

Contracts Industry Council Planning Meeting

Those in attendance: Steve Amell, Kelly Baldwin, Amy Bare, Gabe Bell, Rob Bierman, Manning Bolchoz, Maura Boselowitz, Matt Bringman, Samuel Brown, Chris Chekroun, Jim Condon, Jimi Elderman, Mark Fanning, Tony Graziani, Josh Hatter, Craig Herring, Gary Jaffe, David Layne, Robin Leightner, Brian Lindgren, Manny Lovgren, Ron Malec, Jim Medeiros, Greg Muffley, April Nadeau, Derrick Nixon, Jennifer Osment, Clayton Smith, John Somerville, Martin Sullivan, Scott Varn, Jerry Vevon, Heather Walker, Adam Wieder, Peter Woodhull. Cynthia Holt was present for support.

Meeting began at 0900 with Manny Lovgren as chair.

Introductions were made of CIC Members: AFCEA representatives are Amy Bare - Large; Manny Lovgren, Mid-size; and Jennifer Osment, Small. CDCA representatives are Heather Walker – Large; Derrick Nixon; Mid-size and Gary Jaffe, Small. Any questions can be directed to these folks; see contact information at CDCA website. <http://www.charlestondca.org/cic>

One of the things the CIC has been working is trying to make Industry Days more productive so industry can make better bid and teaming decisions. This group is about the community. We want to improve and make things better for all of industry. Primarily, we must have collaboration with SSC Atlantic. We have provided an update on CIC initiatives under the meeting minutes.

Open for discussion:

- Cyber Mission Engineering (CME) industry day feedback: One attendee remarked that SSC LANT seemed to be more willing to listen to feedback than ever before. One attendee said the Nov Industry Day was more open and the govt answered more of our questions in comparison to the April Industry Day. One-on-one sessions were productive.
- Base Access Process: please let the CIC know what issues you have with the new process.
- Increasing Sample Task Orders. This is an ongoing conversation and could be something in the future and cheaper for industry.
- Add a 2nd phase approach to the Request for Proposal (RFP) (i.e. more BAFOs) if the govt requires additional information rather than having to go through the entire process of the orals.
- Staffing plans
 - Because of long award lead times, people not available by the time awards are made.
 - The govt wants awardees to be able to staff immediately, though both govt and industry recognize the challenge with initial staffing for non-incumbents.
 - For hard-to-fill billets, resumes for personnel submitted today won't be available at the time of award when it takes several months to award. This comes back to the importance of timely rewards.
- Resumes need to be real, verifiable and show proof that you have previously staffed similar tasking.
- Based on previous contracts rather than who you have on the team now and how you would propose it. It goes back to the labor categories. This denies people from talking about innovations. If everyone has to present the cost model in the same way, you have to chisel down each task to propose innovations.

- Technical and Cost Volumes are evaluated separately.
- Pricing data points are all over the place, but they are trying to close the gap across offerors by how they evaluate pricing.
- For the Antarctica Project, the govt is giving the task and requesting folks to submit how they will manage it (how much manpower, etc.).
- The Minimally Acceptable Rate (MAR), which is now known as the Lowest Reasonable Rate (LRR), is where the govt is price realizing offerors below the MAR. The adjustment typically occurs when a rate is 2 standard deviations below the mean.
- IDIQ level. Offerors should be able to share the criteria of your team and show the roles each person plays and be graded on what each team can bring. Right now the only place to tell the story of the team is in the SB Plan, and the technical team doesn't evaluate this volume.

CIC leads encouraged the group to continue to share their thoughts with them so they can help SSC Atlantic to get better at assisting us.

- Find areas where we do have common ground. Put it on paper and present it to CIC. 3-5 things we all recommend and that we can get behind. Let's put together a list of long-term initiatives to work collectively.
- If we could funnel these thoughts to one person to compile the list.
 - There is not a current CIC email address that goes to all of the leads; CDCA will look at adding one.
- In comparison to 5 years ago, we have come a long way. We now have a great dialogue and work together with the govt as they openly solicit CIC inputs when they want assistance.
- The time is right for us to focus our energies and present it to them. We can't just present a complaint. It must be well thought out and have a well-defined solution.
- Steve Harnig takes our feedback seriously (positive and negative) and is willing to come and do more Town Halls. We just need to request one if we would like to hold another one.
- Solicit ideas from the group. Narrow down to top 10, then meet again to narrow it down to the top 3-5.
- The end state needs to be beneficial to all. The CIC is constructed to ensure all voices are heard - large, medium and small business.
- The CIC meets monthly. Any questions/concerns can be sent to the CIC representatives so they can discuss them. Please reach out to your CIC reps when you have feedback/questions/concerns.
- April Nadeau, CDCA's SBIOI representative, suggested we have a CIC representative talk at the 7 Sept SBIOI. The Government has spoken, but we haven't had an industry representative talk about what we they are about and how they can help.
 - In a couple of weeks to talk about the next SBIOI Agendas. If we have the top 5 topics by the next Reverse Industry session, we can weed them into this discussion.
- Manny: This is why we have these pre-meetings before sitting down with the govt.
- Josh: Initially, we were not preparing on the industry side. This is now happening. We began to focus on what we can solve. When you propose an issue or concern, please propose a potential solution as well.

