

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Editor's Desk	2
"FAR-Cited"	4
Unsolicited Proposal Rule	4
PBSA Online Guide Update	5
FPDS-NG	6
Register Now for the 2004 FACE	7
FACE Awards Dinner Update	8
Spotlight on Excellence!	8
FSS Acquisition Training News	9
PBS Acquisition News	10
Green Acquisition in Region 1	11
JWOD	13
Check it Out!	13

SPE Corner by David Drabkin



Integrity. If you were to come to my office you would find three words in capital letters on my whiteboard. Those words are: "INTEGRITY," "LOYALTY" and "FUN." These are words that I choose to live by and how I value other people and organizations. Integrity is always first, above all else. Integrity is first among our values at

GSA. Integrity is not something one can prove one has by talking about it--it is something one demonstrates one has by living it every minute of every day. For those of us in the acquisition workforce, it is imperative that we demonstrate that not only do we have integrity but that our processes do as well.

When it comes to our processes, we demonstrate our integrity by providing for the maximum practicable competition and making our processes as transparent as

practicable in the context of conducting business. For those of you who are students of history or government, or just happen to have read the biography of John Adams, you know that since the inception of our government, getting competition and providing transparency into the processes used has been the focus of our leaders. Keeping good accounts and getting value for the taxpayer has been the hallmark of our acquisition system and the vision of every



administration since George Washington was sworn in. We, the members of the acquisition workforce, are the gate-

keepers for our acquisition process. If we aren't ardent advocates for competition and transparency, who will be?

This doesn't mean we throw up roadblocks, it means we facilitate the process to get what our customers want by using the

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- *Changes to Unsolicited Proposals Rule*
- *Register for FACE now!*
- *Kudos to Rhonda Cundiff!*
- *Green Acquisition in Region 1 Saves!*

system to deliver elegant, compliant solutions.

As to personal integrity, it is unfortunate that over the last several years a number of our fellow associates gave away their integrity in pursuit of personal gain. What can be said about someone who gives away the most precious thing he or she has, their integrity? We all know that nobody can take our integrity from us. We also

"Integrity ..is something one demonstrates one has by living it every minute of every day."

know that once given away, getting one's integrity back is very hard, and sometimes impossible. Combine a loss of integrity in the process with the loss of personal integrity and our whole system comes crashing down. Public trust and confidence is eroded and our leaders begin to look for new

ways to make sure the system doesn't fail - often this results in new rules. Consider the foregoing with the news last week that another of our colleagues was convicted on his plea of guilty for taking a bribe as a contracting officer. I know that there is nothing we can do to stop those who are determined to break the law. The fact that we can't stop them from intentionally breaking the law doesn't mean that the rest of us can't impact public perception by demon-

strating every day that we have integrity. We don't tolerate those among us who do not value integrity and we greatly outnumber those few associates who are determined for whatever reason to give up their integrity. For us

this means that we must think about the impact our words and actions have and be sure that we don't accidentally give up our integrity, even for what may appear to be a laudable goal, servicing the customer.

Mr. Drabkin is the Deputy Associate Administrator, Office of Acquisition Policy.

From the Desk of the Editor by Judy Steele

Spring is here and it's time to get updated on the latest in acquisition news and seek out some training opportunities to tune up your acquisition skills! In this edition we focus on changes to reviewing unsolicited proposals. Be sure to brush up on the best in Performance-Based Service Acquisition by checking out

new additions to the online Seven Steps Guide. The Federal Procurement Data System-Next Generation (FPDS-NG) has many features and functions that you may not know about—check out the article on FPDS-NG titled "Did You Know?" In this edition, PBS



discusses the use of FedTeDS, an IAE initiative; and Region 1 details a successful partnering "green" acquisition for carpeting the JFK Federal Building. Keep JWOD products in mind when filling requirements. To make that easier to do, get



a copy of the new 2004 JWOD Catalog, which is now available.

Wonderful training opportunities await you at the 2004 Federal Acquisition Conference and Exposition (FACE 2004). Early bird registration ends April 9 so get registered NOW! Online and classroom training opportunities are available through FSS's Center for Acquisition Excellence. To make it

easier for busy acquisition professionals to locate training opportunities, in this edition we begin a new column--"Check It Out!"--which will highlight upcoming conferences and events of interest to the GSA acquisition community. If you'd like to have your conference or event listed in this column, send an email to the Editor with the pertinent information and a point of contact.

