

GSA Acquisition Workforce Forum

--Informing the GSA acquisition workforce on the latest acquisition news and events!

EDITION ONE

OCTOBER 2003

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SPE Corner



by David Drabkin

This is the first in what we plan to be a regular series of newsletters pertaining to acquisition issues within GSA and throughout the government. It is appropriate for our first letter to be issued at the beginning of our new fiscal year. We plan for this letter to be a way to share information from our perspective and from yours. For this to be a success we will need you to provide us with

topics and articles.

We would like to have a corner where we share and catalogue best practices and lessons learned. This will be perhaps the most important part of the newsletter. We do a lot of great things in GSA and we rarely tell our story. We also have learned about what doesn't work and it is important to share that information as well, so we don't pay to learn the same lesson twice. We look forward to your active participation in this newsletter so that it becomes owned by all members of GSA's acquisition workforce.

Some people have asked what's next for

acquisition. The answer is there are a lot of exciting things in store for us as a profession. In the area of acquisition workforce there are a number of changes around the corner. We will be expanding the definition of the acquisition workforce in the near future, much like our colleagues in DoD, to include project/program management. This will make it clear that acquisition is more than contracting and extend to our colleagues in project/program management the affirmative education and training requirements of Clinger-Cohen. We are also working on implementing a solution, or solutions, that



allow us to demonstrate our competency/skill levels. It is important that we ensure that every associate has the competencies/skills necessary to do

her or his job. Where gaps exist we will be able to identify those gaps and provide training to close the gap, putting every associate in the best possible po-

sition to "Wow" our customers and our stakeholders. We are working with our colleagues in other agencies as well to ensure that our efforts will be

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- **HOW TO REGISTER ON CCR—SEE PAGE 3**
- **FPDS-NG UP AND RUNNING—SEE PAGE 4**
- **PBSA TRAINING AVAILABLE – SEE PAGE 8**
- **CELEBRATE NATIONAL DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT AWARENESS MONTH—SEE PAGE 14**

recognized at their agencies and to learn from them.

In terms of acquisition itself we are working towards two major changes. First, a GSA-wide e-Solution for acquiring goods, services and construction. This solution will not only allow anyone involved in the acquisition process to access online that portion of the process applicable to her or him, it will make all of the other requirements associated with acquisition transparent to them. For instance, shortly

we will field an acquisition planning wizard, that will allow all parties to the acquisition team to walk through the acquisition planning process, online. As you all know acquisition planning is key to the success of any project/program. Ultimately we will have a portal that will include the entire acquisition process. We are also looking at improving our buying power by the use of spend analysis and aggregating, where it makes sense, requirements to drive prices to the level that our buying power com-

mands in the marketplace.

These are just a few examples of what's to come. To be successful, each of us needs to focus on improving our skills and competencies. Take every opportunity to learn something new. Share your knowledge with others. Join a professional organization to learn from others outside of GSA and to share your knowledge with them. Remember today's acquisition professional is a multi-disciplined associate bringing to every pro-

ject/program the knowledge of not only how to make a business deal but also the marketplace and the practices of the industries in the marketplace. We provide leadership through knowledge and the ability to

"For this newsletter to be a success we need you to provide us with topics and articles."

translate that knowledge into a successful business deal, regardless of the position we occupy on the team.

From the Desk of the Editor

WELCOME! to the first edition of the "GSA Acquisition Workforce Forum." In October's edition of the "Forum" we discuss the launch of a new service, the Central Contractor Registration database (CCR). We also discuss the transition from the old Federal Procurement Data System

(FPDS) to the Next Generation of FPDS (FPDS-NG). We include articles on the implementation of the Acquisition Career Management Information System (ACMIS) throughout GSA and the creation of a new office in OGP--the Share-in-Savings Program Office.

In the area of education we provide an article on the Federal

by Judy Steele

Acquisition Institute (FAI) and a summary of the services FAI provides, which are available to GSA associates. We also include an article on Performance Based Services Acquisition (PBSA) training for GSA acquisition professionals. In each edition of the "Forum" we will have a column "Spotlight on Excellence," featuring an outstanding acquisition professional, including,



hopefully, several from GSA. This month features the Ida M. Ustad Award winner, Charles E. Bright, of the U.S. Special Operations Command.

