

**FAQ Sheet On Offeror Proposal Submission Under The GSA Environmental Solicitation**  
**TFTP-EW-990899-B Refresh #5**  
(Revised as of 8/26/04)  
**Worldwide Federal Supply Schedule For**  
**Environmental Services**  
**FSC Group 899**

**GENERAL QUESTIONS REGARDING THE OFFER**

**Q:** During the process of completing an offer when a new solicitation is issued, do I have to submit under the new version?

**A: No, if the offer is received no later than 30 days after the posting of the newer version, then you may submit your offer under the previous solicitation. If more than 30 days have passed, then you must submit under the newest solicitation.**

**Q:** Can the document be hand written or must it be typed?

**A: Responses can be hand written. However, GSA recommends that the responses be typed in order to add clarity to the proposal submission.**

**Q:** GSA addresses construction services through the Public Building Services (PBS). Can a Multiple Award Schedule cover certain types of construction such as specific electrical repairs, installation, etc.?

**A: Construction work is outside the scope of all the Special Item Numbers (SINs) under the Environmental Services Schedule 899 and all other Multiple Award Schedules. This also includes subcontracting. There are however, instances on other schedules where electrical work would be considered incidental to the project. For instance, on the General Products schedule, the purchase of a piece of equipment may require installation and hookup. The installation and hookup (an electrical connection, for example) are considered incidental to the purchase of the equipment and are allowed.**

**COVER PAGE TO OFFER: (Page iv)**

**Q:** On the “Cover Page to Offer” page regarding “Each Authorized Negotiator’s Name, Title and Phone Number” – is this asking for the name of the person filling out the application or the names of any employees that will be negotiating a federal contract after we have a GSA contract?

**A: A firm must identify the personnel authorized to hold discussions and obligate the firm both during the evaluation phase and during the life of the contract. This point of contact**

(POC) can be someone other than the person signing the 1449 and is often referred to as Contract Administrator. In some cases, there may be more than one POC.

Q: On the “**Cover Page to Offer**” page regarding “Aggregate Estimated Government Sales Per Contract Year in dollars” – is this the dollar amount we hope to do per year or the dollar amount we have done over the past year? Also, does government sales include state, city, and county work?

**A: This is the Aggregate Estimated federal Government Sales Per Contract Year that you expect to do under the Environmental Schedule Contract. This amount should also be equal to the NAICS total sales in A2 on page 2 and the SIN total sales in paragraph (2) of Attachment 3 on page 118.**

Q: Since we do not have a particular work order in mind, how should we estimate our “Anticipated Aggregate Estimated Government Sales Per Contract Year”? Can we provide a range as opposed to an exact amount?

**A: The amount is a best guess based on your anticipated sales to the government but cannot be a range.**

Q: Given that we provide services as opposed to products, is it necessary that we accept the Government wide Commercial Purchase Card?

**A: Yes, the requirement applies to services as well as products.**

Q: Other than possible exceptions to the terms and conditions, what other information needs to be included in the cover letter?

**A: Nothing.**

#### **OFFEROR CHECKSHEET: (Page v)**

Q: Do we include only the pages listed on the **checksheet**?

**A: Section I, Administrative Proposal, should include all documents from the Cover Page to Offer through and including attachments 1, 2, 3, 4 (if you are a large business) and 6.**

**Q:** Should Sections I, II, and III of the proposal be submitted as three separate documents? For a paper submittal should each be comb-bound or in binders?

**A:** It isn't necessary that the three sections be placed in separate binders. They can all be placed in one binder and tabbed or just tabbed with no binder. The important thing is that we receive all the proper paperwork.

**Q:** On the **Offeror Checksheet** of the GSA Environmental Services Solicitation under Section II Experience, there is a request for "a copy of our audited annual report, an audited consolidated financial statement, or other such information that demonstrates the company's financial stability." Upon searching through the solicitation, I did not find a place that requested that specific information, and I would like to get more details on the format and specific content requirements of such a report. When I presented this piece to our Financial Manager, she offered to provide a range of materials but wanted to know specifically what you were looking for to ensure our response is appropriate.

**A:** Unfortunately you're not going to find any other specific information in the solicitation telling you exactly what we're looking for in this area. If you don't have an audited financial annual report or audited financial statement, a copy of your company's latest balance sheet and/or income statement will suffice. As it mentions in the Offeror Checksheet, GSA is just trying to obtain information regarding your company's financial stability.

**Q:** Should the completed application be organized according to the Offeror Checksheet or the way it was originally received? Example: Under Section I/Administrative on the Offeror Checksheet, Attachment 3 is before page 21 and page 26 is listed after page 60.

**A:** The way it was originally received.

**Q:** (Section III/Pricing) To whom should we send the electronic version of the pricing section, and do we only send that section or would they prefer the entire application?

**A:** To the address shown in provision F10, B. It is your choice whether to submit the entire offer electronically or not. You may also submit your pricing on a CD or floppy disk if you submit a hard copy of your offer.

**Q:** (Section I/Administrative) Where should the signature be placed on the Offeror Checksheet?

**A: You don't need to sign the Offeror Checksheet, only the Cover Page to Offer and the SF 1449.**

## **SF 1449**

Q: Under item number 12 – Discount Terms, what is a standard discount for environmental services?

**A: This is a prompt payment discount and if no discount is entered then the payment terms default to Net 30 days.**

Q: Under A.2 (Page 2) there is a request to complete the following table indicating **estimated average annual sales** applicable to our proposed SINs. The table below is asking for the estimated average annual sales of the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) code that represents the preponderance of sales of the two NAICS codes listed. How do I address this in the table?

