General Services Administration

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HUMAN CAPITAL AND TRAINING SOLUTIONS (HCATS)
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I. Kick-Off

Alexandra Rouse:
Okay, good morning everyone. Once again, thank you for coming out to our GSA auditorium for our HCaTS presolicitation meeting. We are very happy that you’re here. We -- just to get -- before we get started we’re going to do a little bit of housekeeping. Probably the first thing I would like to call to everyone’s attention is where there was a mix-up at the security check-in, and gentlemen in the room may want to check their wallet to make sure they have the correct wallet. [laughs] So I apologize for the inconvenience, but I guess there was quite a flow of traffic through here this morning, so [laughs]. I know that’s not a good feeling for anyone.

[laughter]

It does. So also I just wanted to politely ask that folks either put their cell phones on vibrate or silent. We don’t want to have any unexpected phone calls and rings being captured on our transcription. With that being said, we have someone who’s making a transcription of today, which we will post on our GSA Interact page for HCaTS. So your colleagues who weren’t able to come in person will be apprised of what happened here today.

We’re also hosting a virtual meeting of what we discuss today next week on the 27th. So if you would like to have other colleagues participate in that event, registration for that closes on Monday at 5:00 p.m. So -- and there’s no limit on the amount of attendees there. Unfortunately we had to do it for this space, because of the size. So thank you for your patience and understanding with that. We do appreciate it.

We -- if you need the facilities, if you step out in the main hall down any of these hallways that bring you further into the building, at the beginning there’s a lady’s room, and men’s room there. And we also have a café in the -- at the very end of the third hallway on the left.
So with that being said, I will officially kick off today. I have the privilege to introduce our FAS Commissioner, Tom Sharpe. Just some background information on Tom. Before coming to GSA, many of you may know that he was the Senior Procurement Executive at the Department of Treasury. He’s also worked at IBM, EPA, and DOD, and brings a lot strength to FAS with his expertise with procurement policy, strategic process improvement, and business management. Today, Tom oversees GSA Federal Acquisition Service, which is a $50 billion portfolio variety of services and products. Tom is building a healthy future for FAS with focus on procurement initiatives, such as HCaTS, to make a better government. So I would like to invite you up here, Tom. Thank you.

[applause]

Tom Sharpe:
Thanks, Alexandra. Good morning. Is that all you got?

[laughter]

Welcome, and again good morning. Thank you for being here. This is a very important session and discussion for us, so we’re glad you’re here. I want to recognize my OPM business partners here. I understand Director Archuleta is coming later for remarks. Joseph Kennedy, George Price, Nina Ferraro. And I want to thank our contracting team -- Tiffany, Jim, Bjorn, Gail -- thank you so much. And it’s a delight to have the head of the Federal Procurement family with us, Anne Rung, director of OFPP.

So why don’t we go ahead and get started. This type of collaboration and discussion between industry and government is a very key component of category management, which I think Anne’s going to talk about in some detail, and strategic sourcing. And we believe very, very strongly it leads to better outcomes, so that’s what this is about.

So we take these opportunities very seriously, except for the technology.

[laughter]
We want to make sure we make the most of this time together this morning. So please take advantage of this opportunity. These types of events are critical to the success of our contract solutions. And we're talking about a very important one we're partnering with OPM on. In this era of tight budgets, category management and strategically sourced vehicles are key to help our customer agencies [inaudible] their missions, while saving time and money in acquisition. I'm not sure how to fix this. Okay.

Category management, as I think Anne's going to talk to you in some detail, is going to be the one place for the 60,000 federal acquisition officials to go, to learn, share, and collaborate. Strategic sourcing is about doing important acquisitions once, doing it right, and then sharing it across government so we don't have to duplicate efforts. Okay, better?

Our partners at OPM are leading the HR category hallway. And I'm delighted and very proud of the fact they've asked FAS to help develop in partnership with them and place the HCaTS contract which we're going to talk about this morning. It's a great opportunity to marry together OPM's deep category management expertise around HR services with our deep acquisition experience.

We are approaching this solution as a formation of a partnership between GSA, OPM, and industry to provide worlds class HR and training services. This will help bring our partners new business opportunities -- you in the room -- and deliver innovation and top of the line HR and training services to our customer agencies. This solution will strengthen the procurement process for both industry and government, enabling more efficient contract administration for the provision, and easier access to HR consulting services to our customer agencies. Our solutions, including HCaTS, are developed over a multi-year deliberative process that includes collaboration with industry, just like we're having here today. Meaning these vehicles are essentially and effectively designed by everyone in this room.

It is very, very important to FAS that we continue this type of engagement and collaboration throughout the life of this program -- through in person events, just like here.
this morning, but also through our Interact community which you all should have access to. So again, my special thanks to the team from GSA, and our colleagues at OPM for the work they’ve done so far to make this solution the best it can be, and the feedback we’re about to get today to even improve further. Thank you so much. Make the most of the session.

[applause]

Joseph Kennedy:
First, let me just say good morning. My name is Joseph Kennedy and I’m the Associate Director for Human Resources Solutions at the Office of Personnel Management. And I would like to add my welcome and thanks to our industry partners. This is a very important day and a very important milestone for us, and you have been instrumental in getting us here. I would also like to thank Commissioner Sharpe and his team for their partnership and leadership in putting together this acquisition.

We knew that when we partnered with GSA that we were going to get unparalleled thinking in the area of acquisition. And OPM would marry it in the area of Human Capital Management. And this partnership has exceeded my expectations. And it should serve as a model of how organizations, and how government can approach these types of joint agency acquisitions. And I know Tom had to leave, but I look forward to a continued partnership. And I look forward to building something, and sustaining something that is ultimately going to be extremely special.

The HCaTS will be the successor to the training and management assistance contract. A number of you know that. But the TMA contract was conceived in the 70s and 80s, and to help fulfill a legislative requirement for the Office of Personnel Management. And that was when OPM would advise and assist in the establishment of training programs for agencies. And that legislative mandate did something for OPM. It began to look to expand our capacity, to help organizations build their workforce. And the primary focus was on something though. It was on the agency. It was moving OPM away from something that we had done with some of our training programs, and it said, “We should be
helping the agencies achieve their missions through better training, through better execution.”

So you fast-forward 35 years. The legislative mandates aren’t getting any easier. There’s the CHCO Act [spelled phonetically], and there’s the GPRA MA, and there is the requirements in our training. There are continued modifications to what we’re doing in the area of talent. And the management challenges -- they become equally complex. We’ve got to look at ways to safeguard our nation and manage in a technology enrich environment, and restore our infrastructures, and attract those millennials. And as powerful as the TMA contract has been in the past, we need something different. We need a change. We need the HCaTS.

And over the years OPM has developed and issued hundreds of HR regulations and policies and human capital frameworks, and I can’t even mention all the ones that we’ve put out. And for the most part, those have been distributed widely, and accepted widely. But I’m going to admit something. There are some places in government -- those nooks and crannies have never heard of those HR policies. Nor have they seen those frameworks and models. And in those cases we are losing our ability to shape efficient, and effective human capital management in government. We are losing our opportunities to partner with acquisition, and IT, and the program communities to partner on the people management challenges that are hitting us. The HCaTS will remedy this.

With this connection to category management, it will expand our reach by baking in adherence to HR regulations, by baking in those human capital frameworks and those models. And that is the key place that organizations seek human capital services -- at the point of purchase. This is going to support an evolution in human capital management that we have never ever seen. Imagine influencing human capital management at every single purchase. The HCaTS will become a nexus for human capital management in organizational performance. It will usher in the center of excellence in human capital management where we have insights into our human capital programs, where we have better data to make decisions, where people management, again, begins to make more sense to all of us. It’s going to lower cost. It’s going to create economies of scale.
So it’s going to do all of this; what is going to take? Well, there are three parties that can make this evolution happen. The GSA, OPM, and OMB team, the customer agencies, and you, industry. We look forward to what’s going to be an amazing partnership.
II. FSSI Introduction

Joseph Kennedy:
Now I’d like to move aside for the person who was driving the fundamental change in our acquisition strategies. I’ve heard her speak. I’ve looked at her writing. She has a profound vision for what we must do. Anne Rung, Administrator for the Office of Federal Procurement Policy.

[applause]

Anne Rung:
That was the best intro ever.

[laughter]

Short, and said I’m a visionary. Welcome. So you thought you could put your sweaters away today. No. It’s freezing outside. I want to thank Joe for the introduction, and for the amazing partnership and leadership from OPM. And, of course, Tom Sharpe, and Tiffany, and the whole team from GSA. I’m really pleased to be part of this important discussion today on the Human Capital and Training Services acquisition.

So my GSA, and OPM colleagues asked if I would spend a few minutes just sharing with you my vision for federal procurement, and how this acquisition fits into that vision, given I’m head of the family, as Tom said -- the big dysfunctional family, as it is. So as many of you have heard me say, our procurement system is plagued by too much complexity and duplication. So the current, highly fragmented framework for acquisition is not just inefficient. It makes it really difficult to achieve the best value for the tax payer. So simplification is desperately needed, and that occurs through greater use of existing contracts, less price variability, simpler requirements, and faster time to award.

Collaboration comes with communication between industry and government, between CEOs and PMs, between agencies. It’s the sharing between procurement units of contract information, including terms and conditions, and pricing.
And it also means newly trained teams of acquisition specialists using industry, best practices, and working hand in hand with requirements experts. So in the end simplification, and collaboration lead to improved performance and savings.

So, as most, if not all, of you know by now, I share a vision with GSA for simplification and collaboration based on category management -- where spend on common goods and services is broken down into categories that are managed like mini-businesses, with one team of experts developing strategies that we deploy across government in a consistent way. As explained in my December 4th memorandum to CAOs and SPEs, each category will be led by a senior government executive who’s a true expert in the category. Each category manager will understand buying trends, what drives cost, new innovations on the horizon, and emerging companies. And instead of focusing solely on reduction of unit price, the category manager and his or her team will develop a broader government wide strategy to drive down total costs and improve performance.

So we’ve created 10 categories as part of category management, including IT, professional services, and human capital. And I’m really pleased that OPM is leading the human capital category on behalf of the federal government. And Sydney Smith-Heimbrock, of OPM, is serving as our category manager.

Human capital represents nearly $4 billion dollars a year in spend for the federal government, and like the rest of our categories, has a vast amount of duplicative contracts, varying standards and quality, and very little collaboration and sharing of information across our agencies. This procurement represents a really important step towards better managing our human capital solutions across the federal government. This procurement was approved through and by the Category Management Leadership Council comprised of the seven largest spending agencies, including DOD, DHS, VA, and GSA, and chaired by me as the administrator of OMB.

The HCaTS acquisition team is a great example of how agencies can work together to deliver a common -- sorry -- deliver a government-wide procurement solution, one serving
as the category management OPM, and the other as procurement agent GSA. I’m also really delighted that the Chief Human Capital Officers Council, and chief learning officers are also actively involved in validating the procurement’s requirements and participating in the source selection.

The goals of this acquisition are to better leverage the federal government’s buying power, provide greater flexibility to agency customers, streamline our contracting actions, and help agencies to deliver on their missions. It’s also important to note that this contracting strategy is only one of many strategies that Sydney, Joe, and their team will deploy to better manage our HR training across the government.

I really want to applaud GSA and OPM for opening this dialogue with industry and giving our stakeholders a chance to work with us in shaping key policies for better results, and I look forward to hearing feedback on this proposal at hand, and other opportunities we might be thinking about as we move forward. Thanks very much.

[applause]
III. Acquisition Overview/Scope Description

Tiffany Hixson:
Thank you, Anne. Can everyone hear me? All right. Hold on. I know we were having a hard time hearing a little bit. Can you hear me now? All right. Good.

Hi, I’m Tiffany Hixson, and I work for the General Services Administration and I serve in a number of capacities. For today and for the HCaTS procurement, I am the Head of the Contracting Activity. And what that means is I’m responsible for making sure we do this procurement right. And so this morning I thought I’d take a few minutes to share with you who is on the team from both OPM and GSA, what our roles are in the procurement, and just a general overview of the vetting process, and oversight process that we have here in GSA, to make sure that I’m doing my job right.

So if we can go to the next slide -- oh. Hi, Nasim. Thank you. There’s me in the top box. I feel like I need to go up and kind of point, but -- okay. I’m in the top box, and I am responsible for the entire procurement process and making sure that we follow the evaluation criteria that we laid out in the procurement. We have got really a cross-functional, and cross-regional team that is supporting this procurement, which is in addition to partnering with OPM. We are partnering in house, in GSA, to make sure we have got really the best and most talented acquisition professionals that are supporting this procurement.

