



Procurement Countdown

Winter 2003 No. 126

A Message from the Assistant Administrator

By Tom Luedtke

It has been just over 48 hours since the Columbia disaster. NASA, and the country are still reeling, still trying to come to terms with what has happened. In my office, people are more quiet today than usual. There is little laughter – something that can be heard most days here. I'm sure it is like that at most NASA centers and at many offices throughout the country. Many of you were here when the Challenger tragedy occurred. You know what a time of mourning and hard work are ahead. For others, including me, this is a first, and I hope, a last. For all of us, it brings into focus the reality and dangers of space travel. And I hope it brings a sense of pride in NASA and the work we do. I know people here say that by being a part of NASA, and the great things NASA does, makes this terrible experience a little easier to bear.

Working at NASA is not just working a government job. It's different. It's not like

working at HUD or Energy or Treasury. NASA does something that touches people in a way no other agency can. By exploring space, sending out spacecraft to study planets and stars, and running experiments, NASA fills people with the excitement of exploration and with hope for the future. Maybe



your job in procurement has you working on the shuttle or on the missions that flew on STS-107. Maybe your job barely touches space flight. But we are all part of the NASA mission.

The focus of procurement at some centers will change greatly in the next few weeks as we deal with shuttle contracts and other related issues. In the long term, we may find other contracting issues we must deal with as offshoots of these events. But along with that are the regular jobs that must still be done. Request for Proposals must go out, contracts must be awarded. Business will not be as usual, but the usual business must go on.

We all must face the sorrow of what has happened and the way it affects us personally, as part of the NASA Family, and as a grieving nation. If, in coming weeks, you find you need to talk about this tragedy and how it has affected you, I encourage you to seek out the resources of the Employee Assistance Program at your center and use it.

Remember that while we all share this tragedy, we all share the NASA future, and we will all play a part in getting there.

Highlights...

ARC has awards, new personnel and promotions on pages 2, 4, and 15.

Procurement Award Winners are listed on page 4.

See how a procurement professional's idea got Flat

Stanley aboard the Space Shuttle, page 5.

Meet the new Deputy Assistant Administrator for Procurement, Chuck Duff, page 6.

LaRC's construction guru is featured on page 8.

GRC has articles about IFM and Task Orders on pages 9 and 12, respectively

GSFC says good-bye to Procurement Officer, Mike Ladomirak on the back page.

Two from Ames Get Kaufhardt Peer Awards

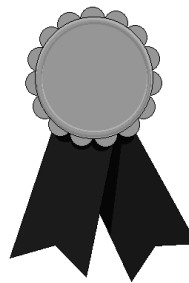
By Joanne Comstock, Ames Research Center

Beverley Mesa and Christine Munroe of Ames' Acquisition Division were presented with the annual *Leslie A. Kaufhardt Peer Award* in recognition of their achievements and accomplishments during FY 02.

The Peer Awards were established in 1986 to recognize non-supervisory personnel "who made special or outstanding contributions" to the Acquisition Division. Nominations are made by division personnel, excluding managers and committee members. In 1994, the name of the award was changed to honor our late colleague, Leslie Kaufhardt. A past chair of the committee, Leslie was also a consummate professional who embodied the enthusiasm and willingness to go the extra mile that these awards seek to recognize.

Bev Mesa is an administrative assistant in the Acquisition Branch for Aeronautics. She was recognized for her excellent support, professional manner, and willingness to take on and complete tasks for both her branch and the division. Bev acts as liaison between contractors, contract specialists, other NASA sites, and various branch chiefs, going out of her way to assist in customer and contractor inquiries and resolve issues where possible. Throughout the approaching implementation of IFMP at

Ames, she relieved contract specialists of their closeout workload. Bev is a motivated individual who is always ready, willing, and able to learn new things. She goes out of her way to help her organization in any way she can. She assisted the contract specialists in her branch by preparing purchase orders for Contracting Officers, in the



process obtaining quotes from vendors and gathering all documentation necessary for award. Bev has taken the initiative of developing and maintaining a current knowledge base of these procedures by participating as an active, contributing member of the division's Simplified Acquisition Process Team.

Christine Munroe is a contract specialist for the Acquisition Branch for Center Operations and Space. Christine was recognized for her role as a leader in this past year's SBIR program awards. During the absence of a more senior Contracting Officer, Christine

stepped in to help minimize the burden of this year's program on other team members. She spent a great deal of time addressing the requirements of the SBIR program office, then interpreted those needs and provided contract specialists with valuable information and assistance. Her efforts and insights to the process were considered particularly notable in light of the heavy workloads being carried by all the contract specialists involved.

Christine is also commended for her consistency in projecting a positive attitude, even under adversity; by bringing an uplifted spirit and lightheartedness to the workplace. She is described by her peers as a strong motivator—or, more simply, "a rock"—who mentors fellow contract specialists, interns, and students. Christine's willingness to extend herself on behalf of her colleagues demonstrates what a credit she is to her branch and the division.

The award winners have contributed to improved performance, efficiency and morale, which has strengthened relationships within the division and with other directorates. Congratulations Bev and Christine!



People on the Move

GRC

Farewell: Wayne Girard, procurement specialist, Aeropropulsion Procurement Branch, retired in January 2003. We wish him all the best in his future endeavors.

Changes — Developmental Assignments: Angel Pagan has just returned from an assignment with the Federal Executive Board. Tom Spicer is beginning an assignment with the Commercial Technology Office. Alice Wilson is beginning her last developmental assignment under the New Leadership Program.

GSFC

Congratulations: The newest member of our procurement management team is Sandra Marshall. Leigh Anne Giraldi is now the Associate Chief for NASA Headquarters Procurement. Sue Gonser and Steve Lloyd are now procurement managers for the HQ Procurement Office. Other

recent promotions include: Wanda Behnke, administrative systems analyst; Mary Ann Bishop, administrative systems analyst; Theresa Keane, administrative systems analyst; Dawn Murvin, administrative systems analyst; Larry Smith, administrative systems analyst.

