

Alaska Procurement Connection

A Monthly Newsletter From Your Procurement Technical Assistance Centers

Will There Ever Be a WOSB Program?

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

On March 21, 2007, the House Small Business Subcommittee on Contracting and Technology held a hearing on "Federal Government Efforts in Contracting with Women-Owned Businesses." The hearing called on the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) to answer why the Women's Procurement Program has not been implemented even though the law authorizing it was passed in 2000. This program would allow procurement preferences to woman-owned small businesses (WOSB) that qualify.

In a pre-emptive strike, SBA issued a press release March 20 answering questions regarding the Women's Procurement Program. In the press release, SBA blamed implementing delays on the lack of legislative findings being included that would allow the program to withstand legal scrutiny. This omission left SBA with the burden of providing findings and constitutional justification for the program.

SBA also minimized the lack of movement on the program by noting that the 8(a) program (also currently under scrutiny by Congress) "offers more benefits" and has many "female participants" citing that more than 33 percent of 8(a) firms are owned by women. In Alaska, only 11 percent of the 198 certified 8(a) firms currently listed in CCR are individually owned by women.

SBA went on to hail their commitment to increasing the number of contracts being made to women business owners stating, "the agency is proud of its record and will continue to provide women with the assistance they need to make their businesses successful" noting that contracts have increased for this demographic group by \$5.9 billion. This achievement is \$21.1 billion less than women business owners would have received in the last five years if SBA was able to act on implementing the Women's Procurement Program and if contracting agencies were able to effectively meet their mandated goals.

A statement issued by Women Impacting Public Policy (WIPP) and their coalition of members during the Subcommittee testimony targeted SBA's failure to implement the program as a primary reason goals were not being met in this category. WIPP went on to state, "It is not clear to us whether the SBA will implement this program. We urge the Subcommittee to require the SBA to quickly implement the women's contract assistance program." Other issues hampering goal attainment were listed as contract bundling, lack of subcontracting integrity, adequate technical assistance from SBA for WOSB, and empowering small business offices in federal agencies.

During testimony, SBA Deputy Administrator Jovita Carranza again reiterated that delays in implementing the Women's Procurement Program stem from concerns that guidelines be written in such a way that they stand up to legal scrutiny. Carranza went on to say that the study on implementing guidelines for this program should be published in April (nothing had been released as of press time) and that the program will be up and running later this year.

May 2007

On the Inside

E-mail Marketing Tips	2
News Flash	2
The SBIR Program	3
Proposed Rule Part of Effort to Collect Taxes Owed by Contractors	3
Meet-the-Agency: ANTHC	4
Upcoming Events	4

Check out the PTAC Calendar of Events for Upcoming Opportunities!

www.ptacalaska.org



Anchorage

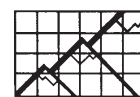
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E-mail Marketing Tips

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

If there's one benefit to e-mail marketing, it is that the cost associated with sending an e-mail is very inexpensive. Also, with e-mail marketing, you can potentially get a lot of traction in a short period of time!

Listed below are some quick marketing tips that anyone can use to target government agencies via e-mail.

Start with the Right Targets

- Find out who the right people within each agency are by accessing the Federal Point of Contact listing provided by your Alaska PTAC.
- Target the decision makers at the right time. Access historical purchasing information to see when there has been a need for your services or when budgeting has been approved.

Create Meaningful E-mails

- Individually targeted e-mail campaigns tend to have more of an effect than generic e-mails.
- Establish the value you will bring to the agency, including the benefits, competitive comparison, testimonials, and procedures.

Develop a Lifecycle

- Track when you are sending marketing communications, and how often.
- Adjust the government marketing communications to fall in line with the progression of your sales cycle.
- Here is a basic lifecycle to help you develop and track your e-mail campaigns:

1. Acquisition (Identify Prospects) – Launch your e-mail campaign to your targeted lists of prospects.

2. Persuasion (Engage Prospects / Introduce Sales Opportunities) – Develop follow-up campaigns to reinforce the e-mails and establish meaningful sales conversations.

