Pacific Northwest
NATIONAL LABORATORY

Questions and Answers
9/19/2012

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP) 212858 – Demonstration of Fuel Cell-Based Auxiliary Power Unit for Refrigerated Trucks

Question 1:

The technical requirements state: "The APU shall employ commercially available fuel cell technology as opposed to lab-scale experimental technologies." Does this eliminate any fuel cell technology which is not commercial off the shelf? Could more definition be placed on commercially available'? For example, if working fuel cell stack units can be readily built at present, but they are not available for purchase to the public, does this eliminate the technology?

Answer:

We are trying to limit the fuel cell technologies to those that can be readily commercialized. They do not necessarily have to be off-the-shelf or available for purchase today to the public, but we do not want experimental fuel cell technologies that will take years to develop to the point of being commercially available. The rationale for this solicitation is to develop this early market opportunity; to encourage growth beyond the limited scope of this particular project to possibly hundreds of APU units. Fuel cell technologies that cannot be scaled up to these larger production quantities and still be reliable should not be considered.

Question 2:

I'm writing to inquire whether the scope of the solicitation for the project, "Demonstration of Fuel Cell-Based Auxiliary Power Unit for Refrigerated Trucks" can be broadened to include refrigerated trailer applications. As written, the solicitation is limited to demonstrations involving Class 4-6 short haul trucks. This excludes the trailer platforms which predominate in the large food distribution fleets where the fuel cell refrigeration APU product is likely to be adopted.

Answer:

The reason this solicitation excludes long-haul trucks is that the hydrogen infrastructure for refueling is not currently distributed throughout the country. The ultimate goal is to include these larger trailer platforms; however this will require a more extensive hydrogen infrastructure. As a first step, this solicitation focuses only on short-haul trucks that may return to a central location for refueling.