

Alaska Procurement Connection

A Monthly Newsletter From Your Procurement Technical Assistance Centers

Construction Spending to Top \$6.5 Billion in 2006

Contributed by K. Anderson (anksa@uaa.alaska.edu)

Total construction spending for 2006 will reach \$6.5 billion, of which \$2.6 billion will be through public funds, according to the latest "Alaska Construction Spending Forecast" released by the Associated General Contractors. This figure provides a 13 percent increase from the revised figure of \$5.7 billion in 2005.

Defense spending is expected to grow by 8 percent this year to \$730 million, according to the report. A large portion of these funds are coming from U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Alaska District who anticipates spending close to \$800 million on both construction *and* environmental projects in Federal Fiscal Year 2006. In 2005, Alaska was the third largest recipient of Army Corps of Engineers funds, by receiving more than 7 percent of the entire budget of the Corps. Other projects driving defense spending in Alaska include: the buildup associated with the Stryker Brigade at Ft. Wainwright; deployment of two new F-22 fighter jet squadrons; arrival of new C-17 Cargo Aircraft at Elmendorf AFB; a new hospital at Ft. Wainwright; and other facilities in Anchorage and Ft. Richardson.

An additional \$400 million of federal capital spending in Alaska is projected for other types of federal projects, the report says. This figure includes State agencies who receive federal support via grants, as well as other civilian federal agencies such as the Department of Interior, the Postal Service, Department of Agriculture, and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Agency, who is constructing a fish research facility in Juneau in conjunction with the University of Alaska.

Not to be discounted, transportation funds to include highways, railways, airports, and harbors are anticipated to top \$860 million. The Denali Commission also provides construction projects directed under federal capital spending to rural Alaska infrastructure needs which typically concentrate on energy projects, health facilities, and even some transportation.

These figures not only impact those directly in the construction industry, but support industries as well to include suppliers, service providers, and other residual industries such as lodging and transportation. It's important to note that the construction industry is highly unpredictable and is often influenced by a number of uncontrollable factors to include natural disasters, international events, and even changes in administration. Therefore, these forecasted numbers can change at any point in time.

For a complete copy of "Alaska Construction Spending" forecast, access: <http://www.agcak.org>. To find out more about accessing tentative project schedule lists for agencies, contact your local PTAC office.

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Check out the PTAC
Calendar of Events for
Upcoming Opportunities!

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Anchorage

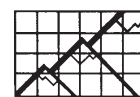
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A Program of:



University of Alaska
Small Business
Development Center

EC/EDI Corner

Contributed by Mary Wheeler (fnmaw@uaf.edu)

Updating Your CCR Registration

Your firm's DUNS number and the TPIN (Trading Partner Identification Number) provided following initial CCR registration are required for annual updates and changes to your firm's CCR registration and SBA profile information. Since the TPIN provides access to confidential information, it should be kept in a safe place and accessible only to authorized personnel. Oftentimes, however, the TPIN can be difficult to find because it usually gets used only once a year. Authorized personnel having trouble finding their TPIN can go to the Help tab at <http://www.ccr.gov>, which offers assistance for lost TPINs, or phone 888-227-2423. *Remember: your TPIN is never used on government paperwork or contracts and should not be given out.*

The MPIN, ORCA, and bpn.gov

CCR is part of the Business Partner Network (<http://www.bpn.gov>). In April, 2004 the MPIN (Marketing Partner Identification Number), became mandatory in CCR registration to help prepare vendors for the ORCA (Online Representations and Certifications) requirement. The MPIN, a personal code the vendor makes up in their CCR registration, should also be kept in a safe place. The MPIN provides access to registration for various links on bpn.gov, including ORCA - the mandatory electronic version of representations and certifications. As with CCR, ORCA requires updating as necessary, or at least annually.

The MPIN, FedTeDs and the Corps

The Alaska District U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Alaska District (USACE) is posting its electronic format solicitations to the Federal Technical Data Solutions (FedTeDS) website at <https://www.fedteds.gov>. To register for access to solicitations posted at FedTeDS, have the following available:

- DUNS number or CAGE code,
- MPIN,
- Your telephone number,
- Your email address.