**A: The table asks for the estimated average annual sales .....because some firms provide services under both NAICs (multiple SINs), and size determination is then based upon "preponderance". Firms offering services that impact both NAICS should then identify monetary value for each NAIC which adds as support for NAIC/Size determination. Based on SBA Size Standards rules described in the previous question, data you enter in the table will be used by GSA to determine the size of your business.**

Q: Under B.5 page 9 regarding the requests for schedules of training courses, we usually provide prices on a per person basis. Can I use a per person price for that section (page 9)? Also, the prices are based on the assumption that the client would be coming to one of our facilities for a class. If our one of our trainers has to go to another facility, we will charge an extra fee for meals, lodging and additional expenses, is this just assumed or am I to add that price into the class price?

**A: You can provide a "per person" price for classes but you should also provide a minimum number of students and a cost for each additional student. Regarding the second part of your question; travel, meals and lodging are reimbursed by the ordering agency (see provision E.8, paragraph (b) of the solicitation). If there are other costs (you mention additional expenses), you would need to identify what they are and how much**

Q: Under B5, (Page 11) Under SIN 899-99: Introduction of New Services. If we are not planning to introduce new services, do we need to state this, and if so, where?

**A: No, this SIN is for new services that would fall within the scope of the Environmental Schedule but are not included under any of the other SINs.**

## **C.5 SCOPE OF CONTRACT-WORLDWIDE (c): Page 17**

**Q:** Regarding the geographic requirements of the environmental solicitation, we have capabilities limited to the State of California, can we bid on this solicitation solely within our geographic area, or are we required to have capabilities "world-wide"?

**A:** In your situation you would check the box for domestic delivery only. However, once you are contracted, you would respond to a Request For Quote (RFQ) only from those agencies located within the state of California.

## **CLAUSE C.24 CONTRACT PRICE LISTS**

**Q:** On Page 29, C.24 (b)(1), Federal Supply Schedule Price List – To whom do we distribute this list and is this distribution part of the application process? If it were not part of the application process, when would we distribute this list?

**A:** You would distribute the price list after award, and we will furnish you with a mailing list at time of award.

**Q:** On 29, C.24 (b)(2)(ii). Federal Supply Schedule Price List – Since we are providing professional services, I am assuming we will create our own price list. Given that assumption, what are the "items, terms and conditions accepted by the Government"?

**A:** This is referring to awards that are based on an offeror's Commercial Price List (CPL), however, we are aware that not all offeror's have Commercial Price Lists.

**Q:** On page 29 / C.24 (b)(2)(ii) Federal Supply Schedule Price List – This paragraph states "the Contractor must show on the cover page the notation "Prices Shown Herein are Net (discount deducted)", are they referring to the GSA Application cover page or the Federal Supply Schedule Price List?

**A:** No, if the rates were based on an offeror's CPL, they are typically discounted to GSA and it is the discounted rates that paragraph is referring to.

**Q:** Page 29 / C.24 (b)(3) Federal Supply Schedule Price List – Do we need to include a completed version of the Federal Supply Schedule Price List Cover Page even though we are not currently

pursuing work under this schedule or is this an example of what we will need to include for future work?

**A: This is a document you will prepare after award and we will send you a sample copy with the award.**

Q: On Page 32 / C.24 (b)(9) Federal Supply Schedule Price List – Since we only provide services and not products, should we respond by stating “Not Applicable (N/A)” to the blanks asking for Mailing List Code, Commodity Code, and Approximate No of Copies?

**A: You can just leave them blank.**

## **CLAUSE C25 ELECTRONIC COMMERCE – FACNET**

Q: On Page 33 / C.25 (c) Do contractors typically register through their VAN before or after they have submitted the GSA application?

**A: It is something that can be done at any time.**

## **CLAUSE D1 CONTRACT TERMS AND CONDITIONS REQUIRED TO IMPLEMENT STATUTES OR EXECUTIVE ORDERS – COMMERCIAL ITEMS**

Q: Page 48 / D.1 (b) Do we need to provide copies of our policies to give proof of compliance with the indicated statutes and/or executive orders or is a signature of our understanding proof enough at this stage?

**A: By signing your offer on the SF 1449 you agree to the terms and conditions set forth in the solicitation.**

## **CLAUSE D2 STATEMENT OF EQUIVALENT RATES FOR FEDERAL HIRES (52.222-42)(MAY 1989) (Page 51)**

Q: Page 51 of Solicitation; Section D.2 includes a table referencing "Employee Class" which uses a five-digit number. I assumed that this is correlated to the Federal Position Classification Plan, but it does not seem to as that system uses a four-digit number. Is there a different Employee Classification table that I should be using?

**A: The Employee Class number comes from the Department of Labor, and their Directory of**

**Occupations.** You can access them on-line at [www.dol.gov](http://www.dol.gov) and search using “directory of occupations”.

#### **CLAUSE F.2 PREPARATION OF OFFER (Pages 54 – 64)**

Q: We do not have a **published price list** as requested on page 57 of the schedule (F.2 c.1). What kind of documentation is required to show our pricing schedule?

**A.: For offeror's, who do not have commercial price lists, please see Section III - Pricing, paragraph (c) on page 63. The supporting information could consist of copies of invoices, contracts, or purchase orders that show the same labor categories as you've proposed to GSA.**

#### **CLAUSE F10 SUBMISSION OF PROPOSAL GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS**

Q: Page 61 (B)(1) what is the preferred format to demonstrate that our proposed pricing is fair, reasonable, and supportable?

**A: You can either provide a narrative discussion of why you feel your rates are fair and reasonable or a table comparing your rates with competitor's rates, etc.**

Q: On Page 61 / F.10 (B)(2) How would we indicate that we are offering the Most Favored Customer (MFC) pricing?

**A: Tell us who your most favored customer is now, what rates they are charged, and support those rates in some fashion such as copies of invoices.**

#### **CLAUSE F11 PROPOSAL INSTRUCTIONS (L-FSS-10FT-502 Pages 62**

##### **SECTION II: Experience (Pages 62 – 63)**

###### **Corporate Experience (Page 62)**

Q: Since we are offering professional services, we will need to submit a Professional Compensation Plan. What exact information are you looking for? Is it referring to salary, 401K, medical/dental, vacation, etc... policies?

