GSA

Procurement Times

A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION BY THE ENTERPRISE GOVERNMENTWIDE ACQUISITION CONTRACT (GWAC) CENTER

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Director's Corner

Paul Martin, Director (Acting)

We are sometimes asked why the GSA GWACs require the issuance of a "delegation" to place an order against the GWAC. In response, we explain that it is all part of our responsibility, as an executive agent of OMB, to ensure that the Governmentwide Acquisition Contracts are used effectively and responsibly.

> *GSA has been designated as one of the executive agents by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), pursuant to section 5112(e) of the Clinger-Cohen Act, authorized to issue and administer GWAC contracts.*

GWACs provide many benefits for our clients, such as: (1) solutions-based contract vehicles; (2) flexibility to add team partners and subcontractors; (3) streamlined acquisition process; and (4) full range of contract types.

In order to receive a Delegation of Procurement Authority (DPA), a prospective GWAC user (also known as an Ordering Contracting Officer-OCO) must verify he/she possess an appropriate Contracting Officer warrant and complete GSA's DPA training. After completion of training, the DPA holder is free to issue orders using the tools & guidance provided.

Although GSA is available to assist Ordering Contracting Officers as needed, TO issuance and administration is the responsibility of the OCO. The OCO should understand and perform the full spectrum of contract administration duties required for the effective management of a GWAC Task Order. Below are some suggested administrative actions that are sometimes overlooked:

1) Include contract & pricing details in the contract such as ceiling amounts by option period and total for entire contract; Contract Type, and Period of Performance.
2) Enter accurate TO award information in the Federal Procurement Database System.
3) Perform past performance assessments annually and allow Contractors to provide feedback.
4) Obtain a Release of Claims as part of TO closeout

Understanding and effectively implementing appropriate procurement procedures reduces cost to the government and motivates our Industry Partners to perform in an exemplary manner. We believe we have provided OCOs with the tools and framework for success and we have confidence that with their support the GWAC program will continue to thrive. If you require further information on any GWAC contract issue, please call the Enterprise GWAC Center and we will gladly assist you.

"Surround yourself with the best people you can find, delegate authority, and don't interfere as long as the policy you've decided upon is being carried out." -- Ronald Reagan

GSA's GWAC Management Module - A New Tool for Creating Reports Supporting Effective Management of your GWAC Order

The Governmentwide Acquisition Contract (GWAC) Management Module (MM) was built to support the management and support of GSA's Governmentwide Acquisition Contracts as required by the Office of Management and Budget and to provide GWAC Customers with visibility into their task order over time. This MM located as a separate module within GSA's ITSS Solutions Shop (itss.gsa.gov) allows GWAC customers to request a Delegation of Procurement Authority, obtain management reports on their Order activity and create customized ad-hoc reports through business objects. The following represent three categories of reports/data that will be offered through the GWAC MM:

- Spend Data - Reports that focus on labor rates and total dollars spent on a task order and cumulative GWAC level based on dollars obligated.
- Management Reports- Reports that provide a more global/summarized view of order activity such as dollars spent by FY by task order or for all task orders that can be displayed.
- Ad Hoc Reports- Customized and ad-hoc reports as designed by the client to meet their particular reporting needs.

GWAC users who are already registered in GSA's ITSS Solutions Shop (itss.gsa.gov) should review their access to the GWAC MM and/or seek assistance from the ITSS Registration desk to gain access. For those users who have not yet registered, go to itss.gsa.gov and begin your registration process as your first step to accessing the GWAC MM. Additional questions can be addressed to Mimi Bruce, Director Client Support at (877) 534-2208 or email at mimi.bruce@gsa.gov.

- Mimi Bruce

Millennia Past Performance Survey V

This fifth Past Performance Survey covered Millennia's 64 active task orders for the period of January 1st through December 31st of 2007. New this year, with assistance from the GSA Chief Information Office (CIO); a survey website was designed for easy access and input by the survey respondents, which helped streamline the process by auto populating the data into a spreadsheet.

