

a. **Objectives:**

Program Purpose: The mission of the Office of Federal High-Performance Green Buildings is to provide high-performance green building information and disseminate practices, technologies and research results through outreach, education, and the provision of technical assistance government-wide. The Office was established by the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (“EISA”, Public Law 110-140) to:

- (1) coordinate the activities of the Office of Federal High-Performance Green Buildings with the activities of the DOE Office of Commercial High-Performance Green Buildings;
- (2) ensure full coordination of high-performance green building information and activities within the General Services Administration and all relevant agencies;
- (3) establish a senior-level Federal Green Building Advisory Committee, which shall provide advice and recommendations for high-performance green buildings;
- (4) identify and reassess improved or higher rating standards recommended by the Advisory Committee;
- (5) ensure full coordination, dissemination of information regarding, and promotion of the results of research and development information relating to Federal high-performance green building initiatives;
- (6) identify and develop Federal high-performance green building standards for all types of Federal facilities;
- (7) establish green practices that can be used throughout the life of a Federal facility;
- (8) review and analyze current Federal budget practices and life-cycle costing issues, and make recommendations to support high-performance green buildings; and
- (9) identify opportunities to demonstrate innovative and emerging green building technologies and concepts.

“High-Performance Green Buildings” are defined as buildings that, as compared to similar buildings:

- (1) Reduce energy, water, and material resource use;
- (2) Improve indoor environmental quality, including reducing indoor pollution, improving thermal comfort, and improving lighting and acoustic environments that affect occupant health and productivity;

- (3) Reduce negative impacts on the environment throughout the life-cycle of the building, including air and water pollution and waste generation;
- (4) Increase the use of environmentally preferable products, including bio-based, recycled content and nontoxic products with lower life-cycle impacts;
- (5) Increase reuse and recycling opportunities;
- (6) Integrate systems in the building;
- (7) Reduce the environmental and energy impacts of transportation through building location and site design that support a full range of transportation choices for users of the building; and
- (8) Consider indoor and outdoor effects of the building on human health and the environment, including—
 - (i) Improvements in worker productivity;
 - (ii) The life-cycle impacts of building materials and operations; and
 - (iii) Other, appropriate factors.

Public Benefit: This Office, authorized under EISA but previously unfunded, will support the stated goals of the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act by providing technical standards, measurement tools, and government-wide leadership necessary to support the agencies charged with delivering high-performance green Federal buildings under the Act.

The government-wide infrastructure investments resulting from the standards and activities of the Office will benefit the public by reducing carbon emissions, reducing consumption of energy and water, increasing reliance on renewable energy in Federal buildings and minimizing related impacts on human health and the environment.

b. Activities:

The Office of Federal High-Performance Green Buildings will (1) promote and coordinate high-performance green building information and activities throughout the Federal government, (2) serve as the Federal government's green building advocate, and (3) develop standards and establish green practices for all types of Federal facilities.

Near term known activities include: selecting a permanent Director, establishing the program office, and identifying milestones for meeting the requirements to be highlighted in the December 2009 report to Congress.

Current activities include:

- (1) coordination of activities with the Department of Energy Office of Commercial High-Performance Green Buildings;
- (2) coordination with the Interagency Sustainability Working Group on the development of a tracking system for compliance with the Guiding Principles for High-Performance and Sustainable Buildings;
- (3) formation of the Federal Green Building Advisory Committee and formation of kick-off goals;
- (4) review and analysis of the latest green building rating standards;
- (5) development of a research plan through the coordination of existing high-performance green building research initiatives and integration with NIST activities;
- (6) development support for and review and analysis of ASHRAE Standard 189.1 and similar high-performance green building standards;
- (7) identification of operational and maintenance best practices;
- (8) review and analysis of Federal budget practices impacting green building performance;
- (9) identification of a demonstration project in a Federal building to promote innovative and emerging green capabilities.

c. Characteristics:

The funds provided by the Recovery Act are for the salaries and expenses of the Office. Recovery funds will provide for a staff and additional support costs, including travel, training, and supplies.

