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ANSWER CONTRACT FACTOIDS!

1844	Task Orders
\$1.93B	Funded Sales
\$5.24B	Estimated Value

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ANSWER and EER Systems Support Operation Iraqi Freedom *Monti Jagers*

During Operation Iraqi Freedom, EER Systems and ANSWER provided timely support to the war fighter in the first demonstrated combat use of a tactical Measurement and Signature Intelligence (MASINT) capability. EER Systems exceeded the initial expectations of the Air Force and continues to work closely with GSA through the ANSWER contract to enhance the Air Force Distributed Common Ground System (AF DCGS) operations, and to provide new and innovative products, taking full advantage of the new and emerging MASINT sensor capabilities for the warfighter over the next decade.

After 9/11, the Air Force used Defense Emergency Response Funds to jumpstart an initial MASINT capability in AF DCGS. Using the ANSWER contract, a task order was awarded to L-3 Communications/EER Systems in March 2002 with a total contract value of approximately \$59 million dollars if all options are exercised. MASINT is technically derived intelligence that detects, locates, tracks, identifies, and describes the unique characteristics of fixed and dynamic target sources. The AF DCGS is a Family of Systems, and its primary mission is to provide global, time-sensitive, multi-Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) tasking, processing, exploitation, and dissemination across the spectrum of military operations.

EER Systems quickly established a baseline MASINT capability that supports each individual ISR sensor, created a means to archive and share data to support quality analysis, and continuously evaluated system performance to identify issues and enhance capabilities. Working closely with the Air Force organizations responsible for acquisition, security, sustainment, and training; EER Systems oversaw the integration of the equipment at all seven AF DCGS sites worldwide, and continues today to provide additional staffing and refine procedures to enhance the initial delivered capabilities.



Through the ANSWER task order, EER Systems provides program and functional management; exploitation and analysis support; integration, operational planning; system development; security, configuration management, systems administration, and training. Because of the many challenging technical and security requirements for the staffing on this task, EER Systems' aggressive recruiting techniques and phased manpower strategy proved invaluable in providing the highly specialized staffing required at all AF DCGS sites worldwide, including Virginia, California, Korea, Germany and Hawaii. Together, EER Systems and GSA ANSWER met Air Force requirements and reached initial operational capability in November 2002, a truly exceptional achievement according to the Air Force.

ANSWER Approaches Two Billion \$\$\$ Mark in Funded Task Awards and Its 2000th Task Order *Sherrie Householder*

As we approach the milestone event of crossing the two billion-dollar in obligated funding for task orders under the ANSWER contract, it seems appropriate to take a quick look at the overall status of the contract vehicle. Since the award of the ANSWER contract, sales have exceeded \$1.93 billion in obligated sales. Additionally, under the contract, 1844 task orders have been awarded through the end of April 2003 with an estimated contract value of \$5.24B. The geographic scope of the ANSWER projects continues to expand on a monthly basis with task orders across 43 states and 57 countries.

Services Acquisition Reform Act (SARA) Moves Out of Committee **Monti Jagers**

The House Government Reform Committee recently approved legislation that could significantly change the way the government buys services. SARA would exempt certain kinds of service contracts from stringent acquisition rules, promote share-in-savings contracts, develop a government-industry exchange program for contracting officials and create a fund for training federal procurement employees.

Of particular importance is the proposed creation of an acquisition workforce training program using fees collected under Government-wide contracts, including ANSWER. Section 102 of SARA would establish within GSA an acquisition workforce-training fund to be managed by the Federal Acquisition Institute (FAI). The fund will be financed by depositing 5% of the fees collected by various executive agencies under Government-wide contracts.

OMB and DoD oppose some of the bill's features concerning acquisition of commercial items, including a section of the bill that would allow agencies to award time-and-material and labor-hour service contracts under the procedures of FAR Part 12. These types of contracts require a high degree of labor-intensive surveillance and are subject to cost growth. Part 12 of the FAR is intended for commonly available "commercial" items that do not require much oversight and the preferred contract type is firm fixed price. DoD also objects to a section that broadens the category of commercial services that can be sold to the government under FAR Part 12 to include research and development services.

The proposed bill must be approved by Congress to become law. Similar legislation was introduced last year that never made it out of committee.

Contracting Officer's Corner **Ron Heald**

Today we will look at the Service Contract Act and some of the issues that have been looked at by the ANSWER GWAC Center in recent months. The Service Contract Act (SCA) establishes standards for minimum compensation, safety and health protection of employees performing work for contractors and subcontractors on service contracts entered into with the Federal Government and the District of Columbia. The SCA does not apply to work performed in any other territory under the jurisdiction of the United States or any United States base or possession within a foreign country. If a portion of the contract services is performed within the United States and a portion is performed outside the United States, the SCA applies to the portion performed in the United States.

Every covered contract in excess of \$2,500 shall contain a provision specifying the fringe benefits to be furnished the various classes of service employees. Wage determinations are reviewed at regular intervals, as new data becomes available. Most wage determinations are updated each year. ANSWER, though, adjusts the labor rates every other year for those skill levels where it applies.

If an employee under SCA was employed by the predecessor contractor and hired by a successor, the vacation time continues, as long as there is no break in service. The contractor by whom a worker is employed at the time the vacation right vests (i.e. on the anniversary date of employment) must provide the full benefit required by the wage determination which is applicable on that date, whether or not it is the incumbent or the successor contractor.

The contractor is liable for the amount of any underpayments of compensation due to the employee engaged in the performance of the contract. Any employee or a labor organization, contracting agency or other interested person or organization may report an apparent violation to any office of the Wage and Hour Division of the Department of Labor.

If the contractor utilizes a skill level determined to be exempt from the Service Contract Act, but the actual job duties of the performer do not match that skill level and would normally be covered by the Act, the contractor is liable for insuring that the employees have been adequately compensated, including overtime. Therefore it is incumbent on us to assure the actual duties performed are covered by the skill level description.

MAY/EARLY JUNE **EVENTS**

Date: 5/12-5/16

Location: Boston, MA

Event: Solutions Edu-PBSOW Training

Date: 5/19-5/23

Location: Denver, CO

Event: Solutions Edu-Price Negotiation & Source Selection

Date: 5/19 – 5/21

Location: New Orleans

Event: Management of Change Conference

Date: 5/20

Location: San Diego, CA

Event: FORUM

Date: 5/21

Location: Oakland, CA

Event: FORUM

Date: June 2-4th

Location: San Francisco/Oakland

Event: Q12 Training/All Hands ANSWER GWAC Meeting

Date: 6/9-6/13

Location: Denver, CO

Event: Solutions Edu-PBSOW Training

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