

# Green Building Certification Systems Review

*Bryan Steverson*

*GSA's Office of Federal High-Performance Green Buildings*

*Presented to Green Building Advisory Committee*

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# Agenda

## Introduction and Purpose

- Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007
- GBCS Review Report

## Project Update

- Federal Register Notice
- Key Concepts
- Comment Summary

## Next Steps



# Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007

## Sections 433(a) and 436(h)

- Identification of “*a green building certification system... determine[d] to be most likely to encourage a comprehensive and environmentally sound approach to certification of green buildings*” in the federal sector
- Provide a recommendation to Secretary of Energy



# GBCS Review Report

GSA commissioned green building certification system evaluation

- Prepared by Pacific Northwest National Laboratory (PNNL)
- Published March 2012
- Evaluation does not contain recommendations; simply reports findings
- Available at:  
<http://www.gsa.gov/gbcertificationreview>



# GBCS Review Report

## Initial Screening Criteria

“Whole building”, availability in U.S. markets, & third-party certification



Green Building Initiative's Green Globes



U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED)



International Living Building Institute's Living Building Challenge

# Interagency Ad-hoc Discussion Group

- Co-chaired by GSA, DoD & DOE
- Worked through a set of related questions and issues around
  - Interrelationships among green building certification systems and green building code-compliant standards for new construction ;
  - Federal high performance building design, construction and operations requirements;
  - Metrics to inform building performance tracking and reporting;
  - How high performance in buildings can reduce the total cost of ownership; and
  - The appropriate role of green building certification systems in advancing high performance buildings in the Federal sector



# GBCS Listening Sessions

- GSA hosted two public listening sessions
- First listening session: June 25<sup>th</sup> 2012
- Second listening session: July 10<sup>th</sup>, 2012



# Project Update

- Since the last Green Building Advisory Committee meeting in November:
  - February 5, 2013: notice published in Federal Register (Notice-MG-2012-04)
    - Seeking public comment over a period of 60 days on the key findings from the Interagency Ad-hoc Discussion Group
    - April 8, 2013: Public comment period closed
  - Public comments and deliberations of Interagency Ad-hoc Discussion Group will be used to better inform GSA's recommendations to the Secretary of Energy



# Interagency Ad-hoc Discussion Group

## Key Concepts

1. Use of green building certification systems saves the government resources
  - Eliminates the cost to the Government of developing its own standards
  - Furthers policy of reliance on the private sector to supply Government needs for goods and services



# Interagency Ad-hoc Discussion Group

## Key Concepts

2. Agencies should select the green building certification system that best suits its mission and portfolio needs
  - Guidance should be developed that identifies specific credits/points that all agencies should focus on when seeking certification
  - Agencies should be encouraged to only use one certification system at the agency or service level



# Interagency Ad-hoc Discussion Group

## Key Concepts

3. Federal sector should formalize a process to maintain currency with evolution of green building certification systems and underlying standards
  - Should automatically adopt newest version of 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
  - Representatives from major Federal real property portfolio holders should convene to review any updated certification systems
  - GSA should track the evolution of green building certification systems and standards and work with DOD and DOE, and other agencies as appropriate, to review changes and propose any necessary Federal response