3. Conversion (Seal the Deal and Grow Revenue) – Establish the contracting opportunity and address the agency's needs and expectations.

4. Retention (Retain Current Sales Relationships) – Maintain contacts with the agency and address any new agency needs.

5. Loyalty / Renewal (Renew Contracts and Expand on Opportunities) – Engage in discussions about contract renewals and ask the agency if they would be a referral.

Provide Calls to Action and Informational Tools

- Always include contact phone numbers, e-mail addresses, and your company website if you have one.
- Offer testimonials or case studies as part of the campaign.
- Offer referrals.
- Offer samples, if applicable.

For more information on marketing to government agencies, contact your Alaska PTAC.



Contributed by Megan Luna (anmcl1@uaa.alaska.edu)

Draft Anchorage Pedestrian Plan Available

For contractors accessing information on future projects, the Municipality of Anchorage (MOA) issued a public notice on March 26, 2007 that the Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Solutions (AMATS) released the Draft Anchorage Pedestrian Plan for public review and comment. The public notice states "the purpose of this Plan is to establish a 20-year framework for improvements that will enhance the pedestrian environment and increase opportunities to choose walking as a mode of transportation."

It additionally describes proposed future projects in the areas of new walkways, sidewalks and crossings, as well as upgrades to existing ones, lighting, snow removal, and drainage. To access the Draft Anchorage Pedestrian Plan in its entirety, visit http://www.muni.org/iceimages/transplan/Public%20Review%20Draft_Web.pdf. Copies are also available at local libraries, and at the MOA Traffic Department (4700 Bragaw Street). For more information, call 343-7994.

University of Alaska Fairbanks Highlights Upcoming Projects

UAF Facilities Services presented at the AGC Spring Board Meetings, highlighting upcoming projects for 2007/2008. Their Capital Projects presentation is now available at the PTAC website under "What's New." Find out what's coming up, what's planned, and how to get the information!

—<http://www.ptacalaska.org/pdf/uaffacilitieservices2007.pdf>

The SBIR Program

Contributed by Carolyn Pratt (ancap1@uaa.alaska.edu)

If you've been reading the *Procurement Connection* for the last several months, you have probably seen articles referencing the Small Business Innovation Research Program (SBIR). The SBIR is administered by 10 federal agencies for the purpose of helping provide early-stage Research and Development funding to small companies in a Phase I, II, and III process. Companies compete for funding by proposing innovative solutions to the technical topic needs identified in agency solicitations.

Alaska has several SBIR companies that have successfully completed Phase I, II, and III projects. The innovations range from development of underwater sonar technologies to delivery of an alternative medicine multimedia program to researching and testing robotic systems. It is a unique program and a tremendous resource for businesses with the capacity to innovate and develop. TREND is a program that provides SBIR assistance to Alaska businesses and individuals. Call 274-7232 or e-mail ancap1@uaa.alaska.edu for more details.

The agencies currently accepting proposals, or soon to be, and links to their sites for a copy of the complete solicitation are:

Department of Transportation 2007 SBIR Solicitation
Due May 1, 2007
www.volpe.dot.gov/sbir/

Environmental Protection Agency 2007 Phase I SBIR Solicitation
Due May 23, 2007
www.epa.gov/ncer/sbir/

2007-2 Department of Health & Human Services PHS SBIR and STTR
Non-AIDS Related Topics (NIH, CDC, FDA)
Due August 5, and December 5, 2007

AIDS Related Topics (NIH)
Due May 1 and September 1, 2007, and January 2, 2008
<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/sbir.htm>

Department of Homeland Security FY07.1 SBIR Solicitation
Opens April 20, 2007 (on the web now)
www.sbir.dhs.gov/

NSF FY 2008 SBIR/STTR Program Solicitation
Expected May 13, 2007 (on the web now)
<http://www.nsf.gov/eng/iip/sbir/>

DoD SBIR Solicitation 2007.2
Expected May 14, 2007 (on the web April 12, 2007)
<http://www.acq.osd.mil/sadbu/sbir>

Proposed Rule Part of Effort to Collect Taxes Owed by Contractors

Contributed by Mary Sheehan (fmmhs@uaf.edu)

Currently, federal contractors are required to certify whether they have been charged or convicted of tax evasion. A proposed rule expands the certification requirement to include notification of unpaid taxes, including those that have not been filed under criminal or civil laws.