And I will be responsible for HCaTS through contract award and stand up. And after we get through stand up of the contract we will be transferring contract administration responsibility to Region 2. In Region 2 in GSA we just hired a new Regional Commissioner, Gregory Hammond. And he will be the executive responsible for handling the contract administration for HCaTS post-award.

The contracting team we have is led by Gerri Watson, who is my deputy, and also the deputy head of the contracting activity. Bjorn Miller, Gail Schneider, Nasim, and Kimberlee Wallentine, who’s not able to join us today, are
the contracting staff that we have working on the procurement. Bjorn is responsible for our HCaTS procurement, the unrestricted one, and Gail is responsible for our small business HCaTS procurement. And you’re going to be hearing a lot from them today, so --

On the program side of the house, Jim Ghiloni is leading the program team, followed by Alex Rouse who is the Program Manager for HCaTS. Jimmy Hahn, who is the Deputy Program Manager from Region 2. And then we also have a procurement analyst that is supporting the entire team, who is Brad Demers. And he -- for those of you that follow -- actually the professional services work that we do in GSA, he’s pretty active in our blogs, a contracting expert that is supporting the team as we get through this.

The color coding actually does mean something. All the blue is generally GSA, or supporting GSA from a contracting perspective. The tan color is OPM, who is the technical sponsor and category manager for HCaTS. And on the program side of the house Joseph Kennedy -- where -- did he go? All right. He’ll be back, I guess. So Joseph Kennedy is the executive that is responsible overall for this engagement from an OPM perspective. Sydney Smith-Heimbrock is the category manager for HR Services, as Anne mentioned, from a government wide perspective. George Price is the program executive, who is my counterpart in supporting, really the technical evaluation, the technical part of the process as we get through HCaTS, and they will remain engaged throughout the lifecycle of this procurement, even post award.

Rich Vinnacombe is also a program manager that works very closely with Alex in making sure that we’re developing the requirements and that those actually reflect what the CHICO and Chief Learning Officers want from this procurement across government. They are also both very active in a commodity team that is sponsored by the Office of Federal Procurement Policy. The Category Management Leadership Council for all of our government wide activities, from a category perspective, have a series of commodity teams that are -- have membership from across government, and those agencies that have the most spend in those categories. So that’s what -- Alex and Rich spend a lot of time talking to them. As a matter of fact they briefed them yesterday.
about the progress that we’ve made on this procurement, how we’ve resolved a number of issues, and questions that we’ve heard from industry, which Bjorn and Gail will be walking you through in a little bit.

Oh, yeah. And the CHCO and CLOs will also be providing OPM with feedback and support as we get through the evaluation process.

In terms of oversight support, we’ve got a number of groups that provide us that here in GSA, and first is GSA Counsel. And we’ve got three team members that are supporting us from our counsel office. Kristen Nowadly, who is our principal counsel, and is leading the counsel team in providing us with feedback on what’s legal, what’s not, making sure we’re doing the right thing from that perspective. John Cornell is also a counsel who has supported a similar procurement like HCaTS. He was — supported the OASIS team in getting OASIS in place. And we’re using a lot of the same contracting principals that we used in OASIS in HCaTS. So John is supporting us through this, giving his experience in that space. And then Betsy Kruger is also supporting counsel from — actually where I’m at. They felt like they needed to have counsel like right by me, and make sure I was doing the right thing — out in Seattle.

From a small business perspective we have two principle team members that are supporting us from a small business perspective. The first is our small business specialist out of Region 2, who is Janice Bracey. And the second is our SBA PCR, who is assigned to GSA, and that’s Isaac Roper Charles. And so, they have been very active in making sure that our small business documentation — and we do have a number of pieces of documentation that we have to go through from a procurement perspective — that that is adequately justified. They’re also very actively engaged in HCaTS, our small set aside procurement.

Last leadership stake holders and those folks that make sure that I’m doing my job the right way include Jeff Koses who is our GSA Senior Procurement Executive, and he is also engaged in reviewing, in particular the acquisition strategy, the business case for how we’re going to be running the program. He has oversight responsibility for
that here at GSA. Kevin Youel Page, who is the -- [coughs] excuse me, deputy Commissioner for FAS, and my boss. He also has responsibilities for reviewing our work as we get through specific phases of the procurement. So for example, we -- well, we have a new -- FAS has a new acquisition counsel, and so as we get through various phases of the procurement we go before this counsel to say, you know, “Here’s our plans. Here’s how we got here. Here’s our rationale. Here’s our go forward recommendations.”

And so, we do that at the acquisition planning phase. We will do that before release of the final solicitation. And we will go before that board before we make our award decision. Post award that board also oversees contract administration. We keep them up to date in terms of what’s happening from that perspective. And he chairs that. And then Greg Hammond, who is the new RC in Region 2. He’s a key stake holder because he’ll be taking over responsibility for contract administration post award.

-- a communications perspective, if we have anyone here from the press. Cara Battaglini [spelled phonetically] -- I was -- I’m sorry, Kara, if you’re here. I always mess up your last name. But she’s our principal point of contact from an external communications perspective, and she’s got a team of folks that support her, with both our communications through our Interact website, and also with the press.

And of course our strategic sourcing group. We’ve got an internal team that supports us, with OFPP and our work on the category management space, including Meredith Romley, and Joanie Newhart from OFPP, who are the principals that work for Anne, and that are also actively engaged in the requirements development and category -- commodity teams, I’m sorry, for the HCaTS procurement. So they spend a lot of time talking to the government wide users about what’s happening with the procurement, and making sure that they’re buying in and using this procurement stays where it’s supposed to be. So for example, right now we are working with the commodity team on commitment letters about levels of use that each agency will be using in HCaTS, which we -- once we get through that process we’ll be sharing that with industry as well.
So Bjorn, you ready?

Bjorn Miller:
I’m ready.

Tiffany Hixson:
All right. So Bjorn is going to walk you through where we’re at in terms of thinking through our strategy, some of the key questions that we’ve received from you all, what our plan is in addressing those questions, and next steps in the procurement process. So Bjorn, the floor is yours.

Bjorn Miller:
Thank you. Thank you, Tiffany, and thank you, industry partners for taking the time out of your busy schedules and for braving the elements. I was told that it’s supposed to rain a little harder later on, so during the Q and A , only easy questions. Okay?

This event will help you and us prepare for the next major milestone, the release of the RFPs. What Gail and I hope to accomplish by the end of today, is for you to have a better understanding of what we’ve done, why we’ve done it, and how it’s going to benefit your organizations, and ours. Some of the material you are already familiar with, and have seen, while other information will be new. But we have set aside time at the end of the presentation for you to ask questions, and to provide us with additional feedback.

For federal agencies to carry out their missions, and to plan for tomorrow’s challenges, the government workforce requires requisite, and specific skills, knowledge, and tools. And that’s the purpose of HCaTS. With a workforce as large as ours, providing as many services as we do, we need a total solution. And that’s why we anticipate awarding multiple, government-wide IDIQ task-order contracts.

With the support of Ms. Rung, and the Category Management Leadership Council, we are excited to present the first ever services contract solution under category management. What does that mean? We have a new tool for the government to leverage its buying power to make smarter business decisions.
decisions. To do that we realize that we can’t rely on just a handful of contractors. We need all of your support. We want to establish long term relationships with you. And what we’re going to propose in the RFPs -- I’ll wait for you guys to get your pens and pads out -- is a ten and a half year ordering period with an un-capped contract ceiling. We believe that is going to reduce program risk for you and us.

Working with yourselves, Roger Waldron, with the Coalition of Government Procurement, the CHICO Council, the Coalition -- the Category Management Leadership Council, we’ve identified three areas of focus that we are going to include in the scope of HCaTS -- training and development, human capital, and organizational performance. And Mr. Kennedy spoke to that earlier today. We believe that this will allow federal agencies, at the individual, unit, and enterprise levels, meet their needs today and tomorrow.

Well, we have this expanded duration, this ceiling. We’re under category management. Let’s drill down a little bit further. We’re now going to allow full range of pricing types. We realize that one contract type does not fit every acquisition. So at the task order level, federal agencies can award the fixed price variation, the cost reimbursable variation, and time and materials.

And finally, HCaTS is going to serve as the knowledge management repository for the government. Our vision is for HCaTS to reside in the common acquisition platform, so agencies know where to go to share best practices, and lessons learned, that you will be providing and we will be using. This will help develop a heightened level of expertise, and to make sure that future acquisitions are streamlined.

Next slide. Thank you. The goals of HCaTS. Again, we want to provide a flexible, customizable, total solution at the individual, unit, and enterprise level. We recognize that every acquisition is unique and the contract types need to fit the project risk, and address the triple constraint. And, as I mentioned earlier, all types of contracts can be awarded at the task order level. We want to maximize the use of small businesses and have them grow with HCaTS. And that’s why we’ve set aside one contract
vehicle solely for small businesses. Our vision is that under the unrestricted, the subcontracting plans that will be incorporated in their contracts, those large businesses will reach out to the small business community and partner with them on the total solutions that you’ll be providing to the government.

We also want to provide transactional data and best practices and lessons learned for the government. As Miss Rung, and Mr. Sharpe had mentioned earlier, the goal of the government is to make smarter business decisions using data. I’m reminded of the phrase, “In God we trust, and all others bring data.” And that’s what we want. It’s important for us to get that data so we can make smarter business decisions and in turn that’s going to help you. Often times we get things wrong, and if we have that data to support our decisions it will make your lives easier.

We want to provide value in adding services to the training, and development of the solicitations. Federal agencies are able to directly acquire their needs under HCaTS. How so? Both Gail and myself will be providing training, a delegation of procurement authority, just like the GWACs, and issuing those authorities so contracting officers can directly acquire their services. Also, we will be working with them to ensure that their terms and conditions are in compliance with HCaTS, and that the entire acquisition process at the task order level is done properly and fairly. We’re trying to protect ourselves and also you. So this is going to be a win-win, and a true partnership for the remainder -- for the life of your contract.

In the event that a federal agency cannot, for whatever reason, acquire their own services, they can go to OPM and use their assisted acquisition services to procure those needs.

Finally, we have built in an on-ramping mechanism in both contract vehicles. We want to ensure that every single day for the life of the contract -- that we have the best of the best contractors that can provide the services and solutions we need. We understand that environments and initiatives change, and we have to take proactive measures to capture that. So throughout the life of HCaTS, we are
Now, I’ve touched on the strategy and the goals of HCaTS. Gail Schneider will now discuss what you’ve had to tell us when we posted the draft RFP. Gail Schneider.

Gail Schneider:
Thank you. Can everybody hear me? Okay. We’d like to thank -- we’d like to thank industry for all the engagement that they’ve shown us throughout this HCaTS process. You cannot hear? I’ll talk louder. Okay. Okay. Not only did we receive 600 questions in addition to comments for our last draft RFP, we also got hundreds of questions and comments with our RFI in addition to other outreach that industry has done with us to make us aware of the environment that our HCaTS contractors will be working under. So it’s our goal with all the feedback that we’re getting to create a robust contract vehicle -- to create a robust contract vehicle, and to make sure that we have maximum competition when we release this RFP.

As you saw with our draft -- with our RFI, we took all of your survey results, your comments, your questions, and dramatically reshaped what we gave you at the RFI, to the draft RFP. And, we are doing the same exact thing with all the questions, and comments, and the engagement that we’re having right now, this industry day, to make sure that we’re making the necessary changes from our draft RFP to our final. If everybody has noticed that on Tuesday the 19th we posted all the answers to the questions that were asked of us for the draft RFP on both Interact, and on FBO. So if you haven’t looked through them, we encourage you to do that.

And, on the next slide, we’ll show you what -- we took all of your feedback, researched it, evaluated it. And then we came up with six major changes. The first one is having to do with the NAICS codes. On the draft RFP everyone noticed that we had scoring elements attached to -- for having multiple NAICS codes represented in the sum of your relevant experience projects, and simply for having a NAICS code on all of your relevant experience projects. As the requirement was -- is only that you have four projects with a pool NAICS code, and two can have any NAICS code. But we
realize that this didn’t align with the messaging of the HCaTS scope. Our scope is defined solely by the key service areas. And in doing so we needed to remove the scoring element attached to them to align ourselves with that message.