The results of the survey indicate that five out of the nine Millennia Industry Partners exceeded their previous past performance scores. The survey was scored by using a 1 to 5 likert scale, with 5 being the highest score and 1 being the lowest. All of the Industry Partners were able to achieve an overall score of 4.00 or higher. Overall, the data indicated a 97.00% favorable rating. A total of 128 surveys were solicited with 84 responses being received from both the Internal and External clients, which represents an overall response rate of 65.63%.

The survey results were loaded into the National Institute of Health's (NIH) Contractor Performance System (CPS). This system allows for a 30 day contractor rebuttal/ comments period before uploading into the Past Performance Information Retrieval System (PPIRS). Once that is done, a modified Past Performance Summary Report will be posted to the GSA Millennia website (www.gsa.gov/millennia) and will be available to the public.

With the fifth Past Performance Survey completed, we look forward to continued business growth and quality performance. For those who are interested, the Defense Acquisition University (DAU) provides a free, online past performance course (CLC028) to all government users.

- Chris Andrade

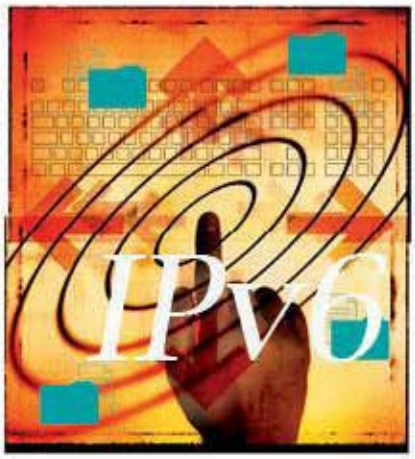
ANSWER & Millennia Support IPv6 Transition as Deadline Nears

As many Chief Information Officers and Network Administrators are already astutely aware, the June 30, 2008 deadline to meet Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) mandated transition to Internet Protocol version 6 (IPv6), is quickly approaching. A June 2005 OMB Transition Planning memo (M-05-22) summarized the transition timeline for all federal agencies to be capable of transmitting both IPv4 and IPv6 traffic, and supporting IPv4 and IPv6 addresses.

Agency acquisition professionals who support IT departments should be proactive in asking whether all of their agency infrastructures (network backbones) are on track to meet OMB's deadline for transition to IPv6 by June 30, 2008.

In order to meet these requirements, the Enterprise GWAC Center's ANSWER and Millennia contracts are among a host of other GSA IT acquisition vehicles available to help agencies meet the IPv6 transition deadline. For more specific details on GSA's IPv6 related products and services visit the GSA IPv6 website at www.gsa.gov/itsipv6 or for ANSWER and Millennia specific details contact our Client Services call center at 1-877-532-2208.

-Tony Ojeda



Quick-Closeout Procedure—A Viable Alternative to Final Indirect Cost Rates

Optimally, planning for timely closeout should begin at contract award and should be continually addressed throughout the life of the contract. Timeliness and consistency is key for such actions as: acceptance of deliverables, payment of invoices, submittal of indirect cost proposals, completion of audits and negotiation of final indirect rates. Negotiating final payments for each option year as soon as final indirect rates are available will also facilitate a more streamlined final closeout at the end of the contract period.

Contract closeout is often an afterthought in acquisition shops that are increasingly understaffed and overworked. For cost and T&M contracts delayed receipt and audit of indirect rate cost proposals may further hamper the closeout process. A streamlined quick closeout procedure allows the Contracting Officer responsible for contract closeout to negotiate the settlement of indirect rates in advance of final indirect rates and is required if the conditions of FAR 42.708(a) are met.

Although primarily applicable to cost and T&M contract types, it may be used in other hybrid contract scenarios where there are significant cost reimbursable items with associated indirect costs. Typically, the Contracting Officer should include the Allowable Cost and Payment Clause (FAR 52.2216-7) and indicate to which cost elements it applies.

Determination of final indirect costs under the quick close-out procedure provided for by the Allowable Cost and Payment Clause at FAR 52.216-7 is final for the contract covered by the agreement, and no adjustment is made to other contracts for over or under-recoveries of costs allocated or allocable to that contract.

The use of quick closeout procedures can benefit both the government and the contractor in time saved and earlier release of funds withheld. To encourage more frequent use of this procedure, the contracting officer should make every effort to reach agreement on a reasonable estimate of allocable dollars and encourage contractors to establish quick closeout rates. Collaboration and communication are vital to a successful outcome for all.