The proposed rule would amend the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) to change the certification regarding debarment, suspension, proposed debarment, and other responsibility matters and to amend the language about contractor qualifications adding language regarding nonpayment of taxes. In the representations and certifications contractors are currently required to certify whether or not, within a three year period preceding an offer, they have been convicted of or had a civil judgment rendered against them for tax evasion or are presently indicted for, or otherwise criminally or civilly charged with, the commission of tax evasion.

Under the proposed rule, contractors would be required to certify whether or not they have, within a three-year period preceding the offer, been convicted of or had a civil judgment rendered against them for violating any tax law or failing to pay any tax, or been notified of any delinquent taxes for which the liability remains unsatisfied. They also will be required to certify whether or not they have received a notice of a tax lien filed against them for which the liability remains unsatisfied or the lien has not been released.

According to Senator Norm Coleman, R-Minn, the aim of the proposed rule is to identify companies with whom agencies should not do business before contracts are written. Coleman said, "Simply put, if federal contractors don't pay their taxes, they won't be doing business with Uncle Sam anymore."

The proposed rule is the result of two things, the federal government's 12-figure budget deficit as well as the result of findings by the Government Accountability Office (GAO) that agencies regularly pay federal contractors for new work even when those same firms have significant tax debts. For additional information on the GAO research and the tax gap, see the March issue of the *Procurement Connection*.

Public comment on the proposed rule will be accepted until May 29 and can be submitted at <http://www.regulations.gov> under FAR Case 2006-011.



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Meet-the-Agency: ANTHC

Contributed by Buffy McKay

On March 22, 2007, Ron Hadden, Director of Procurement and Contracting at Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC), presented information on the organization structure, contact information for procurement, and what ANTHC looks for in solicitations.

The procurement process at ANTHC is similar to federal procurement. Competition is the preferred method, and activity is decentralized. Examples of the goods and services needed include: housekeeping, food service, equipment and supplies for offices, equipment and supplies for a medical center, conferences, training, catering, staffing, maintenance, and construction and renovation. Contacts for procurement at ANTHC are:

- Ron Hadden, Director of Procurement & Contracting, 729-2966 (large procurements over \$100,000)
- Don Lesco, Materials Management Manager, 729-1482 (general supplies and equipment)
- Donna Fleming, Central Sterile Supply Manager, 729-2550 (medical supplies for ANMC)
- Josie Judd, Division of Environmental Health & Engineering procurement, 729-3570 (construction, engineering)

Upcoming Events

Meet-the-Agency: National Park Service
May 10, 2007, NOON – 1:00 PM

University Center, 3801 Old Seward Hwy, Room 143

Learn what the National Park Service purchases, how they buy it, and where to locate the contracting opportunities. Call 274-7232 to pre-register.

10 Step Approach to Government Contracting

May 2, 2007, Mat Su SBDC call 373-7232 for details

May 15, 2007, Anchorage call 274-7232 for details

Our simplified 10-Step Approach will help you understand the first steps businesses must take to sell and market to federal, state, and local government agencies. This workshop covers registering in government databases, understanding “government speak,” and locating opportunities.

The 2007 Military Appreciation Luncheon, sponsored by the Anchorage Chamber of Commerce, will take place Monday, June 4. Contact Jessica Lord at 677-7110 or e-mail at events@anchoragechamber.org for more information.