

EISA 436(h) Green Building Certification System Review Federal Register Notice Key Concepts

Based on the deliberations of the EISA 436(h) Interagency Ad-Hoc Discussion Group and input received from the two public listening sessions, GSA offered several key concepts for additional public comment.

- 1 Green building certification systems maintain robust integrated frameworks of performance metrics, standards and conformity assurance aimed at evaluating building performance. These systems are kept current with market developments, including maintenance of professional training and accreditation systems for designers, engineers, auditors and assessors to ensure professionals maintain their expertise in the evolving market. The Ad-hoc Discussion Group found that, properly aligned with government requirements, use of these systems saves government resources by eliminating the cost to Government of developing its own standards while furthering the policy of reliance on the private sector to supply Government needs for goods and services.
- 2 If pursuing certification, an Agency should select the green building certification system that best suits its mission and portfolio needs. However, there are important guidelines that should be applied for use of green building certification systems in the Federal sector:
 - a At the national level, guidance should be developed that identifies specific credits/points that all agencies should focus on when seeking certification. These points/credits should be aligned with Federal requirements and considered as “prerequisites” for Federal building certification.
 - b For internal consistency and efficient use of resources, agencies should be encouraged to use only one system at the agency or service level. Effective use of these systems requires a high degree of familiarity with each system as well as the system’s application to different building and types. Decisions to use multiple systems within one agency should be based on a finding that the organizational structure supports effective use of training resources, and meets portfolio needs considering broad classes of building and use types.
 - c Federal experience with green building certification systems has demonstrated that the systems are flexible enough to develop applications to all building types if Federal agencies have the right direction about how to use the systems, and that this direction should apply to all buildings, including special building types and building types/uses representing relatively small segments in the Federal portfolio.
- 3 The Federal sector should formalize a process to maintain currency with the evolution of green building certification systems and underlying standards. Elements of the recommended “currency” process include:
 - a The Federal sector should maintain currency in the use of any green building rating system and automatically adopt the newest version of any standard or green

building certification system within one year after it is finalized, unless there is an overt decision not to adopt the latest version.

- b Representatives from major Federal real property portfolio holders and resource agencies should convene to review any updated green building certification systems and changes to standards critical to building performance in a process similar to the current EISA 436(h) interagency review.
 - c GSA's Office of Federal High-Performance Green Buildings should track the evolution of green building certification systems and standards, and work with the Departments of Energy and Defense, and other agencies as appropriate, to review changes and propose any necessary Federal response.
4. Green building certification systems currently serve as a bridge both in supporting the transformation to high-performance within the Federal portfolio, and in harmonizing Federal green building activities with the private sector. The Federal government should strategically engage with green building certification system owners to develop better alignment with Federal agency requirements and needs while continuing the Federal government's role in market leadership. Strategically engaging to develop better alignment with Federal agency requirements and needs could include improving performance metrics and methodologies; addressing fundamental improvements in content such as life cycle impacts and human health and productivity needs; and increasing government efficiency by reducing duplication in documentation for conformity assurance.