Other topics as proposed by attendees:

- Steve Harnig is aware of lack of consistency from buyer to buyer. They are trying to standardize this, but this is an ongoing process.
- Industry proposed asking industry for potential problems and solutions on ecommerce for a few weeks to get feedback.
- The issue is that it is easier to pick the low hanging fruit. What are the quick fixes to streamline?
- Speed to Award. This is a problem across all commands.
- Steve Amell added that Representative Joe Wilson and Senator Lindsey Graham want to help and are willing to drive money the Lowcountry.
- Will the command be willing to make an announcement that they are open for business and that work acceptance is easier now?
 - The SPAWAR HQ CO stated this is a Navy Command and they will only accept navy work.
 - Conversations are happening quietly. CAPT Heller said they won't turn away any kind of work. Is SSC LANT willing to state this publicly?

Update on notable CIC initiatives include:

- Developed a collaborative, problem-solving team environment between SSC LANT and industry.
- Worked to improve the Task Order Forecast to make it more valuable to industry with respect to the data included and continue to refine based on inputs gathered.
 - Metrics to measure the accuracy of the data are currently being examined.
- Worked to ensure that IPTs identified to use future MAC IDIQs have forecasted projected programs/projects and annual throughput and that this information is included in industry days.
- Expanded Industry Days for a better bid process and opportunity to ask questions of the government to make better bid/no bid decisions.
- We continue to collect and discuss feedback from the Tech Exchanges and Industry days to make them even better, to include more time with technical leads in 1-on-1 sessions.
- CIC is looking into issues with the new base access process. SSC Atlantic moved to an automated Check In-Check Out (CICO) Move/Add/Change (MAC) Process on March 20, 2017. The REMEDY/ITSM transition went into effect April 3, 2017.
- Researched/discussed OTA benefits/challenges.
- Discussed pros/cons of doing oral proposals from government/industry perspectives.

Other CIC initiatives:

- Continuing to gather Intel on Seaport-e follow-on.
- Examination of SSC LANT standard labor category update.
- We held an open industry planning meeting on 13 JUN at LCE to allow anyone who wishes to help industry prepare/present ideas and concepts. Industry is encouraged to participate in these planning meetings and bring agenda topics forward to be discussed with SSC LANT.
- Josh Hatter's CIC term as a large business representative ends in June. This upcoming vacancy is a three-year commitment for the selected applicant. The commitment is June 2017—June 2020. Nominations/ applications closed on Wednesday, May 31, 2017. The selection process closed June 9, 2017. Josh's replacement as the CDCA LB representative is Heather Walker.
 - Josh also served as the lead on the industry side and Manny Lovgren has been selected to take the reins as the next industry lead.

AGENDA

- Resumes used as an evaluation factor-Will start to solicit more information from members.
 - There is no immediate solution to solve the resume issue or the time it takes to award a contract therefore the proposal validity concern will remain. Potential recommendations to aid in disqualifying/ reducing the number of offerors who submit bids then cannot perform technically given that offerors cannot hire the incumbent or other personnel at the rates they bid and therefore cannot staff the contract:
- SPAWAR is developing salary ranges by category as part of the IGCE. This would be extremely beneficial in determining whether an offerors proposed labor rates are unrealistic. Lately industry has seen the phrase, "Offerors are cautioned that proposals with unrealistically high or low labor rates/ salaries may be deemed reflective of an inherent lack of technical competence, or indicative of a failure to comprehend the complexity and risk of the proposed work, and may be grounds for rejection of the proposal."
 - Another recommendation is to increase/ expand the number of key labor categories in the personnel section. Most contractors know that key personnel cannot be changed out within a certain window and know the FAR rule. We usually see this referenced in H.7 KEY PERSONNEL REQUIREMENTS.
- Finally, make the Management Approach the highest rated evaluation factor. Within the management approach under Resources, the offerors will be evaluated on their staffing plan/ resources and the ability to engage in full performance of the contract once the firm receives notice of award. The staffing plan must have named individuals for all positions both key and non-key. They cannot be TBD. Also must include copies of contingent hire letters for named individuals that are currently not employed by the prime or their subcontractors. "The Offeror shall provide a copy of the letter of intent to hire for any individual proposed who is not currently employed by the offeror or subcontractor (if proposed)." (These letters of intent allow you to see the salary or hourly rate they are agreeing to for the position. The government can do a quick comparison to ensure it is realistic and within the salary range you have come up with.)
- Discuss path to money/funding as it applies to helping the Command develop warfighter capabilities that enhance program execution, extend capabilities and solutions across the Portfolios, strengthen relationships with mission customers, and infuse technology solutions.
 - Talk about ways to initiate pilot programs, minimally viable products/solutions. Today, the Portfolios have a minimal business development budget to grow their portfolio. Overhead money, mission money, OTA's, Innovations Cells and NICE/219 funding.
 - How can we simplify/streamline to meet the objectives and create a pipeline of possible enterprise solutions that can be offered to competencies for use in supporting their customers?