As the newsletter evolves, to ensure that all of GSA's acquisition workforce is represented, we hope to include a regular column for each of the services: PBS, FSS, and FTS. This month PBS provides an article on "Green Cleaning" and FSS provides a column of updates on various products and services. Another regular column will feature the JWOD

Program and we begin October celebrating National Disability Employment Awareness Month.

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 or articles for publication.

CCR—What is It and What does It Mean to YOU?

The Central Contractor Registration (CCR) database was developed by DoD to provide contractors a single point to

"CCR provides contractors a single point to enter all contractually required business information."

enter all contractually required business information. This includes name, address, products and services, payment information including Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) information, and Data Universal Numbering System

(DUNS) number. The CCR database is part of the Business Partner Network (BPN), one of the e-Gov initiatives developed under the Integrated Acquisition Environment for use governmentwide. As a GSA acquisition professional, **what does this mean to you?**

A Federal Acquisition Regulation



(FAR) change will be issued soon requiring most contractors to register business information in the CCR before contract award. This applies to most contracts, agreements and orders (the final FAR clause will detail specific exemptions for purchase cards, classified information, etc.) Most contracts, agreements and orders that extend beyond September 30, 2003, will

have to be modified to include CCR clauses with some exceptions. Contracting officers (COs) will be required to check the CCR to verify contractor registration before award is made. Payments will be directed to the EFT data located in the CCR so the CO will no longer have to collect this information. Finance offices will also refer to the CCR for required information.

COs should encourage all vendors and contractors to register on the CCR as soon as possible!

Contractors are respon-



sible for the accuracy of the data in the CCR and will be required to maintain it. To register, the contractor first needs to obtain a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number (if they don't already have one). This is a 9-digit number assigned by Dun and Bradstreet to identify unique business enterprises. Then go to the BPN website at www.bpn.gov and click on "CCR." An online handbook is provided for contractors and government officials to help them get familiar with the CCR

registration process. Contracting officers have been sent a letter informing them of the need to get their contractors registered in CCR. Finance will soon be mailing out letters to vendors about the need to register as well. So look out for the FAR change! Get familiar with the CCR program at the BPN website, and encourage your vendors to get registered NOW!

For more information, contact Gayle Messick of GSA's Intellectual Capital Management Divi-

sion at gayle.messick@gsa.gov or (202) 501-2980.

FPDS and YOU!

Major changes occur to the Federal Procurement Data System (FPDS) on October 1, 2003. How will that impact you? From October 1, 2003, through December 31, 2003, there will be two separate FPDS databases requiring two different means of reporting. You must report Fiscal Year (FY) 2003

contract actions (and corrections to prior year actions) to the old FPDS. You must report FY 2004 contract actions to the new FPDS, FPDS-Next Generation (NG).

The old FPDS, operated by the Government since 1978, remains responsible for collecting the FY 2003 contract action data from Executive Branch agencies and departments. FPDS-NG is

responsible for collecting data beginning October 1, 2003, starting with the FY 2004 contract actions. Each system uses different reporting software, requiring two different means of reporting until the transition from the old FPDS to FPDS-NG is complete.

What do you do after October 1, 2003, regarding contract actions awarded before October

1, 2003? You must report contract actions awarded before October 1, 2003, to the old FPDS using the same procedures that have been in effect during FY 2003. You can still submit that data after the end of the fiscal year; you do not have to submit all of that data before October 1, 2003. The old FPDS will remain operational until December 31, 2003, and you can submit your data (and correct your data) on

contract actions that were awarded before October 1, 2003, to the old FPDS system until December 31, 2003. You may only use the old FPDS for this data and you must not submit data regarding contract actions awarded before October 1, 2003, to FPDS-NG before January 1, 2004.