**A: Yes, tell us about your companies salary, 401K, etc.**

**Q:** How detailed should the project descriptions be, given that we have a total of 3 pages?

**A:** It should be detailed enough so that we can tell from your corporate experience that you are able to perform the services you are offering to the Government on the schedule.

**Q:** Are current projects acceptable or do they need to have been completed?

**A:** We prefer recently completed projects but one or two on-going projects are acceptable.

**Q:** What is "direct charge employees" as stated in 52.237-10 Identification of Uncompensated Overtime?

**A:** Employees that are directly involved in the work and not part of a general and administrative (G&A) cost or overhead cost.

**Q:** In reference to "page limits" for Corporate Experience, when pursuing multiple SINs, how does this fit into the "3 pages per SIN" concept, and how is this different from information required in the "executive summary"?

**A:** Corporate experience is limited to three (3) pages per SIN. However, when combining SINs you could exceed three pages if necessary. The key to remember is that this area is used to evaluate your ability to perform the services you are offering that is demonstrated in narrative provided by your firm. This differs from the executive summary in that your summary should provide a narrative of what services you are intending to provide and how you intend to execute any resultant work.

**Q:** Can the previous experience of our employees be included in the Corporate Experience section? For example, Jane Doe has 12 years of experience providing occupational training services, but she has only been at with us for one of those years. Can we use her experience at another firm to prove that we can provide this service?

**A:** Yes, that would be acceptable.

**Q:** In Section II Experience, under subheading Corporate Experience, can one project be submitted

in representation of more than one Special Item Number (SIN)?

**A: Yes, you may submit one project for more than one SIN. Make sure that the project identifies which SINs.**

Q: Under **project experience**, would it be better for us to use individual project experience or multiple projects for the same client, i.e. we have a hospital as a client and we provide on-going service for different areas of the hospital throughout the year?

**A: Individual project experience is generally better but that is not a hard-and-fast rule**

Q: (Section II/Experience) How detailed should the description of our segregating and tracking costs system be? Do you simply need to know the name of the software and that it is capable of handling tracking and segregation?

**A: Just a general description of the software/accounting system and its capabilities.**

Q: Under “Corporate Experience” of the solicitation there are requirements to submit a **Professional Compensation Plan** in accordance with Clause 52.222-46 and to submit a copy of the offeror’s policy that addresses uncompensated overtime in accordance with Clause 52.237-10. Where do I find these clauses since they are not printed out in the solicitation?

**A: Go to the National Archives and Records Administration’s website of Electronic Code of Federal Regulations e-CFR located at: [www.gpoaccess.gov/ecfr](http://www.gpoaccess.gov/ecfr). Select: Title 48; Browse Part 52.**

**You will find the Compensation Plan information under paragraph (b) of Clause 52.222-46 and the Overtime information under paragraph (b) of Clause 52.237-10.**

Q: Under “Corporate Experience”, Clause 52.222-46 (a) is asking for supporting information for our **Compensation Plan**. Where do we find this data, surveys, etc. asked for in this paragraph?

**A: A firm needs to identify the source or basis used to create their Compensation plan. (e.g. methodologies, sources used)**

Q: In reference Section II Experience, under subheading Corporate Experience, is the **page limit** for this section three pages per SIN offered? As an example, if offering on four SINs, would the page limit for describing projects similar in size and complexity be limited to 12 pages.

**A: The page limit is three pages per SIN offered. So the total page limit for four SINs would be 12 pages.**

Q: In reference Section II Experience, under subheading Corporate Experience, should the **narrative** be limited to describing projects completed in the last three years, or can additional narrative about representative environmental services be submitted?

**A: You can add some general information with the specific projects if you feel that it is relevant.**

### **Past Performance: (Page 63)**

Q: We will shortly submit our past performance to open ratings. How long does it take to go through the **process to contract award?**

**A: When a request has been submitted to Open Ratings Inc. (ORI), a copy of the results is transmitted to GSA within 2-3 weeks. Once offer and rating are received, the evaluation process normally takes approximately 90-120 days. Delays encountered are often due to receipt of an incomplete offer and/or workload of individual contract specialists.**

Q: In reference to Section II Experience, under the subheading Past Performance, will GSA accept a **past performance evaluation form** submitted to Open Ratings, Inc. with a date of submission prior to issuance of the “refreshed” solicitation if there was no change in project information being submitted in response to the older version of the solicitation?

**A: GSA will accept the past performance with a date of submission prior to issuance of the “refreshed” solicitation. We prefer it only be within the past 6 months, but we will accept up to the past 6 – 12 months.**

Q: For the past performance evaluation, do we have to include the DUNS number and contract number?

**A: If you do not have relevant corporate past performance, then we do our own evaluation with the references that you provide to us. When we contact your references, we need the contract number in order to identify the work you did. The DUNS number is not required. However, if you do have corporate experience and you are sending to Open Ratings, Inc., then**

**include the contract number in order to identify the work and the DUNS number if it was work for another company that has one.**

**Q:** On page 75 – 78 of the solicitation regarding “**Past Performance Report** – Please provide 20 of your customers to be surveyed”, my understanding is that we don’t need to fill this portion out if we have submitted a “Past Performance Evaluation” to Open Ratings. Is this correct?

**A:** **Although the Open Rating Incorporated (ORI) rating has been requested, a firm must still provide the list that was submitted to ORI. This list is often used to contact the references for additional information as related to past performance.**

### **SECTION III: PRICING: (Pages 63 – 64)**

**Q:** For Section III--Pricing, should the solicitation pages 63-64 (Application of Escalation Clauses to Proposed Hourly Rates) be filled out and included in the document, or is this information just supposed to be incorporated somewhere into the price proposal?

