with all required services enabled.

Question: Is there a timeframe selected for hardware testing/eval opportunity? Will testing be completed before pricing is reviewed/considered?

Answer: Currently, there is not a plan to evaluate the vendor products.

USER –ID

Question: Policy based on user is one of the requirements. What are the requirements for this integration and how will this be tested? Palo Alto networks does not require any agent installation on the client machines to accomplish this requirement. Other vendor solutions may require agents. This adds to administrative overhead and installation effort.

Answer: Solutions that meet the minimum requirements either with or without using an agent will be considered.

SSL VPN

Question: Would you like to allow or disallow access based on specific client parameters for example service pack level or anti virus?

Answer: This is not a requirement of this RFP

Cables

Question: Depending on cable length requirements direct attach cables could be considered. These cables do not require fiber and have the optics built in. Palo Alto Networks will support either method.

Answer: Any solution that meets the minimum requirements will be considered. If Palo Alto Networks can provide different options for fiber connectivity, please include this in the response.

Central Management

Question: Is there a hardware or VMware requirement for the central management server? Palo Alto Networks can be deployed as a physical appliance or a virtual machine under VMware. The management interface does not require any additional software be installed on a client machine and is all web based. The interface is very similar to that of a stand alone firewall. And provides central logging and report generation.

Answer: We have a VMware ESXi virtual environment that can potentially be used for management/logging. The solution may be either physical or virtual.

Questions from OneNeck:

Question: Can we submit an alternative bid that includes either leveraging the existing Cisco Infrastructure or providing a trade-in for the existing infrastructure?

Answer: Any solution that meets the minimum requirements will be considered. Also, we will consider any trade-in value that is proposed.

Question: Is it acceptable to split these jobs into different boxes at all?

Answer: The functions can be either on the same set of hardware or separate devices.

Question: Is VPN licensing required? If so, what type of VPN Client is needed: full tunnel client VPN or client-less browser-based VPN and how many concurrent licenses are needed? Will any smart phones need VPN access?

Answer: Yes, VPN licensing is required. The RFP requested SSL VPN licenses. If other options are available, i.e. IPSEC client-based, iOS and Android support, please include this as an optional exception to the RFP. The number of concurrent licenses was not defined in the RFP. Please provide different options.

Question: Does the existing 5585 have VPN licensing?

Answer: Yes, the Cisco ASA5585 is licensed for Anyconnect Essentials.

Question: Antivirus Protection – please provide throughput statistics for flow-based and proxy-based protection - Does this need to be at 10g thru-put as well?

Answer: The solution needs to provide a minimum throughput of 10 Gbps. Please provide proposed options for running anti-virus protection in both flow-based and proxy-based protection.

Question: Authentication-based firewall policy Application Control – Traffic Blocking/Shaping by Application - Do you require any Content Filtering?

Answer: Internet content filtering is not a requirement of this RFP. If this an optional feature, please provide this information.