And finally, **CONGRATU-**

LATIONS! to Rhonda Cundiff, whose accomplishments are featured in this month's "Spotlight on Excellence."

Correction:

The article, "Do You Know a JWOD Program Supporter?" included in the Winter 2004 edition of the newsletter incorrectly stated that Mr. Steven Arginteanu was the most recent GSA employee to receive the E. R. "Dick" Alley Career Achievement Award



from the Committee for Purchase From People Who Are Blind or Severely Disabled. While Mr. Arginteanu won the award in 2000, the most recent GSA recipient of this award was actually **Donna Hutchens**, Team Leader,

Contract Services Team, in the Northwest/Arctic Region of GSA's Public Buildings Service, who was recognized in 2001. Ms. Hutchens has supported the JWOD Program for over 25 years and helped create nearly 300 jobs for

people with disabilities on janitorial and administrative support contracts in her region. Ms. Hutchens has also assisted in the creation of employment opportunities for people with severe disabilities outside of her region by her



consistent advocacy of the JWOD Program to other GSA regions and Federal agencies. We congratulate her on her accomplishments!

We welcome any comments, suggestions and articles for the newsletter. The "Forum" is here to meet the needs of

the GSA acquisition community and we can't do that without your input! We also welcome any individually authored articles on acquisition issues that would be of interest to the GSA acquisition audience. Please contact the Editor, Judy Steele, at judy.steele@gsa.gov or (202) 501-4994 with comments or sug-

gestions.

“FAR-Cited” by Jerry Zaffos

QUESTION: Why doesn't the FAR Directorate (or someone at the CO level) make the FAR (and FAR updates) available in Word for Windows format? Why only HTML and PDF? I suspect everyone in GSA who uses the FAR needs it in Word format.

ANSWER: The FAR is maintained in HTML and PDF formats for a number of

reasons. One reason is that these formats make it easier to incorporate the revisions contained in the FAR Circulars. These formats are freely available to users in and outside the government, whereas not every user has access to Word.

Another reason is that the formatting in Word is dependent

on the user's printer set up. For example, a visit to the GSAM site will disclose that the GSAM is formatted using the settings of the HP LaserJet 4000. When the GSAM is printed using a different printer, the printed edition will not look the same as the screen edition.

If a user wants to copy sections of the FAR into a solicitation or correspondence, the easiest way is to highlight the pertinent section of the FAR



in HTML, right click, COPY and then PASTE the section in the Word document you are working on. You may have to reformat the text to match the font you are using for the rest of the document.

If you have any questions about the FAR including where the FAR covers a specific topic, please send them to the Editor to be answered in the next edition of the newsletter.

Unsolicited Proposals Rule by Julia Wise

The Federal government looks to the private sector to assist in the accomplishment of its mission and program objectives. The government's policy is to encourage the submission of novel and unique ideas in response to Broad Agency Announcements, Small Business Innovation Research topics, Small

Business Technology Transfer Research topics, Program Research and Development Announcements, or any other government-initiated solicitation or program. When the innovative ideas do not fall under topic areas publicized under those programs or techniques, the ideas may be submitted as unsolicited propos-

als.

There are a number of applicable regulations relating to criteria governing acceptance of an unsolicited proposal; principally, they are:

- Title 48 Code of Federal Regulation



- (CFR), Chapter 1,
- FAR Subpart 15.6 Unsolicited Proposals; and
 - Title 48 CFR, Chapter 9, the Department of Energy Acquisition Regulation (DEAR) Subpart 915.6 Unsolicited Proposals.
- DOD, GSA, and NASA published a proposed rule in the Federal Register at 68 FR 33330, June 3, 2003, to revise the FAR to implement Section 834 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (Public Law 107-296). Section 834 adds new considerations concerning the submission, receipt, evaluation, and acceptance or rejection of unsolicited proposals. It requires that:
- a valid unsolicited proposal not address a previously published agency requirement;
 - before initiating a comprehensive evaluation, the agency must determine that the proposal contains sufficient cost-related or price-related information for evaluation; and
 - it has overall scientific, technical, or socioeconomic merit.
- The final rule will be published in Federal Acquisition



Circular (FAC)-01-22 and the FAR will be revised to incorporate these changes in FAR Subpart 15.603(c) and 15.606-1. For more information, contact Julia Wise at julia.wise@gsa.gov or (202) 208-1168.

