OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
3000 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-3000

ACQUISITION,
TECHNOLOGY
AND LOGISTICS

APR 28 2014

MEMORANDUM FOR COMMANDER, UNITED STATES SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND (ATTN: ACQUISITION EXECUTIVE)
COMMANDER, UNITED STATES TRANSPORTATION COMMAND (ATTN: ACQUISITION EXECUTIVE)
DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE ARMY (PROCUREMENT)
DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE NAVY (ACQUISITION AND PROCUREMENT)
DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE (CONTRACTING)
DIRECTORS OF THE DEFENSE AGENCIES
DIRECTORS OF THE DOD FIELD ACTIVITIES

SUBJECT: Competency Assessment of the Contracting Career Field

As the DoD Functional Leaders for the Contracting Workforce, we are pleased to announce the kick-off of the 2014 Contracting Competency Assessment. All civilian and military members of the Contracting Workforce will complete a self-assessment. In addition, supervisors will complete a supervisory assessment for each of their employees. We request 100 percent participation in the assessment, which launches next week and will remain open through June 20, 2014. Continued emphasis on the importance of the Contracting Workforce makes this assessment timely and aligns with the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics' Better Buying Power initiative to improve the professionalism and qualifications of the total acquisition workforce.

As background, the Contracting Workforce successfully completed a Contracting Competency Assessment in 2008/2009, with over 90 percent participation. The assessment results provided a complete competency inventory of the Department's contracting professionals at all career levels, and enabled senior contracting leaders to better understand the proficiency levels of the workforce. Additionally, the contracting senior leadership, with support from the Contracting Functional Integrated Product Team and Defense Acquisition University, reevaluated certification standards for contracting professionals, standardized source selection methodologies and processes, developed cost and pricing centers of expertise, and completed an extensive revision of training curriculum for the Contracting Career Field.

We are now reassessing the workforce, utilizing the same Contracting Competency Model and methodology that we used for the 2008/2009 effort. The results from this assessment will identify changes in capabilities since the last assessment, assist in human capital planning actions, and identify strengths and overall capabilities across the Contracting Workforce. Furthermore, the results will allow the Department to make informed and sustained investments

in the workforce to include leadership development opportunities and quality-focused initiatives to strengthen the capability and readiness of the workforce.

In the near future, members of the Contracting Workforce will receive a launch e-mail from the Center for Naval Analyses (CNA), a Federally Funded Research and Development Center. The email from CNA (contracting@cnacompass.org) will include a link to the assessment tool, known as COMPASS, as well as information on how to complete the assessment. COMPASS is a web-based tool designed to assess an employee's proficiency in each of the technical and professional competencies contained in the Contracting Competency Model. No individual data will be reported and all responses are confidential. If you receive your launch message and have trouble accessing the website (https://www.cnacompass.org/con), please contact your local helpdesk who can assist with adding the URL as a trusted site.

In preparation for the assessment, please print the attached Helpful Hints document and the Contracting Competency Model for review and to have nearby when completing the assessment survey. Each participant will have the opportunity to update the Contracting Competency Model by identifying any competencies that are relevant to his/her mission but are not identified in the model. By participating in the preparation for and completion of the assessment, workforce members are eligible to receive three Continuous Learning Points.

We appreciate your participation in this important endeavor. The success of this assessment is dependent on the support and involvement of the entire Contracting Workforce. If you have any questions, please contact Ms. Susan Pollack at susan.w.pollack.civ@mail.mil, or Ms. Mary Thomas at mary.s.thomas.civ@mail.mil.

Richard Ginman
Director, Defense Procurement
and Acquisition Policy

Shay Assad
Director, Defense Pricing

Attachments:
As stated

Helpful Hints for Completing the Contracting Competency Assessment

The assessment is: A tool to identify current DOD-wide capabilities.
The assessment is not: An individual employee rating system, pass/fail test, or performance appraisal.

Getting Started

1. Read through the Contracting Competency Model to understand the assessment model; print a hard copy to keep with you for reference while taking the assessment. The assessment is directed at the element level.
2. Expect the actual completion of the assessment to take 45-60 minutes.
3. Although we encourage you to complete the assessment in one sitting, the assessment will automatically save your results at each screen - every time you hit "continue" - so you may enter/exit at any time.

Important Points to Remember

All Participants

1. Avoid the BACK button – you may enter and exit the assessment at any time
2. Enter your demographic data correctly the first time! If not you will need to contact the help desk (POC will be provided) to reset the fields.
3. Pay attention to the definitions of proficiency, frequency and criticality to ensure you are answering correctly.
4. Please note, not all jobs require a high level of proficiency in all competencies, so please answer each item fully and honestly. The answers you provide will be used to help improve training, certification processes, career developmental initiatives.
5. You have the option to assess competency elements as N/A.
6. You can modify or add competency elements at the end, so make notes as you go along.
7. Your supervisor will not see the inputs you provide.
8. You can view a summarized version of your inputs at any time while the assessment is open. We encourage you to print your results at the end of the assessment for your own professional purposes.