Recent selections from clerical to professional include Candace Schumacher, administrative systems analyst; Patricia Jefferson, administrative systems analyst; Kimber Russell, administrative systems analyst. Fred Little was recently converted from a co-op to a full-time employee.

New Faces: Welcome new employees Jim Geiser and Janet Langweil. Janet Langweil is a new but old Contracting Officer who has come back to us from the DOE. Chris Whyte is the Contracting Officer for the Agency CSOC Procurement at the HQ Procurement Office working with Chris Jedrey at Headquarters.

Farewell: Sandra Cover to Dept. of Justice; Cathy Cavey to

Code 205; Gifford Moak to Code 400; Glenna Paulson to Import/Export Bank; Brad Poston to NSF; and Loren Sunell to Dept. of Commerce.

LaRC

Congratulations: Sandi Ray. Sandi, the Deputy Procurement Officer, will be acting head of Human Resources for several months, until a permanent replacement is appointed. During Sandi's absence, Ginny Wycoff and Panice Clark will be helping Procurement Officer Kim Stone hold down the fort.

JSC

New Faces: During the last few months of 2002, Craig Burridge joined the Science and Analysis Procurement Office. Bob Derr and Kathleen Martens joined the Institutional Procurement Office. Billy Perry transferred from Randolph AFB, TX, and joined the Space Operations Procurement Office. Virginia (Ginny) Stephenson and Susan Stefanovic joined the Projects Procurement Office. Susan Starkweather joined the Shuttle Procurement Office.

The list of **People on the Move** only includes those names that were submitted to the *Procurement Countdown*. If you know people who should be listed in this column, contact your Center *Procurement Countdown* point of contact, or send the names to the editor, Susie Marucci, on (202) 358-1896, or e-mail at susie.marucci@hq.nasa.gov.

From the Editor

With the exception of the article on the front page, all the articles in this issue were written before the Columbia tragedy. These articles have not been changed. This issue may, in some places, have a lighter tone or reflect the way things were before the tragedy.

Boy Are We Glad to See You!

By Carolyn S. La Follette, Ames Research Center

“Nobody knows you when you’re down and out.”

Well, that may not be quite the case here, but the Ames Acquisition Division has been down and out relative to staffing. Being unable to hire for the last two years has been taking its toll on those of us remaining. During the summer of 2002, we were authorized to advertise internally at the center for some new blood. We were successful in hiring four new contract specialists, three converting from other positions inside the division and one from outside the division.

The Procurement Officer, Connie Cunningham, devised a warm welcome for these individuals. She provided them white mugs with blue background and lettering that says “1102” three times on each side. The mugs were decorated with a bow and colored cellophane and filled with candies.

One of my tasks is to be a “procurement guru” to the

“newbies.” Ames has one NCIP (procurement) intern and one recently graduated internal co-op, so I include them as well in these meetings. We meet on a monthly basis and discuss various topics related to acquisition. It is meant to be different from their on-the-job-handling-purchase-requests training. For example, we have discussed contracting authority,



the Space Act of 1958, and warranting. Each time I provide two or three questions that require them to do a search in the FAR and/or NFS to find the answer for the next meeting. One of the goals is to impress upon them that part of being a

successful contract specialist is to learn to use the regulation, but not hide behind it. In other words, “when in doubt, read the regulation” – don’t go ask someone for the answer to a new problem you may have encountered.

All of the new contract specialists are enjoying their jobs and are doing well; some of them completed negotiating and awarding their first contracts with the FY 02 Phase I SBIRs. The SBIRs, especially the Phase I’s, are a great learning tool for new contract specialists. This is especially true here at Ames where we tend not to have a lot of smaller contracts in a given year on which one can learn the tricks of the trade.

I am confident that over the years each will grow in his/her new role as contract specialist and it will make a great career, as it has for the rest of us.

2002 Procurement Award Winners

Eight NASA Procurement professionals and one person from outside the procurement organization were chosen to receive the 2002 Annual Procurement Awards. These awards are the highest procurement honors at NASA. The annual procurement awards are used to recognize those people and centers that have made outstanding contributions to the procurement effort throughout NASA. As in past years, it was a very tough competition with many worthy candidates nominated by the centers.

The winners of the awards are:

- Contract Manager of the Year:** Mary L. Kincaid (JSC)
- Contract Specialist of the Year:** Rhonda O. Baker (ARC)
- Simplified Acquisition Specialist of the Year:** Jill Willard (ARC)
- MidRange/Commercial Person of the Year:** Ernest C. Mensurati (GRC)
- Grants Specialist of the Year:** Heidi D. Shaw (GRC)
- Procurement Analyst of the Year:** Jeffery Lupis (HQ)
- Procurement Support Person of the Year:** Terri Keane (GSFC)
- Procurement Supervisor of the Year:** Paivi H. Tripp (GRC)
- COTR of the Year:** Samuel A. McPherson, III (LaRC)



HS Analyst Sends Flat Stanley to the ISS

You may ask who is this analyst and what is a Flat Stanley? The analyst happens to be Harold Jefferson in the Office of Procurement, Program Operations Division. He presently staffs requirements for the Marshall Space Flight Center (MSFC), International Space Station (ISS) Program, and the Office of Biological and Physical Research. All right, you say, I can accept Harold as analyst, but is Flat Stanley a new hire in the Office of Procurement? No, Flat Stanley could not meet the physical requirements for the analyst position. But guess what, Flat Stanley has traveled all over the world as a privileged guest. Enough suspense!

Flat Stanley comes from a story written by Jeff Brown about a little boy with a positive attitude. That boy, Stanley, was smashed flat when a bulletin board fell on him. Flat Stanley as a construction paper cut-out, has been participating with elementary age kids for about 40 years. Normally, all the young kids are required to complete a project involving Flat Stanley. Each student must write a letter to someone requesting that Flat Stanley become part of their work place, home, travel, or vacation for a limited period of time. At the completion of the visit, the hosts are asked to provide a summary back to the student describing what fun things they and Flat Stanley accomplished.