**A: You can just incorporate the requested information somewhere in your price proposal. Our intent was to bring this clause and its options to the attention of all offerors whose pricing is not based on a commercial price list.**

**Q:** On Page 63, how detailed do the descriptions of the labor categories need to be? Are you simply looking for education and years of experience requirements or for a detailed explanation of job responsibilities?

**A: A general description of job responsibilities along with the education and experience.**

**Q:** On Page 63, How detailed should the description of the proposed annual rate of escalation be?

**A: Show us what you are basing your proposed rate of escalation on. We’re looking for more than just a proposed rate. We want to know how you determined it.**

**Q:** On Page 64 Pricing (a) (2), do we need to provide a copy of the Market Indicator or is filling in the blanks enough?

**A: The escalation rate for (a)(1) and (a)(2) is an either/or – we're asking you to choose one or the other.**

Q: Does GSA have a **standard labor category list** that we should use for pricing on our proposal?

**A: No, we don't have a list of standard labor categories as we try to allow our offerors the flexibility to classify their labor categories in a way that best suits their needs.**

Q: I do most of my non-government work under fixed-price contracts. I would like to submit two or three commercial invoices and attach cost breakdowns to demonstrate my **pricing justification**. Will that meet your requirement?

**A: If the invoices you will provide only show a lump sum and the cost breakdown will show hours and a labor rate or how you arrived at the lump sum, than that would be acceptable.**

Q: As a one-person operation I will not have examples of other **labor categories**. Anticipating growth over the next few years, I would like to include other labor categories in my proposal. In order to provide additional justification for additional labor categories, can I use prices from competitors that are available on the Internet?

**A: Our general rule is additional labor categories are acceptable if they will be needed in the near future (a year). Otherwise, all our contractors have the ability to request a contract modification anytime after award to add new labor categories as they are hired or become necessary.**

Q: How and when do we **price materials**?

**A: We ask that you price materials if they typically exceed \$2500 on any given job and they can generally be priced in a manner that follows your standard commercial practice.**

Q: How is **travel** paid for?

**A: Travel is generally directly reimbursed by the ordering agency, but please see paragraph (b) of Provision E.8 of the solicitation entitled, Contractor Tasks/Special Requirements.**

**Q:** Is there a difference between **firm-fixed price vs. labor hour task orders** as to what information our submission/application needs to include?

**A:** **No there is no difference in the information you provide. The deciding factor is your accounting system and whether or not it is capable of segregating and tracking task orders on an hourly basis.**

**Q:** Do **costs for equipment and materials, subcontracted services, or related costs** need to be included, and/or is it advantageous to try to provide costs for a long list of possible billable items despite the fact that they may seldom be used?

**A: Equipment and materials costs, etc. for frequently used items are desired.**

**Q:** Are **equipment and/or materials costs** required for SIN 899-8 (remediation services)?

**A: Equipment and/or material costs are desired but not required.**

**Q:** What is the level of detail required for the "**accounting system**" description and is submission of a timesheet needed?

**A: Just a general description of your accounting system is all that is needed with a statement as to whether or not it can segregate and track individual elements of price.**

**Q:** I do most of my non-government work under fixed-price contracts. I would like to submit two or three commercial invoices and attach cost breakdowns to demonstrate my pricing justification. Will that meet your requirement?

**A: If the invoices you will provide only show a lump sum, and the cost breakdown will show hours and a labor rate or how you arrived at the lump sum, that would be acceptable.**

**Q:** Being a one-person operation, I will not have examples of other labor categories. But I anticipate growth over the next few years and would like to include other labor categories in my proposal. If I do not include other labor categories, I will not be able to grow or effectively compete against larger

companies. Do you need additional justification for the other labor categories? If so, can I use prices from competitors that are available on the Internet?

**A: Our general rule is that additional labor categories are acceptable if they will be needed in the near future (a year). Otherwise, you have the ability to request a contract modification anytime after award to add new labor categories as they are hired or become necessary. We will need additional justification for the other labor categories and their rates. Supporting information such as competitor's rates is acceptable, but the rates you propose should be competitive for your area of the country and bear a relationship to education and experience requirements as well.**

Q: What type of supporting documentation for the Commercial Sales Practice Format is expected?

**A: Copies of invoices, contracts, or purchase orders showing the labor category and rates.**

Q: What type of information should be included in our discussion of why we believe our pricing is fair and reasonable and how it relates to most favored customer pricing?

**A: You can either provide a narrative discussion of why you feel your rates are fair and reasonable or a table comparing your rates with competitor's rates, etc.**

Q: Regarding Other Direct Costs (ODCs): We will be submitting various labor categories with associated rates but would also like to submit some typical ODCs that we normally incur as part of our current environmental tasks and which we expect to incur in the future. For example, there are items such as cameras, field equipment and other supplies that we have used in developing environmental assessments, studies of endangered species, etc. We expect that in the future we would use this type of equipment, but it may not be exactly the type we purchased last month or last year. It could subject to change depending upon specific requirements and what is available in the marketplace (as gear improves for example we may want to purchase more capable or more sturdy equipment). Can you advise us how to submit and price such items?

**A: Pricing of ODCs is really not too much different from pricing the labor rates that are based on current conditions. So your rates should be based on what you currently use and have in-house. If you have a commercial price list that you use to price ODCs, then adjustments in price for the ODCs would also be subject to the Economic Price Adjustment (EPA) clause in the contract. If you don't have a CPL for the ODCs, then price adjustments are made in accordance with the EPA clause at provision C.31. We also realize there are changes in the market place. New items can be added to the contract under the modifications clause in much the same way as new labor categories.**

**Q:** Regarding SINs applied for: We believe we are extremely well qualified in three SIN areas and well qualified in one SIN area. Our preference would be to submit a proposal for all four SINs at this time, but we also do not want to jeopardize our submission as a whole if you don't think we are qualified under a specific SIN. What is your advice on this?