What do you do beginning October 1, 2003, regarding

contract actions awarded on or after October 1, 2003? You must report contract actions



awarded on or after October 1, 2003, to FPDS-NG using the new procedures established for the new system. You cannot report data to FPDS-NG on contract actions awarded before October 1, 2003, until January 1, 2004. Starting January 1, 2004, all contract actions must be reported only to FPDS-NG because the old FPDS will be shut down and it will not accept any new data.

What about reporting on SF 281? The guidance above also

applies to SF 281, FPDS Summary Contract Action Report summary data, with one exception. The exception is that you have a choice of whether or not to submit SF 281 summary data for contract actions awarded on or after October 1, 2004. We prefer that you not submit SF 281 summary data for those contract actions, and that you report each of those individual actions to FPDS-NG instead. However, if

your service has chosen to continue to submit SF 281's for awards made during FY 2004, you may submit the data to <http://www.fpdc.gov>, using the same procedures now in place. At the close of FY 2004, this option goes away. At that point, you must report only to FPDS-NG because SF 281 reporting will no longer be available. If you need help using FPDS-NG, contact the GCE Help Desk (see <https://www.fpds.gov/> and don't forget the "s" in https). Jerry Olson is the FPDS Program Manager and he can be reached at jerry.olson@gsa.gov or (202) 501-3221.

*Major changes occur to
FPDS October 1, 2003.*

ACMIS Update!

This summer, the Office of Governmentwide Policy (OGP) approved implementation of the Acquisition Career Management Information System (ACMIS) within GSA. The secure online information system was developed in conjunction

with the Clinger-Cohen Act, to track training and education of acquisition professionals governmentwide. The system is an online tool that will allow Office of Personnel Management (OPM) and GSA acquisition managers to better manage the acquisition workforce. The Office of Acquisition Workforce Transformation (MVB) was given

the task of implementing the system in GSA.

MVB worked with the Regions and Central Office to provide training and assist in the implementation. Because GSA was the first agency to enter data into the system, there were some initial troubles that were overcome with assistance of the

team of contractors who developed the system. SRA International Inc. worked with devIS – Development Info Structure, to develop, train and trouble shoot problems and questions that arose through implementation.

For implementation purposes, MVB divided the acquisition workforce into Contract Specialists (1102's) and non-1102's

who have warrants. 1102 Series associates were in the first group to load data, followed by the non-1102 warranted associates. All participants were requested to register with the website at www.acmis.gov, and to enter their data into the system. Each individual was asked to enter their own data and allow supervisors/managers access to their records to see where train-

ing or education was needed. The system design also allows for the running of reports with various report indicators to sort through all the information gathered.

The system has specific areas for participants to enter their current position, education, training, individual development plans and contracting warrants. The



system was developed for governmentwide implementation and all 1102's and 26 job series were uploaded with blank records from OPM. This created a record file of over 50,000 records in the system. The system requires a user to enter their current position so that their record is moved in the system from the general area to their specific agency. Over 62 agencies, bureaus and departments are scheduled to begin uploading their information in the coming years.

This summer GSA began having GSA associates enter the system and enter their data. **GSA expects all acquisition professionals to have their data entered by October 30, 2003.** The system will provide detailed knowledge of who is buying for the Federal government and what the workforce's qualifications are. For more information on the GSA implementation of ACMIS, contact Patrick Witham at Patrick.witham@gsa.gov or (202) 633-0058.

Share-in-Savings Program Office Created

OGP has established the Share-in-Savings (SIS) Program Office within the Office of Acquisition Policy. The SIS Program Office was formed in response to Section 210 of the e-Government Act and will oversee the issuance of

Federal acquisition policy as well as advise and assist Federal agencies with establishing share-in-savings contracts.

SIS will be a valuable strategy to help us achieve the President's key mission objectives.

SIS is an innovative funding and acquisition strategy that allows agencies to launch or

expand programs with little or no upfront funding while linking payment to performance. Payment to a contractor is the result of savings achieved by improving the efficiency and/or effectiveness of government processes. Since payment is only received based on achieved savings, the risk to government is minimized.