You've probably guessed it by now. I am Harold Jefferson and I was chosen by a second grader named Vernon Tate in

King George County, VA, to give Flat Stanley an adventure. Vernon attends Potomac Elementary in Dahlgren, VA. You are probably wondering what is the connection or how he found me. Over the last few years, the Office of Procurement senior management has allowed me to participate in the school's career



Mr. Jefferson is the last man on the top row.

day. This has given me an opportunity to take NASA materials, astronauts, and scientists to the school to promote the importance of education and share the NASA missions.

On the Road

Now you are probably wondering what Flat Stanley and I did for fun. To be honest with you, I am sure he had more fun along his journey than I did. The first thing I did was to take Flat Stanley on a business trip to the Johnson Space Center. My cohorts for this trip were James Balinksas (director, Program Operations Division) and Tom Russell (HS analyst). My colleagues served as planners and photographers along the way. While I had to work, Flat Stanley was seen riding the Saturn Rocket, sharing a moment with the longhorns, kissing-up to astronauts, in the mission control room, and in the shuttle cockpit

mock-up. I guess it really is more fun for the family/friends when you take them on a business trip.

But wait, Flat Stanley's journey was not over! This wild idea came into my head. I asked the Assistant Administrator for Procurement, Tom Luedtke, if he thought the Administrator would take a picture with Flat Stanley. Tom suggested that I contact Sean O'Keefe's assistant, Shiron Gaines. I promptly followed up on his suggestion. I called Shiron and introduced myself and the purpose for the call. I was requested to bring Flat Stanley and a copy of the letter from Vernon to her office. A few days later, she informed me that the Administrator wanted to fly Flat Stanley on Endeavour in June (last summer) on a trip to the International Space Station! I was totally surprised by the turn of events. Uh, it goes to show your friends will abandon you in a heartbeat for an adventurous flight to a neat place like the International Space Station. But as you will see later, Flat Stanley did return to thank me.

Flat Stanley spent 14 days in space, made 171 orbits around the earth and logged almost 5 million miles. That's what I call frequent flier miles.

A Trip to School

Remember earlier I said "I was surprised by the turn of events." I was not aware the Administrator and two astronauts were planning to personally return Flat Stanley to Vernon at

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A Closer Look:

Chuck Duff: To California

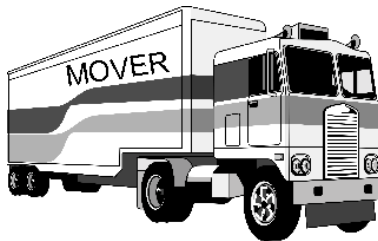
By Susie Marucci, Headquarters

If things stay calm the first couple of weeks, then you'll be OK – or maybe you'll just have to decide to be OK anyway... At least, that's how it looks to Chuck Duff. The acting Deputy Assistant Administrator for Procurement, and the first deputy here in years, has had more than his share of surprises when he walks into a new job. This job is no exception. Fortunately for him, most of the surprises have been good ones.

"I love this job. It's fun," Chuck says. As the second highest procurement person at NASA these days, he doesn't have a bad job. But it isn't just this job. It's all of the jobs he's had in the procurement arena. Let's face it: it's rare to meet a person who so clearly loves what he does, especially in the government. This job, in the Office of Procurement, is a homecoming of sorts.

After starting his career in the Air Force, Chuck spent three and a half years at the Office of Procurement, from 1992 to 1995. "I left the Air Force because I wanted to expand my horizons. I wanted an agency with three things: It had to be a civilian agency, with a focus on R&D, and have cost reimbursable contracts. That meant NASA. It was totally opposite from the Air Force." For one of those years at Headquarters, Chuck was the executive officer to the AA for Procurement, Don Bush. In fact, Chuck was at NASA all of seven days when he was plucked from near obscurity to be the AA's

exec. Chuck landed at NASA, walked right into one of the myriad fire drills always going on, and got the AA's attention. Things like that happen to Chuck all the time. He worked closely with Bush and then with the deputy who came in part way through his tenure – Dee Lee. When Bush was getting ready to leave, he gave Chuck a choice of which division he wanted to go to. Chuck chose the Program Operations division. "I love the program stuff. I always have."



He ended up doing procurement work for all of the Marshall propulsion issues on such programs as the shuttle and the space station (during the redesign). He handled all the ELVs at Goddard and Glenn (Lewis back then). At one point the MSFC work alone that he was involved with was worth more than \$4.5 billion in total value. He especially enjoyed his involvement with the Office of Space Flight and shuttle propulsion. "I had one small part in the program. Code M is full of good people who want to do the right thing. They had a very difficult set of work issues."

Chuck was a Code HS analyst in 1995, loving his job, when he got an unexpected phone call. Dennis Brown, the Procurement Officer at ARC was

looking for a new policy officer and pricing chief. He asked Chuck to come out to do the job. Chuck did. He said, "I came to DC to diversify and to increase my perspective, then I went to Ames for the same reasons."

The Left Coast

After a year, he had settled into the job and was enjoying it. He had actually made it long enough that he thought nothing unusual was going to happen, when it happened again. Suddenly, in June 1996, Dennis retired and Chuck was chosen as the Procurement Officer. He hadn't gone out to Ames expecting anything like that. However, it turned out to be a very interesting job. During his time at Ames, he assisted in the areas of life sciences, space sciences, earth science, and the Human Exploration and Development of space. He was Procurement Officer for over seven years when the next unexpected call came.