**A:** If we do not think you are qualified under a particular SIN, it doesn't affect the SINs for which you are qualified. We would just ask you to withdraw your offer for that SIN and continue the evaluation of those SINs we find acceptable.

## **H.1 OFFEROR REPRESENTATION AND CERTIFICATION – COMMERCIAL ITEMS: Page 65**

**Q:** H.1 (c) (8) (i) and (ii) on page 68 asks that information be submitted if this solicitation has been identified as being in one of the four **designated industry groups (DIGs)** or one of the **targeted industry categories (TICs)**. Does the Environmental solicitation fall into one of these two categories?

**A:** No, this solicitation does not fall into either these two categories. Under (8) (i), you can enter N/A. Under (8) (ii) (B), you can enter N/A.

## **ATTACHMENT 2 (Page 79)**

**Q:** Is Attachment 2--Index of Register of Wage Determination Under the Service Contract Act just provided for our information or are we supposed to include it somewhere in one of the sections? How do we use this information?

**A:** Attachment 2 should be included with your Administrative Proposal, as it will become part of the resultant contract. This index lists all the Service Contract Act wage determinations that apply to this solicitation (see the NOTE on page 50 under "Addendum to 52.212-5"). The Service Contract Act establishes minimum wages and fringe benefits for service employees for work performed under any task orders issued under the resultant contract. You need to access the wage determination(s) for those areas where you believe you will be performing work (or the high cost areas if you aren't sure where you will be performing). You will need to assure that the rates you propose for those classes of employees subject to the Act meet or exceed the minimums set forth in the particular wage determination.

## **ATTACHMENT 3 (Page 118)**

**Q:** Regarding Attachment 3 Commercial Sales Practices Format -- Could you give a **clearer definition of (4)(a) & (b)?**- What does it mean, and how do we fill it out?

**A:** Paragraph 4 is asking for information on prices you charge your "Most Favored Customer(s) (MFC)" with discounts, etc. Column 5 is information on prices you are proposing to charge GSA under this schedule/solicitation and the purpose is to compare the rates you charge your MFC to those you are proposing to GSA.

**Q:** Commercial Sales Practices Format (1) Given that we only provides services, not products, how should we complete this form? Are you requesting our revenue for last year?

**A:** We are requesting your revenue from last year. This form is basically asking you provide information on your most favored customer(s) so you would fill out the form with this in mind.

**Q:** Commercial Sales Practices Format (3) we will be offering our best rates, but how do we demonstrate this given that we do not sell a product?

**A:** By telling us who currently receives your best rates and what those rates are and support them with copies of invoices, contracts, purchase orders, etc.

**Q:** Commercial Sales Practices Format (2), Question 2 requests our "total projected annual sales to the Government under this contract for the contract term". What time period is the "contract term" referring to (1 year, 5 years, 20 years)? How should we determine this amount given that we do not currently have a contract?

**A:** We are asking for annual sales. This amount must coincide with the amount you've shown on the Cover Page to offer and in provision A.2 on page 2. Again, it is just a "best guess".

**Q:** Commercial Sales Practices Format (4)(a), Assuming that we should answer Yes to question 3, how should we respond to question 4? Since we do not provide a product, it is almost impossible to determine a quantitative measure for the services we provide to each of our clients. How do you recommend we respond to questions 4(a), 4(b), and 4(c)?

**A:** You can put N/A in the quantity/volume column but we are looking for a comparison of what you charge your most favored customer versus what you are proposing to GSA

**SMALL BUSINESS SUBCONTRACTING PLAN: (Attachment 4, Page 120)**

**Q:** We are preparing an Offer and **question whether we need to provide** a Subcontracting plan at this time. The Offeror's checklist says "if applicable" (we are a large business under this NAICS, so that this could possibly be applicable) but the solicitation instructions imply that it is needed when a contract is awarded.

**A:** **As a large business you are required to submit a small business subcontracting plan with your offer. Since small businesses are exempt from this requirement we used the term "if applicable".**

**Q:** On Page 126 regarding the small business-subcontracting plan in section 2. GOALS of the template-subcontracting plan, offerors are required to state separate dollar and percentage goals for the various small business types. In the template, there are boxes entitled "**BASE**", "**1st Option**", "**2nd Option**", and "**3rd Option**". What do these boxes mean, and what do I put in each box?

**A:** **The contract will have a five year "Base Period" and three, five year "Option Periods". In the boxes put what you estimate you will subcontract under the contract for each one of those periods.**

**Q:** Since we are a small business do we need to state this as a reason for not completing Attachment 4 or is that already assumed based on our answers to the questions on the Cover Page to Offer?

**A:** **It's assumed based on your business size checked on the Cover Page to Offer and the Reps. & Certs. completed at H.1 (page 65).**

## ALTERNATIVE FUEL VEHICLE (AFV) PROGRAM FAQS

### What is an AFV?

An alternative fuel vehicle, frequently referred to by the acronym “AFV,” is defined by the Energy Policy Act of 1992 (EPACT) as a vehicle capable of operating on any one of the following alternative fuels:

“methanol, denatured ethanol, mixtures containing up to 85% methanol or denatured ethanol, natural gas, propane (liquefied petroleum gas), biodiesel, hydrogen, and electricity.”