Supervisors

1. In addition to completing an employee self-assessment, supervisors will complete a supervisory assessment for each employee they supervise.
2. You can assess your employees as soon as the website is open for access; you do not need to wait until an employee completes their survey first.
3. You will be required to input the career level (entry, journey, senior) of the employee you are assessing. Guidance is provided in the assessment to ensure you understand the criteria for each level.

If you encounter problems accessing https://www.cnacompass.org/con, please contact your local helpdesk to assist in (a) adding the URL as a trusted site, (b) making sure JAVA™ is enabled on your computer, and/or (c) making sure your computer is using the Internet Explorer (64-bit) program option (NMCI issue). If you experience other technical problems with the assessment, please contact the CNA help desk at Contractinghelp@cna.org.

DoD Contracting Competency Model

11 Units of Competence: 10 Technical Units and 1 Professional Unit	28 Technical Competencies 10 Professional Competencies	52 Technical Elements, 10 Professional Elements
Pre-Award and Award	Determination of How Best to Satisfy Requirements for the Mission Area	1. Provide proactive business advice on requirements documentation based on analysis of requirements and performance-based approaches to find the best solution to satisfy mission requirements.
		2. Conduct market research using relevant resources prior to solicitation to understand the industry environment and determine availability of sources of supply and/or services.
		3. Perform acquisition planning by considering all available sources and methods of procurement to satisfy mission needs while appropriately allocating risk.
	Consider Socio-economic Requirements	4. Consider socio-economic requirements including small business, labor, environmental, foreign, and other socio-economic requirements to provide maximum practicable contracting and subcontracting opportunities.
	Promote Competition	5. Conduct pre-solicitation industry conferences and analyze responses to draft solicitation terms and conditions to promote full and open competition.
		6. Identify and facilitate joint ventures and partnering on solicitations and subcontracting opportunities to increase competition and/or small business participation.
	Source Selection Planning	7. Document a source selection plan that is consistent with public law, regulations, policy, and other guidelines.
	Solicitation of Offers	8. Conduct pre-bid or pre-proposal conference to inform offerors of the requirements of the acquisition.
		9. Publicize proposed procurements to promote competition.
		10. Issue a written solicitation consistent with the requirements documents, acquisition plan and source selection plan, that includes the appropriate provisions and clauses tailored to the requirement.
		11. Issue amendments or cancel solicitations when such actions are in the best interest of the Government and conform to law and regulations.
		12. Respond to preaward inquiries by taking the appropriate action according to FAR/DFARS (and applicable supplements) to resolve questions.
	Responsibility Determination	13. Determine contractor responsibility by assessing past performance and financial stability to ensure that the contractor will be able to satisfy Government requirements.
	Bid Evaluation (Sealed Bidding)	14. Evaluate the sealed bids in an transparent manner to preserve the integrity of the competitive process.
		15. Perform price analysis to determine whether the lowest evaluated bid is reasonable and provides the best value to the Government.
	Proposal Evaluation (Contracting by Negotiation)	16. Evaluate proposals and quotes against evaluation criteria and request technical and pricing support, if needed, to identify offers that are acceptable or can be made acceptable.
	Source Selection	17. Decide whether to hold discussions based on results of the evaluation.
		18. Establish the competitive range to determine which of the offers will not be considered for the award.
	Contract Award	19. Select the awardee who in the Government's estimation, provides the best value.
		20. Award contract/ Issue task or delivery orders after ensuring fund availability and obtaining reviews/approvals.
		21. Conducting pre/post award debriefings for all unsuccessful offerors when requested to ensure appropriate disclosure of information.
	Process Protests	22. Process protests to determine whether to withhold award or stop performance pending outcome of the protest.