When Tom Luedtke took over as the Associate Administrator for Procurement (now Assistant Administrator), he was acting and there was no deputy. Later, when he was permanently made the AA in 1999, the climate at Headquarters precluded AAs who didn't already have deputies from hiring them. So for the past three years, Tom has run the Office of Procurement without a strong right-hand person.

and Back Again

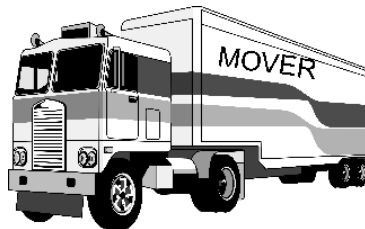
This last year, the climate changed again. That plus the work on Competitive Sourcing and the JPL contract negotiation were too much for one AA and three division directors. Tom was given permission to bring on a deputy. Chuck got the call. But this time, moving back east with children in school was not that easy. So Chuck's family stayed in California, and he came back to Headquarters on a one-year detail.

Back East

Once back at Headquarters, Chuck hit the ground running. He quickly got involved in putting out fires and was noticed by the NASA Chief of Staff, Courtney Stadd. In late January, Chuck was made an offer he couldn't refuse. Courtney asked him to be the Freedom to Manage co-chair. While this plum assignment means a lot more travel and trying to fit in his 'real' work in Procurement, Chuck is very excited. "It gives us a chance to decide what needs to get done, to see what is standing in the way, and to collectively decide what we don't need to do." He believes people have to put their heart into a job like Freedom to Manage. They can't be indifferent, he said, they must be willing to invest.

While Chuck wasn't at Headquarters for the inception of Freedom to Manage, he has quickly become a staunch

advocate. "People don't have to be too careful, but they have to be prudent. If something is in the way and can be removed, do it." He thinks everyone needs to be smarter about the issues around managing. He also thinks that people must believe in themselves and what they are doing. "If you believe you can make a difference," he says, "then you act on that belief in a constructive way." It becomes a self-fulfilling prophesy, according to Chuck.



While Freedom to Manage and the Procurement Office give Chuck plenty of work and responsibilities, they don't affect his attitude. "We are in a tremendously fun business... we can use our technical and business imagination. It's challenging, yet rewarding. I love what I do."

Chuck's love of acquisition work goes back to his early beginnings as a civilian in the Air Force in 1984. During his eight years, he worked on two programs he was especially proud of. The first was his work in the Global Positioning Satellite program office. Chuck bought the first block of operational satellites. The second Air Force program was in the Defense

Support Program, a Missile Launch Detection system. "It is a very important program to country," Chuck says. "It was the only Air Force multiyear contract at that time." Chuck started on that program as a GS-7. It was a \$1.5 billion program. In the beginning, it was Chuck, a technical expert, and a pricer. "I had way more authority right from the beginning than the money that goes with it." He was involved in this program from the start of the acquisition strategy through the contract award. "From the first day in the government, I got to do things that were very interesting in nature. I've been absolutely blessed in my career."

Chuck worked at the Pentagon during the "Ill Wind" investigation. He calls it his Gilligan's Island tour. It was supposed to be for 3 weeks, but ended up being 4 years. "It's the hardest work I've ever done and some of the saddest." His job was to keep programs going while the senior level officials who had access to the programs were being investigated and, in some cases, convicted. While it was hard work and difficult to see the harm and serious impact on the procurement profession, Chuck took real pride in his work. "It was a great sense of reward, working with several major investigative agencies, senior Air Force, and OSD leadership to work through the issues and keep the missions afloat," he said.

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Getting the Job Done!

The Construction Guru – Richard C. Shisler

By Tim Stubbs, Langley Research Center

One minute it is behind the desk reviewing the FAR, and the next it is on with the hard hat attending a site visit with a group of local construction firms. As Langley's elite construction contracts professional, Richard Shisler has become accustomed to such diverse transition. Today, Richard is the lead for Construction Contracting in Langley's



Service and Construction Contracting Branch. But he had quite a trip getting here.

In 1964, after four years in the Navy, Richard went to work as a mechanical technician at the federally funded Space Radiation Effects Laboratory (SREL), now known as Jefferson Laboratories. Then, in 1978, with federal budget cuts leaving the future of SREL uncertain, Richard decided it was time for a change. That's when he started his government career as a lab technician working at LaRC. He was assigned to the Operations Support Division working on laser system technologies and maintaining the labs' vacuum systems. The move was not a big shock in terms of culture since NASA, at that time, regularly conducted experiments at SREL. So Richard already had the opportunity to work with many LaRC engineers and technicians.

Richard's quest to improve himself during his career has been truly inspirational. While working full time as a technician and

supporting a family of five, Richard attended college at night for ten years. He received his Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration from Christopher Newport University in 1980.

Richard made the big switch in 1983. That's when he was hired from his NASA engineering technician job into a developmental position in procurement. He learned his new trade quickly, and rose to his first lead Contracting Officer position (in construction) within six years. Richard persevered through the official elimination of the lead positions in procurement at Langley in the mid-nineties, and continued to provide leadership in an unofficial capacity in all of his assignments. Richard was one of the first to express an interest when lead positions were brought back in 2001. He was the logical choice for the construction team lead job.

Richard considers construction contracting to be the most exciting and rewarding of all the contract work he's done. "The construction business is without a doubt, one of the most competitive industries," noted Richard. "Most of the construction contractors that work at LaRC are small businesses that take their successes and failures very personally. One poorly managed job could cost them their business and even jeopardize their personal finances. Being a part of their successes and knowing you have helped some of them avoid failure is very gratifying."

Richard feels that "the management here at LaRC allows you all the freedom and responsibility you can handle for

decision-making. This latitude, combined with the uniqueness and diversity of personalities and projects, makes for an ever-challenging and rewarding career. It's a win-win situation for everyone involved in construction contracting. In this job you're constantly learning from all your experiences both good and bad." Displaying his refreshing sense of humor, he says, "unfortunately you learn faster from the bad ones." He believes that attitude goes a long way, and that integrity and tenacity or "stick-to-it-ness" make you a winner every time. He thinks being in the right place at the right time is an added bonus.