"As we continue to evolve our business processes toward a



more performance based environment, share-in-savings will be a valuable strategy to help us achieve the President's key mission objectives," said GSA Administrator Stephen Perry. "The e-Gov Act helped to remove key barriers to implementing the concept and we already see progress with many agency customers."

GSA hosts several web-based support systems that include a project screening tool, a proposal evaluation model, and case studies to assist agencies with better understanding the process. In addition, a FAR Case is under consideration with guidance expected to be published on SIS before the end of the calendar year. Progress in each of these key areas can be

found at: www.gsa.gov/shareinsavings. For more information contact Kenneth J. Buck, Director, Share-in-Savings Program Office, at ken.buck@gsa.gov or (202) 219-0311.

How the FAI Can Help You!

The Federal Acquisition Institute (FAI) provides valuable resources to help you, as acquisition professionals and managers, grow in your careers.

Who We Are:

Under the Office of Federal Procurement Policy Act (41 U.S.C. 405(d) and 41 U.S.C. 433), FAI is charged with promoting professionalism in the acquisition workforce. The Act established FAI under the Office of Federal Procurement Policy and located it in GSA. To meet this man-

date, FAI seeks to ensure availability of exceptional training, provide compelling research, promote professionalism, and improve acquisition workforce management.

How We Can Help You:

FAI provides tools and information to help acquisition professionals and managers with the workforce challenges they face today. These include:

Report on the Federal Acquisition Workforce: 1100 Series: Annual demographic report on Federal acquisition workforce trends

Insight: FAI's newsletter featuring the latest acquisition news

Contract Specialist Training Blueprints: A tool for Contract Specialists to evaluate and document classroom and on-the-job training.

COR Training Blueprints: A tool for Contracting Officer Representatives to evaluate and document classroom and on-the-job training.

Competency Based Career Development Training Guide: An IDP designed for individuals seeking a career in the contracting field.

College Guide to Acquisition-Related Academic Programs and Courses:

Academic programs and courses in acquisition-related subjects.

Explore our offerings at www.gsa.gov/fai

Lunchtime Learning Seminars:

Presentations by top professionals in the acquisition field, sponsored jointly by FAI and the Defense Acquisition University. Presented in the DC metro area, each seminar provides Continuous Learn-

ing Points that contribute toward meeting continuing training and education requirements. If you are outside the DC area and would like to arrange audio or audio-visual hook-ups to a seminar, please contact julie.gummo@gsa.gov.

Acquisition Career Management Information System: A govern-

mentwide database of training, education, and other information on the acquisition workforce. GSA is the first agency on-board, but ACMIS will soon be growing.

FAI Online University: Online courses and seminars on acquisition-related issues. The most popular offerings are CON101, Fundamentals of Contracting, and the COR Mentor Program, but we have many other courses and

shorter seminars available.

Where You Can Find Us:

FAI's primary home page is currently at www.gsa.gov/fai. This is where you can find our reports, newsletters and training tools. By the end of October, we hope to have our new website operating as www.fai.gov. The FAI Online University is at www.faionline.com. It will remain there until we transition to the

new government-wide e-training site, golearn.gov. We also manage ACMIS at www.acmis.gov. Take the opportunity to explore our offerings. If you have suggestions, comments, or questions, please contact Julie Gummo at julie.gummo@gsa.gov or (202) 501-4757.

PBSA Training Offered!

To enhance the use of performance-based contracting techniques on eligible service contracts, OGP's Office of Acquisition Policy has made available a 40-hour Performance-Based Contracting training course to all GSA's acquisition workforce including program managers, contracting officer representatives, contracting officer technical representatives, contracting officers, contract

specialists, etc. The course will cover how to write performance work statements and statements of objectives, performance measures and standards, quality assurance surveillance plans, and performance incentives. This course incorporates the latest performance-based contracting regulations, policy information, and guidance including the concepts from the *Seven Steps to Performance-Based Services Acquisition Guide*. Go to the following website to register for a course: <http://bmra.xtention.net>

For information about sessions in your region, contact the following associates:

CO - Julia Wise, julia.wise@gsa.gov

FSS -- Patricia Miller, patricia.miller@gsa.gov

FTS -- Karen Minor, karen.minor@gsa.gov

PBS -- Matthew Urnezis, mattthew.urnezis@gsa.gov

NCR -- Elizabeth Vitale, becky.vitale@gsa.gov

New England Region -- Tracey



Fonzi, tracey.fonzi@gsa.gov
Northeast and Caribbean Region -- Colleen Pappas, colleen.pappas@gsa.gov

Mid-Atlantic Region -- John G. Jones, john.jones@gsa.gov
Southeast Sunbelt Region -- Gary Mote, gary.mote@gsa.gov

Great Lakes Region -- Nancy Kalata, nancy.kalata@gsa.gov
Heartland Region -- Connie Deese, connie.deese@gsa.gov

Greater Southwest Region -- Salvador Vargas, salvador.vargas@gsa.gov

Rocky Mountain Region -- Russell Ware, russell.ware@gsa.gov, and Darlene Gonzales, darlene.gonzales@gsa.gov

Pacific Rim Region -- Karen Hester, karen.hester@gsa.gov

Northwest/Arctic Region -- Kenyon Taylor, kenyon.taylor@gsa.gov

taylor@gsa.gov

Spotlight on Excellence! The Ida M. Ustad Award Winner

The Ida M. Ustad Award for Excellence in Acquisition was established to commemorate a longtime GSA associate, Ms. Ida Ustad, who served as GSA's Deputy Associate Administrator for Acquisition Policy and Senior Procurement Executive. This year's winner of the Ida Ustad Award for Excellence in Acquisi-

tion was Mr. Charles E. Bright of the United States Special Operations Command.

The Ida M. Ustad Award goes to an acquisition professional who reflects Ida Ustad's commitment to public service and the Federal acquisition community. Ida was GSA's "Top Gun" on acquisition. She developed innovative ideas and approaches to

solve the most complex acquisition issues for both GSA and the entire acquisition community.





This \$5,000 award honors individuals that carry on her tradition of excellence in acquisition and recognizes an individual government associate in the 1102 series working for an agency subject to the FAR.

This year's winner, Mr. Charles E. Bright, made huge contributions directly supporting the global war on terrorism, but none more critical than the contract to equip the command's MH-53M helicopters with a desperately needed defense system. Mr. Bright orchestrated the United States Special Operations Command's first-ever "two

week" competition for an award of a letter contract for a \$102 million requirement. His concept was brilliant, saving both time and money, and most importantly, allowed the Special Operations Command technical experts to quickly assess the capabilities of two proven manufacturers of Infra-Red Countermeasure Systems. The system will provide protection for aircrews and aircraft by locating hostile missiles tracking the craft and defeating their Infra-Red, heat seeking tracking system.

Mr. Bright worked tirelessly to develop many "first-of-their-kind"

documents and processes. His efforts included crafting a unique letter solicitation, streamlined evaluation criteria, a template for contract terms and conditions and a solid justification for limited competition. The solicitation was released within two working days after receiving a statement of objectives from the technical team. Mr. Bright then proceeded to field questions from the two interested contractors and was instrumental in the successful receipt of oral proposals only seven days after the solicitation was released. Mr. Bright's impressive efforts did not stop there. He worked closely with



the Program Manager to orchestrate what is likely the most compressed source selection process on record. In three grueling days the proposals were analyzed and a concise briefing was presented to the Source Selection Authority (SSA).

For more information on the Ida

M. Ustad Award process, contact Bev Cromer at Beverly.cromer@gsa.gov or (202) 275-4272. If you'd like to submit the name of an acquisition professional for "Spotlight," please submit their name and information detailing their outstanding performance to the Editor, judy.steele@gsa.gov.

PBS Update "Green Cleaning" in GSA

GSA's Public Buildings Service (PBS) has over 600 custodial services contracts in place in more than 1,800 Federal buildings. The combined effect of the use of various cleaners, solvents, and other chemicals in every building has a substantial impact on the safety and health of the people who use these ma-

terials, as well as the people within those buildings.

