

**** Please share these Notes within your agency! ****

Notes from the Administrator

June 2011

The past few weeks have been event-packed for me, including several Congressional hearings (which are an important part of my job) as well as several events with federal acquisition professionals (which are probably the most enjoyable part of the job). In addition to the events described in this issue of the *Notes*, let me mention a very impressive conference where I got to spend some time with more than 700 acquisition professionals at the Department of Veterans Affairs. Our colleagues at VA deserve kudos for (among other things!) their commitment to strengthening the acquisition workforce, including their training, for 1102s but also for COTRs and program managers; and their progress in driving up usage of strategic sourcing vehicles.

Small Business Joint Session

Earlier this month, I had the pleasure of joining Joe Jordan, the Small Business Administration's Associate Administrator, as co-hosts of a special joint session of the Chief Acquisition Officers Council (CAOC) and the Small Business Procurement Advisory Council (SBPAC). You've heard a lot from me about increasing and improving communication – both inside and outside the government - over the last six months, and this event offered an unprecedented opportunity for discussion between two groups that benefit greatly from effective collaboration: agency small business advocates and agency acquisition leadership. The session provided a chance to hear from both groups on subjects like the implementation of the Small Business Jobs Act, the professionalization and development of the small business advisor career field, and training regarding the women-owned small business program.

While we're on the subject of small businesses: we anticipate the release within the next few weeks of SBA's FY 2010 Goaling Report and Scorecard. While we hope and expect to see progress in the percent of contract dollars awarded to small businesses, this is an area where we all need to continue to work diligently, and work together, to improve outcomes.

Rising Acquisition Professionals Community

One of the most encouraging recent developments was the first forum led, on June 16 in the White House complex, by the "Rising Acquisition Professionals Community," a group of relatively junior acquisition professionals from a wide range of agencies. Joanie Newhart and I had the chance to speak at the event, along with Darren Ash, the Deputy Executive Director for Corporate Management at the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. The several dozen attendees

included people from a whole series of civilian and defense agencies, and the energy and enthusiasm in the room were palpable. Kudos to Alex Mavroukakis, Nicole O'Neal, Terri Smith, Todd Anthony, and Claudia Melgar for organizing a great event!

If you're looking for opportunities to broaden your network and meet others in the acquisition community, you should consider attending the next RAP-C event. RAP-C is targeted primarily to entry and mid-level contracting professionals, though all are welcome. Over the next few months, RAP-C will be holding a series of events, the next of which are a White House Tour at the end of July and a speed mentoring event in the fall. To get on RAP-C's mailing list or to volunteer to help, contact Alex Mavroukakis at Alex.Mavroukakis@ed.gov.

Strategic Sourcing Progress Update

June has been a banner month for several of our Federal Strategic Sourcing Initiatives (FSSI). I recently attended a meeting of the Office Supplies 2 (OS2) Commodity Team, where we celebrated the first anniversary of this initiative. I learned that, after finalizing the numbers, OS2 sales through April were over \$86 million, and that sales over the first year of the program will almost certainly top \$100 million. Agencies are saving an average of 8% by using this vehicle, and some agencies are saving as much as 24%. And these savings were achieved while awarding 73% of the total OS2 sales to small businesses! If your agency is not yet taking full advantage of this opportunity to both save money and help achieve small business contracting goals, we strongly encourage you to do so.

Progress is also being made in two other FSSI areas. The Print Management Initiative released its final Request for Quotation (RFQ) for an acquisition that will equip agencies with tools to assess their printing and copying device fleets and identify ways to reduce the costs of operating those fleets, including better ways of acquiring devices that will lower costs and improve sustainability. Also, the Wireless initiative posted its draft Statement of Work (SOW) to GSA's BetterBuy wiki to get input on the draft from both industry and agencies before finalizing the SOW and RFQ for this initiative. The Wireless Commodity Team also met to discuss the comments received to date on the wiki and at the meeting with industry representatives the last week of May.