Richard grew up in South Philadelphia and attended Bishop Neumann High School. He is emphatic that the "Philly Cheese Steak" is not overrated, but the idea of a "mild mannered catholic nun is," and he has the scars to prove it. He is thankful that he was brought up in a family environment that taught him good morals, good manners, and a good work ethic.

Richard considers himself a "short timer" and we expect to see him leave us in the next few years. When he does leave, it will be the Agency's loss. But we will attempt to carry forward the numerous things he has taught us in dealing with construction contracts. Richard will spend his time doing things he enjoys like traveling with his wife exploring the country, and spending time with his children and grandchildren.

What's it all about:

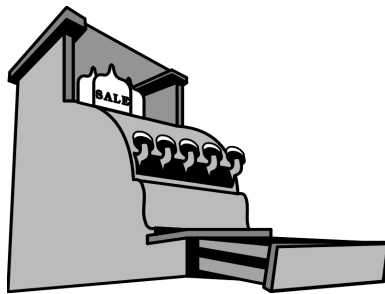
Implementing IFM Core Financial at GRC

By Doreen Medzi, Glenn Research Center

If you have yet to implement the IFM Core Financial system at your center, you may wonder what it has to do with procurement. However, if you've been keeping up with all the IFM-related articles that have been published in the *Procurement Countdown* or, better still, have gone through the system implementation, you understand that the implementation of this software has everything to do with Procurement. For starters, a tremendous implementation effort was required by a team of some very dedicated and hard working individuals.

A GRC IFM purchasing team was formed a year in advance of implementation, in November 2001, to perform a variety of activities ranging from making GRC SAP configuration decisions regarding how documents would be routed and approved to how best to convert GRC legacy system data to SAP. The unique thing about this "purchasing" team was that it was highly cross-functional, consisting of a number of procurement and non-procurement personnel. This was absolutely necessary since the purchasing sub-process part of IFM focuses not only on procurement (i.e., PRs, contracts, purchase orders, closeouts, etc.) but also on aspects such as goods receipts, purchases of NASA Supply Management System (NSMS) items, and the bankcard program.

The team included experts from the logistics area of the "purchasing" process: Bob King and Chuck Smith from Indyne were brought in to test and validate test results in the area of receiving and the many NSMS interfaces. There was a finance faction that was also a part of the GRC purchasing team. Bob Strunak was brought in to validate the financial posting test results from the NSMS interface.



Sally Saltzman, also from finance, provided her expertise in the area of grant payments as well as many other financial areas.

The largest team contingent was, of course, from procurement. Rita Poulsen, Doreen Medzi, and Maryann Pawson provided well-rounded bankcard program expertise. Doreen was also the overall expert on just about any issue that had anything to do with the SAP purchase module. Kurt Straub and Mary Lou Guthrie functioned as our team experts on all questions dealing with a wide variety of contracts. Kurt was also the key procurement person with regard to data conversion. Jean Boylan

provided the team with her many years of expertise in the area of simplified acquisitions. Tom Palisin, our legacy systems expert, assisted in the successful conversion of GRC data to SAP. Toni Niebieszczanski from Indyne and Bonnie Kaltenstein from Logistics performed a wide range of testing. Their experiences and input provided the team with a first look at how a user unfamiliar with the new processes and the new software would deal with SAP. Their feedback indicated a need for additional GRC briefings for the larger GRC IFM user community. Sheryl Batesole, with the Pace contract, through her years of experience with the GRC PR legacy system, provided invaluable input into the configuration of SAP PR approval routing (i.e., release strategies). In retrospect, we probably would have been wise to include also some requisitioners and project managers early on in the process. As they became more familiar with the impact of the system on project and program funds management, a separate effort was required to address their concerns and to develop workarounds.

Integration

Since the Core Financial software is truly integrated, the team worked with all functional areas to ensure that configuration and conversion decisions that were made were in the best interest of all areas affected. The

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IMF Core Financial

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team was required to provide the leadership and take the initiative to painstakingly research and in some cases negotiate configuration and data conversion decisions with other functional areas such as finance, budget, and logistics. It became clear that end user communities of approvers and requisitioners needed also be included in these decisions. In reality, no decision could be made that didn't have an impact on more than one area. Often decisions were made, then revisited and revised several times prior to implementation. Even with all of the research and negotiation that was performed before decisions were finalized, decisions were again revisited after implementation and in some cases changes were required.

Since NASA is leading the way with regard to government implementation of SAP, team members found themselves often in brand new territory. They were required to envision potential gaps between existing processes and the "to be" processes within SAP. The team understood that new processes might not resemble old processes and that the responsibility for performing these tasks might actually shift from one functional area to another. This type of thinking led to some very innovative solutions and workarounds. Team members worked when necessary with the GRC technical community to develop workarounds and, to the extent possible, to ease the transition from GRC legacy systems to the IFM software.

Work and More Work

In addition to software testing, the purchasing team acted in a number of other implementation roles. Approximately half of the team acted as trainers for the more than 80 instructor-led SAP training



classes while software testing was still on-going. These classes served to train approximately 500 GRC SAP end users in roles ranging from requisitioner to agency buyer. In addition to the IFM Core Financial role-based prescribed classes, team members developed and conducted briefing sessions. These provided information to GRC IFM software users on GRC specific configuration decisions and data requirements not covered by the Agency IFM training courses. At any given time, one team member could be simultaneously responsible for software testing, training, development of briefings, presentation of briefings, attendance at data conversion and change management meetings, as well as performing some of their standard job-related duties. In addition, a few of the

team members involved in the Agency IFM team were still traveling to Huntsville to perform Agency IFM team-related duties.

As you would expect with all of this exposure to the GRC community at large, purchasing team members were on the front-lines of change management. While there were some bright moments, the role of a change agent was not always one of the easier or more glamorous aspects of the job.

