

## Questions and Answers

The following questions were submitted by DOE employees during the initial stages of the Financial Services A-76 study. Answers to these questions have been provided by subject matter experts. If you have any questions or need further clarification, please contact Paul Anderson at (803) 725-5607 or e-mail him at paul.anderson@srs.gov. This website will be updated regularly and new questions and answers posted as they are received.

1. It appears that, according to the Financial Services Plan of Action and Milestones, in any event, some of us will lose our jobs. How will it be decided which employees will lose our jobs?

**Answer:**

It is possible that the study outcome may or may not require a reduction-in-force (RIF). It would be premature at this time to address layoffs (i.e., RIF), which will depend upon the outcome of the study. Management has many tools available to mitigate a RIF, including seeking early retirement and/or buy-out authority, employee reassignment and possibly, relocation. If it is decided that positions will be abolished, then RIF rules will be followed.

- 1a. For example, will the Reduction-in-Force rules apply?

**Answer:**

If positions are abolished and employees are to be "released" from their competitive levels, RIF rules will apply. In the event of a RIF, the provisions of Federal regulations would be followed. For example, if a RIF were required, Federal regulations require that affected employees must receive at least 60 days specific written notice.

2. Whether the Reduction-in-Force rules apply or not, will the employees that lose their jobs be compensated with severance pay and how much?

**Answer:**

First, employees must be eligible for severance pay. The following requirements are taken from Federal regulations covering eligibility: Employees serving on appointments without time limitation (excluding Schedule C) must be removed from the Federal service by involuntary separation and not have declined a reasonable offer of other Federal employment. Employees must also have completed at least 12 months of continuous service and not be eligible for an immediate annuity from a Federal civilian retirement system or from the uniformed services.

Generally, severance pay is computed as follows:

One week of pay at the rate of basic pay for the position held by the employee at the time of separation for each full year of creditable service through 10 years; and,

Two weeks of pay at the rate of basic pay for the position held by the employee at the time of separation for each full year of creditable service beyond 10 years; and 25% of the otherwise applicable amount for each full three months of creditable service beyond the final full year.

Lifetime limitation – The severance pay fund is limited to that amount which would provide 52 weeks of severance pay (taking into account weeks of severance pay previously received).

- 2a. Will the employees have the option to take another job within DOE at "saved" pay?

**Answer:**

If an employee who has assignment rights to a lower graded job (i.e., the right and opportunity to "bump" or "retreat" into that lower grade job) the employee will receive "saved grade" for two years and "saved pay" for at least two years from the date the employee was released from his/her competitive level.

3. If the work is contracted out, what happens to the DOE employees currently in those positions?

**Answer:**

The following response was taken from the A-76 Website and is quoted here:  
"To the extent possible, voluntary actions will be used to reduce the need for involuntary actions. In all RIF actions, the Department will provide at least a 60-day notice to all employees in the affected competitive area. However, the Department will continue to aggressively pursue internal and external placements in other Federal jobs via the Priority Placement Program to minimize the impacts on employees."

- 3a. If they are offered positions in the contractor's organization, will they maintain the same salary?

**Answer:**

Adversely affected employees only have the right of first refusal for available contractor jobs for which they are qualified. There is no right to salary and benefits comparable to Federal salary.

4. What is the schedule for implementing the results of the 2004 study?

**Answer:**

The Plan of Actions and Milestones (POAM) calls for announcing a tentative decision on March 22, 2004. This means the government will have evaluated any commercial or Interservice Support Agreement (ISSA) bids received and selected one bid to compare against the government's Most Efficient Organization (MEO). As a result of this evaluation, the government will decide to award to a commercial vendor/ISSA, or to implement the MEO ("tentative decision"). Once the announcement is made, the government must immediately begin transition

activities. Usually, transition to the winning bidder or MEO takes between 60 and 180 days.

4a. When can we expect the first layoffs?