USACE solicitations listed on FedBizOpps (www.fbo.gov) will have links to the solicitation documents and other technical data on FedTeDS.

Note: FedTeDs registration acknowledgement takes approximately 48 hours (not including weekends).

SDB Price Preference Suspended...Again

Contributed by Mary Sheehan (fnmhs@uaf.edu)

The Department of Defense (DOD) has suspended for one year the use of the price evaluation adjustment for small disadvantaged businesses (SDBs) because DOD exceeded its 5% goal for contract awards to SDBs in fiscal year 2005. This price evaluation adjustment, which is required by statute and implemented by Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) Subpart 19.11, accords SDBs a 10% price preference in certain competitive acquisitions. Section 801 of the Strom Thurmond National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1999 (Pub.L. 105-261) amended 10 U.S.C. 2323(d)(3) to prohibit DOD from granting such a price preference for a one-year period following a fiscal year in which DOD achieved the 5 percent goal.

The suspension applies to all DOD solicitations issued from March 10, 2006 to March 9, 2007. Last year, DOD also suspended use of the price evaluation adjustment for solicitations issued from February 24, 2005 to February 23, 2006, again because the agency exceeded its 5% goal. It is not clear whether the suspension applies to DOD solicitations issued during the short gap (February 24, 2006 to March 9, 2006) between the two suspension periods. The suspension will be reevaluated based on the level of DoD contract awards to SDBs achieved in fiscal year 2006.

—71 Fed. Reg. 9320 (Feb. 23, 2006)

Helpful Tips for CCR

The following are some helpful times to keep in mind when registering or updating your CCR information:

- If you registered in CCR and received your TPIN prior to 2000, your TPIN will begin with the year you registered (i.e., 1997) plus six digits.
- If you registered in CCR and received your TPIN after 2000, your TPIN will be eight numbers.
- When completing your Tax ID verification information in CCR (which is now required for new CCR registration and updates), do not include any punctuation (no comma's, apostrophes, periods, etc.) for your firm's name. The only punctuation acceptable for this registration is the "-" (dash) symbol.
- If you need assistance with any of these items, call your local PTAC office.

ADOT&PF DBE Goals No Longer Set

Contributed by Robert Brunett (anreb2@uaa.alaska.edu)

Based on recent guidance from the U.S. Department of Transportation, which was clarified on January 10, 2006, the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) has implemented a race neutral Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) program and is now setting participation goals at zero on all highway, mass transit and airport projects. ADOT&PF is also eliminating DBE participation points for professional service agreements. This action is the result of a court decision in the State of Washington against DOT's DBE program. All contracts that have been awarded, or are in the process of being considered for award, are not affected by this action.

Prime contractors must continue to report DBE participation on the Monthly Summary of Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Participation Form 25A-336. This will allow ADOT&PF to continue to accurately report DBE participation to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and Federal Aviation Administration (FAA).

Non-DBE prime contractors must also continue to provide opportunities for DBE firms to participate on highway, mass transit and airport projects as appropriate. A 0% DBE participation goal does not relieve prime contractors of the requirement to provide equal opportunity in subcontracting, supplies, or other services offered by DBE firms.

Additionally, ADOT&PF proposes the following goals be achieved through race neutral means for FY2006:

- FHWA – The department expects to achieve its DBE goal of 4% through race neutral measures such as prime awards to DBE firms and additional subcontracting to DBE firms over the minimum commitment.
- FAA – The department expects to achieve its DBE goal of 4.9% through race neutral measures such as prime awards to DBE firms and additional subcontracting to DBE firms over the minimum commitment.

ADOT&PF must now conduct a disparity study to determine the parity of contractors, subcontractors, consultants and airport concessionaires participating in USDOT assisted programs and projects. For questions about the DBE Utilization Goals call Jon Dunham, Manager of the Civil Rights Office, DOT State of Alaska, at 907-269-0850 or email to jon_dunham@dot.state.ak.us.