As with any change, there was a lot of skepticism from peers and sometimes open hostility. Through it all, team members managed to maintain a positive attitude in the face of anxiety, stress, and frustration. Team members often recounted their first experiences with the new software. With that understanding, they attempted to alleviate some of the stress and frustration of the user community.

As October grew near, the purchasing team was asked to give even more of their time and talent by working weekends and holidays, late into night, and what some people consider early morning (1:00 a.m.) preparing for GRC's "IFM Go Live" date. But the task did not stop after Go Live.

Many team members currently continue to support the IFM implementation through staffing the IFM "War Room" (phone lines) and "Open House" (a place where all purchase module users can

Chuck Duff

(continued from page 7)

bring and complete their SAP work with the help of an expert) or by making “House Calls”(assisting people at their own desktop).

It has taken, and continues to take, a tremendous amount of work to implement this massive new system. It has consumed significant resources in the Procurement community and taxed all of our capacity for change. On the positive side, the implementation has increased our understanding of the entire business process at GRC, brought different functional groups to closer cooperation with each other, and cultivated new leadership among the team members.

Understanding the Agency mandate, our goal has been to make SAP work for people at GRC, and to support our customers from requisitioners, to procurement and finance staff, to bankcard program participants, and to any other user community that touches the purchasing sub-process.

While Chuck learned a lot in the Air Force and will always cherish those days, it's obvious his real passion these days is at NASA. He understands many aspects of the space program and clearly gets excited when talking about it. He loves the procurement work and the “other duties” like Freedom to Manage. “I wouldn't change a thing about my work,” he says with a smile. “I am lucky to feel that way.”

Chuck has again gotten used to the fast pace and political nature of life at Headquarters. He is readjusting to the Washington area. He even bought a TV last week. But he admits it is hard being a part of a bi-coastal family. When he does get home, he spends time with his wife, Beth, and two children, son Karl and daughter Courtney. Chuck enjoys skiing, motor and bicycle riding, and tennis. He took up golf so he could play with his kids while his wife (an instructor pilot) was teaching people to fly

airplanes and so he had something he couldn't take too seriously. He says he can't take golf too seriously when he is as bad as he is. But he enjoys spending whatever time he has with his kids.

So what is next for Chuck? Will he go from acting deputy to deputy? Will he skip right to Code A and run something high profile after Freedom to Manage? Will he go back to California and shake up Ames, again? We don't know. We'll have to see what the next unexpected phone call brings.

Check out the IFMP Website

The NASA Procurement Library now has a site dedicated to IFMP with a FAQ page and other useful information. It is at:

<http://ec.msfc.nasa.gov/hq/library/IFMP/welcome.html>

Managing Task Order Contracts

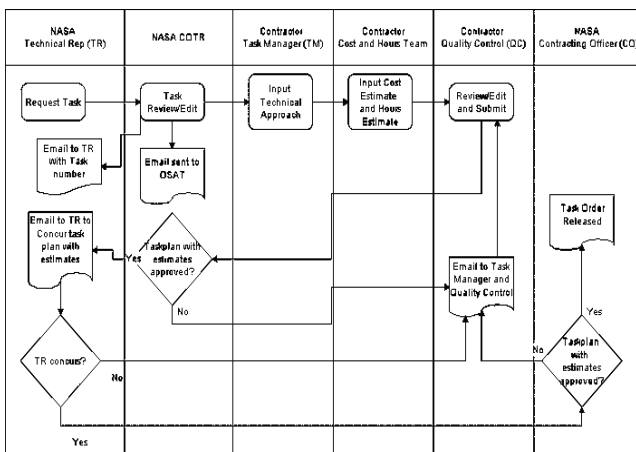
By Dennis Vano, Glenn Research Center

Task Order contracts have long been recognized as an enormously adaptable contracting method that allows the government to enter into contracts before specific technical requirements are known. The contract statement of work is a general description of the services to be provided, while the individual task order statements of work are written with very specific technical requirements and performance metrics. Although task order contracts tremendously reduce procurement lead time, the benefit comes at a price. The management of a task order contract is extremely labor intensive, particularly when the contract is a Cost-Plus Award Fee contract.

Contracting Officers usually delegate authority to Contracting Officer's Technical Representatives (COTRs) who assist the project offices in developing performance-based statements of work. They also develop government cost estimates that will be compared to the contractor's cost estimates. Typically the project offices are required to review and concur with the contractors' estimated labor hours and other direct costs associated with the tasks before the estimated costs are negotiated by the Contracting Officers. This process can take as long as two months and involve dozens of government and contractor personnel. Amendments to existing tasks usually go through the same process. For a contract with over 200 active tasks, there are annually thousands of funding actions, contract deliverables, and task order amendments. The effort required to manage this type of contract can be overwhelming.

At Glenn Research Center, the Systems Engineering Division (SED) developed a contract management tool for the new Glenn Engineering And Scientific Support (GESS) contract, which started in April 2001. This web-based tool enables the government to track the status of all GESS contract actions while reducing the average time of issuing a new task to less than four calendar days. It began in December 2000, when the division directed Dynacs, Inc. to develop the tool for the GESS contract. Dynacs assigned the task of developing this tool to Linda Kenik. She had just completed development of a web-based engineering standards tool known as the Engineering Standards Wizard For SED.

Ms. Kenik coordinated a number of meetings with the NASA Contract Management Team that consisted of Mark Manthey, Contracting Officer; Tom Burke, COTR; and Virginia Cestaro, Alternate COTR. The purpose of the meetings was to flow chart the existing contract management process. This process was not changed, but the method from paper-based to web-based was. The process is shown on the left.



The contract management software development schedule was very tight. This was necessary to have the system in place in time to support the transition of over 200 tasks from the incumbent contractor to the new contractor. The team reproduced and electronically sent the respective project offices each existing task order statement of work. As project offices usually assign a Technical Representative (TR) for each task, the

TRs were asked to review the technical requirements and develop a minimum of three performance-based metrics for each follow-on task for the first six-month award fee period of the contract. The first web screen developed by Linda Kenik was the Task Request Form (shown, next page). This screen requires that the project office provide the technical requirements and metrics used in determining the task award fee rating. Project offices were notified via e-mail that task requests and modifications would only be accepted through the new web-based system. The fact that the project offices could "cut and paste" from the electronically provided statement of work simplified the process for the customers.