There are a number of different AFV fuel system configurations:

1. **Dedicated AFVs** – These vehicles have one fuel system that operates only on the alternative fuel.  
*Examples: compressed natural gas (CNG) or electric.*
2. **Bi-Fuel AFVs** – These vehicles have two separate fuel systems; one for the alternative fuel and one for gasoline.  
*Examples: CNG/Gasoline and Liquid Propane Gas (LPG)/Gasoline*
3. **Flex-Fuel AFVs** – These vehicles have one fuel system that can operate on either the alternative fuel, gasoline, or any combination of the two up to 85% of the alternative fuel.  
*Examples: Ethanol (E85) and Methanol (M85)*

### What are the AFV acquisition requirements for the Federal Government?

EPACT mandates Federal agencies to acquire a certain percentage of their annual light duty vehicle (Gross Vehicle Weight Rating of less than 8,500 pounds) acquisitions as AFVs. Since 1999, agencies are required to obtain 75% of their annual light duty acquisitions as AFVs. EPACT applies to Federal fleets of 20 or more vehicles located in Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs) that are capable of being centrally fueled. Exempt from the mandate are law enforcement vehicles, emergency vehicles, nonroad vehicles, medium duty vehicles, and heavy duty vehicles.

Compliance with EPACT is met by AFV acquisition credits, which are granted based on the number of AFVs acquired and the quantity of biodiesel fuel used:

- 1 Light Duty AFV = 1 EPACT AFV Credit
- 1 Light Duty Dedicated AFV = 2 EPACT AFV Credits
- 1 Dedicated Medium Duty AFV = 3 EPACT AFV Credits
- 1 Dedicated Heavy Duty AFV = 4 EPACT AFV Credits
- 1 Bi-fuel or Flex-fuel Medium or Heavy Duty AFV = 1 EPACT AFV Credit
- 1 Zero Emission Vehicle = 1 Additional EPACT AFV Credit
- 2,250 gallons of biodiesel (B20) used = 1 EPACT AFV Credit

### What vehicles are considered capable of being centrally fueled?

Light duty vehicles that are refueled at least 75% of the time at a location that is owned, operated, or controlled by any fleet, or under contract with that fleet for refueling purposes are considered capable of being centrally fueled. GSA Fleet leased vehicles supplied with a fuel purchase card fall into this category.

### **What is the purpose of EPACT and Executive Order 13149?**

EPACT and Executive Order (E.O.) 13149, *Greening the Government through Federal Fleet and Transportation Efficiency*, strive to reduce the United States' dependence on foreign sources of petroleum to increase energy security and reduce pollution. E.O. 13149 requires Federal agency fleets to reduce their annual petroleum consumption by at least 20% by the end of Fiscal Year (FY) 2005 compared with FY1999 petroleum consumption levels. Recommended strategies by the E.O. to meeting this goal are increasing their fleet's average fuel economy by three miles per gallon by FY2005 compared with FY1999 fuel economy and using alternative fuels the majority of the time in AFVs.

### **Are hybrid electric vehicles (HEVs) considered AFVs?**

Currently, HEVs are not classified as AFVs. Federal agencies do not receive EPACT AFV credits for HEV acquisitions. However, these fuel efficient vehicles assist agencies in meeting E.O. 13149 mandates to reduce petroleum consumption.

### **Are there any reporting requirements for EPACT or E.O. 13149?**

Yes, there are reporting requirements for both legislative mandates.

Each Federal agency is required to report vehicle acquisition, inventory, fuel economy, and petroleum and alternative fuel consumption data to the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) using the online [Federal Automotive Statistical Tool](#) (FAST).

Federal agencies are also required to provide an annual written compliance report to Congress by November 13, starting in FY 1999 and continuing for the next 14 years. The report must address compliance with the requirements of EPACT and related Executive Orders. This report must be placed on a publicly available web site, and its availability must be published in the Federal Register.

For more information on FAST, visit <http://fastweb.inel.gov>.

### **Does GSA Fleet provide Federal Automotive Statistical Tool (FAST) data to its customer agencies?**

Yes, GSA Fleet provides FAST data in the beginning of November for the previous fiscal year.

If you have questions about GSA Fleet's FAST data, please contact either Forrest King at 703-305-6771 or Katie Miller at 703-305-5973.

### **Where can I refuel my AFV?**

The Department of Energy's [Alternative Fuel Data Center](#) maintains a comprehensive website of alternative fuel stations across the country. The website provides addresses and maps of alternative fuel stations for all AFVs.

### **Is GSA Fleet a mandatory source of vehicle leasing for the Federal Government?**

No, GSA Fleet is not a mandatory source of vehicle leasing for the Federal Government. Federal agencies have the option of procuring their own fleet, commercially leasing, or leasing vehicles from GSA Fleet.

### **Can the public lease AFVs from GSA Fleet?**

GSA Fleet leases vehicles only to Federal government agencies and qualified contractors. The public may purchase pre-owned vehicles through GSA Fleet's public vehicle auctions. Visit <http://www.autoauctions.gsa.gov/> for more information.

### **How many AFVs has GSA Fleet acquired?**

GSA Fleet has purchased over 68,000 AFVs. GSA Fleet has purchased more AFVs directly from the original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) than any other single organization in the United States.

### **How much does it cost to lease an AFV from GSA Fleet?**

The monthly lease rate of an AFV varies by vehicle type and from year to year. For this reason, GSA Fleet publishes new AFV lease information at the beginning of each fiscal year (FY). GSA Fleet's FY04 AFV Product Guide, which provides pricing information, is available at [FY2004 AFV Product Guide](#).

### **What is an AFV incremental cost?**

The AFV incremental cost is the amount of money that an AFV costs as compared to the low bid for a conventional vehicle in a like vehicle class.

## **Why does GSA Fleet charge customers the AFV incremental cost?**

In 1996, Executive Order 13031, *Federal Alternative Fueled Vehicle Leadership*, removed AFV funding from DOE and placed the financial burden of funding AFVs on the individual agencies. GSA Fleet operates on a revolving capital fund, does not receive appropriations from Congress to pay for AFVs, and pays cash for its vehicles. GSA Fleet does not have borrowing authority if it runs out of funds. GSA Fleet typically purchases conventional gasoline vehicles, and AFVs in general have a higher purchase price. The vehicle rates for conventional gasoline vehicles are not set to generate the cost of the higher priced AFVs.