PBSA Online Guide Update

The purpose of the Seven Steps to Performance-Based Service Acquisition (PBSA) Online Guide is to be the one-stop resource for all PBSA information to assist the acquisition community in awarding performance-based acquisitions. The Guide is updated constantly with new policies and regulations, guidance, and now samples and examples. To see the new additions to the Guide, "Vetted Samples and Examples," go to www.acqnet.gov, click on

"Library," and "Executive Version (hardcopy)," see the "Executive Summary," and click on [Download Executive Version](#).

PBSA information is still being sought, especially samples or examples of best practices, performance work statements, performance incentive plans, performance measures and standards, and quality as-

urance surveillance plans for any service. To contribute to the PBSA repository of information, please submit documents to SevenStepstoPBSA.Feedback@gsa.gov. For more information, contact Julia Wise at julia.wise@gsa.gov or (202) 208-1168.



FPDS-NG -----Did You Know? By Jerry Olson

The Federal Procurement Data System-Next Generation (FPDS-NG) is the new data collection system for procurement information governmentwide. It went "live" October 1, 2003, and began accepting procurement data from departments and agencies that day. FPDS-NG is funded through contributions from many departments and agencies and its goals are to make procurement information available to decision makers "real time," have more accurate information, and save money through elimination of redundant related systems (feeder systems and data warehouses).

Did you know that you can now run your own reports from a list of pre-canned reports available on FPDS-NG?

Did you know that you will soon be able to design your own report online to extract whatever information you need from the FPDS-NG website?

Did you know that there are three ways to enter data into FPDS-NG?

- Contract writing system sends directly to FPDS-NG real time.
- Agency batch reporting

to FPDS-NG (like the reports to the old FPDS). Direct entry using the data entry screens on the FPDS-NG website, if you do not yet have a contract writing system or batch system in place.

Did you know that reports from FPDS-NG on your procurement performance are useless if you did not report your contract actions?

Did you know that the Federal Acquisition Council and OMB have determined that agencies should get rid of batch systems



that report to FPDS-NG and replace them with systems such as contract writing systems that report directly to FPDS-NG on a real time basis?

Did you know that the FPDS-NG system is going to change much more frequently than the old FPDS system to add and modify

data elements that are reported to FPDS-NG? However, you will receive advance notice of those changes and, even if you do not adapt your contract writing system (or batch system) to the new changes, the FPDS-NG software allows you to use old formats until you have made the change.

FPDS-NG is backward compatible for version changes.

Did you know that help is available from 7:00 AM to 10:00 PM (EST) at the FPDS-NG Help Desk? They can tell you how to do things that are confusing you and they can tell you how the sys-



tem works or who to talk to if you do not have the system rights you need.

Did you know there is an active program to track problem calls at the FPDS-NG Help Desk in order to find system bugs and fix them? If you find a problem with the FPDS-NG screens, procedures, output, etc., call the Help Desk and turn it in. A bug fix will be



started and a number will be assigned. You will be able to track

that bug fix through its development all the way to production. For more information, contact Jerry Olson, FPDS Program Manager, at jerry.olson@gsa.gov or (202) 501-3221.

Register Now for the Federal Acquisition Conference and Exposition 2004 (FACE 2004)! By Barbara Plevelich

Online registration is now available for this year's Federal Acquisition Conference and Exposition 2004 (FACE 2004). To register, go to www.fai.gov/face. The conference will be held June 2-3, 2004 at the Hyatt Regency Crystal City in Arlington, Virginia, and June 22-23 at the Dayton Marriott in Dayton, Ohio.

The theme of this year's conference, Partnering for Performance, emphasizes the need for strategic partnerships between contracting professionals, program managers and private sec-

tor counterparts. Federal acquisition professionals and industry partners are invited to attend. FACE 2004 features agency and industry experts, networking opportunities, a wide range of exhibitors, plenary and breakout sessions, and an awards banquet.

Featured speakers include the administrator of the Office of Federal Procurement Policy,

several Senior Procurement Executives, and other knowledgeable acquisition and industry professionals. The conference features several breakout sessions on two program tracks, People and Projects, and Smart Contracting. Topics covered in the breakout sessions were generated by conference sponsor, the Federal Acquisition Council, and include human capital, program management, competitive sourcing, performance based



contracts, and e-commerce, among others.