However, with any change in process there is always some resistance. Numerous training sessions were scheduled for both the government task representatives and the contractor supervisors and administrative staff. System users were invited to suggest changes to the software which resulted in many

Just Got Easier

NEW TASK

Request on the GESS Contract

COTR Information
 COTR: Tom Burke
 Phone: 433-
 Alt COTR: Ginny Cestaro
 Phone: 433-
TR Information
 TechnicalRep, Kathy
 Organization: 7800
 Phone: 3-9999
 Mail-Stop 86-15

SAVE TASK
 Reset

OSAT requirements
 Please check if contractor is required to provide

Task Title
 NEW TASK

Funding Organization 7800
Initial Funding JO XXXX000

Task Details
Estimated Task Period of Performance
(not to exceed contract end date of March 2006) This period of
 Through 03/31/2003

Background
Why the project is being pu...

Background

Task Order Description:
 Description of Services to be procured and speci

Task Order Description

General Scope of Work
 SOW Summary should define respective responsibilities

SOW

changes from screen colors to page content, all to make the system more user friendly. Other adopted suggestions included electronically routing each task request through the Office of Risk Management for advice on risk management provisions, adding user manuals, and a “What’s New” screen (shown below).

By far the largest impact of implementing the Contract Management System (CMS) was felt by the contractor who now provides far more details in cost estimates and task plan, within 10 working days of receiving the task request. The Contractor Task Plan (top, next page) is how the contractor communicates its proposal to meet the government’s technical, schedule, and quality requirements. It details the number of hours necessary to perform the task and contains all job titles of personnel assigned to tasks. The contractor merely selects the appropriate job title, enters the direct cost per hour, and estimates the number of hours. Unique requirements such as travel or equipment are also specified by the contractor.

Each task plan submitted by the contractor is reviewed by the COTR/ACOTR and then forwarded to the TR that requested the task. If either the COTR or the TR disagrees with the proposed effort, it is returned to the contractor with an explanation. When the technical content is agreed upon, the task is electronically forwarded to the Contracting Officer.

Mark Manthey, the CO for GESS, reviews the entire task order package on his PC and if acceptable, electronically approve the task.

Another time savings feature of CMS is the Task Order Award Fee Evaluation Form (shown final graphic, next page). The TR receives an e-mail indicating that the evaluation form is on the web and needs to be completed. Only tasks belong-

ing to a specific evaluator are listed. Each task includes the unique metrics specified with the adjectival definitions. Typically 75 percent of the ratings are received within a week and nearly all ratings are received with just one reminder. The paper evaluation form process took twice as long.

Six weeks prior to the start of an award fee evaluation period, the TRs are asked to review the task statements of work and make necessary changes. A key to the success of CMS is that each statement of work covers only one award fee evaluation period. This requires the contractor to review and update its planned training, travel, equipment, and milestones, even for ongoing efforts. At this time the government also updates its performance metrics.

CMS for GESS
Contract NAS3-00145

You are entering the GESS Contract Management System
 A Web Enabled System to manage the GESS contract

- [Flow Chart of the Work Flow in the GESS CMS](#)
- [View a list of tasks](#)
- [Login](#)
- [Learn about the CMS](#)
- [Request a new task](#)--- Contact [Linda Kenik](#) to request a password

COTR [Thomas Burke](#) at ext 5172
Alternate COTR [Virginia Cestaro](#) at ext 3012
Responsible NASA Official [Dennis Vano](#)

For questions, comment and help regarding this website, contact the [Web Administrator](#)

Announcements

- [Request Funding on your GESS Task](#)
- [ODIN CHANGES proxy settings](#)
 Please review if you've been having trouble reaching this server
- [Award Fee Period \(AFP\) 4 is October 1 through March 31, 2003](#)
- [What's New](#)

CMS has offered many benefits over the paper process. It makes communicating the government’s technical requirements far more efficient, keeps task amendments simple, and keeps cost estimates current. These enable project offices to more efficiently use their funds. When unforeseen events occur, CMS also allows the contractor to quickly notify the government and insure that the proper funding is available to maintain task performance if desired.

(continued on next page)

Task Orders

(continued from previous page)

Continuous improvement and flexibility are hallmarks of the software. Screens have been customized to meet the needs of individual groups of users, such as the CO, COTR, TR, and contractor. System

Technical Approach

TECHNICAL APPROACH:
The Contractor shall perform the following:

1.) Address all inter-related processes agreed upon by necessary document the required procedures. The are following:
a) User friendly
b) Ongoing meet
d) Documentation requirements, processes
e) Train appropriate activities and expect

Save Changes

Timer
43:00
01:59

Award Period 05 Costs	
Description	Costs
Direct Technical Labor	\$27,743.00
Distributed Costs	\$17,756.00
Travel	\$0.00
Training and Education	\$600.00
Task Direct Equipment Charges	\$0.00
Fabrication	\$0.00
Material	\$1,200.00
Other	\$1,200.00
Award Fee	\$1,000.00
Total Price Award Period 05: \$50,614.00	

hours
22
TECHNICIAN DRAFTER II 480
TECHNICIAN DESIGNER V 100
TECHNICIAN DESIGNER IV 100

flexibility enabled the system to be modified to bundle multiple funding requests into a single funding action covering dozens of tasks, a necessity since the new SAP system is line item limited.

