

NOAALink User's Quarterly



*Service. Partnership. Commitment.
Where Business and IT Connect.*

Welcome to the inaugural edition of the NOAALink Quarterly Newsletter! NOAALink is committed to not only keeping you informed about the NOAALink Program, but also being a resource for NOAA's IT professionals on the subject of IT acquisition advancements in the Federal environment. NOAALink is proud to launch this Newsletter in support of this commitment, which serves as a catalyst for providing transparent and current communications to the NOAA community.

NOAALink is a program that takes an innovative approach to NOAA's enterprise-wide strategic IT planning and management; with the goal of achieving standardization, alignment, and cost effectiveness in IT products and services. Mandated by NOAA Leadership, NOAALink requires participation from all NOAA Offices.

ON THE RADAR

Enterprise Initiatives Led by the NOAALink Program Office (PO)

Adobe ELA effort

NOAALink is working to establish an Adobe Acrobat Professional Enterprise Level Agreement (ELA), and is seeking participation from all NOAA Line/Staff Offices in this effort. Significant cost savings are anticipated with the successful implementation of this ELA. In order to meet the minimum requirements stipulated by Adobe, the NOAALink PO is actively seeking participants in need of Adobe Acrobat Professional upgrades and new licenses. Those who have upcoming requirements should email the NOAALink PO with quantities and version specifications at NOAALink.Help@noaa.gov.

Application Development and Management Services

NOAALink is in the process of developing a broad Task Order, aiming to consolidate Application Development and Application Management service requirements across the organization in an effort to lower costs and reduce acquisition lead times. Services would be requested through Administrative Modifications (MODs) and would not require a new Task Order issuance.

NOAA IT Cost Saving Initiatives Supported by NOAALink

NOAA has identified the following 4 strategic enterprise-wide cost savings initiatives, intended to improve efficiencies in IT purchasing and governance:

- The Data Center Consolidation Initiative - Aims to develop an actionable plan to consolidate NOAA data center infrastructure.
- The Service Desk Consolidation Initiative - Will facilitate the establishment of a NOAA enterprise wide Tier 1 call center.
- The Enterprise-Wide Security Assessment & Authorization Initiative - Targeted at standardization of the security assessment and authorization process.
- The Desktop and Laptop Management Initiative - Initiated to reduce desktop and laptop acquisition costs. The PC and Accessories Acquisition Portal discussed in the section below is one of the methods developed to meet this objective.

The NOAALink PO provides strategic planning support to the teams leading these efforts. Some ways by which the PO may support these efforts include:

- Managing the acquisition scope, schedule, and risks.
- Managing the coordination of efforts.
- Collaborating with Line/Staff Offices to develop requirements.
- Assessing the NOAA IT pipeline to identify requirements that align with these initiatives.

PC and Accessories Acquisition Portal

NOAALink is supporting the transition to the Department of Commerce's PC and Accessories Acquisition Portal. The portal is expected to be fully operational between late March and early April. Until then NOAA Line/Staff offices have been asked to postpone their PC purchases in order to take full advantage of the significant cost savings anticipated. Please send questions regarding the PC and Accessories Acquisition Portal to: Noaapc.initiative@noaa.gov.

WHAT'S NEW AT NOAALINK?

NOAALink 101 FY 12 Training

The NOAALink Program Office is currently in the process of updating the NOAALink 101 FY12 Training to reflect recent program improvements and policy changes. In order to enhance the quality of information provided and to deliver targeted content to users, the course has been divided into two different sessions. The sessions will be structured to target:

1. Users involved in the pre-award NOAALink process – Those users who will be involved in completing a NOAALink request submission.
2. Users involved in the post-award NOAALink process - Those users who will assume the Task Manager role by monitoring all technical aspects of the contract and assisting in contract administration.

The training schedule will be posted to NOAALink website at http://www.cio.noaa.gov/NOAALink/noaalink_training.html. Please check the website regularly for updates to the training schedule.

For past participants who wish to receive Continuous Learning Points (CLP) for NOAALink 101 Training, please send an email to NOAALink.Help@noaa.gov with NOAALink Certification in the subject line. In your message be sure to include your contact information, date of attendance, and whether you attended via Webinar or in person. Participants can earn 1 CLP for each hour of participation in NOAALink 101 Training.