**Answer:**

Employees must have, under Federal regulation, a minimum of 60 days notice of separation through a Reduction-in-Force (RIF). Notice period to employees who may be separated is calculated in the Transition Plan. Because RIF is very complicated and requires a number of steps prior to employee notice, it is not likely that any separations would occur early in a transition (e.g., slightly more than 60 days after the winning bid is determined) but, rather, later in the transition. As part of the transition, management has other tools available – it may seek early retirement and/or buy-out authority, employee reassignments and possible relocation to another office of the Departmental element.

4b. How much notice is given to employees?

**Answer:**

Should a RIF be required, affected employees must receive at least 60 days specific written notice.

5. Is there any talk of "freezing" personnel actions between now and 2004?

**Answer:**

There are no plans for a freeze on personnel actions, including promotions.

5a. Will those of us in career-ladder positions continue to advance?

**Answer:**

If there is work to be done at the higher grade (as anticipated by a career ladder), it is reasonable to assume that career-ladder employees will continue to advance. However, career-ladder employees may be affected if the results of the MEO restructure grades.

6. Will funds be made available to train employees to gain additional skills so that they can be more marketable?

**Answer:**

DOE has and will continue to provide training and retraining opportunities to its employees within budgetary constraints.

7. What efforts will be made to help employees find other employment if they lose their jobs?

**Answer:**

Additional assistance will be available through career transition services such as Federal job information, individual career counseling and guidance services, job search assistance, and on a referral basis, employee assistance program counseling services. Efforts will be made to avoid involuntary separations. However, in case of RIF, employees will be entitled to selection priority for certain jobs within DOE. Competitive service employees will also have selection priority for jobs in other Federal agencies.

8. Government employees are routinely required to take on special projects while also performing a full-time operational position, such as with Business Management Information Systems. If our positions are contracted out, how will these special projects get done?

**Answer:**

To the fullest extent possible, special project activities and other required collateral duties currently being performed by employees whose positions are included in the A-76 study will become a requirement of the Performance Work Statement (PWS). The PWS specifies what interested commercial bidders and the MEO must provide in their bids. That is why the government is painstakingly crafting the PWS, in order to assure that needed work (whether part of an employees' normal duties or special assignments) will get done by the winning bidder or by the MEO.

9. Can the Most Efficient Organization (MEO) be bid as a combination of Federal positions and contractor support?

**Answer:**

Yes, the MEO can be composed of both Federal employees and contractor support. We award a contract for a service, not for employees.

10. How can offices attract the best and brightest entry-level accountants and prepare for succession planning while undergoing an A-76 study? It seems contradictory.

**Answer:**

Attracting and retaining capable, qualified staff during the conduct of an A-76 study is a clear management challenge. Future job uncertainty and uncertainty about the location where work may be performed makes both retention and recruitment difficult. Helping current employees understand as much about the process, possible outcomes, and their options in the event of downsizing or contracting out, helps them make informed decisions. It has been the experience of other studies that full and open communication minimizes employee departures. By the same token, full disclosure to prospective employees helps them make informed decisions as well. Understandably, the process of an A-76 study, and the attendant uncertainties, is disruptive to both current and prospective employees. This is one reason that the Financial Services Team is proceeding with the study in an expeditious manner – the sooner employees know the outcomes and the impact of the outcomes on them, the quicker life can get back to "normal".

11. Since this is a Department-wide effort, how will the competitive areas be determined in a Reduction-in-Force (RIF) occurs?

**Answer:**

Although competitive sourcing will be accomplished DOE-wide, if competitive sourcing results in positions being abolished, any resulting RIF will be conducted using standardized rules contained in the Code of Federal Regulations and existing DOE RIF policy. Under Federal rules, competitive areas (CA's) are based on organization and geography; although a CA may consist of all or part of an agency, the minimum CA is a subdivision of the agency under separate administration within the local commuting area. A CA can be larger geographically than the minimum provided for in the regulation. CA's are defined by the Heads of DOE Departmental Elements. All employees within the identified organizational unit and within the identified geographical area are included in the CA. Heads of Departmental Elements are responsible for providing information on their CA's to all element employees.