Please contact GSA or Jack Kelly in OFPP if you see problems or barriers to using either the domestic delivery services or office supplies vehicles under FSSI, and do your part to get your colleagues to use these vehicles. Jack can be reached at jkelly@omb.eop.gov or (202) 395-6106.

Fighting Human Trafficking

At this month's Chief Acquisition Officers Council meeting, we heard from Alice Hill, Senior Counselor to the Secretary at the Department of Homeland Security. Alice supports Secretary Janet Napolitano's participation on the President's Interagency Task Force to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, which is working on various fronts to eliminate human trafficking. One facet of this effort that directly concerns the acquisition community is the clause at FAR 52.222-50, Combating Trafficking in Persons. This clause codifies the federal government's zero-tolerance policy for contractors who engage in human trafficking, which is both a crime and human rights violation. Additionally, the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of State are leading a working group that is developing government-wide awareness training on human trafficking specific to the acquisition workforce, and we'll provide information about the availability of that training as it becomes available. For more information about the government's efforts to combat trafficking, visit www.dhs.gov/humantrafficking and www.state.gov/g/tip/.

Agency Procurement Attorney Forum

On June 7, we had the first meeting of our new Agency Procurement Attorney Forum. Much like the Front Line Forum, which provides an opportunity for us in OFPP to hear front-line contracting professionals' perspectives on the issues that affect them, the Agency Procurement Attorney Forum will provide an opportunity for regular interaction with and among the agency procurement attorney community, an important element of the acquisition workforce. During our inaugural session, I was very happy to hear about the positive working relationship that exists between the contracting offices and counsel's offices at many of our agencies, and I was reminded again of the importance of communicating early and often. The session also provided a valuable opportunity for us to hear about which issues currently concern our procurement lawyers.

Workforce Development

- **Upcoming Event – Effective Vendor Communication Webinar**

On June 29th, OFPP Associate Administrator Joanie Newhart will be conducting a webinar focused on improving acquisitions by effectively engaging industry prior to issuing a solicitation. Contacting industry earlier rather than later is often essential to learning about new technologies and processes that can better meet your agency's objectives, and this webinar will help you learn how to do it. The webinar will run from 10:00 – 11:00 AM, and registration information is available here:

<http://www.fai.gov/training/event 016.asp>.

- **Have You Registered?**

On May 31st, the Federal Acquisition Institute (FAI) launched phase I of the FAI Training Application Systems (FAITAS v2.0), which will help you manage your acquisition career. Once you create/validate your user profile in FAITAS, you can electronically submit applications for resident classes, online classes, or continuous learning available at FAI, DAU and other federal agencies. The FY-12 FAI training catalog is loaded and class registration is available. Beginning in October 2011, future enhancements will be available that allow you to: submit and track certification requests, upload your work and educational history, apply for Talent Exchange opportunities as well as volunteer to become a member of the Contingency Contracting Corps. This is a significant step forward for acquisition workforce members, so don't delay, register today! The link to FAITAS v2.0 is conveniently located at: www.FAI.gov.

As you can see from these stories, it's been a busy month, and we have another busy month ahead. In addition to the items mentioned above, July will also likely see an event that shines a spotlight on the progress that the acquisition workforce has made, and that recognizes all of your hard work in successfully increasing competition, buying smarter, and reducing use of high-risk contracts – stay tuned. But, until then, let me close by saying “Thank you” for everything that you do to ensure that our agency customers’ needs are met and our citizens’ tax dollars are prudently spent.



Daniel I. Gordon
Administrator for Federal Procurement Policy

***** Please share these Notes within your agency! *****

Issues of Notes from the Administrator are available online for any employee of the executive branch in the Acquisition area of the MAX Federal Community. The MAX community is open to Federal government employees with a valid .gov, .mil, or .fed.us email address, and you can register here: <https://max.omb.gov/maxportal/registrationForm.do>.

Once you're registered, you can find the Notes from the Administrator here:

<https://max.omb.gov/community/x/cYJ2I>.