The SOW Technical Defensibility Scorecard

Pre-Award Statement of Work Audit & Governance Toolkit | **buttonup.tech**

Project / Solicitation: _____	**Evaluator:** _____
Date Evaluated: _____	**Target Award Date:** _____

Score Tier	Status	Governance Directive & Action
14 - 15 Points	**DEFENSIBLE**	Objective boundaries, automated pipeline gates, and commercial remedies present. **Approved for Award.**
11 - 13 Points	**ELEVATED RISK**	Subjective language leaves technical boundaries exposed. **Redraft failing clauses prior to signature.**
10 or Fewer	**DEFECTIVE**	Contract relies on vague adjectives and lacks telemetry sign-offs. **Halt procurement until restructured.**

15-Point Technical Defensibility Audit Table

#	Check	Defensibility Checkpoint	Validation Standard & Enforceable Criteria	Notes / Redlines
1	[ ]	**Explicit Out-of-Scope Boundaries (Negative Scope)**	Contract lists excluded systems, unsupported legacy platforms, and unassigned third-party integrations.	
2	[ ]	**System Interface Definitions**	Documented rules, data formats, schemas, and response-time SLAs for every external integration point.	
3	[ ]	**Data Migration Standards**	Explicit responsibilities for extraction, cleaning, and loading; maximum data transfer error rate <= 0.02%.	
4	[ ]	**Automated Approval Gates**	Milestones approved/paid via automated testing pass/fail telemetry rather than subjective manager reviews.	
5	[ ]	**Real-World Load Testing**	System performance validated via continuous 24-hour soak test under peak production traffic profiles.	
6	[ ]	**Clear Rejection Timelines**	Buyer retains 10-15 business days to review deliverables with formal written technical rejection rules.	
7	[ ]	**Software Bill of Materials (SBOM)**	Machine-readable CycloneDX v1.5 SBOM delivered with every release candidate package.	
8	[ ]	**Security Vulnerability Rules**	Pre-delivery zero unmitigated CVSS 7.0+ flaws or CISA Known Exploited Vulnerabilities (KEVs).	
9	[ ]	**Code Maintenance Standards**	Automated code scanners confirm ISO/IEC 5055 maintainability >= 75 and Technical Debt Ratio <= 5.0%.	
10	[ ]	**Objective Issue Classification**	Defects categorized strictly by operational impact (Severities 1-4) governing mandatory patch SLAs.	
11	[ ]	**Withheld Payments for QA**	15% rolling retainage on milestone invoices + 10% warranty retainage held 90-180 days post-launch.	
12	[ ]	**Fixed-Work Scope Swaps**	Equal-effort removal of original scope required when adding new feature change requests.	
13	[ ]	**Independent Code Verification**	Third-party Level 3/4 escrow verification confirming clean-room build capability without vendor aid.	
14	[ ]	**Hands-On Knowledge Transfer**	Vendor handoff incomplete until internal team installs, launches, and operates platform via guides.	
15	[ ]	**Full Delivery of Infrastructure Code**	Full legal ownership of deployment scripts, Helm charts, Terraform manifests, and CI pipelines (DFARS 252.227-7014).	

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Executive Review & Audit Sign-Off

Total Score: ____ / 15	**Final Determination: [ ] Defensible [ ] Elevated Risk [ ] Defective**
Lead Reviewer Signature: _____	**Date: _____**