12. Are part-time employees affected differently during a Reduction-in-Force (RIF) than a full-time employee?

**Answer:**

Under RIF procedures, similar positions are grouped into competitive levels based on grade, series, qualifications, duties and working conditions. Different work schedules are considered different working conditions. In determining retention standing and assignment rights, positions with different types of work schedules (e.g., full-time, part-time, intermittent, seasonal or on-call) are placed in different competitive levels from full-time employees. Therefore, part-time employees do not compete against full-time employees for retention and placement. The position offered a part-time employee must have the same type of work schedule (e.g., part-time) as the position from which the employee is released.

13. As the Most Efficient Organization (MEO) is being developed, there will undoubtedly be changes in working conditions, which would be subject to collective bargaining and may differ from individual local Union contracts. Although the Unions are currently involved, the current involvement is strictly collaborative as a team member, and NOT in a bargaining role. Since the MEO will cover positions in multiple bargaining units (i.e., Headquarters, Oak Ridge or Richland), how will the local bargaining obligations be met?

**Answer:**

The process of developing an MEO does not change working conditions. The members of the team developing the MEO must agree not to disclose the provisions of the MEO so, as the team is working, nothing is changing. However, if the MEO, as the "government bid" wins out over any bids by commercial firms or, possibly another government agency, working conditions are expected to change and formal negotiations on the implementation of the MEO and measures to address the effects of the MEO would proceed. At that point, local collective bargaining

agreements would apply. Some local agreements already cover a number of issues that would be of interest at this time – training, out placement, reduction-in-force, etc. If the local agreement doesn't cover these issues, then further negotiations would probably follow.

13a. If local management negotiates, how will they know the details of the MEO since the MEO is subject to non-disclosure?

**Answer:**

Local management would not negotiate on the implementation of the MEO unless the MEO won the competitive bid. Neither local management nor the local Union would know the details of the MEO while it is under development.

13b. And, what authority will local management have to negotiate and change the MEO, if necessary, which crosses other bargaining units?

**Answer:**

Local management would not have the authority to change the MEO which, if the winning bid, must be implemented as presented in the bid. Negotiations will be limited to "impact and implementation" of the MEO and to provisions of the local collective bargaining that both management and the Union would like to change. If the MEO wins the bid, implementation of the MEO must occur within a specified number of days (e.g., 60 – 180 days). If that does not occur for whatever reason, the "losing" bidder(s) could appeal. Further, within a year after the MEO's bid wins, the MEO is subject to review to ensure that the MEO's provisions were implemented. If they were not, another bidder could be given the work. In summary, negotiations cannot change or delay the local implementation of an MEO.

13c. If the MEO team negotiates with the local Unions, what authority will they have to negotiate on behalf of the local management, who is the party subject to the local Union contract?

**Answer:**

The MEO team does not negotiate with the local Union. The bargaining relationship between the Union and local management is not changed.

13d. Also, what happens if negotiations are only successful for some of the local Unions, and not others?

**Answer:**

If you define "unsuccessful negotiations", as the two parties, the Union and local management, not being able to reach agreement and going to "impasse", over conflicting bargaining proposals, then management may very likely have to declare that it must proceed to implement those provisions of the MEO that affect the basic MEO "bid". Labor law gives management the "right" to contract out, and negotiations can't stop that. If management proceeds, the Union also has the right

to file an unfair labor practice against management but the MEO will proceed toward completion within the allotted time. Let's assume that both sides will work hard to make negotiations work, though.

13e. What happens to the MEO?

**Answer:**

If the MEO "wins", the MEO must be implemented Department-wide. If the MEO "wins" and is not fully implemented, the losing bidder, likely the one selected to be compared to the MEO, may be appointed the winner by a neutral party tasked with reviewing the implementation of the MEO. The A-76 process requires an implementation review within a year after the transition to the MEO.