The conference awards banquet will feature several awards for outstanding acquisition profes-



sionals presented at a dinner on June 2. The awards include the Ida Ustad Award for Excellence in Acquisition, a \$5,000 award presented to a government employee who embod-

ies the "contract specialist as business leader/advisor" concept. The Procurement Round Table will present the Elmer Staats Award for Young Acquisition Professional Excellence, a \$5,000 award given to a young Federal acquisition professional that makes significant contribu-



tions to acquisition operations or policy. Additionally, the Performance Institute will present the Excellence in Performance-Based Service Acquisition Award. (See more information on this below.)

Exhibitor and sponsorship opportunities are also available for the conference. Exhibitors may register for booth space at one or

both conferences by visiting www.fai.gov/face. There is an exhibitor discount for those exhibiting at both venues and exhibitor benefits include two full complimentary conference registrations, mention in the conference program and exposure on the website.

For more information on the conference, please visit www.fai.gov/face

or e-mail face@sra.com. Early bird conference registration deadline is **April 9, 2004**.

FACE Awards Dinner Update by Beverly Cromer

The Federal Acquisition Conference & Expo (FACE) awards dinner will be held at 6 p.m., on June 2, 2004, at the Hyatt Regency, Crystal City, Virginia.

GSA is partnering with the Performance Institute to sponsor a governmentwide award. The Excellence in Performance-Based Service Acquisition Award is a \$2,500 governmentwide award recognizing an individual who has made a significant contribu-

tion or has been a driving force in a performance-based acquisition. This award serves as incentive for acquisition professionals to continue to improve their use of performance-based contracting. The deadline for nominations for the 2004 Excellence in Performance-Based Service Acquisition Award has been extended to April 9, 2004. For more information on nominating an individual and nomination forms, go to <http://www.acqnet.gov>. For

more information, please visit www.excellenceinacquisition.org or contact Beverly Cromer at beverly.cromer@gsa.gov or (202) 501-1448.

Spotlight on Excellence!

Congratulations to **Rhonda Cundiff**, Procurement Analyst with the Office of Acquisition Policy! The Office of Small Business Utilization (OSBU) is honoring her, among other GSA recipients, with their "Above and Be-

yond" Award recognizing achievements in advancing GSA's Small Business program. As the small business acquisition policy expert within GSA, Ms. Cundiff works closely with OSBU in an effort to achieve the GSA

goal to provide maximum practicable opportunities in its acquisitions to small business, veteran-owned small business, service-disabled veteran-owned small business, HUBZone small business, small disadvantaged business,

and women-owned small business concerns.

The OSBU is specifically recognizing Ms. Cundiff for her efforts on two policy initiatives that advance small business participation. Ms.



Cundiff made a highly significant contribution to the extremely visible contract bundling strategy mandated by the Office of Federal Procurement Policy (OFPP) in response to the

President's Small Business Agenda. The contract bundling rule will increase Federal contracting opportunities for small business and strengthen compliance with subcontracting plans among other things. The second initiative the OSBU is recognizing Ms. Cundiff for is GSA Acquisition Letter MV-03-01,



Federal Acquisition Regulation Class Deviation – Size of Business Re-representation. This policy will not only improve the accuracy of small business participation reporting but also ensure that companies that are no longer small fulfill the responsibilities associated with being a large business.

outstanding GSA acquisition professional, send an article outlining their accomplishments and a photo (if available) to the Editor, judy.steele@gsa.gov.

Rhonda, Well Done!!

If you would like to spotlight the accomplishments of an

FSS Acquisition Training News

Increase your acquisition knowledge and skills through the Federal Supply Service's FSS Center for Acquisition Excellence ("the Center"). The Center is a virtual campus designed to meet your training needs in relation to

the GSA Multiple Award Schedule (MAS) program. The Center was developed to target three specific audiences: MAS customers, businesses seeking to participate in and market their services and products through the

MAS program, and FSS associates.

