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Notes from the Administrator

May 2011

As I write this, it is Memorial Day weekend, a time when our thoughts turn to those who have fought to defend our country and our freedom over the years. As you know, this year is the 150th anniversary of the outbreak of the Civil War, the terrible conflict that led to the creation of Memorial Day (originally called Decoration Day). The holiday is a time to remember the sacrifices of our nation's warfighters, and my thoughts also go to the efforts by our acquisition workforce and the contractors who support the warfighters. In addition, this year our hearts go out to the victims of the recent tornadoes and flooding in Missouri, Alabama, Tennessee, and other places across our country. Again, we in the acquisition workforce have been playing key roles in getting needed goods and services to those affected.

Chief Acquisition Officers Council Awards

Earlier this month at the GSA Expo in San Diego, we presented three 2011 Chief Acquisition Officers Council (CAOC) Acquisition Excellence Awards. These awards recognize teams or individuals that have demonstrated excellence in acquisition management, and the two individuals and one team award winner clearly exemplify this trait. I had the pleasure of chatting with some of the award winners and was enormously impressed by what they had achieved. Here is a summary of the great work that earned them these awards:

- **Cyrus Sanandaji, Leasing Specialist, General Services Administration (Individual Award)**
GSA awarded a large complex FBI lease for 76,737 sq. ft. in Oakland in November 2010 which required occupancy in the new space by August 2011. To accommodate this timeline, Cyrus Sanandaji developed an innovative departure from standard lease procurement schedules. All offerors (and the FBI) were required to agree to a Design Intent Workshop to be held within days of lease award, and agreed to work in a concentrated effort to complete, review, and approve all documents needed to move permitting and construction efforts forward. Within two days of lease award, all team members assembled in Oakland to create, review, and approve all necessary design documents---an effort completed in four days. This is a significant achievement, considering that typically this process takes up to six months; as a result, nearly half a year was eliminated from the standard procurement time with an impressive win-win for all parties. This outcome required a skilled project manager to coordinate with all of the necessary stakeholders to make sure the required decision makers were in the room. Mr. Sanandaji ensured appropriate agency buy-in and cooperation from all involved, including the responsible GSA contacts, the appropriate agency decision makers, the lessor, and the architects.

- **Debra Streufert, Supervisory Contract Specialist, Department of the Navy (Individual Award)**

Ms. Streufert, Lead Procurement Contracting Officer, was personally responsible for the contracting effort to award the Continuity of Services Contract, thus ensuring a seamless transition from Naval/Marine Corps Intranet (NMCI) to Next Generation Enterprise Network (NGEN). Breaking new ground in government contracts, Ms. Streufert was able to negotiate a price for the acquisition of the infrastructure and intellectual property that was over 1 billion dollars less than that originally proposed by Hewlett Packard Enterprise Services, which set the stage for a successful follow-on competition with NGEN. Ms. Streufert's diligence and vision led to an aggressive plan to inventory and evaluate over 1.2 million individual assets of existing NMCI property in 12 months in support of negotiations. While leading the NMCI infrastructure inventory efforts, Ms. Streufert simultaneously conducted an evaluation of the NMCI intellectual property and negotiated a Government Purpose Rights License, including 100,000 hours of support at no additional cost to the Government. The signed contract represents a significant guarantee of the Navy-Marine Corps mission at a much reduced, "budget-friendly price" for the Department of the Navy.

- **Ms. Sarah Corley, Mr. Michael Gallagher, Mr. John Campos, Mr. Richard Goodin, Mr. Dale Williams, Ms. Mary Johnson, and Mr. Bruce Alsop, Mission and Installation Contracting Command (MICC) Team, Department of the Army (Team Award)**

The team was recognized for their work in effective acquisition partnering by entering into a business relationship with AbilityOne to provide contract close out services. Through an IDIQ contract, the MICC team conducted a pilot and realized \$10.4 million in deobligations, closed 4,415 contracts, and supported the employment of 14 individuals with disabilities. The program also created a partnership with the Defense Acquisition University to provide training that would help develop a pipeline of skilled professionals to work on the IDIQ task orders. Current IDIQ task orders total \$6 million in requirements from various DoD agencies and have already put 36 people with disabilities to work, including 4 wounded warriors. This is a great success story on multiple fronts: achieving savings, creating employment for individuals with disabilities, and building a skilled workforce to meet ongoing future needs. If you are interested in learning more about the program or effort, please contact John Campos, Procurement Analyst at 210-221-9839 for IDIQ program information or Donna Skeeters, Contracting Officer at 502-624-8047, donna.skeeters@us.army.mil or Karen Cline, Contract Administrator at 502-624-6395, karen.cline1@us.army.mil for contract ordering information.

Warm congratulations to each of the winners!

You can help: Let us know your view.

We've been hearing for some time that there is a need for an online inventory of available interagency contracts, to help you and your agency users learn more about the options available to you. There is one directory available, based on FPDS data, at:

<http://www.contractdirectory.gov/contractdirectory/>. That directory was set up pursuant to FAR 5.601. It has also been brought to our attention that at least one commercial company, ASI Government, has an online catalogue of GWACs, multiagency contracts, and DoD-wide contracts, and other companies may also offer such services.