We also heard back from industry that they would like to use their experience as a subcontractor as a relevant experience project. And we did listen to you. We realize that not only should we allow your experience as a first tier subcontractor, but it’s also extremely valuable when you’ve done work as a subcontractor for the federal government. So it’s -- not only is it allowed now, but we will also be giving points. Our -- we have a two tiered structure for having a federal project, with the most points going if you were federal prime contractor, and then the next tier would be if you were a first tier subcontractor.

And the last one on this slide is that in the draft RFP you noticed that we had accreditations that were tied both to contractor key personnel and to the company. We definitely received a lot of feedback with this suggesting different accreditations that we could use. But, also -- ultimately, we realized that while all the accreditations that we had tied to the contractor key personnel were worthwhile, and fit within the scope of HCaTS, it did not fit the roles of a contractor key personnel. And it would also introduce volatility within all of our offerers to make sure that they could get those points. So we decided to remove contractor key personnel in order to align ourselves with what the roles of contractor key personnel actually are. But we have kept the accreditations tied to companies. Next slide.

So what -- another thing that we heard from industry was that when a contractor task order is issued it’s at the decision of the contracting officer, and not at -- not the contractor’s decision. So we know that you might want to use a collection of task orders in order to equal one of our relevant experience projects, and that will be allowed for one relevant experience project. Every other relevant experience project will stay as a single contractor task order. In this way you’ll be able to meet the minimum requirements and scoring elements by using up to six task
orders that meet our definition of a collection of task orders.

After we used all of your feedback, and made these major changes, we realized that we also needed to align our point allotment with the way that we’re messaging HCaTS and what makes a quality HCaTS contractor. So we ranked all of our scoring elements, and then weighted them in the way that we think will get us the best in HCaTS contractors for our customers. And we’ve put the scope of the work that you do, and your past performance as the most highly weighted factors and -- with every other factor below it. And the accreditations are below your relevant experience projects.

And, finally, the other major change is that, in the draft RFP, we were requiring that all HCaTS contractors were able to take cost-reimbursable work. So that means that if you did not pass the adequacy for an audit of your accounting system, that you would not be able to get an HCaTS contract. And in doing so, we were going to make sure all of our HCaTS offerers who were in contention for award, would have their accounting systems audited by the DCAA. But, we realized that we need to provide options for offerers -- that, possibly, an offerer might not want to do cost-reimbursement work. So that’s an option -- that they can say, “I’m not -- I still want to be an HCaTS contractor, but I do not want to take cost-reimbursement work.” And that will be that for this issue. Or a contractor can come in and say, “I have a current accounting system that was audited by the DCAA, or a cognizant federal agency, and now a CPA, and I would like the HCaTS contracting Team to review it for adequacy.” And if we give you that determination, and you’re awarded an HCaTS contract, you will be eligible to take cost-reimbursement work.

And the next slide?

Bjorn Miller:
Okay. Thank you. We heard you, loud and clear. We have to make changes and the changes we made were to reduce artificial barriers of entry and to have meaningful elements go into the evaluation. Something that we were happy you didn’t want us to change was the overall
acquisition strategy, what we are calling highest technically rated with fair and reasonable prices.

Two contract vehicles: The unrestricted and the total small business set aside. Within each contract vehicle are two pools, different size standards but identical pools in both contract vehicles. Under each pool, we anticipate awarding 40 contracts plus any tied at the 40th position, and we’ll go over that a little later.

So we’re looking at approximately 160 different contracts when it’s all said and done. Again, as I mentioned earlier, we’re not going to rely on just a small handful of contractors to provide the services we need for this initiative under category management.

Well, how are we going to make these awards? What’s highest technically rated with fair, reasonable price? Say that three times fast.

[laughter]

It’s neither lowest priced, technically acceptable, or a trade-off. So we’re not focusing our attention on price, and we’re not going to analyze and compare non-price and price factors. We want you to tell us and to prove to us the work you’ve done in the past and how well you’ve done it in the past. And this is the relevant experience projects we’ve identified in Section L.

We do plan on awarding without discussions. We want to make sure that what you’re showing to us in your proposals are verifiable. You’ve done the work, just show us the documents. We also want your initial proposals to contain the best offers. We’ve outlined a lot of scoring elements within the RFP to give you the best chance to get a contract and all we’re asking for you is to show us verifiable documents. So the benefits to you are that you don’t have to write any lengthy narratives. So you can put your pens down, you can tell your bid and proposal teams just to relax.

We’re also, again, not looking to have you identify limiting labor rates for the next 10-and-a-half years. Furthermore, as you requested, we’re expanding the types of
relevant experience projects that we’re accepting, both in the federal and non-federal world. You get to choose the best projects you believe give you the best chance of getting a contract. We’re trying, again, to reduce those artificial barriers to entry. And ultimately, this is a very objective evaluation. There is no subjectivity in what we’re doing. You just have to prove to us why you should claim the points that you’re claiming.

So I touched on the pools. Why do we have pools in HCaTS? Well, as I mentioned, both contract vehicles have the same two pools. The pools are a grouping of NAICS codes of the same size standard. Pool 1 consists of three NAICS codes, and the size standard for Pool 1 is $11 million. And Pool 2 consists of five NAICS codes, and the size standard is $15 million.

A couple of years ago, the Small Business Administration promulgated a final rule that directed the government and told us, “Look, in the past, you haven’t been consistent in how you are identifying the size standard of contractors. You need to fix it.” And this is our solution.

Now there’s been some conversation and discussion about this, but we believe this gives you the best opportunity to earn a contract and for us to get the services we need. Everything else being equal, if we eliminated both pools and just had one pool per se, we would have less contracts to award. So this is why we have two pools under the identified NAICS codes in the RFP.

And as Gail had mentioned -- I just want to go back to the slide, sorry -- the NAICS codes and the pools do not drive the scope of HCaTS. That’s very important. The scope of HCaTS resides in Section C. It is the three KSAs. Next slide.

The three KSAs. Again, working with OPM, the category management leadership council. We’ve aligned the future of the government’s needs with these three Key Service Areas. We’ve identified six objectives within them to improve the management of human capital within the government, and the applicable governing documents. Mr. Kennedy had spoken to that. Over the years, things have changed, laws have changed, this is an evolution and we have to be proactive.
We want to increase our efficiency and effectiveness in merging business processes with the workforce. Again, as technology changes, as initiatives change, we want to be proactive to make sure that what the people are doing align with the business process.

We want to continually grow the skills, knowledge, and tools of the federal workforce. We have a mission to accomplish and we’re only as good as the training we get.

[sneeze]

Bless you.

We want to implement change management initiatives. Again, we want to be proactive, forward-thinking; we want to streamline the process and your innovative approach to meeting our needs is what we’re looking for. As I mentioned earlier, one of our visions is for partnerships at the task order level. You can come up with the creative solutions that we’re looking for at any given moment, at any level, under any pricing type. We want to maximize the return on our training and development investments. It costs a lot of money to train, develop on-board personnel and we’re looking to save on those costs with your innovative approaches.

So there’s three -- sorry, I’m going to talk. The three key service areas have subcategories underneath them. They give you some breadth of what we’re looking for, but this is not limiting. There’s much more that can go into this than what you see on the screen and what’s in Section C, so don’t think that this is just what you’re able to provide. So long as it fits the overarching elements of HCaTS, we will most likely agree within the in-scope determination. Next slide?

Gail Schneider:
Okay, thank you, Bjorn. As Bjorn showed two slides ago that he showed the contract vehicle structure of having two contract vehicles, one for small business and one for unrestricted, it shows how much we’re going into the small business concern, that we have the two contracting vehicles are matching each other not just because of what Bjorn mentioned, but also we want them to mirror each other so
that the small business wasn’t the only one that was restricted by pools. We wanted to make it an easy solution for our customers to be able to see both vehicles.

So that means with the two-contract-vehicle structure that a customer will do their market research, determine which vehicle and pool they’re going to release their task order under, and if it’s under the small business HCaTS, that means that only small businesses will be competing against each other, which is a great benefit. And we’re also engaging small businesses through subcontracting of all of our HCaTS contractors. All HCaTS contractors that fall under the other-than-small distinction will be giving us subcontracting plans and we’ll be evaluating them for reaching, but attainable goals and we also have the option for a small business to submit a subcontracting plan which is because Bjorn mentioned that we’re having on-ramping on HCaTS and one method of on-ramping is that if a small business graduates from their small business size, they’ll be able to vertically on-ramp to the HCaTS unrestricted contract vehicle.

However, in doing so, they need to be able to meet the score of the last contract that was awarded, so that would be the 40th-plus-all-ties position. And they’ll be scored at the exact same elements and one of the elements on the HCaTS unrestricted that is not on HCaTS small business is meeting or exceeding your subcontracting goals. And the only way to do this is if you had subcontracting goals to start with, so some of our small businesses might choose to submit a subcontracting plan thinking in the future that they might want to grow their business and move to the HCaTS unrestricted if they outgrow the small business size standard.

In addition to our contract structure, we’ve also made it that we -- this is a new thing from the Draft RFP that you’ll see in the final -- is that we’re awarding three contracts to HUBZone small businesses, disadvantaged small businesses, women-owned small businesses, and service-disabled veteran-owned small businesses. This way, when a customer wants to do a set-aside for one of these socioeconomic subgroups, we will have adequate competition for them. And we are doing this not by taking out offers who are not in any socioeconomic distinctions but score
high, what we’ll do is, after the 40th-plus-all-ties, we’ll look at the constitution of our small business contractors and make sure that we’re awarding to three of each of those categories, and if we’re not, we will move the next highest scoring proposal that’s within that subgroup that we needed another contractor for up in for contention for award. Next slide?

So now that both Bjorn and I have talked about the strategy, the goals of HCaTS, now we’ll talk about our streamlined screening and evaluation procedure and this will be helpful to all of you, for us, and for our customers that they will get a solution in a more efficient time. So what we’ll do is first, every proposal, every offer will come in; it depends on how many pools that they are submitting for. Each pool will have -- if you’re submitting for more than two pools, you’ll submit one offer, but you’ll be applying to two pools. And each pool will be evaluated separately, and that goes for each contract vehicle.

If you’re a small business, you’re able to submit on both the HCaTS unrestricted and the HCaTS SB, so that could mean that you’re submitting two proposals and possibly two pool applications. So we will take, for each pool that we’ll identify based on the offer, self-score, the top 40-plus-all-ties, these will be the only proposals that we’ll look at because they’re in contention for award and we’ll evaluate them first by screening them to make sure that all of the documents that the offer says are in the proposal were submitted for us and if that was not the case, if an offer says, “I had this particular substantiating document based on this file name,” we look at the proposal that was sent in to us on a readable DVD, we will contact the offerer and make sure before we start the full evaluation process, we have everything the offerer intended for us to get.

Now that we have the full proposals, we’re going to do a minimum requirements review and the score validation. There’s minimum requirements associated with responsiveness and eligibility in addition to the minimum requirements on your Relevant Experiences Projects and this will happen simultaneously that if one of these minimum requirements is not met, that top 40 offer will automatically be removed.
from contention and the next highest scoring proposal will move up in that offerer’s place.

However, then there’s also the case that we’re validating all of the scores that have been provided to us by reviewing your substantiating document and there’s the possibility that a score might be reduced or possibly increased. After the change in score, we’ll, once again, re-rank the proposals and if a proposal who had their score reduced, it’s now no longer in the top 40, they’ll once again drop down and the next proposal will move up. And then we’ll start the whole process again, initial screening, minimal requirements review, and scoring validation. So ultimately, it doesn’t matter if you were selected in the beginning or if your proposal went up from another proposal dropping down. Your proposal will be evaluated exactly the same as all other proposals.

And after everything has been screened and evaluated, we have our top 40, it’s no longer a floating top 40 because all 40, plus all ties, have passed minimum requirements and their scores been validated by us, will now move to having their prices for fair and reasonableness. Then, next step -- okay.

So, as I mentioned earlier, you will submit one proposal, but if you’re submitting for two pools, you will have two pool applications. The items on the screen are what is in your complete proposal, but not your pool application, and these are the responsibility of your proposal, which we’ll be evaluating in a two-structure approach by searching government databases and by the documents that are provided by your offer. And Bjorn is going to talk more in-depth about the pool application.

Bjorn Miller:
Thank you. Okay, so, as we mentioned earlier, we changed significantly one element within the RFP and that was the scoring allocation and now the preponderance of the scores are focused on the Relevant Experience Projects and the past performance and that’s what you guys asked of us to do, and it makes sense. As we mentioned, each pool you have to submit six projects of your choosing, federal or non-federal -- I should clarify that: if you are submitting
a proposal for two pools, you can submit ten projects up to the 12 because of these floating, non-NAICS-codes projects.

