

a. **Objectives:**

Program Purpose: The Office of Federal High-Performance Green Buildings provides high-performance green building information and disseminates 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 supports 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 supported by 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: (1) promotes and coordinates high-performance green building information and activities throughout the Federal government, (2) serves as the Federal government's green building advocate, and (3) develops standards and green practices for all types of Federal facilities.

Current activities of the Office include:

- Coordinating activities with the Department of Energy Office of Commercial High-Performance Green Buildings;
- Coordinating 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;
- Forming the Federal Green Building Advisory Committee;
- Reviewing the latest green building rating standards;
- Developing of a research plan for high-performance green building research initiatives and integration with NIST activities;
- Development, review, and analysis of ASHRAE Standard 189.1 and similar high-performance green building standards;
- Identifying best practices in operations and maintenance;
- Reviewing Federal budget practices impacting green building performance; and
- Identifying 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 provide for a staff and additional support costs, including travel, training, and supplies.

Funds have already been obligated for a contract award to develop a sustainable facilities decision tool for small projects; other funds will be obligated for contracts with academic, research, non-profit, and professional firms that provide services related to high-performance green buildings. All 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: Complete
- (2) Staff selection and hiring: As of May 14, 2010, five employees had been hired into the Office, including a permanent Director; the Office is expected to be fully staffed by August 2010
- (3) Review of LEED 2009 – Complete
- (4) Select and formalize non-government members of the Federal Green Building Advisory Committee – August 2010
- (5) Identification of a demonstration project – Complete
- (6) Tracking system for compliance with the Guiding Principles for High-Performance and Sustainable Buildings – Complete
- (7) Develop and issue guidance on use of ASHRAE Standard 189.1 in Federal facilities – August 2010
- (8) Development of research plan – 3rd quarter 2010
- (9) Review and analysis of Federal budget practices impacting green building performance – 2nd quarter 2011
- (10) Prepare and submit EISA-mandated biennial report to Congress – June 30, 2010. EISA requires that the report:
 - Describe the status of compliance with the High-Performance Federal Buildings provisions of EISA and other, related statutes and regulations;
 - Identify Federal facility procedures that may affect green building certification;
 - Identify inconsistencies in Federal law that may serve as barriers to implementation of the relevant provisions of EISA;
 - Recommend language for uniform standards for environmentally responsible acquisition by Federal agencies;
 - Review the Federal budget process, to identify alternative treatments of energy and environmental costs and benefits;
 - Identify green, self-sustaining technologies for use in natural disasters and other emergencies;
 - Summarize and highlight development of high-performance green building initiatives, standards, and laws in State and local governments; and
 - Make 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 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:

Following are several quantifiable measures that the office will deliver by the end of 2011. As the Office completes staffing and organizational development, the Director will identify additional performance measures.

- Number of agencies with applicable buildings who have been trained on the use of ASHRAE Standard 189.1 for the design of High-Performance Green Buildings: 15 agencies by the end of 2011.
- Number of Technology Demonstration Project research reports published: 1 per year, starting June 2011.

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 is 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:**

The Federal Director will submit the EISA-mandated, biennial report to Congress on June 30, 2010. The report will assess the status of compliance with the Federal High-Performance Green Buildings provisions of EISA, including those that establish the responsibilities of the Federal Director.

j. **Barriers to Effective Implementation:**

There are no statutory or regulatory requirements that impede effective implementation.

k. **Federal Infrastructure Investments:**

No funds were authorized for infrastructure investments.