Additionally, GSA Fleet builds in the replacement cost of the vehicle when the rates are constructed to ensure funds are available for GSA to purchase a similar vehicle when the vehicle's lease ends. GSA Fleet must pay the full vehicle cost at the time of purchase.

## **What types of payment methods does GSA Fleet offer to its customers to finance AFVs?**

GSA Fleet offers its customers three different AFV incremental cost payment options.

### **Payment Option 1: AFV Rate**

The AFV Rate is designed to amortize the cost of an AFV over the life of the vehicle through the monthly rate. By spreading the costs over the life of the vehicle, AFVs are more affordable to our customer agencies. The result allows customers to acquire more AFVs and assist them in meeting legislative mandates.

### Payment Option 2: Lump Sum Payment

The customer obligates a lump sum to GSA Fleet at the beginning of the fiscal year to pay for AFV incremental costs. The obligation of money could be made in an Interagency Agreement or any mutually agreed arrangement between GSA Fleet and the customer. This money can only be used to pay for the AFV incremental costs for vehicles procured in that fiscal year.

### Payment Option 3: Fleet Surcharge Payment

The customer directs GSA Fleet to apply a per vehicle monthly surcharge to the customer's entire fleet. The funding is managed centrally and used to pay for the customers AFV incremental costs. The funding can only be used for vehicles purchased in the fiscal year it is charged. Any residual balance will be returned to the customer because GSA does not have the authority to use the funds for the next fiscal year. This method of payment must be outlined in an Interagency Agreement between GSA Fleet and the customer.

## Alliant Questions and Answers

### Subject Categories:

- [Award](#)
- [Industry Days](#)
- [Interested Parties](#)
- [Other Contract Vehicles](#)
- [Procurement](#)
- [Small Business](#)
- [Teaming](#)
- [RFP](#)
- [Website](#)

### Award

**Q** Please confirm the published award date for Alliant. The presentation for the Alliant Industry Day briefing states May 2006. However, I have also seen a third party web site that states May 2005.

**A** *The planned award date for Alliant is May 2006*

**Q** Does GSA expect to make an award for Alliant in May of 2005 or 2006?

**A** *May 2006*

### Industry Days

**Q** In the Washington DC Q&A one of the answers (page 6, 2<sup>nd</sup> to last question) states, "At the Oakland Industry Day, a small business representative presented a briefing on joint ventures and the differences between consortiums and coalitions. We will post this presentation on the web site." We are very interested in reading this presentation. When will this presentation briefing be posted to the website so that we may read the information?

**A** *The presentation will be posted on the web site.*

**Q** I am very much interested in the requirements for ALLIANT, but will be unable to attend either industry day. Is there a way I can get on the mailing list for bidders/interested parties or at least get further detail so I can determine if my firm can actively participate in bidding/teaming on this proposal?

**A** *GSA will not maintain a Bidder's List, but an interested parties list is posted on the web site.*

## Interested Parties

**Q** How do I get on the Interested Parties List?

**A** *The Interested Parties List registration form is available on the Alliant Website: [www.gsa.gov/alliant](http://www.gsa.gov/alliant)*

**Q** We plan to add our company to the list of Interested Parties, but what I would like to know is if there is anything else we could/should be doing at this point? I have searched for a specific RFS but don't see one.

**A** *You may contact the individuals on the Interested Parties list to explore teaming arrangements.*

**Q** When will the "Interested Parties List" be posted to your sight?

**A** *It is now available.*

**Q** We have completed the Interested Parties Form and submitted it for posting in the next round of website updates. What else can we do to get ourselves noticed? Can you provide a list of primes interested in Alliant that we can contact directly?

**A** *You may contact the individuals on the Interested Parties list to explore teaming arrangements. The ANSWER primes and Millennia primes are posted on the web site.*

**Q** I am very much interested in the requirements for ALLIANT, but will be unable to attend either industry day. Is there a way I can get on the mailing list for bidders/interested parties or at least get further detail so I can determine if my firm can actively participate in bidding/teaming on this proposal?

**A** *GSA will not maintain a Bidder's List, but an interested parties list is posted on the web site.*

## Other Contract Vehicles

**Q** Could you please provide at your earliest, the companies who are the prime contractors on each of the following GWAC vehicles?

**A** *All points of contact for the GWACs maintained by the Enterprise GWAC Center are listed on the web site.*

**Q** Will SAFEGUARD, Virtual Data Center, ACES, SmartCards, Disaster Recovery be rolled into Alliant, or will it only be ANSWER and MILLENNIA?

**A** *Alliant will be a follow-on to ANSWER and Millennia only.*

- Q** My company has been tracking various GWACs and has come across conflicting reports in the press concerning which contracts will be consolidated under Alliant. So far, articles in Federal Computer Week, Government Computer News, and Washington Technology have stated that: 1.) Only Answer and Millennia will be consolidated and 2.) Answer, Millennia, ACES, Disaster Recovery Services, Virtual Data Center Services, and Safeguard will be combined under Alliant. Has GSA decided which contracts will be consolidated under Alliant?
- A** *Alliant will be a follow-on to ANSWER and Millennia only.*

