Q40: Does the person with the clearance need to be one of the PI/co-PIs, or could this person be any personnel on the team??
A40: It could be anyone on the team

Q39: Will a list of potential teaming partners be distributed?
A39: No

Q38: For the legacy software thrust of TA1 can we assume that the source code is available, or would solutions that can handle binary only legacy software be preferable?
A38: Solutions for either are attractive, the ability to process binaries is important

Q37: For the legacy software thrust of TA1, can we assume that the source code is available, or would solutions that can handle binary-only legacy software be preferable?
A37: Solutions for either are attractive, the ability to process binaries is important

Q36: For legacy software, would artifacts produced by past legacy certification efforts be among the evidence that may need to be handled by the appropriate TAs?
A36: Yes.

Q35: The BAA focuses entirely on establishing that the risk is acceptable. What should happen what it is not? What are the TA3 responsibilities for cases when evidence does not support an assurance case, or at least not at any meaningful degree of confidence? What are the TA3 and TA1 responsibilities when given software that perhaps ought to be rejected, rather than certified? Does the “N out 6 evaluators agree” metric apply only to successful creation of an assurance case?
A35: The goal of the program is to produce assurance cases and a meaningful representation of the confidence in those assurance cases. Whether to certify software based upon assurance cases is beyond the scope of the program. Not all software is worthy of certification.

Q34: Page 7 of the BAA, the diagram and color coding for human and automated-- is that correct? I would have imagined more human involvement would be needed in the legacy software?
A34: Automated solutions are preferred.
Q33: Can you give an example of certification criteria? DO-178?
A33: DOD Airworthiness Certification Criteria (a document that can be googled). DOD Systems Security is an example. Common Criteria would be a third example.

Q32: Is ARCOS focused on baseline certification?
A32: ARCOS is focused on developing techniques to provide compositional, automated evaluation of software.

Q31: Are re-certification technologies in scope?
A31: ARCOS is focused on developing techniques to provide compositional, automated evaluation of software.

Q30: Are TA-3 Proposals that address both goals preferred?
A30: Yes

Q29: Can you expand on what you mean by assurance driven development? (It appears only once in BAA)
A29: Development of the assurance drives the development of the implementation. From design all the way through implementation and test.

Q28: Who drives the process?
A28: The goal of the program is to automate the evaluation of software assurance evidence, to enable certifiers to determine rapidly that system risk is acceptable.

Q27: Where does the end-user initiate the certification process?
A27: The platform owner will initiate certification efforts when necessary.

Q26: What is SQA intended to cover? Mainly Process?
A26: Yes process.

Q25: Are you encouraging virtual teams (across TAs)?
A25: It is up to the proposer to determine.

Q24: Is Legacy software (for TA1) considered to be black box or white box? Source available or just binary?
A24: Solutions for either are attractive, the ability to process binaries is important.

Q23: Does the prime contractor need to have a person with SECRET clearance? Or can this person be from the sub?
A23: One team member must be cleared at the SECRET level (doesn’t have to prime)

Q22: Is the program funding 6.1 or 6.2?
A22: 6.2
Q21: Will industry participants be allowed to conduct fundamental research on ARCOS?
A21: For 6.2, industry is considered non-fundamental

Q20: Just to confirm, abstracts from prospective proposers are due to you on May 24, correct? Would we send them to this email address?
A20: Yes, May 24, noon ET. Directions for submission of abstracts are detailed in the BAA.

Q19: Will different business sectors in the same company be considered separate entities? For example, if one sector is awarded TA4, would that preclude another sector from being awarded TA1-3?
A19: Proposer entities are defined by CAGE CODE.

Q18: How big is each award in TA1 and TA3 in terms of funding amount?
A18: It depends on the quality of the proposal. There is no predetermined value, it will be based on the number and values of the proposals received

Q17: How are deltas in government organization assurance expectations desired to be addressed? Will an agreed upon set of assurance criteria be provided? For example, even among the DoD services there can be differences in software safety Level of Rigor task requirements.
A17: The level of rigor will be dependent on what is bid on TA4, a high level of rigor should be anticipated.

Q16: Is there a desired weighting of safety vs security assurance? Are both required? For example, could a strong proposal address only safety assurance?
A16: Consider assurances to be at a more abstract level. You need to be able to demonstrate assurance claims are true regardless of safety or security.

Q15: Can you elaborate on the certification criteria to be used in this program? Are there going to be ambiguous certification criteria?
A15: There will be no ambiguous criteria. Criteria will be pulled from Airworthiness Certification Criteria or similar. (see answer 33 for other examples)

Q 14: How much is the overall budget of the ARCOS program?
A14: ~68M

Q13: Can you clarify the requirements box feeding TA1? Is the intent that TA1 capture the derivation of evidence from traditional artifacts (requirements docs and Design models)?
A13: Software assurance evidence, Legacy Evidence and certification criteria

Q12: What defines “Conflict of interest” between TA 1-3 and TA4? Would separate business units under same umbrella company fall into this category?
A12: Determination will be made based on CAGE CODE
Q11: Will abstracts that do not have all of the cost and teaming info still be evaluated/feedback provided.

A11: Feedback will only be provided on information submitted. It could be difficult to determine feedback on incomplete information.

Q10: Are there recommended or preferred sizes for TA1 and TA3 teams (In # of PIs) and projects (In $$)

A10: No

Q09: Are there particular implementations of interest to focus on for evidence generation? (c/Java vs Rust/Scala)

A09: Implementations should be of interest to the DoD.

Q08: Could you please give us some clarification on the desired scale of the modules in the TA4 assessments? Is it what a customer might consider a module – for example: The flight planning software package? Or is it what a software architect might consider a module – for example The Flight planning software’s backend reasoning engine

A08: Something a software architect might consider a module

Q07: For the assessment platform, is there a preference for cyber physical platforms vs platforms that are purely software? If so, which is preferred?

A07: A preferred platform would have certification criteria in multiple domains

Q06: Can you clarify on the key performance indications for TA2? Is it just the number of nodes we can handle?

A06: It is scalability, how much data can you support. Being able to support evidence for the domains listed.

Q05: TA2 appears to be the system integrator, creating APIs and mediating between TAs 1 and 3 (yes?) Can the same performer bid TAs 2 and TA 4? (and perform on both)?

A05: True. No. (you can propose to any TA you’d like, but will not be selected in both roles)

Q04: Assessment – who runs the tools? Do the performers run their own tools, or does TA4 and the SMEs run the tools?

A04: The performers will run the tools in conjunction with TA4. The SMEs look at outputs

Q03: Where is the input (Data) for TA1 and TA2 coming from?

A03: From TA 4, they are providing the testbed

Q02: The TA1 split between Legacy and New seems a bit unrealistic since every system is a mixture of totally new, reengineered, and reusable components. Is it appropriate to merge to some extent the TA1 proposal to cover this spectrum rather than making a strong split?
A02: Proposals that cover both are encouraged

Q01: Can you elaborate and provide examples on what is meant by ‘curated nodes’? Is this lines on code?

A01: Curated nodes are nodes in the evidence graph, there is no hard definition due to the disparate types of evidence, and they would be similar to nodes in the graph of the seedling.