Of the six projects, four of them have to align with one of the NAICS codes identified in the pool you’re applying for. Whoa, wait a minute, Bjorn, you said earlier that the NAICS codes don’t drive the scope. It doesn’t. We believe that if we don’t have this element in the acquisition that many of you will have less of a chance of getting a contract because companies will come in and not map their projects to a NAICS code and they’ll automatically get awards in both pools. Again, we’re trying to reduce these artificial barriers to entry to increase small business participation and to get the best of the best to get the contracts.

So six projects per pool, four of them align to one of the NAICS codes in the pool, and every project has to be within scope of at least one of the KSAs identified in Section C and on the earlier slide. The other two projects can have any NAICS code that you’ve identified. They can float; we’re not worried about that. But again, they have to be within scope of one of the KSAs.

We further define what a relevant experience project is and we’ve tried to broaden the definition as much as possible, so any single contract that you’ve performed services under, any task order or purchase order against a contract or a BPA will count as well. The bottom line is we want you to show us verifiable contractual documentation that you’ve done what you say you’ve done and how well you’ve done it. I just want to point out one element that I’ve added to the RFP is the collection of task orders. That was not in the original draft RFP. We’ve realized, across the government, there are reasons why task orders are broken out, that these projects are logically grouped; there’s a logical relationship to them. So we’re allowing only one of the six projects to be considered a collection of task orders and we’ve identified the parameters of what that means in our current RFP.

Just to drill down a little bit further: the minimum requirements of these six Relevant Experience Projects. Some of these have changed, others haven’t. I want to highlight three things that have changed since the draft RFP. One, we’ve reduced the minimum period of performance
of the projects from six months to three months. We heard your feedback and you told us that many of your projects wouldn’t qualify, and should, because you couldn’t hit that six-month-mark. We’ve done our research; it makes sense. We’ve also reduced the estimated obligated amount from $50,000 to $25,000. Same reasoning: you told us that it was too high of a threshold; it didn’t make sense, and we think that you should be able to take credit for the work you’ve accomplished that meets one of the KSAs we’ve identified.

Furthermore, I just want to outline this: The projects have to be awarded by an entity outside of your corporate structure. We will not accept any project that was somehow performed within your corporate structure. I feel like that has to be said. Everything else, I think, is self-explanatory. Again, we’ve tried to reduce these artificial barriers, but have meaningful minimum requirements so we get the best of the best contracts awarded. Next slide?

Gail Schneider:
Okay. Something that Bjorn and I -- we’ve talked about all of the changes that we’ve made based on your responses, but we also, on Tuesday, we posted a further draft version of C, L, and M to correspond with two of our attachments that we have given to you in order to have some advanced warning because you might need to contact a customer regarding these two attachments.

One was our attachment J9, which is a collection of task orders. With the addition of having a collection of task orders for one relevant experience project, you will have to have your customer, or contracting officer if it was a federal project, confirm that the collection of task orders that you wish to submit in lieu of the Relevant Experience Project does fit the definition of our RFP. And then the other attachment that we released was J6, the Past performance substitute form, and if a project, whether it’s because it was not a federal government project or there just was no PPIRS report or CPARS report, you’ll be able to contact your customer, contracting officer, assessing official to fill out this Past Performance Substitute Form because, as you see, one of our highly weighted points is based on your past performance rating. So we’ve done that...
as a service for industry to get a heads-up on getting their proposal ready. So --

Bjorn Miller:
Can I say something quickly?

Gail Schneider:
Yes.

Bjorn Miller:
These are final drafts, so although we are --

Gail Schneider:
Just the attachments.

Bjorn Miller:
The attachments. Although we will accept them, as with many times with the government, we do reserve the right to change our minds. So we’re trying to make every attempt to give you the lead time to start working your relationships with your assessing officials and contracting officers. But there are some limits, so just be advised that it may change, but we’re doing our best for that not to happen.

Gail Schneider:
Yes, thank you. In addition to those two attachments that we have, the HCaTS RFP is made up of 10 integrated attachments in which we’re trying to guide the offerers through their proposal submission which will in turn help us with the evaluation process. If at all possible, these forms are automated so that it asks the offerer a question based on their question, maybe they have to answer a follow-up question, and then the response is given for us in the form.

The most automated of our forms and kind of the highlight of the proposal will be your self-scoring worksheet. And this form is highly automated in that it will ask you a series of questions about your minimum requirements and every scoring element, and if you claim it, you will have to also substantiate it with contractual documents, government reports, deliverables for us to review. So we would ask that it’s in best practices that you would not only list -- you’ll have to list the documents, otherwise we will not know that it’s substantiating it, but also to
highlight where we should be looking within these documents, and there will be a place for an explanation if something -- we need to combine a couple documents in order to get a figure.

So we encourage you to take the time to make sure that you’re communicating to us what we need to substantiate your points and minimum requirements. So, based on that, you’ll get your self-score, you’ll submit that with your proposal, and as I stated during the screening evaluation process, that will initially choose our top 40, and then we’ll re-sort based on our validation of it.

So we also, I touched earlier, that we’ve re-sorted our points in the allotment in which we’re giving the most amount of points for your past performance, and then scope. Something that has changed from the Draft RFP is that only the unrestricted is having the scoring element for meeting and exceeding small business goals. We believe that all of our scoring elements combine to mirror the complexity and the anticipated task orders that will be released within the HCaTS environment and will ensure that our contractors are providing quality for the customers. Next sheet?

So in addition to your Relevant Experience Projects, the other scoring elements are your accreditations and this will also be on the self-score sheet in which you will -- we have two types of accreditations. One is based on your approved systems and your billing rates and the other are - - we have two ISOs and on the sheet, you’ll submit your certification and the other information that’s required by the RFP and based on your response there, you will also get points if you’ve met the requirements for one of these accreditations.

So now that you’ve heard everything about HCaTS, possibly, what do you do now? We would like to encourage everybody to submit a proposal. If you have an other-than-small business, you’ll be able to submit for both pools in the unrestricted. If you’re a small business, you’ll be able to submit a proposal for both HCaTS unrestricted and HCaTS small business and you can also submit for both pools. As I stated earlier, we would like you to make sure that you’re submitting all of the file names and you’re substantiating both the minimum requirements of the
responsiveness and eligibility of all of the scoring elements. You’ll submit -- this is a change from the Draft RFP, that you’ll submit your proposal on a readable DVD and once you’ve done that, you’ll send us a confirmation email in which you’ll send us your tracking number of your readable DVD proposal so that once the RFP has closed, we have a ginormous stack of all of your readable DVDs and we will check based on who said that they submitted it from the email and what we’ve gotten, and we will track down if we are missing something. We’ll contact you if you’ve said that you’ve given it to us. So with us getting the tracking number, both us, the government, and you, the offerer, will know if your proposal came in in a timely manner.

So definitely double-check our proposal format table. It is outlined in Section L4.1, it outlines every element and how we would like the files to be named and we think that it provides a nice naming convention for you to also organize your proposal with. In addition to that, we have a new proposal checklist that will also help with you organizing your proposal. And very, very important, as I stressed about how we have these 10 integrated attachments and many of them are auto-populating, is that we do not want any documents to be altered from their original format. That will also help you because you won’t have a score if you alter your self-score sheet and you won’t have pricing if you alter your pricing sheet. So, please do not do that.

If you have any questions about your submission, you can contact us at hcatsquestions@gsa.gov. This is an email that you should all be familiar with. It’s an email that we go through as a team to review the questions and comments together and it’s centrally located for all of us to keep everything together and organized. I must stress that, please do not falsify, mislead, or provide any fraudulent information with your proposal. The next slide?

So, now that everybody is wanting to submit a proposal, what’s next? We are updating our Interact site very frequently. It’s been at least once a week, but it could be more. And then we’re also have been updating FBO with the release of the Drafts C, L, and M and the two attachments, so it’s our recommendation that if you have
not registered with both FBO and Interact that you do so, because you’ll be provided with emails notifying you of any update. These are our two solicitation numbers up here. We will be providing these slides to you at a later date and when you get them, they’re hyperlinked to the pre-solicitation notices on FBO, and that’s our Interact site.

As always, any questions go to the same email as before, and if you have any colleagues after this presentation that you would think that they would also benefit from hearing the presentation, or possibly want to hear it again yourself, we are providing the link on a feature slide for registering to the Virtual Industry Day.
IV. Questions and Answers

Gail Schneider:
Now, the next slide is questions. What we’d like you to do is we have two microphones set up in the aisle. Actually one is missing a microphone; possibly we can move one over. Line up, and we’ll be taking questions alternating between the two microphones, so if.

Jimmy Church:
Good morning.

Gail Schneider:
Good morning.

Jimmy Church:
My name is Jimmy Church. I’m with M Powered Strategies. And I just want to say, thank you. I mean, what you’ve guys have been doing -- I’ve been tracking this for a while, and I feel like you guys have been very responsive, clear, and candid, and thoughtful and fair throughout this entire process, so I just wanted to thank you. I mean, this is amazing.

Bjorn Miller:
Thank you.

Gail Schneider:
Oh, thank you for saying that.

Jimmy Church:
I just have one quick question. Is there a total points possible?

Gail Schneider:
There are. I believe we have it at -- I think it’s at 20,000 for the small business and 20,350 for the unrestricted; however, that’s just the maximum amount of points. We know that that will not be reached by anybody.

[laughter]

Bjorn Miller:
Let’s clarify. We’re not looking for you to get the maximum number of points because it’s going to be very difficult. You have to have every single one of your projects be rated fives across the board and then have every single accreditation and every other scoring element, so what we’re trying to achieve is for you to critically think and choose carefully the projects that best fit within the scope of HCaTS and again, the more KSAs within those projects, the better your past performance, absolutely, the higher your total score is going to be, the better chance you have for award. But I wouldn’t focus your attention on the maximum total score you could get.

Gail Schneider:
We realize that it is a business decision which project you choose, which was why we actually released draft version of C, L, and M with the two attachments because you need to make your business decision to choose your Relevant Experience Projects. However, in the government standpoint, any proposal that’s submitted to us and is meeting the minimum requirements makes them an eligible HCaTS contractor. It’s just who ranks where.

Jimmy Church:
Got it, thank you.

Gail Schneider:
Oh, thank you. Yes?

Mark Sandigan:
Good morning. Mark Sandigan [spelled phonetically] from SAIC. Again, I’d like to echo that fantastic job on the 600 Q and As. The question --

Bjorn Miller:
Thank you.

Mark Sandigan:
-- I had was, when Jim Ghiloni constructed OASIS, one of the things he exhorted the industry to do was make it easy to evaluate. So have you given it any thought to a standardized process for highlighting within the contractual documentation how we should do that, as the industry, to make it easy for you to evaluate?
Gail Schneider:  
Well, we are suggesting that highlighting the documents -- the self-score sheet for every minimum requirement and scoring element is going to ask you to put the file names that’s substantiating this and you’ll further, in some of the cases -- for example, for the case of KSAs, you will provide us why you say that your project was in the scope of this KSA, list all documents that substantiate that, then furthermore, you will tell us within these documents, “Please look at these pages,” and we’re hoping you say, “We’ve highlighted this page and this page, this part of this page,” for us. So the more specific you are for us, the better.

Bjorn Miller:  
Yeah, you have to remember, this is the first time we’re seeing your documents, but yes, in the self-scoring worksheet, if I’m correct, there is the opportunity for you to write a narrative identifying where in that contractual document resides your rationale as to why you should get the points you’re claiming.

Mark Sandigan:  
Thank you.

Gail Schneider:  
Yes. Thank you.

Keith Dalton:  
Good morning. Keith Dalton [spelled phonetically] with Xerox. It appears that you’re going to allow commercial past performance and non-federal, so my question is, will commercial and federal past performances be evaluated equally?

Gail Schneider:  
There is one scoring element for federal experience, then it was the two-tiered with being a prime contractor and a first-tier subcontractor; however, all other scoring elements, it’s up for the relevant experience project.

Keith Dalton:  
Okay.

Bjorn Miller:
So, essentially, the minimum requirements remain the same, but we recognize and realize that there are more barriers with managing and administering a federal project, and we’ve given additional points for those projects, again, because of the NAICS codes issue, CPARS, and PPIRS issues. We’re the government, we make you jump through hoops and over hurdles, and you should be acknowledged of that.

Gail Schneider:
And you’ve had experience working with a FAR-regulated acquisition, which will be what HCaTS is, so we’re rewarding for that, too.

Male Speaker:
Okay, thank you.