- Dan Vidal

Lean Six Sigma and Process Improvement

Lean Six Sigma is a rigorous process improvement methodology that combines two concepts: 1) Toyota's Lean concept for improving its car production system; and 2) Motorola's Six Sigma approach for increasing the quality of its products. Thus, the goal of Lean Six Sigma focuses not only on improving efficiency and lowering costs but on improving quality as well.

Practitioners of Lean Six Sigma proceed through a series of steps to improve a process as follows:

- **DEFINE:** Determine the problem and establish metrics for measuring the problem
- **MEASURE:** Gather data associated with the problem and prepare it for analysis
- **ANALYZE:** Identify why people don't do what they need to do or why a process fails to provide necessary controls.
- **IMPROVE:** Decide on needed improvements and implement them.
- **CONTROL:** Check to see that improvements are maintained and enhanced.

Various belt-color certifications (white being the lowest and black the highest) are used to identify the level of Lean Six Sigma training and expertise an individual has achieved.

- Rebecca Eden

GSA Federal Acquisition Service (FAS) Process Improvement Program

The Federal Acquisition Service leadership has made it a priority to establish a culture, within FAS, of continuous improvement to allow us to better serve our customers, industry partners, US taxpayers and the FAS workforce. To this end, the FAS leadership has established a process improvement program based on the Lean Six Sigma (LSS) process improvement methodology.

Although LSS was developed by industry, it has been used in various military departments since the 1990's with greatly expanded use after 2000. Recently it has evolved into DOD's "tool of choice" for business transformation. With DOD and now GSA embracing LSS one can only imagine that greater efficiencies and reduced waster can be achieved.

Our own Enterprise GWAC Center's Contracting Officer, Jason Schmitt, has volunteered to be a part of this program. He will participate in training sessions as well as LSS projects that will give FAS business lines the tools to identify issues and implement solutions. Upon completion of the program, Jason will earn a Lean Six Sigma Green Belt certification. Good luck Jason! We look forward to all your new and innovative ideas to make the GWAC program even better.

- Rebecca Eden

Why GWACs Should be a Part of Every Organization's Acquisition Portfolio

GSA's Enterprise GWAC Center-West (EGC-W) and Enterprise GWAC Center – Southwest (EGC-SW) will be debuting a new presentation on GSA's Enterprise GWACs at the 2008 GSA Expo. There will be two sessions, one on Tuesday, April 22nd and one on Wednesday April 23rd entitled *Governmentwide Acquisition Contracts – Why GWACs should be a Part of Every Organization's Acquisition Portfolio*. It will focus on both Enterprise GWAC Centers' contract portfolio: ANSWER, Millennia and Millennia Lite.

Topics will include leading edge aspects of contract management (i.e., customer focus, partnership with industry, training, risk mitigation and contract management and oversight) and key reasons why clients choose GWACs. A visual tool will be presented to assist clients in understanding both the similarities and differences among the enterprise GWACs. This tool was designed to assist Federal agencies in making acquisition choices that will insure mission success and optimize results. Additionally, two IT case studies will be included from the previous year's Expo 2007 in Orlando. This presentation will be available on the EGC website.

- Mimi Bruce

GWAC Subcontracting Oversight at the EGC-W

The Enterprise GWAC Center- West (EGC-W) collects, maintains, assesses, monitors, and stores small business subcontracting data for the three major Government Wide Acquisition Contracts (GWACs) it currently administers (i.e., Applications 'N Support for Widely-diverse End User Requirements (ANSWER), Information Technology Omnibus Procurement II (ITOP II), and Millennia). Subcontracting data is directly entered by the Industry Partners into the Electronic Subcontracting Reporting System [eSRS]. eSRS generates automatic e-mail notifications to authorized Contracting Officers (COs) once Industry Partners have submitted their subcontracting reports. COs may then access eSRS from the Web and either accept or reject the reports on the spot.