GSA sought to address this issue in February 1993, when it participated with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on a 3-year study, the Cleaning Products Pilot Project. This project was a cooperative, inter-agency effort to establish a framework for identifying and comparing "environmentally

preferable" commercial cleaning products. The project began as an effort to identify specific cleaning products that were effective yet offered positive environmental attributes. However, the project was soon adapted to become the first "environmentally preferable product" pilot project under Executive Order 12873 ("Federal Acquisition, Recycling, and Waste Prevention"). The report



of this pilot project, which was published in 1997, is available at: <http://www.epa.gov/opptintr/epp/pubs/cleaner.pdf>. In recent years GSA regions have worked independently, without prescriptive national direction, to initiate efforts in establishing "Green Cleaning" programs. A recent survey of Green Cleaning activities was offered to the regions as an initial effort to gather information about the current state of the use of green cleaning practices. Some of the findings of this survey follow:

- All GSA regions that replied to the survey had made some use of green cleaning practices. However, there is substantial variability among regions with regard to the penetration of their green cleaning efforts across their inventory, the methods employed, and the vendors utilized. Virtually all regions have made efforts to implement "Green Cleaning" programs through their contracted custodial operations. Several regions have made

significant strides to institutionalize green cleaning procedures.

- Regions have independently developed green cleaning language used for custodial contract specifications. There is some evidence of sharing of ideas across regions as evidenced by common language in some contract clauses.
- Most regions that sought to utilize green cleaning products also included provisions



for the use of other environmentally preferable products in the performance of the contract. These provisions generally referenced the EPA's Comprehensive Procurement Guideline (which can be accessed at <http://www.epa.gov/cpg>) recommendations as the basis for specifying environmentally preferable products—such

as paper supplies—for use under the contracts.

- While anecdotal rather than based upon any true analysis of costs, there is nearly universal opinion that the incorporation of "green" provisions in cleaning contracts does not result in additional costs when compared to contracted services that do

not require any "green" provisions.

- Most regions commented that they have little opportunity or technical expertise to review product submissions (e.g. Material Safety Data Sheets) for compliance, or to readily provide oversight/enforcement of the green provisions contained in con-



tracts.

- Several regions have utilized services of recognized national expert consultants to develop their programs. Most have relied on in-house program staff to investigate methods, develop



specification language, and provide direction to their regional efforts.

The clear majority of contracts have been awarded to National Industries for the Severely Handicapped

Community Rehabilitation Programs under the negotiation method. Where procurements with other vendors have been completed, it appears there have been just a few efforts to utilize a source selection basis for the procurement action.



Plan for the future

In recent months an attempt to invigorate green cleaning efforts on a nationwide level has begun in GSA. This effort seeks to create a coherent, progressive approach that will be easy to manage, while also being an approach that the cleaning industry can readily respond to without adding cost to these services. The first product of the initiative, a draft green cleaning specification, is currently under-

going a series of reviews prior to its distribution. The distribution of the draft green cleaning specification is planned for the Fall of 2003 as part of a kick-off to announce GSA's commitment to furthering our efforts in this area.

For more information on the green cleaning program at GSA, contact Len Purzycki at len.purzycki@gsa.gov or (215) 446-4643.

Federal Supply Service (FSS) Acquisition News

Schedules News

Schedules Transferred

The Schedules Program continues its progress towards a leaner and more efficient organization. Schedules formerly as-

signed to the Office and Scientific Equipment Acquisition Center (FCG) are being transferred to Regions 3 and 7. The transfer of functions simplifies organizational structure, reduces overhead, and streamlines operations.

The Office Equipment Division Schedule is transferred to the

National Furniture Center in Region 3. All Scientific Equipment Schedules are transferred to the General Products Center in Fort Worth, TX, Region 7.