CMS lead software developer Linda Kenik states "CMS has taken management of task order contracts into the electronic age. Where suspense files and inter-office mail took weeks or months to initiate a task, we now have instantaneous transmission of documents between approvers, automatic archiving of documents, and considerable labor savings. In spite of the complexity of the project, it has been one of the most enjoyable. The software has delivered tangible, measurable

savings in both time and cost." Yes, CMS has exceeded the government's request for a web-based tool to track contract actions. It has evolved into a highly sophisticated, yet simple to use software, that also maintains critical contract data. Thomas Burke, GESS COTR, states, "We are still learning new ways to utilize the data that CMS provides.

The metrics and weights you assigned for this task are shown below.

Category	Weight	Rating
Quality of Performance	25	Excellent 98
Progress toward preliminary analyses of potential inlet designs	75	Excellent Select One
None	0	
None	0	

Comments:
The contractor has done an excellent job this award fee period.

View Your Responses and Composites Reset all Values

We are able to customize our Award Fee Evaluation Plan as never before because CMS tracks and date stamps every action that takes place. We have more insight into the contractor's performance and the contractor is better able to focus on those areas where we place emphasis. CMS permits the contract management team to spend less time on repetitive, administration functions, allowing more time to develop value-added process improvements."

Flat Stanley

(continued from page 5)

the Potomac Elementary school as part of the NASA Outreach Program. The good news is I was invited to the festivities at the school.

Two local newspapers were present on December 2, 2002, as Mr. O'Keefe presented the school and Vernon with a collage of Flat Stanley surrounded by patches, pins and a flight certification recognizing his accomplishment in outer space. The Administrator gave the kids a

rousing pep talk. At the conclusion of his talk, astronauts Leland Melvin and Sandra Magnus commenced their presentations. The astronauts showed slides of the shuttle (interior and exterior) and the space station. They discussed training, the speed the shuttle travels as it orbits the earth, and the need for the students to study all their subjects. Then they answered questions. Over 500 kids attended the assembly. I was surprised at the number of students that were familiar with the International Space Station and the Shuttle.

Yes Flat Stanley did thank me for the opportunity of a lifetime.

I enjoy encouraging young kids to perform their best in school. And the kids really respond. It is one of the highest performing schools in that area. It is a rural area, too. It does not often see such big events. So everyone there was elated. If you have the time, I encourage you to help keep all youngsters focused on preparing for tomorrow. I watched Vernon, now a third grader as he experienced all of this. He was clearly cherishing a day he will never forget.



Administrator O'Keefe with Vernon and Principal DeBorah Bushrod

NASA/Bill Ingalls

A Time Of Change At Ames

By Carolyn S. La Follette, Ames Research Center

Ames Research Center's Acquisition Division has experienced several personnel changes over the last several months. First of all, of course, Mr. Charles W. Duff II, Ames Procurement Officer, agreed to return to NASA Headquarters on a year's detail to act as the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Procurement. His leaving had a domino effect on several of us. Ms. Connie L. Cunningham, the Deputy Procurement Officer, moved into Mr. Duff's position as Procurement Officer. Ms. Carolyn S. La Follette permanently vacated her position as Chief, Acquisition Branch for Center Operations and Space and moved into the Deputy Procurement Officer spot. That move resulted in an additional Branch Chief vacancy in the division, added to one caused by a retirement in 2001. On February 19, 2003, the Procurement Officer announced the selection of the two new branch chiefs.

Mr. Gary L. Heagy has been selected as the Chief, Acquisition Branch for Business and Policy. Mr. Heagy joined NASA Ames in 2000 as a construction contract specialist, after having worked at the Naval Facilities Engineering Command in San Bruno, California for 19 years. Eleven of those years, he was a supervisor. During his tenure, he held both engineering and Contracting Officer positions. He has a bachelor's degree in civil engineering and an MBA. He enjoys sports and spends free time in family events, ferrying his children to sport and dance events.

Ms. Marie E. Dorish has been selected as the Chief, Acquisition Branch for Center Operations and Space. Ms. Dorish has been at the center since 1989, most recently performing branch review duties as well as being the center's IFM purchasing lead. Her prior acquisition experience was at the NAVPRO Lockheed in Sunnyvale, California. Prior to her government service, she was an elementary school teacher. She holds a masters degree in procurement and contract management. In her spare time she enjoys country western dancing and golf.

In addition to the above changes, Ms. Rosa Tonarelli returned to the Acquisition Division after an absence of eight years working in the Commercial Technology Office. During her time there, she held the positions of New Technology Representative and SBIR program manager for Ames. Ms. Tonarelli's current position is the policy officer. Her prior experience in the division was as a Contracting Officer, working later in the business and policy branch. She came to Ames in 1989, after working in DCASPRO Ford Aerospace for several years. She loves her dogs, golf, and travel, especially to Hawaii with her husband.

Michael J. Ladomirak Retires

After 40 years of federal service, Mike Ladomirak retired on January 3, 2002. He began his government career as a management intern at the Olmsted Air Force Base in Middletown, PA. After working in computer programming and operations, budgeting, and procurement, he came to the Goddard Space Flight Center (GSFC) as a contract specialist.. A series of progressively more complex contracting and management assignments in research and development, automatic data processing equipment, centralized procurement, and program procurement, led to the position of Associate Director for Acquisition in November 1994. He was responsible for planning, organizing, directing, and controlling the center's procurement program activities. He also represented the center as the senior procurement official to Headquarters, contractors, industrial organizations, universities, and state and local governments.



Mr. Ladomirak received numerous awards including the Presidential Rank of Meritorious Executive in the Senior Executive Service, NASA Distinguished Service Medal, the NASA Medal for Outstanding Leadership, the GSFC Award of Merit, the GSFC Honor Award for Exceptional Achievement, and the GSFC Honor Award for Equal Opportunity.

Mr. Ladomirak once stated that his life goal is to enjoy life while making a difference. He has surely made a difference at the Goddard Space Flight Center. He will be missed immensely as he pursues his interests and hobbies including woodworking, gardening, photography, travel, cooking, and continued education.



Procurement Countdown

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Editor.....Susie Marucci
(202) 358-1896
susie.marucci@hq.nasa.gov