## Procurement

- Q** Is it possible to obtain a copy of the Contract Vehicle Review Board (CVRB) from September of 2003, which resulted in the creation of the ALLIANT opportunity?
- A** *For information regarding the CVRB, please contact the Office of Acquisition policy at (202)501-1043.*
- Q** Is there a place to register for email notification on the upcoming Alliant procurement with GSA?
- A** *GSA will not maintain a Bidder's List, but an interested parties list is posted on the web site.*
- Q** At the information session; several people asked questions assuming that the 25% 'reserve' for small business would be satisfied by awarding 5 small businesses Prime contractor positions (assuming 20 primes, 25% would equal 5 small business primes) for Alliant. Is that impression correct? Is it also just as likely that the 'reserve' could be met through sub-contracting opportunities with larger primes?
- A** *Alliant will reserve 4 to 7 seats for small business primes. Reserve does not apply to subcontracting.*
- Q** Previous notices indicated that the pre-solicitation was to be released January 2004 - has a new date been established?
- A** *An RFI is planned for the fall of 2004.*
- Q** Millennia-Lite was established to provide a contract vehicle for mid-size companies that had been effectively excluded from the Millennia procurement. While 25% of Alliant business is being set-aside for Small Business, what provisions will be included to make it possible for mid-size firms to compete, win, and operate as prime contractors?
- A** *There is no statutory definition of "mid-size." As per the FAR Part 19, Alliant will recognize "small" and "other than small" businesses.*
- Q** What does the Alliant formation mean to a company like mine who sells Comm/Data products under the GSA schedule to the government? What will this new vehicle look like? And will it help to 'join' in some way? What departments should we call on when apart of the Alliant group?
- A** *Alliant will be an IT services contract. You are required to hold a GSA schedule to submit a proposal. An interested parties list is posted on the web site. The Alliant contract will be managed by the Enterprise*

*GWAC Center.*

**Q** When was the ALLIANT contract initially synopsized? Was it posted on the FedBizOps site?

**A** *Alliant was synopsized in February 2004 on FedBizOpps site.*

**Q** I represent a newly certified 8a IT company. We are interested in participating in the Alliant Contract process as it evolves and is executed. Is there a staff officer who we can talk with and understand the Alliant process and availability for additional vendors?

**A** *Information on Alliant will be posted on the website. To understand the process, the SBA provides 8(a) counseling.*

## RFP

**Q** A couple weeks ago I received an email from the Contracting Office stating the RFP is anticipated September 2004. The Industry Day Presentation states an RFC/Pre-solicitation notice is expected in Sept. and the anticipated RFP date is unknown. Could you please clarify the anticipated procurement dates?

**A** *An RFI is planned for the fall of 2004. The solicitation release date is to be determined. Award is planned for May 2006.*

**Q** I have heard the anticipated RFP date of 06/01/04 had slipped perhaps to September '04. I was wondering if this was true and when the RFP release is now anticipated?

**A** *An RFI is planned for the fall of 2004. The solicitation release date is to be determined. Award is planned for May 2006.*

## Small Business

**Q** Has a definition of company size been formulated for small business primes?

**A** *Alliant will use a 1500 size standard.*

**Q** Have strategies been defined for the participation of:

- a. small business primes also being on large business teams?
- b. large business primes also being on small business teams?

**A** *This information will be posted in Section L of the RFP, when released.*

**Q** We are an IT solution services company that is also Service Disabled Veteran and woman owned company. We are a small business of less than 7 employees, located n Northern California. We do not currently have a GSA Contracting Schedule but are wondering if we are precluded from participating in the Alliant program? If we are not precluded from participating, what do we need to have in place to respond and hopefully be awarded the opportunity to bid on solicitations?

**A** *You are required to hold a GSA schedule to submit a proposal. An interested parties list is posted on the web site.*

**Q** We would be interested in any focus groups being formed for Alliant regarding small business involvement. Will you be hosting a small business focus group in Washington, D.C.?

**A** *No new meetings are planned at this time.*

**Q** This legislation was enacted in December 2003. It created the next major change in the Federal Small Business programs, set-aside small business procurements (no ceiling) and sole-source contracting (up to \$3M) authority for contracting officers for service disabled veteran owned small business (SDVOSB). Congress finally provided contracting officers the tools to meet the goals in this area. The Department of Veterans Affairs has already issue guidance and is strongly encouraging large businesses to find SDVOSB partners. DoD and civilian agencies are making this a priority area as well. GSA has an opportunity to lead on Alliant by addressing this demand for its clients. It will attract work and revenue to the contract vehicle since it would be the only vehicle addressing this need with pre-qualified firms on the contract.

Has the Alliant Office considered the opportunity it has to both lead the way and to have a provision to address the expected high demand in this area? For the small business area, GSA would be positioned well to have SDVOSB as well as 8(a) and small business award areas. 8(a) awardees can bid in 8(a) limited, small business limited and open.

**A** *GSA is exploring the possibility of creating an SDVOSB GWAC.*

**Q** I have read recently that small businesses are encouraged to create "coalitions" instead of teams for the Alliant procurement. What is the definition of coalition in this context?

**A** *There is no statutory definition of coalition; the term has been removed from the procurement.*

**Q** Is there any set aside for Small Disadvantaged Businesses/8a companies under 25% reserved for small businesses?

**A** *Alliant will reserve 4 to 7 seats for small business primes. Alliant will not have set-asides.*

## Teaming

**Q** We would like to be part of the GSA Team for Alliant. I've searched the GSA web to determine the steps required and haven't been able to do so.

**A** *An RFI is planned for the fall of 2004.*

**Q** Can we be on multiple Alliant teams? Or, do we need to find only one prime with whom to work?

**A** *Although not official, it is anticipated that offerors may submit one proposal as a prime; alternate proposals will not be accepted. It is also anticipated that offerors may subcontract on multiple teams.*

- Q** Do we have to be a partner during the competitive process and, thus, part of an Alliant team(s) in the first round of awards? Or, can we be added to an Alliant team(s) after awards are made? What will be the process for getting added to an existing Alliant contract?
- A** *When released, the solicitation will address “on-ramp” and “off-ramp” procedures.*

## Website

- Q** Is the website my only avenue to find information and ask questions concerning this GWAC?

- A** *All information pertaining to Alliant will be posted on the Alliant website and FedBizOpps.*

- Q** As an interested vendor, is there a way to register on the Alliant Website?

- A** *An Interested Parties List is available on the web site.*