14. If a person loses her/his position through the Reduction-in-Force (RIF) exercise and has less than 25 years of service, will they receive a monthly retirement annuity immediately, lump-sum compensation or have to wait for retirement eligibility?

**Answer:**

If an employee is separated through RIF but is not eligible for an immediate annuity, the employee would be eligible for severance pay. When the employee later reaches the age of eligibility for an annuity (which differs depending on whether the employee is a CSRS or FERS employee) the employee would receive a "deferred" annuity, based on his/her salary and years of service while a Federal employee.

15. What are all the financial options for Reduction-in-Force (RIF) employees?

**Answer:**

An employee facing separation (rather than immediate annuity) through RIF has options related to the employee's Thrift Savings Plan and to his/her annuity contributions. Further, if the employee is given what is termed a "reasonable" offer, then the employee has another option that could affect the employee's right to severance pay. Since each employee may have different issues, if there is a need for RIF separations, employees will be given specific information on these options after the winning bid is determined. That is why contact with the local Human Resources servicing office is so important.

16. At some Sites, Federal Full-Time Equivalents (FTE's) that are performing the financial services under study but those duties are expected to be contracted out to support services contractors before the study is completed. If the study ultimately concludes that financial services are to be contracted out (or consolidated at some other Site), will the "losing" Site be subject to reduced Federal FTE ceilings?

**Answer:**

It is the procurement process, rather than the Performance Work Statement (PWS) and/or Most Efficient Organization (MEO) studies, that ultimately decides which entity wins the public-private competition. In order for the private sector to win

the competition, it must be more than 10% below the cost identified in the government's MEO bid. If the government wins the competition, then the agency is required to implement the proposed reorganization and staffing levels identified in the MEO, which may call for higher, lower, or the same structure and levels that currently exist. If a private sector offeror wins the bid, or a winning MEO calls for reduced staffing levels, unless there are concrete mission reasons/expansions, then there will likely be a decrease in the overall staffing levels within the affected organizations and Sites.

- 16a. Same question as 16, only assume that the "losing" Site was able to streamline its operations and reassign Federal Full-Time Equivalents (FTE) to duties not under the study. If the study ultimately concludes that financial services are to be contracted out (or consolidated at some other Site) will the "losing" Site be subject to reduced Federal FTE ceilings?

**Answer:**

The Department is required by Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-76 to implement its Most Efficient Organization (MEO) proposal if the agency wins the competition. Both OMB and Congress continue to scrutinize staffing levels within all DOE organizations and Sites. As always, DOE must have clear and convincing mission-related reasons to justify its staffing levels across the complex. If the agency MEO loses the bid, OMB budget staff and the Congressional appropriators would, for good reason, expect to see overall staffing levels decline. The question above assumes that Federal employees have moved into other real jobs (activities not directly affected by the competition) prior to contract being awarded. To the extent that those positions outside the scope of the study continue to be needed by DOE, then the non-affected positions will remain, regardless of whom wins the bid.

16. Is this also the Department's attempt to avoid using the unpopular and more costly term, Reduction-in-Force (RIF)?

**Answer:**

No. Competitive sourcing is not a substitute for RIF. RIF are procedures that are used to implement management decision such as decisions on abolishment of positions. The reasons for positions being abolished can include budget reductions, lack of work, or contracting out.

17. Will we continue to impose the one-year time in grade rule adopted in the 1950s?

**Answer:**

If this question refers to groupings for reduction-in-force purposes, those groupings, as described in Federal regulations (i.e., those with Veteran's preference are in one grouping, non-Veterans preference with "Civil Service status" in another, and those non-Veterans preference without status in another) will be used. If this question refers to time in grade for promotion purposes, that is also unchanged.



18. Incentives at the closing Field Offices appear to focus on retirement and early-outs; not on retention. Can we expect incentives to hire and retain quality employees who otherwise will be drawn to competitors, private sector, contractors by competing/posting most available open positions with paid Permanent Change of Station costs and moving compensation?