We are considering whether we should invest the time and money to strengthen the FPDS-based directory, simply share information about the commercial services, or take another approach. As we think through what makes the most sense, we'd like your views. In particular, we would welcome your thoughts on (1) strengths and weaknesses of the FPDS-based directory and of any commercial service with which you are familiar and (2) specific types of information or functionality that you cannot currently find and would take advantage of to assist in researching interagency and agency-wide contracts, if it were made available to you. We also welcome more general suggestions in this area. You can send your comments to Mathew Blum at mblum@omb.eop.gov, but do copy me, please: dgordon@omb.eop.gov.

Strategic Sourcing Progress Update

I'm happy to report another very successful month for the office supplies strategic sourcing initiative (OS2). In April, sales reached almost \$16 million, bringing the total sales to date through the program to just under \$85 million. Additionally, at least 15 agencies now have explicit policies for use of the OS2 vehicle, and GSA has rated OS2 usage at 14 agencies as either "medium" or "high," when compared to overall office supply spend. This is substantial progress, though more needs to be done to ensure that we're driving as much business as possible to this vehicle. In addition to providing immediate savings and an opportunity to help meet your agency's small business goals, cumulative sales will trigger additional volume discounts and increase the savings even more.

Please contact GSA or Jack Kelly in OFPP if you see problems or barriers to use, 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.

Improving Vendor Engagement – Community of Practice

OFPP has developed a community of practice on the MAX Federal Community to assist agencies in their efforts to improve vendor engagement. Initial information available through the community of practice comes from a recent workshop that focused on development of vendor

communication plans, and includes suggested government roles and responsibilities, documents and guidance from a number of agencies, a final report from the ACT-IAC RFP Communications Workshop, and contact information for workshop attendees. We plan to post additional strategies, agency guidance, success stories, case studies, and other tools that can help acquisition professionals in their efforts to improve vendor engagement – and we’d very much appreciate your help.

To access the community of practice¹: https://max.omb.gov/community/x/_INBIg.

To share documents for posting to the community of practice: email Joanie Newhart at jnewhart@omb.eop.gov.

Workforce Development

- **Upcoming Event**

The Rising Acquisition Professionals (RAP), along with the Federal Acquisition Fellows Coalition, is sponsoring RAP-Ceries – a series of professional development, educational, and peer networking events. The first of these events will take place on June 16th from 1:00 – 4:00 p.m. at the South Court Auditorium of the Eisenhower Executive Office Building. I will be speaking at this event, as will Darren Ash, CIO of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. These events are targeted to interns and those new to federal acquisition, and you can register at www.fai.gov beginning the week of June 1.

- **Speed Mentoring**

At the GSA Expo earlier this month, attendees once again had the opportunity to participate in ‘speed mentoring.’ I’ve written briefly before about this easy way to draw junior and senior members of the workforce together for short, dynamic mentoring sessions, and OFPP and FAI have found that bringing together mentors and mentees from a variety of agencies and backgrounds can be helpful to both groups. The beauty of speed mentoring is that it does not require a significant time commitment, and it provides participants with common interests and goals the chance to connect when they otherwise would not have the opportunity to do so. Mentors this time around included many GSA senior executives, including Administrator Martha Johnson. One of the attendees at the GSA Expo speed mentoring session commented, “It was easily the highlight of the expo for me.” Based on this success, OFPP is considering development of a “Speed Mentoring Toolkit,” for use by agencies and others in creating their own speed mentoring events. If you’d be interested in seeing such a toolkit, or have ideas that would be helpful, please contact Joanie Newhart at jnewhart@omb.eop.gov.

¹ If you haven’t yet joined the MAX Federal Community, you’ll need to do so to access the community of practice. Instructions for joining MAX appear at the end of the Notes.

- **Recruiting Assistance**

Have you seen OPM's new USAJOBSRecruit website? This site has helpful information and tools for hiring managers, including tips for writing effective job announcements, a recruiting checklist, a strategic workforce planning assessment tool, and a hiring roadmap that focuses on the applicant. Register here to take advantage of this new website: www.usajobsrecruit.com.

Changes to the FAR

On May 31st, Federal Acquisition Circular (FAC) 2005-52 was published in the Federal Register. The FAC incorporates a number of changes to the FAR, including:

- An interim rule that implements Executive Order 13514, Federal Leadership in Environmental, Energy, and Economic Performance; and Executive Order 13423, Strengthening Federal Environmental, Energy, and Transportation Management;
- A final rule that revises contract closeout procedures;
- A final rule that implements section 740 of Division C of the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2010, prohibiting award of contracts to any foreign incorporated entity that is treated as an inverted domestic corporation;
- A final rule that adopts, without change, an interim rule authorizing exemption from the Buy American Act for acquisition of information technology that is a commercial item;
- A final rule that adds ensuring that contractors have implemented the code of business ethics requirements to the list of contract administration functions identified in FAR Part 42; and
- A number of minor editorial changes.

For more details about any of the above, the FAC can be accessed here:

<http://www.federalregister.gov/articles/2011/05/31/2011-12850/federal-acquisition-regulation-federal-acquisition-circular-2005-52-introduction#h-12>.

That's it for this month, but I want to close by saying thanks 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

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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>.