Doing Business with FNSB

Contributed by Mary H. Sheehan (fnmhs@uaf.edu)

The Fairbanks North Star Borough (FNSB) pumps approximately \$30 million into the local economy annually, according to Mary Beth Overturf, Director of General Services. The Office of General Services oversees *all* of the goods and services purchased within the Borough. There are 18 departments, and purchases vary from vehicles to new construction.

Just as federal agencies have shifted to e-commerce, so has the FNSB General Services Department. For those looking to do business with FNSB, much of the information that they need to know, as well as individual solicitations that are out for bid, is now available online at <http://www.co.fairbanks.ak.us/bidsonline>.

All government contracting has dollar thresholds which dictate where different regulations and methods of procurement kick in. Important thresholds to be aware of when doing business with the FNSB are as follows:

- Up to \$5,000: The individual borough departments directly purchase the goods and services, typically soliciting quotes via telephone.
- \$5,000-\$20,000: Each department directly purchases, typically through written Request for Quotes.
- \$20,000 and Up: General Services manages these purchases usually by issuing Invitations for Bid or Request for Proposals. Typically, IFB's are advertised for a minimum of 15 days and RFP's are advertised for a minimum of 30 days, both online and in the newspaper.

Because many of the borough purchases are decentralized with everything under \$20,000 being purchased by the individual departments, Ms. Overturf recommends that small businesses market directly to the departments. The departments are required to solicit at least 3 quotes and always start by requesting quotes from local businesses. If you aren't sure which department to market to, contact PTAC for assistance or phone General Services at 459-1297.

The FNSB Public Works Department also posts their Estimated Bid Schedule online with jobs planned through 2007 at <http://www.co.fairbanks.ak.us/PublicWorks/Projects/estbidschedule.aspx>

According to Mary Beth, an upcoming change to how they do business is about six months away. They are currently working on instituting a procurement card system to be used for the purposes of purchasing supply items with a threshold of \$2,500 or less.

Procurement Technical Assistance Centers of Alaska
UA Small Business Development Center



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USPTO Offers New FAQs

Carolyn Pratt (ancap1@uaa.alaska.edu)

In October 2004, the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) hosted an online chat where USPTO employees answered questions from inventors. Since then, six more chats have been hosted. They received hundreds more questions than they had time to answer and anticipate offering future chats. Always going the extra mile, the Office has made the transcripts available to view on their website. And, a new Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) section has been developed from selected questions believed to be of interest to others besides the author of the question.

The topics range from disclaimers, domain names, and foreign application to patent renewal, joint inventors, and infringement. To access the transcripts and FAQ's, go to <http://www.uspto.gov> and select "Inventor Resources" from the pull down menu at the top of the page. Look for the "Information" section to find "On-Line Chat Transcripts." Right below that is a link titled "FAQs from Previous Chats." Check the TREND website at <http://www.trendalaska.org> for update on the next online chat.

Upcoming Events

Meet-the-Agency (Fairbanks)

April 20, 2006

Learn what is purchased, how it is bought, and where to locate the opportunities for Eielson AFB 354CONS. For time, location and how to register, logon to the PTAC website at <http://www.ptacalaska.org>, or call 456-7232.

Certification Overview (Anchorage)

April 6, 2006 from 8:30-11:30 a.m.

SBA and ADOT&PF will cover programs for socially and economically disadvantaged business owners, including 8(a), SDB, and DBE Programs. SBA will also discuss the HUBZone program for businesses located in areas of high unemployment or low income. Time, location and registration info at: <http://www.ptacalaska.org>, or call 274-7232.

USDOL Contract Compliance Technical Assistance

April 20, 2006 (Anchorage)

Construction 8:30 a.m.; Supplies/Services 1:30 p.m.

This workshop focuses on the various components required to comply with federal Department of Labor regulations. Topics covered will include record maintenance and retention requirements, governing regulations, and recent changes to the program. Time, location and registration info at: <http://www.ptacalaska.org>, or call 274-7232.