Develop and/or Negotiate Positions	Justification of Other than Full and Open	23. Justify the need to negotiate or award the contract without full and open competition or, in a multiple award scenario, without providing for fair opportunity based on business strategies and market research.
	Terms and Conditions	24. Determine terms and conditions, including special contract requirements applicable to the acquisition, that are appropriate for the acquisition to comply with laws and regulations (e.g. method of financing, Government property, intellectual property, OCI, specialty metals).
	Preparation and Negotiation	25. Prepare for negotiations / discussions / awards by reviewing audit and technical reports, performing cost and/or price analysis (or reviewing price analysts reports), and developing pre-negotiation position to include identifying potential trade-offs.
		26. Negotiate terms and conditions (including price) based on the pre-negotiation objective and give-and-take with the offeror to establish a fair and reasonable price.
Advanced Cost and/or Price Analysis	Advanced Cost and/or Price Analysis	27. Evaluate the reasonableness of the contractor's proposed cost/price for use in preparing for complex negotiations.
		28. Develop positions on pricing-related-contract terms and conditions to aid in developing the Government's position.
		29. Supports special cost, price, and finance efforts by researching, analyzing and providing recommended positions that are in the best interests of the Government.
		30. Evaluate award fee/incentive fee plans and arrangements for adherence to policy and guidance.
Contract Administration	Initiation of Work	31. Conduct post-award orientations to address customer concerns and contractor's responsiblities for performance of the contract.
		32. Plan for contract administration regarding delegating administrative functions; designating, training and managing CORs; and formally establishing all contract administration responsibilities.
	Contract Performance Management	33. Administer contract by monitoring contracting officer representatives feedback, contractor performance, and enforcing contractor compliance with contract requirements.
		34. Ensure past performance evaluation is initiated to ensure documentation of performance including contracting officer input.
		35. Analyze, negotiate, and prepare claims file in order to issue final decisions.
		36. Resolve contract performance problems by gathering facts, determining remedies, and initiate remedial actions in order to find and provide a solution.
	Issue Changes and Modifications	37. Analyze the need for contract modifications and negotiate and issue contract modifications, as required.
	Approve Payment Requests	38. Approve contractor request for payments to include final vouchers under cost reimbursement contracts, progress payments, performance-based payments, or commercial financing.
	Close-out Contracts	39. Close-out contracts following proper procedure to ensure property disposition, final payments, and documents/clearances have been received.
Small Business/Socio-Economic Programs	Addressing Small Business Concerns	40. Assist small business concerns in understanding how to do business with the government, identifying contracting opportunities, and responding to small business inquiries regarding payment delays or problems.
		41. Serve as a small business specialist and assist the Small Business Administration's assigned representative in conducting annual reviews of small business share, evaluation of contractors' subcontracting performance, and planning to maximize the use of small businesses.
		42. As a small business specialist provide recommendations on acquisition documents as to whether a particular acquisition should be set aside for one of the Small Business programs.

Negotiate FPRAs & Administer Cost Accounting Standards	Negotiate Forward Pricing Rates Agreements & Administer Cost Accounting Standards	43. Negotiate forward pricing rate agreements (FPRAs) for billing purposes and administer cost accounting standards to ensure contractor's compliance.
Contract Termination	Contract Termination	44. Terminate contracts using applicable FAR (and supplemental) requirements if it is in the best interest in the government (either termination for convenience or cause/default).
Procurement Policy	Procurement Analysis	45. Provide analysis to advise on procurement matters including contract documentation, legislation issues, and congressional inquiries impacting contracting matters.
		46. Develops procurement policy and changes in procedures through analysis of major procurements for statutory and regulatory compliance and a macro-analysis of contracting matters.
		47. Advise on high-level legislation & policy matters to recommend &/or lead change in the procurement process.
		48. Perform oversight & audits to review contract files, compile lessons learned, & ensure consistent policy application.
Other Competencies	E-Business and Automated Tools	49. Use e-business systems and automated tools to promote standardization, efficiency, and transparency.
	Activity Program Coordinator for Purchase Card	50. Performs oversight and execution for the Purchase Card Program.
	Construction/Architect & Engineering (A&E)	51. Develops acquisition strategies, issues notices/solicitations, conducts negotiations, selects sources, awards/ administers contracts for construction & A&E in accordance w/reqts & procedures associated w/construction & A&E outlined in the FAR & supplemental policy & procedures (w/particular attention to FAR Part 36).
Contracting in a Contigent and/or Combat Environment	Contracting in a Contigent and/or Combat Environment	52. Apply contracting expertise during deployments, contingecy operations, or responses to natural disasters
Professional Competency	Problem Solving	1. Problem Solving - Identifies and analyzes problems; weighs relevance and accuracy of information; generates and evaluates alternative solutions; makes recommendations.
	Customer Service	2. Customer Service - Anticipates and meets the needs of both internal and external customers. Delivers high-quality products and services; is committed to continuous improvement.
	Oral Communication	3. Oral Communication - Makes clear/convincing oral presentations. Listens effectively; clarifies info as needed.
	Written Communication	4. Written Communication - Writes in a clear, concise, organized, & convincing manner for the intended audience.
	Interpersonal Skills	5. Interpersonal Skills - Treats others with courtesy, sensitivity, and respect. Considers and responds appropriately to the needs and feelings of different situations
	Decisiveness	6. Decisiveness - Makes well-informed, effective, and timely decisions, even when data are limited or solutions produce unpleasant consequences; perceives the impact and implications of decisions.
	Technical Credibility	7. Technical Credibility - Understands and appropriately applies principles, procedures, requirements, regulations, and policies related to specialized expertise
	Flexibility	8. Flexibility - Is open to change and new information; rapidly adapts to new information, changing conditions, or unexpected obstacles.
	Resilience	9. Resilience - Deals effectively with pressure; remains optimistic and persistent, even under adversity. Recovers quickly from setbacks.
	Accountability	10. Accountability - Holds self and others accountable for measurable high-quality, timely, and cost-effective results. Determines objectives, sets priorities, and delegates work. Accepts responsibility for mistakes. Complies with established control systems and rules.