**Answer:**

**There are several incentives available for use by DOE Managers to facilitate hiring and retention. We expect use of these incentives will continue. Retention allowances of up to 25% of basic pay may be paid to high-quality employees, or groups of employees, who are likely to leave the Federal Government and whose services the Department considers essential. Additionally, relocation bonuses of up to 25% of basic pay may be paid to attract high-quality, Federal employees, including DOE candidates, to positions that are difficult to fill or to keep filled. Authority to use these incentives has been delegated to Heads of DOE Departmental Elements.**

19. The Video Teleconference today provided a "connect" among the offices involved in current and pending initiatives. Is this the first of these sessions with more to follow?

**Answer:**

**As long as there is employee interest, the Financial Services Team intends to offer these televideo conferences on a quarterly basis. The next televideo will be scheduled for November, 2002. If employees have specific topics or concerns they would like addressed during these televideo conferences, please call Paul Anderson at (803) 725-5607, or e-mail him at [paul.anderson@srs.gov](mailto:paul.anderson@srs.gov).**

20. Within the broad accounting areas identified for study, there are numerous tasks performed. Some of these tasks could be viewed as tasks that don't make good business sense to have a non-Fed performing and therefore not included in the Performance Work Statement (PWS). What criteria will be used and who will make the determination of what tasks the PWS Team will include in the PWS document for competitive sourcing?

**Answer:**

**Before providing a direct answer to this question, a short review of the PWS development process may be helpful. The PWS Team, assisted by an A-76 Study experienced consultant, will craft a PWS that eliminates perceived non-value added work, propose standardized work task policies where there are many different ways of doing things today, and may propose that some tasks continue to be performed by government employees (in which case such tasks would not be subject to contracting out). A draft of the PWS will be published for review and comment before becoming final. Ultimately, the PWS Certifying Official (a senior DOE official) will certify the PWS for release to commercial vendors and to the Most Efficient Organization (MEO) Team. Both commercial vendors and the MEO**

Team must develop their bid proposals to satisfy the PWS. If they do not address required work included in the PWS they will be disqualified. Now to the direct question. If a commercial vendor wins the bid, all PWS tasks will be done by contractor employees. The MEO Team can propose a mix of Federal employees and support contractor staffing in its "bid". Only a handful of people will know the content of the MEO "bid" prior to tentative decision because the MEO "bid" is considered procurement sensitive.

21. At the conclusion of the A-76 study and award has been made to either a private contractor or the Most Efficient Organization bid, will the department have the latitude to reassign displaced Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) positions to other critical work, or will each Site's FTE ceilings be reduced?

**Answer:**

If positions are abolished because of competitive sourcing, management may reassign employees in an effort to avoid a Reduction-in-Force, if at all possible. However, budget allocations may be affected by the newly-lowered costs (because of competitive sourcing), so local management must be sure that those reassignments will contribute to the mission of the organization and won't be just an effort to avoid separating employees – which could not be justified budgetarily.

22. How many of the Finance A-76 team members currently occupy a targeted position?

**Answer:**

The positions that are under study are not yet definitized. The Performance Work Statement (PWS) Team is currently validating which positions perform the Financial Services that are being studied. As a result, it will not be known until the February/March 2003 timeframe which positions are subject to competitive sourcing. Having said that, most of the members of the PWS and the Most Efficient Organization Teams will be directly affected by the outcome of the study. Many of the team members have managerial or supervisory roles at the three DOE Financial Services Centers, or in other organizations that have many of the positions that are included in the study. Accordingly, depending on the outcome of the study (e.g., awarded to a commercial entity, consolidated in fewer locations, etc.), these managers and supervisors are potentially subject to displacement, reassignment, relocation or other workforce restructuring actions.

23. How many of the Finance A-76 team members could be adversely affected (be subject to job loss without pension eligibility) if the Government loses all targeted positions?