Gail Schneider:
Yes?

Andy Pasternak:
Hi, Andy Pasternak from Sigmatech. There are many incumbent primes here, and if you’re using an OPM project from the OPM TMA, with regard to NAICS code, the IDIQ was issued under 541611. The projects that came out did not have NAICS code assigned, but were recorded in FPDS under 611430. So if we’re using one of those to meet a KSA, can we choose to go with 541611, or if it meets the Pool 1 training and we have the FPDS under 61411, do we have to get a letter from OPM to change it? Because you said that the contract document trumps FPDS.

Bjorn Miller:
So we recognize that inconsistencies across the federal government exist with the application of NAICS codes, and this is across federal government. And we’ve structured a -- not a naming convention --

Gail Schneider:
We have an attachment --

Bjorn Miller:
-- Order of Precedence as to what documents we will recognize and use the NAICS codes for and the first one is the contractual documents themselves. So what I suggest you do is you look at the documents, and you first make
that business decision as to what project you want to submit and what NAICS code is applied to that project. We’re in the process of creating a document for you to reach out to your contracting officer and have them confirm if that NAICS code was incorrectly recorded. Again, across federal government, just like OASIS did, but you have to have that validated by the contracting officer. And if you don’t have to go to that route, we have that Order of Precedence built into the RFP already. So the contractual documents, the NAICS codes within the contractual documents are what we will first use, then it’s FPDS, and then --

Gail Schneider:
And then PPIRS.

Bjorn Miller:
And then PPIRS. So we’ve tried to recognize, because it’s across government, what, as contracting officers, we would use to identify the NAICS code and where the mistakes may have been made in recording them.

Gail Schneider:
And actually, to further what Bjorn is saying, in that Order of Precedence, if you have the contracting officer fill out the attachment, it’s J10, Collection of Task Orders, that comes to the front of the Order of Precedence, and that will then determine the NAICS code for the project.

Andy Pasternak:
Well, since we have the OPM TMA leadership here, I wanted to just get clarity because of this mismatch with the NAICS codes, so I can send a document, it could’ve been work for a different agency, but I’ll send it to my OPM person and they will make the adjustment. Because the admitting a mis-assigned NAICS code could be a little bit of an issue and I just want to know what OPM TMA wants us to do.

Rich Vinnacombe:
From OPM’s side here, good morning, everybody. It’s a good question. We’ve been working very closely with GSA on this issue and anticipating -- so good morning, everybody, from OPM. We’ve been anticipating this issue in conversations with GSA. What I can share today is that our intention at OPM is to follow a guidance that’s provided in the final
RFP that comes out. Expect that shortly we’ll be communicating as a program office some instructions about how we’ll handle any requests that we receive. And that plan, if you will, is being vetted right now by the TMA program staff in conjunction with our Procurement Executive, so stay tuned. I think you’ll see some additional guidance about, again, from how OPM as a program office is going to handle those requests, but I encourage you to follow the directions, instructions as provided from the GSA contracting office and the RFP.

Gail Schneider:
Thank you, Rich. Rich used a keyword that they’re requests. We have three attachments for customers and contracting officers to fill out, but you are requesting that they fill them out.

Russ Huffman:
Hi, my name is Russ Huffman. I’m with The Center for Organizational Excellence. My question is related to category management and how category management fits into this procurement and other government-wide procurements that category management is driving the procurements. I realize that GSA and OMB and OPM are justifiably excited about category management and how it has the potential to help improve federal procurement, streamline it, make it much easier for agencies to purchase products, and I think that that’s a very noble goal.

I think the problem is, from a contracting standpoint, you still have federal acquisition regulations that are driven by NAICS codes. SBA has to identify small business size standards based on NAICS codes. When contracts are awarded and they’re put into the Federal Procurement Database, you know, they’re tracked, they’re managed, and organized based on NAICS codes, and there’s no mechanism right now for these contracts that are being awarded under the new categories. There’s no way to track any of this contract or task order was awarded under X, Y, Z, category. And then down the road, when you go to do a large-scale procurement like this, or even smaller procurements, and you have to do things like have past performance, you have to have these evaluation criteria, you run into this problem and you’re going to continue running into the problem of the evaluation criteria, all based on NAICS.
codes, yet you’re trying to award work where the procurement is being driven by categories.

So, has either OMB or GSA, or any of the other members of the category management council -- have there been high-level government meetings to say, “If we’re really going to make category management a success, don’t we have to amend the [unintelligible], don’t we have to fix the acquisition regulations so they actually align with categories and not with these NAICS codes,” which were never originally intended, actually, categorize all this work, so. I guess my question is, have there been these discussions and do you anticipate ever seeing something like that?

Tiffany Hixson:
[inaudible] Can you hear me?

Russ Huffman:
Yeah.

Tiffany Hixson:
[inaudible]

Male Speaker:
Sure. Well, this one’s taped up, so.

Tiffany Hixson:
I have not been privy to those discussions at a high level in government. I hear you, and I think the challenge for our team is that we have to deal with the reality that is and get a procurement out the door. So it is very complex, and there are, you know, some new rules that are going to be coming out from SBA in terms of how we align the NAICS codes and that kind of thing, so I can definitely take that back as feedback that we got in this Industry Day, that, hey, this is continuing not only to create challenges from a contracting perspective, but also for the larger industry community. I know that’s not a very satisfactory answer, but it’s the truth. So I’ll take that back to Anne.

Russ Huffman:
Great, thank you very much.

Charles Davis:
Good morning. My name is Charles Davis. I’m with Technology, Automation, and Management. I have a specific question regarding slide 16 where relevant experience project management requirements, where you have six projects, $25,000 each, for three months. Yeah, that’s it.

We are currently working at the schoolhouse for the Defense Health Agency where we are developing curriculum and delivering curriculum and coursework and we are doing multiple projects in the schoolhouse. So how do you count that, if we’re developing dozens of courses and each course is considered a project?

Bjorn Miller:
Okay, so, project consists of an award, a contract, a task order, or a purchase order. So you have to show us some verifiable contractual document that you were awarded that project. If you were awarded multiple projects, you’re essentially breaking it up, and that would be defined as a collection of task orders. So if you were awarded contract 1, 2, 3, but under contract 1, 2, 3, you’re providing multiple training, exercises, initiatives, that would fall under that one project. But if every single individual classroom and training curriculum was awarded an individual contract, they themselves would be considered independent relevant experience projects. Unless you --

Charles Davis:
So I guess my question is about relevancy then. To me, of course, I have a biased position, that if I’m delivering coursework for a school and it’s affecting 10 courses and the contract value, say, is $2.5 million, how can that be evaluated the same rate as a $25,000 task order?

Gail Schneider:
Well, the $25,000 is the minimum requirement; however, they are being evaluated the exact same way. That’s why we have those scoring elements attached to it and we’re rewarding -- one scoring element is the value. So perhaps if you had a $2.5 million contract, then you would be in a good position with the points. I see the --

Charles Davis:
But I don’t meet the minimum. I’m doing 12 projects under the contract, but it says I need to have six individual contract numbers to get the value, to get the points --

Gail Schneider:
Oh, so for our requirement is that we have six relevant experience projects, therefore you’ll have to have, within in the last five years, have performed six projects that were tied to a single contract, task order, or purchase order, and then there’s also the case of one of them being a collection of task orders. If your project is all under one contract -- is that what you’re saying? For the last five years?

Charles Davis:
Right. So we were awarded -- we have two separate contracts. We are developing 24 courses under those two contracts. We are also teaching those courses. We are also providing counseling on them. But, the way you have it here, that would only count as two projects.

Bjorn Miller:
This is a specific situation, so let’s talk offline, maybe we can give you better feedback.

Charles Davis:
Okay. All right, thank you.

Gail Schneider:
In the back?

Theresa Falance:
My name is Theresa Falance and I’m with Kforce Government Solutions. I have three questions about teaming specifically. Are there restrictions on the number of teammates that you can have, teammate companies? Are there restrictions on how many teams you can be on and can you use the teammate’s past performances if the teammate was a prime?

Bjorn Miller:
Okay. So, we are restricting. We’re in fact prohibiting teaming as a prime offer. If you’re going to submit a proposal, you had to have -- you can only submit a proposal under a teaming arrangement under an existing joint
venture, and all projects have to be associated with that existing joint ventures DUNS number. And that’s at the contract level. At the tasker level, completely different story. As I mentioned earlier, we anticipate and expect the contractors awarded a contract under both contract vehicles to partner at the tasker level, but to get the contract award you cannot team. You have to -- if you are going to team, it has to be under an assisting joint venture. You have to submit to us that agreement between all those joint venture entities, and every project has to be awarded under that joint venture’s DUNS number.

Theresa Falance:
So, if you have -- what about small businesses? If you’re a large business and you want to bring -- there’s no teaming with small businesses?

Gail Schneider:
At the tasker level after awards are made, yes. We are definitely going to encourage that and we anticipate that happening. However, what Bjorn was referring to is just with your offer submission.

Theresa Falance:
So, each submitted contract is one company as a prime?

Gail Schneider:
Yes, it goes to one entity. If it’s the prime, that will be them.

Theresa Falance:
Okay, thank you.

Gail Schneider:
Thank you. In the front.

Gail Asroth:
Yes, thank you. Gail Asroth [spelled phonetically] with Abiana [spelled phonetically]. Many companies are providing services to federal agencies through the Department of Commerce, NTIS joint venture partnership. Can you clearly answer for us if the projects that we have supported through the NTIS joint venture partnership program will qualify as past performances under the constructs that you’ve created for HCaTS?
Bjorn Miller:  
I would say yes, but we would have to further research whether or not it would constitute as a federal project.

Gail Asroth:  
Okay, thank you.

Gail Schneider:  
In the back?

Mike Cook:  
Hello, Mike Cook [spelled phonetically] from Cully [spelled phonetically] Consulting. In going through the questions or the answers to questions yesterday I found an oddity, and I apologize if I misunderstood either the question or the answer, but the question had to do with post-award task orders. Would you be held to the rates you bid, and the answer was no. In fact, you could bid higher rates if they were appropriate for the task order, which leads to the question which is, what’s to prevent an unethical contractor from low bailing the initial rates, if you’re not going to be held to them anyway. Now, it sounds like the pricing is only fair and reasonable, so you’ve got to be within a range. So, it may be moot, but it seems to be odd to allow contractors to bid higher rates post-award than they had in their contract initially.

Bjorn Miller:  
Sure. To have a legally binding contract, we have to evaluate price and determine fair and reasonable. The labor rates that will be awarded at the contract level are only applicable if a sole sourced time and materials task order is awarded. We’re not trying to drive down prices. You can at the task order level where the actual work is being performed identify, use the categories that we’ve identified in the contract, and even add to those, and submit the labor rate that you think is appropriate for that task order for that contracting officer to make a fair and reasonable determination. We’re doing this because it’s an IDIQ contract for 10 and a half years, and we have to include pricing focusing on the labor categories we’ve included, and having you build up from the direct labor rate range that we’ve included a fully burdened rate that
Mike Cook:
Thanks.

Bjorn Miller:
You’re welcome.

Gail Schneider:
Thank you. In the front.

Doug Rosenthal:
Yes, Doug Rosenthal of Job Performance Systems. You said that it may be wise for a small business to put together a subcontracting plan for small businesses, in the hopeful event that they become a large business. My question would be if you do not as a small business submit a subcontracting plan now but grow to a large business, can you then add a small business subcontracting plan to your proposal you submitted and therefore move into the unrestricted group?

Male Speaker:
Yes.

Gail Schneider:
Okay, let me clarify that the small business would submit a subcontracting plan, purely if they were trying to get that -- there’s one scoring element that’s not a very large scoring element that’s tied to meeting or exceeding your subcontracting goals, so, that we’re giving small businesses the opportunity to go after those points, if they want to pursue vertically on ramping to the HCaTS unrestricted.

Doug Rosenthal:
Oh, let me make sure I understand that then. So, if you submit to both small business and unrestricted, you will get more points on the unrestricted as a small business if you include a small business sub --

Bjorn Miller:
Now, let me clarify. To your question, yes. You can, if you choose not to submit a subcontracting plan under the
set-aside contract vehicle, and you grow out of that contract vehicle, you can at that time submit a subcontracting plan under the unrestricted contract vehicle.

Doug Rosenthal:
Oh, great. So, there’s really no benefit necessarily to submitting it with the current proposal?