Individual subcontracting data reports are collected biannually for each of the fifty-plus contractors working under these three GWACs. Data compiled from eSRS shows cumulative and periodic subcontracting dollars either paid or committed [depending on individual accounting systems] to the various subcontracting categories required to be reported. Actual subcontracting performance is compared to the goals established in the IPs' respective subcontracting plans. It is then compiled for reporting purposes for use by various authorized parties for such activities as trending and forecasting.

Working in conjunction with the SBA, GSA encourages the Industry Partners to subcontract work to small business entities. Mandated subcontracting goals in conjunction with measuring and tracking achievement are key motivators that have produced positive results. Cumulative subcontracting dollars going to small businesses working on EGC administered GWACs through September 2007 is nearly $2.6 billion.

- Bob Sheehan

2008 National Defense Authorization Act May Affect GWAC

Highlighted below are several components of the 2008 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) (HR 4986; public Law 110-181) which was signed by the President on January 28, 2008, that will apply to GWAC users:

Protests to GAO allowed for on task orders above $10 million.
This is a controversial change, in part due to fears that more bid protests could delay the procurement process and possibly result in higher costs for federal contracts. GAO has exclusive jurisdiction of protests in this arena as opposed to protests for non-task order federal contract awards, which are under the purview of both the GAO and U.S. Court of Federal Claims (COFC). This provision is effective on 27 May 2008 and will expire 3 years thereafter.

Debriefing opportunity required for Orders Over $5M.
The new legislation identifies minimum criteria that must be accomplished in order to meet the "fair opportunity to be considered" requirement of FAR 16.505. Although for the most part the steps mandated by the new legislation have been recommended and practiced in most cases, the "optional" element of offering debriefings has now been removed for Orders over $5M.

The full text of the 2008 NDAA may be found at: http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=110_cong_bills&docid=f:h4986enr.txt.pdf

- Rebecca Eden

Additional 2008 National Defense Authorization Act Acquisition Changes

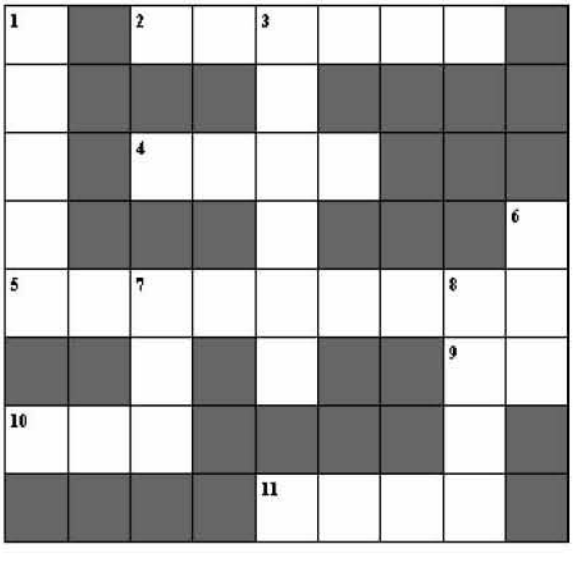
Single Award IDIQ contracts over $100 million require head of agency written Determination.
Similar to that determination required by FAR Part 6 to justify award of a contract on a sole source basis.

Authority for the Commercial Item Test Program under FAR 13.5 is extended until January 1, 2010.
This test program authorizes the use of simplified procedures for the acquisition of supplies and services in amounts greater than the simplified acquisition threshold but not exceeding $5.5 million *($11 million for acquisitions used in support of a contingency operation or to facilitate the defense against or recovery from nuclear, biological, chemical, or radiological attack*) if the contracting officer reasonably expects that offers will include only commercial items

-Rebecca Eden

News Clues Crossword Puzzle

1. OCO should obtain a Release of _____ as part of close out process.
2. First GWAC contract vehicle created by the Enterprise GWAC Center.
3. Questionnaire type document for Past Performance
4. Subcontracting Reporting System for Contractors
5. GWAC for large integrated system projects.
6. Congressional oversight agency.
7. Process Improvement Process Program known as (short)
8. GWAC Management Module is part of this system
9. Instrument issued against a GWAC (short)
10. Newest organization within GSA
11. This system is used by the OCO to load contract data.