**Answer:**

Several team members will be directly affected by the outcome of the study. Many of the team members have managerial or supervisory roles at the three DOE Financial Services Centers, or in other organizations that have many of the positions that are under study. Like affected employees, these managers and supervisors are potentially subject to displacement, reassignment, relocation or

**other workforce restructuring actions. It is possible that all Performance Work Statement and Most Efficient Organization team members could be subject to displacement, reassignment, relocation or other workforce restructuring actions.**

24. During the video conference discussion about Congressional legislation, a DOE spokesman stated that even if the Senate passed legislation prohibiting the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) from using quotas, it would not affect the DOE initiative. Obviously, the driver for these A-76 reviews is the OMB quota of 15%. If these quotas are deemed to be illegal by Congress, the requirement for DOE to continue with this effort has been removed. Despite this, DOE plans to continue with the A-76 effort. This is direct evidence that DOE has no intention of trying to protect the employment of Federal workers but have predetermined that positions will be replaced with contractor employees. Why should anyone believe that the A-76 process will be unbiased in this environment?

**Answer:**

**The language in both the House and Senate measures (H. R. 5120 and S. 2740) provides that, "None of the funds made available in this (Treasury and Postal Appropriations) Act may be used by an Executive Agency to establish, apply or enforce any numerical goal, target, or quota for subjecting the employees of the agency to public-private competitions or converting such employees or the work performed by such employees to private contractor performance under Office of Management and Budget Circular A-76 or any other administrative regulation, directive or policy."**

**In its current form, the prohibition called for in the legislation would not directly impact the studies currently underway in DOE. The Circular A-76 program has been utilized by government agencies for over 30 years, including DOE, as a means to achieve greater efficiency. The Department is committed to making government work as effectively as possible on behalf of the American taxpayer. Despite the quota-related provision contained in the Treasury Appropriations bills, there is no indication that the House or Senate is calling for the complete end of the A-76 program or that agencies should completely stop using A-76 and other management tools to streamline their operations.**

25. How does DOE management officials, and the A-76 Team justify their arrogant plan to disregard the intent of the U. S. Congress?

**Answer:**

**There is no plan whatsoever to disregard Congressional mandates on the A-76 program or any other program affecting DOE. If specific limitations are imposed on the Department, then they will be followed.**

26. It has been rumored that DOE Management Officials enthusiastically supports replacing Government workers with contractor personnel. What measures will be undertaken to ensure that prospective bidders with business or personal affiliations with DOE Management Officials will be excluded from the bidder list?

**Answer:**

As has been stated previously, competitive sourcing is not contracting-out. It is a tool aimed at achieving efficiency and ensuring that government does not compete with the business community for work that could or should be performed by the private sector. All DOE Federal and contractor staff involved in A-76 activities and procurements will be required to adhere to all pertinent ethics and procurement-related statutes, regulations and DOE directives throughout the A-76 and related acquisition processes.

27. What measures will be undertaken to ensure that prospective bidders with business or personal affiliations with DOE Management Officials, and/or influential A-76 team members will be excluded from the bidder list?

**Answer:**

All DOE Federal and contractor staff involved in A-76 activities and procurements will be required to adhere to all pertinent ethics and procurement-related statutes, regulations and DOE directives throughout the A-76 and related acquisition processes.

28. During the video conference, several references were made to "successfully" completing the A-76 review. By whose standards will "success" be measured - Office of Management and Budget, DOE Management Officials, displaced workers?

**Answer:**

The Plan of Action and Milestones (POAM) clearly identified "success". The POAM states, "It is the vision of this study that, through the competitive sourcing process, the overall cost to the Government of performing DOE's financial services will be less than today, whether through outsourcing or through implementation of the Most Efficient Organization (MEO). The Performance Work Statement will be structured to provide commercial sources and the Government's MEO Team with the maximum flexibility toward consolidating operations and bring efficient technological solutions to bear."