Some funds may be expended for contracts with academic, research, non-profit, and professional firms that provide services related to high-performance green buildings. These contracts will be competitively awarded and, to the maximum practicable extent, fixed-price.

GSA will follow its standard procurement guidelines and processes including all Government procurement preferences.

d. Delivery Schedule:

- (1) Selection of the permanent director for the Office - July 2009
- (2) Staff selection and hiring will follow – July 2009 (completion by December 2009)

- (3) Review of LEED 2009 – August 2009
- (4) Select and formalize non-government members of the Federal Green Building Advisory Committee – September 2009
- (5) Identification of a demonstration project – September 2009
- (6) Tracking system for compliance with the Guiding Principles for High-Performance and Sustainable Buildings – December 2009
- (7) Review of ASHRAE Standard 189.1 – 2nd quarter 2010 (or when released)
- (8) Development of research plan – 3rd quarter 2010
- (9) Review and analysis of Federal budget practices impacting green building performance – 2nd quarter 2011

No later than December 19, 2009, the Director of the Office of Federal High-Performance Green Buildings, in consultation with the Secretary of Energy shall prepare and submit to Congress a report that:

- Describes the status of compliance with the High-Performance Federal Buildings provisions of EISA and other, related statutes and regulations;
- Identifies Federal facility procedures that may affect green building certification;
- Identifies inconsistencies in Federal law that may serve as barriers to implementation of the relevant provisions of EISA;
- Recommends language for uniform standards for environmentally responsible acquisition by Federal agencies;
- Reviews the Federal budget process, to identify alternative treatments of energy and environmental costs and benefits;
- Identifies green, self-sustaining technologies for use in natural disasters and other emergencies;
- Summarizes and highlights development of high-performance green building initiatives, standards, and laws in State and local governments; and
- Makes recommendations to address the issues identified in the report, as well as implementation plans for the recommendations.

e. Environmental Review Compliance:

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) – Categorical Exclusion

The Recovery Act provides \$4 million for this Office, the funds will support salaries and expenses, the collection, analysis and development of standards and practices, coordination and dissemination of information, and program management. GSA does not find this program to be major or significant for the purposes of NEPA reporting.

f. Measures:

The Director of the Office of Federal High-Performance Green Buildings is responsible for establishing measures for the Office and metrics for assessing the impacts of its programs. Although the Office of High Performance Green Buildings was established in FY 2008, the \$4 million provided through the Recovery Act is the first allocation of funding. One of the first activities to be undertaken is the selection of a permanent Federal Director for the Office. The Director will develop measures for the program which will then be reported.

g. Monitoring/Evaluation:

The Recovery Act does not establish any new projects or activities for the Office of Federal High-Performance Green Buildings. Recovery funds are provided to the Office to carry out the responsibilities established in EISA. As such, the primary process for periodic performance reviews and risk assessments for this program will be through the GSA Performance Management Process (PMP). All GSA programs participate in this annual process of developing long- and near-term strategies, allocating resources, managing program performance, and appraising and recognizing individual employee performance. The PMP process is well-designed to identify and mitigate risks and to continuously assess and evaluate the performance of operating programs.

h. Transparency:

All Federal regulations prepared by the Office will be made available for public comment on www.regulations.gov prior to final publication.

i. Accountability:

EISA directs that the Federal Director submit to Congress, no later than December 19, 2009 and biennially thereafter, a report that includes a status on compliance with the Federal High-Performance Green Buildings provisions of EISA, including those that establish the responsibilities of the Federal Director.

Further, EISA directs the Comptroller General of the United States to conduct an audit of the implementation of the Federal High-Performance Green Buildings provisions of EISA no later than October 31, 2009 and again by October 31, 2010. That audit will include a review of the performance of the Federal Director, and will be submitted to Congress.

j. Barriers to Effective Implementation:

There are no statutory or regulatory requirements that will impede effective implementation. GSA must balance the government-wide responsibilities of the Office with the internal sustainability practices of the Public Buildings Service.

k. Federal Infrastructure Investments:

No funds were authorized for infrastructure investments.