The Center provides an online training course, "Basic Contracting for the GSA Schedules Program - FSS Personnel," designed to teach FSS



associates how to effectively award MAS contracts. Another online course, "Using GSA Schedules – Customers," is available to teach Federal customers and other authorized MAS users how to properly place orders against the MAS

program. Additionally, an online course entitled "Cooperative Purchasing Program" is available to assist state and local government customers in understanding the rules and

regulations governing the MAS program. Finally, the Center will soon offer a course for FSS business partners, both online and in the classroom. This course will be aimed specifically at vendors to instruct them in how the MAS program works and what steps they need to take to receive a MAS contract.

"Check out our training at
www.fsstraining.gsa.gov!"



All of the online courses are self-paced. At successful course completion, students receive a course completion certificate.

In addition to the online training, we offer, at no-cost, a classroom version of the FSS customer course, taught by certified instructors. This 2-day course can also be tailored to fit a customer's specific needs by placing special emphasis on particular aspects of the Schedules pro-

gram that are of interest to that customer.

So, the choice is yours . . .

Whether you prefer your training online or in the classroom, the FSS Center for Acquisition Excellence meets the training needs of today's acquisition professionals. For more information and to find out what's new, log on to www.fsstraining.gsa.gov or email fss.training@gsa.gov.

Public Building Service (PBS) Acquisition News:

The Federal Technical Data Solution (FedTeDS) is a web application developed under e-Gov's Integrated Acquisition Environment (IAE). FedTeDS enables the distribution and dissemination of Sensitive But Unclassified (SBU) acquisition material related to solicitations found on

FedBizOpps.gov, the single government point-of-entry for Federal government procurement opportunities. FedTeDS is designed to safeguard sensitive acquisition related information during the solicitation phase of the procurement cycle.

FedTeDS expands the functions of an existing Department of Defense (DoD) system for use by Federal civilian agencies. Examples of information protected by FedTeDS include construction drawings; drawings of bridges, dams, aquifers, and lakes; Continuity of Operations



Plans (COOP); schedules, work hours, and security clearance requirements.

Although the Federal acquisition community disseminates solicitation data openly via the Internet and via CDs, in a post-9/11 world it became obvious that *certain solicitation information*, especially in aggregate, might present hazards to National Se-

curity. Currently, over 90 Federal agencies are disseminating Sensitive But Unclassified (SBU) acquisition materials during the solicitation phase of procurement via the Internet. This material in-

cludes information related to operations, systems, structures, individuals and services essential to the security and management of a facility, including telecommunications, electrical power, building facility structural layout, gas and oil storage/transportation, water supply, emergency services, and

"FedTeDS marks another milestone in IAE"



the continuity of operations. FedTeDS was developed to address the above concerns.

Some of the benefits of using FedTeDS include:

- Improved efficiency, credibility, and effectiveness of the acquisition and logistics support process by streamlining the Federal procurement process;
- Real time vendor access to SBU acquisition material, saving government agencies valuable

time and dollars;

- Additional security from a physical firewall between the Federal government and its public customers without decreasing vendor satisfaction; and
- Ability to use existing DoD databases to validate a user's access to export controlled data.

FedTeDS marks another milestone in IAE, which is one of the President's e-Government initiatives. FedTeDS.gov successfully

launched February 19, 2003. The system is a collaborative effort by GSA; a team comprised of a number of Federal agency partners jointly lead by U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) and DoD; and IBM.

GSA/PBS has embraced this system and is currently successfully using it to post its sensitive but unclassified solicitations. The PBS point of contact is Jacquelyn Owens, PXR, at (202) 208-2339. Interest from other agencies should be directed to Richard Clark, JECPO, at (703) 681-2156, clarkr@ncr.disa.mil.

Green Acquisition in Region 1

The John F. Kennedy Federal Building was built in 1966 and consists of a 27 story high-rise attached to a low-rise consisting of 7 stories. The building houses regional offices for several agencies in-



cluding the Internal Revenue Service, Housing and Urban Development, Veterans Administration (VA), Department of Labor,

and several smaller agencies. Due to the large number of agencies in the building, carpet replacement and refurbishment is an ongoing process.

The recent carpet replacement



project for the VA has been contracted by GSA to Interface Flooring, headquartered in Atlanta, GA. In their Sustainability Brief, Interface displays the company's "Reclamation Program" including Reentry, Recycling, Upcycling, Downcycling and Repurposing.

ReEntry is a program to di-

vert all types of carpet from landfills. To date they have diverted more than 3,000,000 yards.

Recycling is the technique used by Interface to turn waste materials into new materials of the same value, such as vinyl backing into vinyl backing.