29. Currently, DOE is developing and planning to implement a new accounting system (BMIS) complex wide. The implementation of this new system will require knowledge of the old system as well as the new system. The estimated implementation date for this new system currently mirrors the expected completion date of the A-76 review. How will it be possible for an external contractor to possess the technical expertise to fulfill the obligations of implementing this new system?

**Answer:**

The Plan of Action and Milestones (POAM) identified this specific concern as one of the study risk areas. Although the POAM risk area write-up is lengthy, in order to answer the question fully, the write-up is repeated here:

"Dynamic Accounting System Operating Environment. The Department's existing 20 year-old accounting system, Departmental Integrated Standardized Core Accounting System (DISCAS), and the related Departmental Financial Reporting System (Management Analysis and Reporting System [MARS]), are being replaced with BMIS-Phoenix. The current strategy is to deploy BMIS-Phoenix in 23 satellite

offices and the three Financial Services Centers. The two systems are several computing generations removed from one another, and the BMIS-Phoenix operating environment will be dramatically unlike the existing environment. Processes, transaction practices, account structures, and accounting conventions will be unlike what we do today. BMIS-Phoenix practices and processes are still being designed, and several major accounting issues have not been resolved. At this time, we anticipate that the Financial Services Study Tentative Decision will be made while the Department is still using DISCAS and MARS. We also anticipate that the successful offeror (i.e., private industry or MEO) will be required to implement BMIS-Phoenix when it becomes available. This could create significant additional work by the successful offeror to implement BMIS-Phoenix, could increase the cost of Financial Services post-study, and could create financial control and integrity issues associated with migrating to a completely different financial system. Our mitigation strategy is to develop close coordination between the Performance Work Statement (PWS) Team and the BMIS-Phoenix Team to assure that the operating environment is understood at the earliest possible time. As mentioned earlier, the PWS Team has members that are also engaged in the BMIS-Phoenix project, and they will facilitate communication and understanding. To the fullest extent, we will incorporate pre-priced options in the solicitation process that will address subsequent implementation of BMIS-Phoenix. And we will thoroughly educate and brief all prospective bidders on the BMIS-Phoenix project and details to assure that they have as full an understanding as possible."

30. If the Government loses the competition, will A-76 team members be prohibited from accepting employment or consulting contracts with the successful bidder?

**Answer:**

Post-Employment (18 U.S.C. 207), Representation (18 U.S.C. 203 and 205) and Procurement Integrity Act (41 U.S.C. 423) restrictions may apply to some A-76 team participants involved in the acquisition process (e.g., source evaluation or selection). Employees should check with their respective DOE Headquarters or Field Ethics Counselor for specific guidance.

31a. If so, for how long after the award of the contract?

**Answer:**

Post-Employment (18 U.S.C. 207), Representation (18 U.S.C. 203 and 205) and Procurement Integrity Act (41 U.S.C. 423) restrictions may apply to some A-76 team participants involved in the acquisition process (e.g., source evaluation or selection). Employees should check with their respective DOE Headquarters or Field Ethics Counselor for specific guidance.

31. Most of the positions selected for study are Oversight and/or Contracting Officer Representative (COR) responsibilities. The purpose is to ensure the taxpayer gets their dollar's worth and the Department gets what they contracted for in support of missions. Is it the intent of the Department to contract out Federal oversight/COR positions?

**Answer:**

**To be provided**

33. If the intent is not to contract Oversight/Contracting Officer Representative duties to the private sector, then why do we continue down a concluded path?

**Answer:**

**To be provided**

34. If the intent is to contract Oversight/Contracting Officer Representative (COR) duties out to the private sector then who will perform Oversight/COR duties over Federal contracts?

**Answer:**

**To be provided**

35. Since the Department's approach to the A-76 process appears to have confused the intended purpose of contracting out the hands-on process with oversight, is there a real intent to downsize personnel using the A-76?

**Answer:**

**To be provided**