NOAALink Worksheet

In a step towards continuous program advancements and improvements in efficiency, NOAALink has automated the request submission process. Customers can now initiate their request by accessing the web-based NOAALink Worksheet, and completing the automated form. Once completed the form should be saved as a PDF and directly attached to the C.Request submission, along with all supporting acquisition documents.

MAKING AN ACQUISITION SUCCESSFUL



Completing a Request

The NOAALink Worksheet is the initial step in the request submission process. However completing a request requires entry of a requisition in C.Request. Instructions on how to route and submit a requisition are provided in the Quick Reference User Guide.

NOTE: A Contracting Officer's Representative (COR) must be selected when completing a requisition in C.Request. The selection can be made on the Administration tab in the Recommended COR field, by searching for and selecting either of the following two NOAALink CORs:

- Tracey McCray - TBM
- Catherine Ossi - CDO

NOAALink IT Acquisition Procedures

The NOAALink Contracting Officer (CO) maintains primary decision authority on the ability of a NOAALink Contractor to fulfill a particular requirement. Although NOAALink Contractors will have primary consideration, if it is deemed that a particular requirement cannot be successfully fulfilled by NOAALink Contractors, the CO will identify a suitable alternative. To learn more about NOAALink's scope, review the applicability guidance on the NOAALink website at <http://www.cio.noaa.gov/NOAALink/How%20to%20know%20%20your%20requirement%20is%20right%20for%20NOAALink.html>.

NOAALink CLIN and Accounting Reporting

Follow these guidelines when completing a requisition:

- a. a. In most cases you would only need to use only two or three Contract Line Items (CLIN's) for each Purchase Request. One CLIN should be used for the requirement, even if there are multiple specifications, a separate CLIN for travel if the contractor is expected to travel during the contract period and one CLIN for the NOAALink fee. Always use LT to designate UNIT.
- b. Contract products/services must have "11" in the object4 field of the four-level object class #-##-##-11 (for example 25-23-00-11, 31-23-00-11, etc.).
- c. Separate CLIN(s) for the 3% NOAALink fee in the object class 77-11-00-00.

***Access Object Class Codes by visiting http://www.cio.noaa.gov/NOAALink/docs/NoaaLink_Object_Class_Codes.pdf.

An Independent Government Cost Estimate (IGCE) is required

An IGCE must be submitted in order to create a best estimate as to what a Task should cost. Market Research is required to support data provided on the IGCE, and should be based on publicly available information. Obtaining quotes directly from contractors or manufacturers is not an acceptable method of conducting market research. Examples of acceptable resources that may be used to conduct market research include:

- a. GSA Schedules eLibrary (www.gsaelibrary.gsa.gov) or GSA Advantage! (www.gsaadvantage.gov)
- b. Online research
- c. Catalogues
- d. Historical Data

***Follow AGO guidelines on how to prepare an accurate IGCE at http://www.easc.noaa.gov/APG/Planning/Plan_Docs/NOAA%20Independent%20Government%20Cost%20Estimate%20GUIDE.doc.

MEET THE FACES BEHIND NOAALINK



This quarter meet Michele Heffner, Program Manager and Director, NOAALink Program Office!

As Program Manager and Director, Ms. Heffner manages the overall direction of NOAALink, overseeing all projects within the NOAALink PO. By ensuring sound assessments are made within the PO, she supports the efforts toward continuous improvement of NOAA's acquisition strategy. In doing so, Ms. Heffner guides NOAALink toward its main goal of delivering cost-effective enterprise-wide IT solutions.

RESOURCES

Visit our Website

Visit our Website for the most up-to-date NOAALink information. FAQ's, required documents, and training information are routinely updated for your reference. In order to assure you are viewing the most recent information, be sure to access the site via <http://www.cio.noaa.gov/NOAALink/index.html>.

Email us

If you are unable to find the information you require on our website, or if you need further guidance, please feel free to contact us at NOAALink.Help@noaa.gov.

Join our Mailing List

To receive important updates on program requirements, required documents, and upcoming training sessions, please join our mailing list by sending an email to NOAALink.Help@noaa.gov.