The list of transferred Schedules follows:

Region 3 (National Furniture Center)



Schedule 36 - Office, Imaging and Document Solutions

Region 7 (General Products Center)

- 1) Schedule 873 - Laboratory Testing and Analysis Services
- 2) Schedule 66 II J - Test and Measurement Equipment, Avionics Test Equipment, Unmanned Aerial Vehicles and Related Services

3) Schedule 66 II N - Chemistry, Biochemistry, Clinical Instruments, General Purpose Laboratory Instruments and Services

4) Schedule 66 II Q - Geophysical, Environmental Analysis Equipment and Services

Industrial Funding Fee (IFF) Reduced

A final rule published July 11, 2003 in the Federal Register

provides public notice that the Industrial Funding Fee will be reduced from 1% to 0.75% of GSA Schedule contract sales effective January 1, 2004. The IFF has been 1% since 1995, but GSA made the decision to reduce it because of the growth of the program. All existing GSA Schedule contracts will be modified electronically. Contractors should refer to the Vendor Sup-

port Center website for information.

Cooperative Purchasing Implemented

As a result of the e-Government Act of 2002, State and local governments are now allowed to use Federal Supply Schedule Group 70, Information Technology (IT) and Corporate Schedule contracts, containing IT Special Item Numbers (SINs). The IT available to State and local government entities includes: firmware, software, supplies, support equipment and services.

Participation in this program is **voluntary** for both State and local government entities and contractors. State and local government entities have the full discretion to decide if they wish to make a Federal Supply Schedule purchase, subject to any limitations that may be established under local law and procedures. Existing Federal Supply Schedule contracts for Schedule 70, Information Technology, and Corporate Schedule contracts, containing IT SINs, must be modified, by mutual agreement

between the contractor and FSS, to participate in "Cooperative Purchasing".

To date, approximately 750 contractors are participating in Cooperative Purchasing. Cooperative Purchasing has generated \$8.7 million in sales since May.

e-Buy Facilitates RFQs

e-Buy is an online Request for Quotation (RFQ) tool that facilitates RFQs for a broad range of services and products offered by GSA Federal Supply Schedules contractors who are also on

GSA Advantage.

e-Buy allows Federal agencies (buyers) to maximize their buying power and provides schedule contractors (sellers) increased opportunities to offer quotes by reaching a wider audience faster through the Internet.

Using the e-Buy system, buyers prepare and post RFQs for spe-

cific services and products for designated periods of time. Each RFQ is assigned to a Federal Supply Schedule, Special Item Number (SIN) category, and sellers are automatically listed under their awarded SIN categories. Buyers may notify all sellers listed under a particular SIN category or may choose to notify a lesser number of sellers. [FAR 8.4 and the Ordering

Procedures for Services (Requiring a Statement of Work) stipulate that buyers must obtain 3 or more quotes for purchases over the micro-purchase threshold.] Sellers not notified may still submit a quote for an RFQ placed under their awarded SIN.

Contractors who wish to quote must do so at the e-Buy website. All schedule contractors who

have their catalogs posted to *GSA Advantage!* are eligible to submit quotes through e-Buy once they log-in at GSA's Vendor Support Center (VSC). Contractors' quotes are not visible to other schedule contractors. Only the buyer can view contractor names and quotes. Once an RFQ has closed, buyers evaluate and accept the quote that represents the best value.

Government users who have an account on *GSA Advantage!* may use e-Buy by logging in through *GSA Advantage!* There is an online tutorial on e-Buy through *GSA Advantage!* at www.gsaadvantage.gov.

GSA Global Supply—Inventory Expanded

GSA Global Supply is preparing

to dramatically expand the breadth and depth of its product lines for military and civilian customers. By the end of the calendar year, buyers will be able to choose from more than 100,000 new tools and office products featuring widely recognized brand names, all offered by GSA Global Supply. Early next year, GSA Global Supply expects to add thousands more products in

the maintenance/repair/operations (MRO) realm.

In recent years, GSA customers have been able to submit orders via phone (800-525-8027), fax (800-856-7057), through Defense Automatic Addressing System (DAAS), or online at <http://www.gsaAdvantage.gov>. These buyers could pay for supplies with a GSA SmartPay purchase card or arrange direct billing by using an Activity Address Code (AAC or DODAAC). Regardless of the ordering mechanism or the payment method, GSA Global Supply guaranteed compliance with Federal pro-

curement regulations for all its customers ordering from the supply program.