Upcycling involves turning waste materials into more valuable products such as using waste plastic from soda bottles to create Terrace panel fabric.

Downcycling creates less valuable products from waste materials. An example of this would be turning nylon face



fiber into car parts or carpet padding

Repurposing allows a product to be reused by donating to a charitable organization or individual.

Understanding the methods and processes used to recycle carpet tiles has given GSA Property Management a valuable means to accomplish recycling goals and to meet future environmental challenges. In



the recycling project at the JFK Building, the carpet tiles were evaluated to determine the type and condition of the vinyl to see if it could be used as feedstock for high-recycled content backing. If it meets a certain quality standard, the backing is separated from the face fiber via grinding and a separation process. The separated backing material is then made into a sheet

that is incorporated as one layer of the finished backing product. All products should have a total recycled content of no less than 40% with a minimum of 20% post consumer recycled content. If the carpet can be reused it will be donated to a charity or non-profit organization. When neither the option of recycling the carpet tiles or donation is possible, the carpet goes to waste-to-energy. In the waste-to-energy process, the carpet is heated in a forced-air



furnace to create steam. A generator turns the steam into electricity for community use, reducing the use of fossil fuels. This is not the preferred solution, but a better option than placing it in a landfill. The combined effort of GSA

and Interface in reclaiming, recycling and reusing carpets tiles at the John F. Kennedy Federal Building in Boston has resulted in the prevention of nearly **225,000** pounds (approximately **30,000 square yards**) of carpet

winding up in landfills. GSA Building Management at the JFK Building, in particular John McDonald, Buildings Management Specialist, have been partnering with Interface for the past year to create ways to reduce and eliminate



waste in carpet replacement. John's "hands on" approach to installing environmentally preferred carpet and other similar projects has placed the JFK Building at the forefront of positive environmental policy in GSA Region 1. It is **certain that all future carpet replacements projects at the JFK Building and throughout**

New England will be done in the same manner using environmentally conscious contractors. For more information on this article, contact Robert J. Wright at (617) 565-7113 or bob.wright@gsa.gov.

The 2004 JWOD Catalog is here!

By Annemarie Hart-Bookbinder

This comprehensive, full color catalog (also available in a user-friendly CD-ROM version) includes over 2,600 SKIL-CRAFT and other products provided by Americans who are blind or have other severe disabilities under the Javits-Wagner-O'Day (JWOD) Program. An electronic version of the catalog is also available on the website of the National Industries for



the Blind (NIB) at www.nib.org.

Get your copies of the new JWOD catalog by contacting NIB's customer fulfillment center (operated by ABVI-Goodwill Industries in Rochester) via email at customer_service@nib.org or by phone at (800) 433-2304. Please specify whether you would prefer to receive your copy of the catalog in print format or on CD-ROM.

Check It Out!

"Check It Out!" is a new column which will highlight upcoming conferences and events which may be of interest to the GSA acquisition community. If you'd like to



have your conference or event listed in this column, please send an email to the Editor, judy.steele@gsa.gov with the pertinent information and a point of contact.

NCMA's World Congress 2004, "Maximizing Value to Stakeholders...Contract Management within the Business Cycle," April 26-28, 2004 at the Renaissance Orlando Resort at Seaworld, Orlando, Fla. Early bird registration

ends March 31 and hotel reservation cut off is April 2. For more information, contact NCMA at www.ncmahq.org/meetings/WCO4/.

Grace Hopper Celebration of Women in Computing 2004, Chicago, October 6-9, 2004. This is the fifth in a se-

ries of conferences designed to bring the research and career interests of women in computing to the forefront. Presenters are leaders in their respective fields, representing industry, academia and government communications. *Leading researchers present their current work, while special sessions focus on the role*

of women in today's technology fields. A link to this conference has been posted in the KM.gov Calendar. For more information, go to www.gracehopper.org.

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We thank our guest authors for their contribution to this newsletter. Guest authors express their own views, which are provided for the information of our newsletter readers.



We welcome any comments, suggestions, and articles. We also welcome any individually authored articles on acquisition issues that would be of interest to the GSA acquisition audience. Please contact the Editor, Judy Steele, at judy.steele@gsa.gov or (202) 501-4994 with comments or suggestions. Questions for the "FAR-cited" column can also be submitted to the Editor.