Answers to be provided in the next Procurement Times issue

Chris Andrade & Tony Ojeda Complete Federal Career Intern Program

On March 2, 2008, after almost 3 years as Contract Specialist Interns, Chris Andrade and Tony Ojeda completed the Federal Career Intern Program and were promoted to GS-12s. The Federal Career Intern Program is designed to ensure that program interns are given training and developmental assignments that facilitate career development leading to their target position.

Chris and Tony worked closely with their assigned Procuring Contracting Officers (PCOs). The interns met the program's objectives and were eligible for promotion to their target position.

Chris joined the Enterprise GWAC Center– West (EGC-W) in May 2005, and was assigned to the Millennia and ITOP II contracts. Chris' responsibilities as a Contract Specialist include: Contract Specialist for Millennia and ITOP II; Past Performance lead on ANSWER, Millennia, and ITOP II; Contractor Performance System registration for GSA Contracting Officers; and monthly task order verification in the FPDS-NG. Chris is also developing a GSA employee manual for internal use.

Tony joined the EGC-W in April 2005, and was assigned to the ANSWER contract. His responsibilities as a Contract Specialist include: Contract Specialist for ANSWER; Contracting Officer's Representative (COR) for the EGC-W's IBA Support Contract; Continuity of Operations Officer; and e-SRS representative. Tony is also the POC for small business subcontracting issues.

Congratulations to both Chris and Tony!

- Anjanette Magante

J. Chris Andrade
Contract Specialist

Louis "Tony" Ojeda
Contract Specialist

Irving Burton Associates (IBA) Supports the EGC-W

IBA has been providing support to the GSA Enterprise GWAC Center in San Diego since October 2005. The team provides contract administrative support to various billion dollar Government-wide Acquisition Contracts (GWACs) contracts such as ANSWER, Millennia and ITOP II plus small niche contracts ACES and Virtual Data Center Services.

The team works closely with the Procuring Contracting Officers to provide contract support services including data entry, document preparation, managing databases, task order/contract close-outs, and miscellaneous contracting support. Projects include but not limited to pre-award/post-award activities, Past Performance surveys, monitoring Delegation of Procurement Authority, assistance with Statement of Work reviews and tracking task orders for each contract.

Many long hours and commitment are put in by the IBA team to help streamline processes and provide superior assistance to the government staff.

IBA assists the government to operate effectively and efficiency through the creation of individual Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). Needless to say, the client is very pleased with IBA's support and looks forward to continued partnership with IBA.

Front row: Jessica Best, Jennifer Jeans
Back Row: Arturo Pena, Sheri Bunn-Markryd, Jenny Huffsmith, Linda Avery

The IBA team has proven that they can overcome obstacles and work well as a team given the ever changing regulatory environment.

- Jennifer Jeans

Enterprise GWAC Center- West (EGC-W)

The EGC-W contracting staff located in San Diego CA offers responsive, efficient, professional support in assisting our customer agencies in laying the groundwork for successful technology acquisitions, while also providing a variety of program support functions including contractual and advisory assistance throughout your Task Order lifecycle. Our GWAC Center staff is committed to:

- Understanding the missions, goals, objectives, and requirements of federal clients
- Providing timely procurement assistance and related ongoing educational initiatives on GWACs
- Possessing a full complement of technical, acquisition, and cost pricing expertise

For access to GSA's comprehensive IT services contracting vehicles, current and potential clients are invited to work directly with our Client Support Director Mimi Bruce as well as our EGC-W Contracting team to:

- Understand the GWAC value proposition and how these comprehensive IT vehicles can support your agency's IT mission
- Access our GWACs through our Delegated Procurement Process
- Receive GWAC Training and
- Obtain valuable contractual advice and assistance at both the Basic Contract level and at the Order level

Enterprise GWAC Center

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We're on the web
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ANSWER	www.gsa.gov/answer
Millennia	www.gsa.gov/millennia
ITOP II	www.gsa.gov/itop2

Upcoming Events

NCMA World Congress
April 13—16, 2008
Cincinnati, OH
Website: www.ncmahq.org

GSA Expo
April 22—24, 2008
Anaheim, CA
Website: expo.gsa.gov

2008 GSA EXPO
Anaheim
california
April 22-24, 2008