Those same program benefits are still available along with the expanded inventory. GSA Global Supply continues to provide global delivery, payment flexibility and "audit-safe" purchasing whether buyers spend \$10 or \$10,000,000. But ordering is even simpler with the advent of a new Global Supply website at



"GSA Global Supply"

www.GSAGlobalsupply.gsa.gov. The new site has been functioning since May and accepts the same registration information (user ID and password) as **GSA Advantage!** The difference is that the new site will display only Global Supply products and services. For buyers that wish to purchase from GSA Global Supply, the new site promises easier searching, faster checkout and less paper-

work. For DOD supply personnel, everything on this site can be purchased using a DODAAC.

GSA Global Supply customers will never have to reconcile multiple bills from multiple vendors. Purchases are simple, safe and secure regardless of their size. By working closely with the JWOD community, GSA ensures

that buyers comply with mandatory source requirements while still offering the best of the commercial marketplace.

To receive a copy of GSA Global Supply's baseline catalog of 7,000 items, call GSA at (817) 334-5215. GSA will develop specialty catalogs to display key elements of its expanded inven-

tory but the most complete and current source of product information will be the GSA Global Supply website at www.GSAGlobalsupply.gsa.gov. First time visitors may wish to review the online tutorial at that location. Those who have experience with GSA Advantage will find the "look and feel" of the new site very familiar.

For more information on any of the items in this column, contact Shirley P. Davis-Williams of the Acquisition Management Division at (703) 305-5723 or shirley.davis-williams@gsa.gov.

Celebrate JWOD in October!

by Annmarie Hart-Bookbinder

October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month, and a perfect time to celebrate the Javits-Wagner-O'Day (JWOD) Program.

Created in 1938, this unique Federal procurement program employs nearly 40,000

Americans who are blind or have other severe disabilities, enabling them to lead more produc-

"Celebrate the talents, skills, and dedication of disabled Americans who are a vital part of our workforce."

tive and independent lives.

The JWOD Program uses the purchasing

power of the Federal government to buy quality products and services at a fair market price from participating, community-based nonprofit agencies dedicated to training and employing individuals with disabilities.

According to President Bush, "All of our citizens should have the opportunity to live and work with dignity and freedom. Every October, we observe National



Disability Employment Awareness Month, to recognize the talents, skills, and dedication of disabled Americans who are a vital part of our workforce." Not only are people who are blind or have other severe disabilities a vital part of the American workforce, under the JWOD Program they are also essential suppliers of SKILCRAFT® and other JWOD products and services to the Federal government and U.

S. Armed Forces. Everything from office supplies, such as pens and notepads; military unique items, such as chemical protective suits and first aid kits; food items that support government international relief feeding programs; and services, such as janitorial/custodial, food services, call center operations and digital imaging. The JWOD Program also works closely with the GSA's Federal Supply Service

and PBS to supply quality products and services to GSA customers nationwide.

National Disability Employment Awareness month provides Federal employees with the opportunity to recognize those individuals within their agencies who support the JWOD Program, and to learn more about JWOD capabilities that meet their procurement needs. There are a



number of different activities JWOD Program, both in October or any time throughout the year.

**JWOD
WORKS
for America**

Please contact the JWOD Program if you require any assistance in planning a JWOD celebration during National Disability Employment Awareness Month at

Federal employees may consider in order to recognize the

jwodworks@jwod.gov or visit www.jwod.gov for more information.

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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're are on the Web!
[www.gsa.gov/
acquisitionpolicy](http://www.gsa.gov/acquisitionpolicy)

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 or articles for publication. Please note that future editions of the newsletter will include a "FAR-cited column, answering questions about where the FAR covers a specific topic; as well as a column, "GEE, SAM," which will

do the same for the GSAM. We encourage readers to send questions for these two columns to the Editor, Judy Steele.