# Interagency Ad-hoc Discussion Group

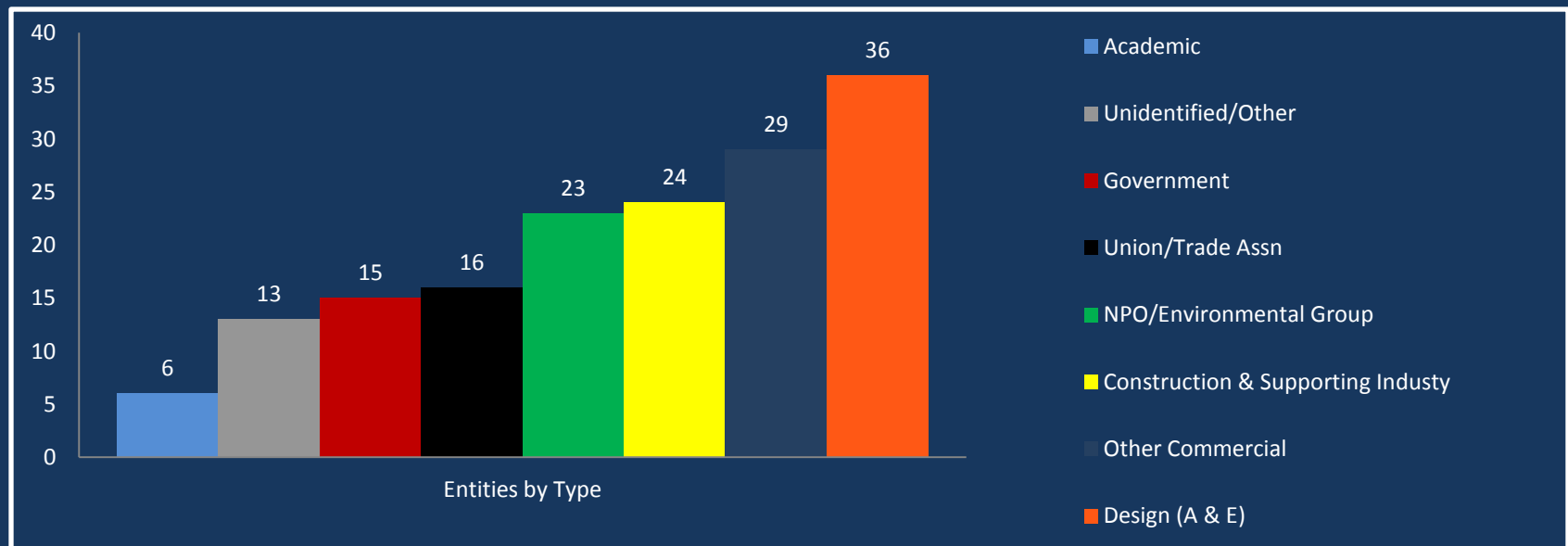
## Key Concepts

4. Federal government should strategically engage with green building certification system owners to develop better alignment with Federal green building requirements and agency needs while continuing the Federal government's role in market leadership



# Comment Summary

- Public comment period: February 5 – April 8, 2013
  - Over 400 comments received from 162 stakeholders
    - Academic, Construction, Design, Government, Non-profit, and trade associations



# Comment Summary

## Key Concept 1

Use of green building certification systems saves the government resources

- Eliminates the cost to the Government of developing its own standards
- Furthers policy of reliance on the private sector to supply Government needs for goods and services

### COMMENTS:

- General agreement: 3<sup>rd</sup> party rating systems provide more value over any system the government could develop
  - Some disagreed - suggested Government develop separate system
- 1/3 of responses had concerns about identifying any one system if it didn't completely align with the Government's requirements
  - Of these - about half suggested identifying multiple systems

# Comment Summary

## Key Concept 2

Agencies should select the green building certification system that best suits its mission and portfolio needs

- Guidance should be developed that identifies specific credits/points that all agencies should focus on when seeking certification
- Agencies should be encouraged to only use one certification system at the agency or service level

### COMMENTS:

- Most agreed GSA should choose a 3<sup>rd</sup> party certification system
  - Mixed comments on identifying any “one” system
- Most suggested allowing individual agencies choose the system that fits their project
- Some suggestions the Government should choose one system that fits most of the Federal requirements and identify ways to meet the gaps

# Comment Summary

## Key Concept 2 continued

Agencies should select the green building certification system that best suits its mission and portfolio needs

- Guidance should be developed that identifies specific credits/points that all agencies should focus on when seeking certification
- Agencies should be encouraged to only use one certification system at the agency or service level

### COMMENTS:

- Many disagreed with mandatory credits / points agencies should focus on
  - Agencies should be given flexibility in what credits and points to focus on
  - Government should establish performance objectives as prerequisites in lieu of credit/point prerequisites
- Most disagreed - agencies should be encouraged to use one certification system at agency or service level
  - Too restrictive and costly to use only one system
  - Government benefits most when competition among rating systems leads to improved building performance



# Comment Summary

## Key Concept 2 continued

Agencies should select the green building certification system that best suits its mission and portfolio needs

- Guidance should be developed that identifies specific credits/points that all agencies should focus on when seeking certification
- Agencies should be encouraged to only use one certification system at the agency or service level

### COMMENTS:

- Those that agreed felt it should be an agency decision to use one system and that this decision should reflect their portfolio needs
- Several suggested that in its deliberations GSA consider:
  - ASHRAE Standard 189.1
  - International Green Construction Code
  - Green Building Initiative's Guiding Principles Compliance Assessment Program
  - Building component rating systems (e.g. roofing systems, plumbing, green cleaning)

# Comment Summary

## Key Concept 3

Federal sector should formalize process to maintain currency with evolution of certification systems and underlying standards

- Should automatically adopt newest version of standard or green building certification system within one year after it is finalized unless an overt decision not to adopt
- Representatives from Federal real property portfolio holders should convene to review any updated certification systems
- GSA should track the evolution of green building certification systems and standards and work with DOD and DOE, and other agencies as appropriate, to review changes and propose any necessary Federal response

### COMMENTS:

- General agreement major Federal real property portfolio holders should routinely meet to review updates to green building certification systems
  - A few suggested including private sector representatives to the group review
- Majority agreed Government should adopt updates to standards / certification systems without delay
  - Most wanted thorough review prior to adoption – much like current review process
- General agreement that GSA should track evolution of certification systems and work with DOD, DOE, and other agencies to review changes and propose any necessary Federal response

# Comment Summary

## Key Concept 4

Federal government should strategically engage with green building certification system owners to develop better alignment with Federal green building requirements and agency needs while continuing the Federal government's role in market leadership

### COMMENTS:

- General agreement government should engage with certification system owners to improve alignment of systems with Federal requirements
- Suggested the Federal government be “at the table” with others from the private sector to ensure its needs are being met by system owners
  - Private sector needs should not be minimized by government requirements

# Comment Summary

## Other comments

- View that domestic wood is being discriminated through LEED
- Product treatment within green building certification systems
- Consensus-based development of certification systems

# Next Steps

- GSA analyzing public comments and findings of Interagency Ad-hoc Discussion Group
- GSA developing a set of recommendations
- Letter with recommendations to be sent from GSA Administrator sent to Secretary of Energy



# Questions?