Bjorn Miller:
There is a small benefit if you do choose to submit a subcontracting plan under the set-aside. We are giving you an opportunity to take credit for meeting those subcontracting goals, if you then go over to the unrestricted. You have to meet the lowest scored contract, the contractor that scored the lowest. The 40th position, you have to hit that total score in your proposal, to get a contract under the unrestricted, and just by including a subcontracting plan under the set-aside, we’re giving you the opportunity to get those points, but the bottom line is you don’t have to submit a subcontracting plan under the set-aside. You can choose to submit one later, if you’ve submitted a proposal under the unrestricted.

Doug Rosenthal:
I think I understand what you’re saying. You’re saying --

Bjorn Miller:
And we can take it offline, and further discuss it, and collaborate.

Doug Rosenthal:
Okay, then a second question. If you are a small business and you win an award, I never understood with OPM TMA. As a small business do you retain that small business status throughout the length of the contract, no matter how large you grow, and is that the case here? You would be a small business for 10 and a half years, no matter how big you grow.

Bjorn Miller:
FAR prescribes that you have to recertify after five years, when we exercise the option.

Doug Rosenthal:
So, you would be a small business for at least five years, and then be recertified even though this may be a 10 year vehicle?

Bjorn Miller:
Correct. At the fifth year when we exercise the option, you have to recertify your business size, and if you remain a small business you continue having your contract under the set-aside contract vehicle.

Doug Rosenthal:
Okay, thank you.

Bjorn Miller:
You’re welcome.

Gail Schneider:
In the back.

Jennifer Sammons:
Jennifer Sammons [spelled phonetically] from Medisolutions. I have just one question. It looked like you removed the points for the facility clearance for secret and top secret facility clearance, and in the event that some agencies require personnel that are cleared, would you consider reinstating the points for facility clearance, to ensure that you have enough contractors with the appropriate clearances to provide said personnel?

Bjorn Miller:
The preponderance of comments and feedback we received from industry was that that should be removed, that the work didn’t garner that accreditation to have those points. At the tasker level, again, it’s a requirement to have that security clearance or any other minimum requirement. You’re required to meet those eligibility and responsibility, or those minimum requirements, but the bottom line is for HCaTS will not be included back into the RFP.

Gail Schneider:
Okay, thank you.

Nandita Gududuri:
Good morning. Nandita Gududuri from AP Ventures. We do a lot of work in Maryland State and have grown to a very large size. As we look at CATS, HCaTS I should say, there are a lot of CATS contract in Maryland State. So, I say CATS. Big question is in the state procurement they do not go by the NAICS code. They go by what is called as NIGP code. So, much of our past performance that comes from state contract, many of them are federally grant funded. How do we use that past performance and sort of line them up to meet the HCaTS code?

Gail Schneider:
Okay, so you’ve touched on the issue of all projects that are not awarded by the federal government, and we know the NAICS codes are something that is attached to just federal government projects. So, if you’re a non-federal government project, we have two methods of having a NAICS code assigned to your project. One is on the J.6 Past Performance Substitute Form, and this establishes the order of precedence. On that form your customer will identify the NAICS code that best fits your project, and we are providing links and explanation for that, knowing that a non-federal government official will not be familiar with the NAICS codes. The other option is if you are not able to get that J.6 Past Performance Substitute Form, that you’ll just be able to self certify, and Bjorn touched on earlier that was we’re recognizing federal experience projects, because they do not have the self-certifying option. Did I fully encompass your question about non-federal projects?

Nandita Gududuri:
Yes. So then you know, I guess the description has to fit the NAICS code. It could be at the judgment of the client?

Gail Schneider:
Yes.

Nandita Gududuri:
Okay, and so you know, a follow-up question if I may --

Gail Schneider:
Okay.

Nandita Gududuri:
-- to the question I just asked. So, there is a scoring for federal past performance now, you know, while many of our projects are federally funded through grant, there is a higher percentage of point be given for federal work versus, you know, the work that we bring to the table. That seems kind of unfair that we would miss out on that. So, you know, any --

Gail Schneider:
Well, with all scoring elements, we don’t anticipate that every project will be able to hit them. We have chosen our elements in the way that we weighted our points based on what we would value, and would mirror the environment after award. There are many things about both non-federal projects and federal projects that we want to give points for. Perhaps as with the NAICS code issue it’s going to be easier for you to have your projects qualify for our four NAICS code requirement, so that there’s tradeoffs in both, but we recognize both performances.

Bjorn Miller:
So, this is a FAR-based -- [unintelligible] is this a FAR-based acquisition at the time [unintelligible] projects you submit have to be FAR-based, to qualify as a federal project. That’s what we’re using [inaudible] --

Gail Schneider:
Yes.

Bjorn Miller:
-- as a baseline.

Gail Schneider:
[affirmative]

Nandita Gududuri:
Understood. Thank you. I appreciate that --

Gail Schneider:
Thank you.

Nandita Gududuri:
-- input.
Dara Nicholls:
Dara Nicholls, C2 Technologies. I have a question regarding period of performance on past performance references. You’re awarding points -- most maximum points for projects that are more than five years in length, and for those of us that are on the OPM TMA contract, per their -- the way they operate the contract, contracts are recompeted every year. So therefore, we may have -- we have several clients whom we’ve worked with, customers who we’ve worked with for longer than five years, yet our past performances would be -- if you’re going by the task orders, you’ve set a requirement here that the collection of task orders, you can only use one project that is a collection of task orders. For many of us the projects are incrementally funded. We might get five or 10 task orders for one project in one year. So, how is that -- have you given any thought to reconsidering that?

Bjorn Miller:
Sure.

Dara Nicholls:
Or allowing us to make a case for -- here’s a project we’ve worked for 15 years, but it may have had more task orders, more contract numbers.

Bjorn Miller:
[affirmative] thank you. So, everything you just said transcends the entire federal government. It’s not specific just to OPM or GSA. We had to set a baseline and we could not envision every single duration. There possibly could be a project out there that’s 10 years in length, and we should give credit to those projects. So we took a holistic view from a federal government perspective, and wanted to recognize and allow offers to get those points, if it did hit those marks. And we looked at our research. And those were the incremental breakdown of the durations that we’ve included in the RFP. So, bottom line is it transcends the entire federal government we just said.

Dara Nicholls:
Are you going to change it, so that we can make that case?

Gail Schneider: You did bring up some valid points that we definitely did encompass in our research. The structure of the contract is that all relevant experienced projects regardless of if they were a collection of task orders or if it’s tied to just a single contractor task order are evaluated the same, and our definition of collection of task orders is broad, so that perhaps one contracting officer awarded incrementally and another one just exercised options. And so, we had to award points based on all the relevant experienced contracts.

Tiffany Hixson: I think I heard your question a little bit differently, which was your concern was the duration of the performance that you have under the task orders that you’ve got under TMA. Is that right?

Dara Nicholls: Yes [inaudible].

Tiffany Hixson: Okay. Whom am I talking to?

Dara Nicholls: Correct.

Tiffany Hixson: Oh, there you are, and so what we did based on that feedback is the minimum duration that you need to have on those relevant projects is three months.

Dara Nicholls: Yeah, but I’m trying to win.

Tiffany Hixson: Right. I can’t help you with that part. All right.

Dara Nicholls: So, I’m not trying to compete. I’m trying to win.
Yeah.

Dara Nicholls:  
And winning, and if I’m working with a customer for 15 years, I should be able to get credit for that.

Tiffany Hixson:  
Yeah, and you will be getting credit.

Dara Nicholls:  
It shouldn’t be a technicality that I’m losing --

Tiffany Hixson:  
Yeah.

Dara Nicholls:  
-- out because I wasn’t on the right vehicle that --

Tiffany Hixson:  
Yeah.

Dara Nicholls:  
-- gave a five year period of performance.  Oh, too bad it wasn’t a GSA contract, where it was a five year period of performance.  You’re stuck with this.  I mean I think -- I’m hoping that what we’re trying to do is actually --

Tiffany Hixson:  
-- getting hung up on.

Dara Nicholls:  
-- get the truth.

Tiffany Hixson:  
You do not -- I think that’s where we’re -- take a look at the language when it comes out.  I think we’re having a disconnect just in terms of how this is being communicated and we don’t have the language up here.  We are not saying the period of performance has to be a minimum of five years.  What we’re saying is that it needed to happen in the last five years --

Dara Nicholls:  
No.
Tiffany Hixson:
Yes.

Dara Nicholls:
You’re awarding points for past performance.

Tiffany Hixson:
Right.

Dara Nicholls:
If you work with a -- if it’s --

Tiffany Hixson:
We are.

Dara Nicholls:
-- more than five years, you get extra points.

Tiffany Hixson:
Okay.

Dara Nicholls:
Okay, so we want to get those points, because we’ve worked with the customers for more than five years.

Tiffany Hixson:
Okay.

Dara Nicholls:
So, that’s all.

Tiffany Hixson:
We can take a look at that.

Dara Nicholls:
Yeah, we -- I mean --

Tiffany Hixson:
All right.
We’d be happy to -- I’m sure there’s probably 200 people in this room that would like to come meet with you and give you an example --

Tiffany Hixson:
Yeah.

Dara Nicholls:
-- so that you can see that this is the reality of --

Tiffany Hixson:
Yeah.

Dara Nicholls:
-- what we’re dealing with.

Tiffany Hixson:
Well, maybe that’s my fault in part. I think I actually rewrote that language a couple of times. So, we’ll go back and take a look at it. I hear you.

Dara Nicholls:
Okay, thank you.

Female Speaker:
Hi, Ish Davina [spelled phonetically], North Island.
Tactical question on the submission for the verifiable contractual documents. Some of our contracts are very lengthy and have, you know, multiple, you know, a lot of pages too, and my question is in terms of the submission, do you only want to have us include those pages of the contract that include the relevant information, as long as you have access to the full contract if needed? Just a packaging question.

Gail Schneider:
No, you can submit the entire document, as long as you’re pointing us to where we should be looking.

Female Speaker:
Okay, thank you.

Gail Schneider:
And that’s fine.
Male Speaker:
Yes, hi. Do you have an estimate on when the FRP will be released and how long it’ll be out for?

Gail Schneider:
We are hoping in end of June, and that we will have it open for about 60 days.

Male Speaker:
Sixty days, okay.

Male Speaker:
How many days?

Gail Schneider:
Sixty.

Meg Prior:
Meg Prior, Monster. Thanks for recognizing that not all companies do cost type work. My question is around the cost template. In previous versions the cost template only had cells to allow you to put in cost type breakdown. So, will you be modifying the cost template, understanding that you don’t want vendors to modify that, to allow them to show their firm fixed price rates, which by their nature are already burdened?

Gail Schneider:
Well, the current form -- the principles of the current form are going to stay, that you’ll start with your direct labor rates, and then you’re allowed to put in the cost elements. And we understand that not all accounting systems fit within those cost elements, but we are asking our offers to be able to match, and we’ll provide a sample about how that’s done in the RFP.

Meg Prior:
Okay, but firm fixed price rates don’t generally disclose --

Gail Schneider:
Yes.
Meg Prior:
-- those elements. So, if you were going to be awarding contract types that were say firm fixed price, we would anticipate that you would have a labor category and a corresponding rate, and not require vendors to break those out.

Gail Schneider:
Correct. Well, as Bjorn talked about, the rates are at the task order level are only applied at the sole source contract when a sole source task order is made, but at the task order you’ll be able to provide the firm fixed rates that you used.

Meg Prior:
Okay, but this would be more toward the contract level. Say a vendor would not be -- a vendor does not do cost type work whatsoever, and they would be wishing to propose their labor categories and corresponding rates to you, envisioning they would never do any type of cost type task orders.

Bjorn Miller:
So, we’re going to revisit this, because it’s no longer mandatory to have your accounting system reviewed. We understand that your standard of accounting systems differ, but we will revisit that template to make sure that it’s appropriate, while we’re asking for you to get your fully burdened rates at the contract level, again, only applicable for that sole source, time, and materials task order.

Meg Prior:
Thank you.

Bjorn Miller:
You’re welcome.

Jeff Rocha:
Hi. My name’s Jeff Rocha with the Millennium Group International. Just a couple of questions. When are the whole -- the scoring of the past performance there’s a cost reimbursement point, and I was wondering if you have a plan on the contract that has a Cost Reimbursable CLIN. Will that gain those points?
Bjorn Miller:
Yes.

Jeff Rocha:
Okay.

Bjorn Miller:
We don’t put a percentage of what constitutes cost reimbursement. The only thing we state is that it cannot - - you won’t get points for a cost reimbursement for travel and any costs associated with travel. That’s the only restriction.

Jeff Rocha:
Okay.

