

MEPNN Supplier Scouting Opportunity Synopsis

Section 1: General Information

Scouting Number	2026-490
Item to be Scouted	Stainless steel gear hook
Days to be scouted	21
Response Due By	09/23/2026
Description	barqHook™ is a patent-pending, single-piece stainless steel gear hook that loops onto a pack handle and locks into trees, rock, posts, or similar surfaces via a chisel-point tip — no rigging or additional hardware required. It is offered

Section 2: Technical Information

Type of supplier being sought	and lab-tested reference design the other two are engineered from). The current design was developed with Boise State University's TechHelp and Studio 3D printers, who produced units via water-jet cutting for prototyping. That
Reason	2nd Supplier. We are seeking a domestic manufacturer capable of producing the same part
Describe the manufacturing processes (elaborate to provide as much detail as possible)	Progressive die stamping and forming of a small (few-gram) single-piece stainless steel part with a chisel-point tip and a self-locking bend. The primary function is to serve as a hook for tactical gear (e.g., filters and backpacks) and the Heavy Duty variant is typically stamped/formed in the annealed condition and precipitation-hardened afterward via a single aging heat treatment. The Light Duty and Standard Duty variants use 304 stainless steel in hardened/spring-temper stock. Secondary operations needed: pointing/grinding the chisel tip, deburring, passivation (or equivalent) for corrosion resistance, mechanical polishing, and engraving (logo/brand or model/size marking). Tooling design and build (die design-for-manufacture) support is also needed, since production tooling has not yet been built for this part.
Provide dimensions / size / tolerances / performance specifications for the item	Finished part is a few grams and roughly hook-sized. Three variants on one platform: Light Duty (3-4g, 5-10 lb rated), Standard Duty (6g, 18+ lb rated), Heavy Duty (12g, 40+ lb rated — the field- and lab-tested reference part). Full CAD drawings, load-testing data, and material specifications are available and will be provided to matched suppliers directly (under NDA where appropriate, given the part's patent-pending status).
List required materials needed to make the product, including materials of product components	Heavy Duty: PH 17-4 precipitation-hardening stainless steel. Light Duty & Standard Duty: 304 stainless steel, hardened/spring-temper stock. Single-piece, single-material part per model — no fasteners, adhesives, or additional components.
Are there applicable certification requirements?	No
Are there applicable regulations?	No
Are there any other standards, requirements, etc.?	Yes
Details	A quality management system appropriate to a load-rated product (ISO 9001 or comparable) is preferred. Potential future export-control considerations (e.g., ITAR/EAR) for tactical or government channels are being evaluated separately as part of our APEX Accelerator engagement — not yet determined to apply.
Additional Technical Comments	The design is utility patent-pending; we will ask candidate suppliers to sign an NDA before receiving full CAD drawings and testing data. All three weight classes are expected to share the same forming approach at different blank sizes and run on the same tooling platform (or a close derivative), so supplier evaluation against the Heavy Duty reference part should reasonably indicate fit across the full platform.

Section 4: Business Information

Estimated potential business volume	Initial order: approximately 100,000 units. This is a starting production run, not a ceiling — we anticipate scaling toward 500,000 and eventually 1,000,000+ units/year across the platform as licensing and retail relationships expand.
Estimated target price / unit cost information (if unavailable explain)	Not yet finalized on a per-unit manufacturing basis — open to supplier quotes to establish a baseline. For context, planned retail/wholesale price points are: Light Duty \$5 retail / \$2.50 wholesale; Standard Duty \$7 / \$3.50; Heavy Duty \$10 / \$5.00 — manufacturing cost needs to leave adequate margin within those figures.
When is it needed by?	No fixed deadline yet — looking to identify a supplier as soon as practical to support the initial 100,000-unit run.
Describe packaging requirements	Not yet finalized. Given the part's small size (a few grams, hook-sized), we anticipate minimal individual packaging (e.g., poly bag or blister card) with a correspondingly small shipping footprint per unit — open to discussing options with matched suppliers.
Where will this item be shipped?	Initial shipments to Spokane Valley, WA (inventor/business location) for quality inspection; long-term distribution to licensee or retail-partner warehouses to be determined as licensing agreements are finalized.

Additional Comments

Is there other information you would like to include?	barqHook is also currently enrolled in the APEX Accelerator program for federal-contracting readiness (SAM.gov registration complete, CAGE code pending), building toward both commercial licensing and potential government/tactical channels. A detailed written proposal covering this request is available and can serve as an accompanying technical brief. Happy to join a scoping call and share CAD drawings/testing data directly with matched suppliers.
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