



**U.S. Department of Energy
Hanford Site**

SEP 06 2006

2006I-332

06-OEC-0064

Mr. Todd Martin, Chair
Hanford Advisory Board
713 Jadwin Ave., Suite 4
Richland, Washington 99352

Dear Mr. Martin:

HANFORD ADVISORY BOARD (HAB) CONSENSUS ADVICE #188 – CONTRACT STRATEGY

Thank you for your April 7, 2006 Contracting Strategy Advice #188. The acquisition approach is designed to integrate the needs of both U.S. Department of Energy, Richland Operations Office (RL) and Office of River Protection (ORP) into a group of coordinated contracts that will provide continued cleanup of legacy waste on the Hanford Site Central Plateau.

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) appreciates that the Board acknowledges the sensitivities of the procurement process. DOE is required to conduct its acquisitions in accordance with the Federal acquisition laws and regulations – including the Procurement Integrity Act that establishes the requirements for non-disclosure of what is called *Source Selection Information*. Under these laws and regulations, an acquisition starts with the earliest identification of a requirement; includes acquisition planning (evaluation of solutions to meet requirements); and continues through the receipt of proposals, evaluation of proposals, and contract award.

We have begun the acquisition and are preparing acquisition plans and documents. Acquisition plans and documents are considered Source Selection Information prior to formal release – and we are prohibited from disclosing source selection information under the Procurement Integrity Act. Information that can be released early during the acquisition process is called *Exchanges with Industry*. The purpose of these exchanges is to improve the understanding of Government requirements and industry capabilities. These exchanges allow industry to determine if they can satisfy the requirements – to enhance the Government's ability to obtain quality services at a reasonable price – and increase efficiency in the acquisition process. The method that DOE uses to communicate to all prospective bidders – and at the same time – is to use the DOE E Center (www.pr.doe.gov) and FedBizOpps (www.fbo.gov).


As stated in your advice, DOE has not provided the rationale for the partitioning of the inter-related and co-located workscope. As provided in the response to advice #182, the new contracts will reflect the lessons learned from recent Office of Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management contracts and will address the Government Accountability Office recommendations. In addition, HAB advice and values have been fully considered including incorporating safety at all levels of contract performance; worker safety; fair treatment of employees; impacts to cleanup progress; deliver results; and meet Tri-Party Agreement

SEP 06 2006

commitments. Following award of the contracts we would be happy to discuss the rationale and how the HAB's advice was considered in the contract acquisitions at Hanford.

Although the Board's advice raises several important values of the Board for us to consider, DOE remains interested in receiving additional input from the Board as discussed at the Budgets and Contracts Committee. Some of the opportunities for information and HAB advice include the January 2006 DOE E-Center Announcement, Hanford Central Plateau Acquisition; timely input on the draft Requests for Proposals; and communication summaries (also known as award synopsis) particularly the effectiveness of the post-award summary. Your advice only states that DOE should make contract procurement communication summaries publicly available – which are available to the public on the FedBizOpps website.

DOE remains committed to meeting Tri-Party Agreement milestones using the most effective contracts. We appreciate that the Board has provided advice, ensuring stakeholder values are considered. The Department remains committed to keeping the HAB involved and informed and to seeking advice that will best assist us as we define the new Hanford contracts. If you have any further questions, please contact Leif Erickson at (509) 376-7272 or Shirley Olinger, Deputy Manager, ORP at (509) 372-3062.


Roy J. Schepens, Manager
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Keith A. Klein, Manager
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cc: See Page 3