Bjorn Miller:
[Unintelligible] can’t be for travel.

Jeff Rocha:
Okay, and the other question I have is in the small business track where you’re getting the pools of socioeconomic vendors with the SDB category, are you looking for SBA, certified SDB’s or just self certified, or it doesn’t matter?

Gail Schneider:
Not self certified, sorry, SBA certifying.

Jeff Rocha:
Okay. All right, thank you.

Jeremy Arensdorf:
Jeremy Arensdorf from Jefferson Consulting. In terms of the NAICS code verification that you would be doing on the past performance, a lot of us have projects that may start off as more of a management consulting project, and end up with training in the end as a result. And so it’s really a mix of the two pools that you’ve created obviously through FPDS. A contracting officer can only choose one of those NAICS codes. Is it possible like on the form you’re saying you can have a contracting officer say, “Oops, this was a mistake. It should really be this,” but rather than just
saying it’s a mistake, clearly it’s not, work could involve both KSAs or all KSAs and be in both pools. Would it be possible to adjust that form, so that it would say, you know, “Yes, this other NAICS code could be applicable,” as opposed to saying it was a mistake that I didn’t classify as training, and I classified it as management consulting, to say that yes, it actually could fit into both. And then that way the past performance could be used in either pool, again, because it would -- I mean if the KSAs are really the focus, like you’re saying, then having that option to say, “Yes, both NAICS codes could apply to one project,” would be advantageous.

Bjorn Miller:
So, if I heard you correctly, I think you’re merging the KSA principle on topic with the NAICS codes. If that project applies or fits with one of the NAICS codes under the pool you’re applying for, then you’re fine. If it doesn’t, again, you have the opportunity to have a duly warranted contracting officer confirm that the appropriate NAICS code that you believe is in fact what it should be. The KSAs -- I heard you say that at one point it would start off with consulting, and then it transferred over to training. Then you get points for both KSAs. So, we’re acknowledging and recognizing that those projects that have multiple KSAs, you will get more points for because the driver of HCaTS is the scope, the three KSAs.

Jeremy Rocha:
Right, but just correct me if I’m wrong. So, if I had a 541611 project in FPDS, and it had both training and management consulting in it, I could only put it into pool two, to count as one of the four required. Even though it has a training element to it. It would not count as one of my four past performances for pool one. Even though again it’s addressing both KSAs, but because of the system, contracting officers can only choose one NAICS code. so, then that past performance couldn’t be used to meet the requirement of 541611 and five, and four of the --

Bjorn Miller:
I’m assuming that you are thinking about applying under both pools?

Jeff Rocha:
Bjorn Miller:
You can have that overlap. I mentioned earlier if you’re applying for both pools, the minimum requirement, the minimum number of relevant, experienced projects to submit is 10, and that’s where your overlap is. So, of the six projects in pool, let’s say pool one, you can have two of those transferred over, and there’s your overlap and be applicable to pool two as well. And get those points under pool two, because we recognize that the NAICS code is an issue.

Jeff Rocha:
But it only counts towards those two. It wouldn’t count towards four of each. Do you see what I’m saying? So, like if the project had both training and management consulting, and you wanted to use it for both pools, as one of the four for the NAICS code for pool one, and one of the four for the NAICS code for pool two, it would only count towards those other two that can be any NAICS code.

Gail Schneider:
So, I think what you’re saying is that you want --

Jeff Rocha:
I can do this offline too though.

Gail Schneider:
-- the project with one NAICS code on one pool, and then you want it to be reevaluated on the other pool.

Jeff Rocha:
Right, as one of the four mandatory within that NAICS pool. So anyway --

Gail Schneider:
Yeah.

Jeff Rocha:
-- basically --

Gail Schneider:
I see what you’re saying.
Jeff Rocha:
-- if you get assigned two NAICS codes to a project, it would resolve the issue.

Gail Schneider:
Okay.

Jeff Rocha:
And you could use the past performances on either. And again making the point that if really the focus is the KSA, you know, who cares about the NAICS code for the project?

Gail Schneider:
That’s an issue that we’ll visit. It hasn’t been something that we’ve thought about. Well, we have thought about it, but we will revisit that.

Jeff Rocha:
Thank you.

Gail Schneider:
Thank you. In the back.

Steven Morris:
Hi, Steven Morris. DEG Technologies. You had mentioned that we can submit up to six task orders underneath an IDIQ contract or a BPA as a collection of task orders. Will you allow us to submit any additional task orders underneath of that IDIQ contract as a separate project? So, if I have seven awards, can I group six and then submit one?

Gail Schneider:
Yes, one of the requirements of the collection of task orders is that you cannot use one of those task orders as another relevant experience project, but if there were seven and you’re only submitting six, the seventh can definitely be its own relevant experience project.

Steven Morris:
Okay, and one other quick question. So, you have a method in place for small businesses to move into the large business contract. Does that same method apply the other way around, if you were to reduce?
Gail Schneider:
Yes, well we do have an -- I think it’s -- is it vertical - - it’s either horizontal or vertical onramping that has been added since the draft RFP to the unrestricted.

Steven Morris:
And that allows for large businesses to move on to the small business contract.

Gail Schneider:
Yeah, if their company size standard --

Steven Morris:
Okay, thank you.

Tiffany Hixson:
Just a general feedback. I think based on some of the questions that we’re hearing here today and some feedback I got privately, where is we still have not been able to clearly articulate, you know, why we’ve got pools that are attached to KSAs as well as NAICS codes. And let us go back and try one more time to walk the community through why we’re doing what we’re doing, and it’s important for me that you understand why we’re structuring the contract the way we are, and why we’ve got the evaluation criteria that we do. I mean I’m just sensing energy in the room and based on the feedback that I’ve got, I think that would be helpful, and we’ll take a first crack at walking through this again for Virtual Industry Day, and for those of you that won’t be participating in that, we’ll get something out on interact, and the FBO is just part of a Q and A process, or like a Q and A. And I think that would be helpful, and if that still doesn’t cut it, you know, we’ll keep working on it until -- at least even if you don’t agree with what we’re doing, I want to make sure that you’re clear about why we’re doing it. So, I just don’t think we’ve hit the mark yet.

Steven Morris:
Thank you.

Josh Rubin:
Josh Rubin with Sevatec. I guess I have a comment and then a question. One is I think there are a lot of companies
who are midsized in these NAICS codes who, you know, are still relatively small, but we’ll be bidding on unrestricted. And what you guys have done, I agree with some of the first people -- that you guys are doing an excellent job in communicating, interacting, but I still think, you know, I’d still like to throw the comment out. Being a midsized company, getting DCMAs attention to get verification, and some of the other criteria that you’re awarding points for, it’s not necessarily the quality and the past performance of the company. It’s more based on hey, we’re not at that $100 million revenue standard yet. My question is that -- my actual question is involving small business plans. If all of your business came from small business set aside contracts, where do you stand in terms of meeting your small business goals? You’re giving criteria that, you know, I think extra points if you met your small business goals. What if -- how do you align that with all small business contracts?

Bjorn Miller:  
So, if your previous contract was set aside, is that what you’re saying?

Josh Rubin:  
Yeah.

Gail Schneider:  
You were a small business --

Bjorn Miller:  
You’re a small business performing.

Gail Schneider:  
And now you’ve grown to be a larger business?

Josh Rubin:  
Exactly, so if you did over 50 percent of the business, does that qualify as meeting your small business goal?

Gail Schneider:  
The way that you’ll substantiate the meeting or exceeding small business goals is using either your ISR report, SSR report, SF-295 or SF-294, which are all government reports based on what you actually did from your subcontracting goal. So, if you just having subcontracted to small
business without the government record of it, it will not substantiate those points.

Josh Rubin:
Okay, well I just -- now I’ll need I guess go back to my previous comment is it’d be great if the point systems, you know, accounted for some of the midsized businesses and you know, we’re competing in a framework, and we’re not getting points. And a lot of that’s based on just the size we are and the revenue standard, as opposed to things we can do to improve and mature our business.

Gail Schneider:
Please do. All right. Sorry.

Jim Ghiloni:
Sorry, I thought I could resist and not say anything. I’m Jim Ghiloni. I’m the program executive. I think I did pretty well. I’ve wrestled midsized for 15 years in government, in these back to pre-Alliant[spelled phonetically] days. Let me say one thing. There’s no such thing. As far as Congress is concerned, there’s no such thing as midsized. We’ve tried. We’ve tried, and tried, and tried. There’s nothing. It’s smaller other than small. That’s the regs. That’s the reality. Does that suck for you if you just graduated from small? Yeah, it does. I apologize for my language, but that’s just the reality we’re with. That’s why we’re trying to, you know, do the voluntary sub-K plans and things like that, so in the future you can avoid the problem you’re talking about, but the reality is if you’ve never had a sub-K plan, those are points you’re not going to get.

But let me just say one thing about the points, and a lot of the dialogue is about the points. And Bjorn and Gail said very eloquently I think earlier. We don’t expect you to get the maximum points, and I know that you’ve got to go back to your companies. And you’ve got some executive who’s looking at your BMP plan, and is saying, “Can we win this or not. Our fiscal year is coming up. I’m running out of money. Am I going to fund this or not?” And they say, “Well, I can’t get all these points. So, no. We’re not going to chase this.” I get that that’s the reality a lot of you are living with, with your companies. There’s not a lot I can do. Tell them to call me, and I’ll talk
them through it. We don’t expect you to get the maximum points, and we’re not going to water it down so that everybody gets all the points, at which point we’d just award it to anybody that wants to apply. It’s not the vehicle this is designed to be. The goal with the points is one, that we’ve got a wide variety so that there’s not any one thing that if you don’t have it, it immediately excludes you unless it really is a bare minimum requirement, like you’ve done work in the area.

The other thing is, you know, you’re not going to get them all. It’s not are you the number one. It’s are you number 40, right? Are you in the top 40 in this area? You know your business. You know your competitors. You’ve looked at the market. That’s the BMP question you need to ask yourselves, because frankly it doesn’t matter if you’re number one or number 40. Who can tell me right now in OASIS who was number one and who was number 40? Nobody can tell me. We could, but we’re not going to. So, please, you know, we’ve looked at this, and we value the feedback, and we’re going to continue to get the feedback about the specific scoring elements, particularly the one earlier that we were discussing. You know, yeah, they’re challenging, but we think they reflect what our customers are asking us for, and the prioritization of them reflects what’s relatively important to our customers. It’s why we’ve got the highest point value on relevant experience and past performance, because that’s a meaningful predictor for the future. We have tie breaker stuff around CERTS. We get that not everybody has an ISO. We get that not everybody has a DCA approved estimating system, et cetera, but those aren’t deal breakers. People will win that don’t have those things. If you’ve got very solid past performance on relevant projects covering the three KSAs, you are well positioned to win a position on this contract. So, I’m not saying don’t give us the feedback. We welcome the feedback, but at the end of the day we’ve got to make a decision about what the relative importance of these things is, and don’t get yourself wrapped around the axel about the point, the five points you can’t win, when there’s 28,000 more that you could. The number 40 score will not be anywhere north of 20,000 probably. So, you know, take that into consideration as we go forward.

Gail Schneider:
Prepared by National Capitol Contracting
200 N. Glebe Rd. Suite #1016
(703) 243-9696
Arlington, VA 22203
Okay. In the front.

Brian Lindholm:
Sure. Brian Lindholm, FedSavvy Strategies. A question, and one I see complimenting of [unintelligible]. I’m glad you have the onramp vertical ramping process, which really is I think a need in a lot of the contracts where small as they gradually, they’re not considered a small anymore. So, it’s good. So, you made the point thought about if you graduate from being a small into the other than small category, you have to hit that point total to go into that pool. Okay, so what happens if you don’t? What happens if that X point level you’re no longer small, but you can’t meet that point total based on your proposal. Are you in no man’s land? Are you off the contract? What happens?

Bjorn Miller:
Sorry.

Gail Schneider:
Oh, got it?

Bjorn Miller:
Yeah, you would be, sorry, taken off the contract vehicle [unintelligible].

Gail Schneider:
So, you’ll be put in a dormant status, because we can’t have a large business on the -- a small business set-aside contract. It is a situation that we are aware of, but if you’ve exceeded the size standard, you won’t be able to remain on the small business contract vehicle.

Brian Lindholm:
So, with that in mind, if you then have essentially a gap in contractors in your different pools, will it be an open season, and are those who had submitted proposal before have the chance to come onboard if there’s an opening?

Gail Schneider:
There is the possibility of an onramping open season.

Brian Lindholm:
But that’s not built into it right now?
Gail Schneider: 
It’s built in the possibility.

Brian Lindholm: 
Okay.

Gail Schneider: 
But it’s not scheduled.

Brian Lindholm: 
Okay.

Gail Schneider: 
But there’s a possibility.

Brian Lindholm: 
Fair enough. Thank you.

Gail Schneider: 
In the front.

Female Speaker: 
Hi, I have a couple of quick questions. I have a GSA MOBIS contract. Now, I don’t know -- how do I know what the MAS code was that the contractors use?

Gail Schneider: 
What the NAICS code of your tasker?

Female Speaker: 
Yeah, of each of the --

Gail Schneider: 
So, if you have an MAS schedule, you have your contract which will not -- the MAS schedule itself will not be what your relevant experience project is. It’ll be the task orders that were issued under your MAS schedule, and for those they will have either in the contractual documents or the task order shall say a NAICS code. There’s FPDS, which could have the NAICS code in it, and PPIRS may have the NAICS code there too.

Female Speaker:
Okay. Also, you said you’re looking for documentation to back up, like, performance. What kind of documentation are you looking for?

Gail Schneider:
So, for your past performance, that’s based on your past performance rating, which is from PPIRS in which your -- the contracting officer will have rated you. However, we know that not all PPIRS reports are filled out within the federal government, and that there are non-federal projects that will not have a PPIRS report. Therefore we have our attachment, which is the Past Performance Substitute Form, where you’ll send that to your customer, contracting officer, assessing official, in which they’ll rate you.

Female Speaker:
Okay, one last question. You had mentioned that over time you’re going to be, like, ramping and adding additional contractors. Are you going to be going over the 40 or is it like a rotating kind of a thing?

Gail Schneider:
We will assess what the environment needs. As I said to the last person, is that we have the possibility of an open season on ramping, but we also have built in for our HCaTS contractors vertical and horizontal onramping, on size standard changes. And then there’s also the possibility of a contractor being offramped. If we need the open season, it could be to exceed 40 or it could be to -- we’ve offramped based on performance or on people exceeding their size standard. But that will be something in the future.

Female Speaker:
Okay, thank you.

Gail Schneider:
And thank you. In the back?

Marcia Watson:
Yes, hi. Marcia Watson with Cherokee Nation Businesses. I have two questions related to American Native Indian tribal organizations or ANCs. The first being is there a current issue or concern with two entity owned companies individual of themselves, bidding in either or each pool, meaning an
entity owned large business, and an entity owned small business?

Gail Schneider:
You’re talking about you have two businesses within the corporate structure?

Marcia Watson:
Yes.

Gail Schneider:
And then bidding -- no, you would just submit one offer within the corporate structure.

Marcia Watson:
At the holding company level at that point?

Gail Schneider:
It could be the daughter company, the parent company. It’s just as long as there’s -- it’s just one offer within that corporate structure, but we do have if you are within a corporate structure, you can have a meaningful relationship commitment letter in which to claim points on both accreditations and past performance from an organization within your corporate structure.

Female Speaker:
Okay, that was my second question. Thank you.

Gail Schneider:
You’re welcome. In the front?

Danny Aranza:
Hi, my name’s Danny Aranza with Knowledge Advantage Inc. A question about the socioeconomic small business categories. I noticed that there was a slide that listed a bunch of them, but we’re an economically disadvantaged woman owned small business, which is an SBA category, which is distinct from women owned small business, and so I was wondering was that category intentionally, you know, not taken into account, or what’s the reasoning behind why it wasn’t listed?

Gail Schneider:
As an economically disadvantaged women owned small business, you would also be included in the women owned small business, and so when we total up to see what the designation is within our top 40, you would be counted as a woman owned small business.

Danny Aranza:
Okay. I just noted that, because there are often times significant size differences between EDWSBs and WSBs.

Gail Schneider:
We’ll evaluate it.

Danny Aranza:
Okay.

Gail Schneider:
The categories that were chosen were based on what set-asides are usually done, but it’s something we are -- we have been looking into.

Danny Aranza:
Okay.

Gail Schneider:
Thank you. In the back.

Curt Anderson:
Thank you. Curt Anderson with Strategic Resolution Experts. The first one is more of a comment, because I think Bjorn’s -- to your statement in regards to the terminology or the word align. I think that has a kind of a different connotation in some aspects, when you start talking about the four key or the, you know, your four key past performance required in each pool, because when you align that to the KSAs and say the KSAs are more important, then the real determination comes down to well, is my NAICS code on my contract important, and can I get my contracting officer to change it so I align, if that makes sense. So, the way I’ve, you know, the way I’ve read it very clearly is, if my contract, my federal contract that I want to use as a past performance relevance does not map into any of the pools where the NAICS defined in the pools, then I cannot use that in any of the pools. Is that correct?
Bjorn Miller:
All right. Well, first my apologies. Got something stuck in my throat. We’re not a fan of the pools, the NAICS code structure as well.

Curt Anderson:
Okay.

Bjorn Miller:
But we have to live by what SBA promulgated a couple of years ago, and this is our solution. And we’ve asked several times in the past for a solution that makes sense, that’s appropriate and equitable, and we weren’t given anything that will allow the midsized companies, the small businesses to compete on equal footing.

Curt Anderson:
Sure.

Bjorn Miller:
So, this is why we have structured the requirements as such. We recognize that NAICS codes is an issue, and that’s why only four of the six require a NAICS code to be assigned to that project. So, I apologize if I misspoke. Assign is the better term.

Curt Anderson:
No, I completely understand that and that’s what, you know, that’s where I think that term align and where KSAs is more important kind of is causing some of the confusion, that’s all. The second question is that you are identifying that you are going to pick certain companies in the small business segment, that you’re going to pick a certain quantity of hub zones, 8As, service disabled veteran owned businesses on that. Have you made a determination as of yet as which ones you’re going to pick first, because several companies may have several designations, such as they may be 8A, and service disabled veteran, and woman owned. You know, how do they fit in, if you’ve already made up your 8A selections already, but their service disabled veterans, so that they can probably be selected if they’re 39 or 40 in the determination?

Bjorn Miller:
So, just to clarify, this is only applicable to the small business set-aside contract vehicle.

Curt Anderson:
Right.

Gail Schneider:
Your particular issue is something that we’re -- I don’t think we’ve actually in the -- we’re working on to make it clear in the RFP. You will on your application state -- be able to check off as many designations as you are.

Curt Anderson:
Right.

Gail Schneider:
Our standpoint is that if you fit into one of these categories that we needed somebody, and you’re the next highest scoring person, you would move up, but we’ll make that more clear.

Curt Anderson:
All right, great. Thank you.

Gail Schneider:
In the front?

Tom Jenkins:
First of all thank you very much for today. It’s going to be helpful in making a go/no go decision. I’m Tom Jenkins with Advanced Business Learning. Past Performance Evaluations, sorry to bring it up again, but quick question. We can supply you with contracts and documents, everything you need what we face though, especially at Fortune 500 companies, especially the Fortune 50. To use them as a past performance which we have a fair amount, there legal departments will not allow them to fill out Past Performance Questionnaires, sign them, and send them in. So how are we going to be evaluated if we can supply you with a contract, we can apply it to NACIS codes, we can show you exactly what we’re doing, but the legal department will not sign those documents.

Bjorn Miller:
So --
Tom Jenkins:
Thank you.

Bjorn Miller:
You’re welcome. One, the government does not have privity of contracts between self and the sub-contractors, and we recognize that. If you are unable to get your past performance evaluated by that prime contractor, that level department you’re rated neutral. It’s neither favorable, nor unfavorable. So it’s not that you are ineligible for an award, you will be rated neutral in that scoring element, and that’s [unreadable].

Gail Schneider:
Yes. In the back.

Deb Tomchek:
Hi, I’m Deb Tomchek from ICF International. I have two very quick things that are a little different I think. The first one deals with the KSA one that limits the competition to services provided to any federal employee. We’ve had a lot of discussion this morning about private sector and non-federal work. I just wanted to suggest that especially for the types of businesses that provide services to federal grantees or first responders or others that the government is training directly. If you would consider whether that should be modified to include those types of individuals.

Bjorn Miller:
Are you referencing section C, the language in section C?

Deb Tomchek:
Yes.

Bjorn Miller:
Okay.

Deb Tomchek:
KSA One.

Bjorn Miller:
All right. We’ll revisit that and take a look at that and make sure it’s what we envisioned. We have in section B I believe, what eligible order activities can use HCaTS through GSA’s ADM manual so, we’ll make sure that the language is consistent.

Deb Tomchek:
And then the other question I have also deals with relevant experience project, and I think it’s been touched on already, but I think ultimately what the issue is, is how the TMA IDIQ handled contracts and competed based on SOOs and giving unique identifying OPM project codes is not consistent with the way other types of contracting takes place. We just would like to make sure that GSA addresses in the RFP the unique way that OPM contracts were handled, so that each competed project is defined by its unique identifying OPM project number.

Gail Schneider:
What you’re speaking to is not -- is a government wide contractor -- contracting officer wide issue and we have taken that into account and hence why after the draft RFP, we’ve allowed for the collection of task orders.

Okay. But the one, the projects we have aggregated task orders right?

Gail Schneider:
I -- but - So the collection of task orders, you can use up to six, and they will have been issued from the same master contract. And they’ll have to meet the requirements of the collection of task orders. If I’m not answering specifically to what you’re saying can you elaborate?

Deb Tomchek:
Yes. I will --

Gail Schneider:
We can take offline.

Deb Tomchek:
Yes, exactly.

Gail Schneider:
Thank you.
Tiffany Hixson:
Well thank you everybody, it looks as though we’re at least at the end of the questions for today. I’m guessing that all this will sink in and we’ll be getting more questions. So we’re looking forward to that. Ms. Archuleta is on her way. We understand that she’s in the car and is definitely looking forward to addressing [unintelligible] she had some things that she wanted to share with you today so, we can take a stretch break and if you want to give us about -- what do you think five, 10, five minutes, 10 minutes. I would really appreciate it. I know that she would really appreciate talking to you so take a moment [laughs].

[break]

Yeah, can you help round up? Hey folks, Ms. Archuleta is here and would love to talk to you for a few minutes. All right. There’s lots of good discussion happening about the requirement. Okay. And let me just get us a thumbs-up from our program folks in the back. Do we have anyone else out in the hallway? Jimmy? Jimmy? No, we’re good? All right. Joseph, the floor is yours.
V. Closing Remarks

Joseph Kennedy:
Well, I get the distinct pleasure to introduce my boss. Since becoming the director of the Office of Personnel Management in November for 2013, Katherine Archuleta has dedicated herself to being a champion of a diverse, engaged, and inclusive workforce. Director Archuleta is the first Latina to lead OPM. She began her career as a schoolteacher in Denver and worked in the local state government. She worked for the departments of transportation and energy in the Clinton administration and was chief of staff to Labor Secretary Hilda Solis during the first two years of the Obama administration. As the president’s workforce ambassador, Director Archuleta hears from and counsels federal employees about their work and she talks with students, young workers, mid-career professionals, and executives about the purpose-driven mission of federal service. Clearly, Director Archuleta lives a life of public service that encourages others to pursue it.

And just one other thing. When we first talked about this, she asked me a simple question, “Are we the best we can be?” We talked about this initiative and she said, “That’s change.” She said, “That’s the kind of change that I want to see in government for human capital management. That will make us the best we can be. Ladies and gentlemen, the honorable Katherine Archuleta.

[applause]

Katherine Archuleta:
Good morning. I was just over here at GSA yesterday, so I’ve -- I’m going to have my own little desk here soon. It’ll be stand up. It’ll be in an open forum, so it’ll be really nice.

[laughter]

I’ll be able to collaborate and innovate with -- ideate? Is that the new word? I’ll be able to ideate with my GSA partners. I’d like to thank Joseph for bringing this group
together and Joseph, all that you do for OPM with the leadership of HRS, thank you. I couldn’t have a better leader in this area. So I want to thank you and acknowledge you for all the hard work you give to the American people each and every day. I’d also like to thank our partners at GSA because this doesn’t happen. This is a true partnership. It is an important partnership to us and so I want to -- I want to be able to thank them personally for all of the work that’s gone into this morning’s meeting. And I hope that you learned a lot, and that you asked a lot of good questions, and that you’ll leave today, or this morning, having a lot to think about. About how might -- you might be able to be a part of this. I think it is so important that we join with our industry partners on the next step of this journey. I want to thank you for being here today, and for the time you spend thinking about this HCaTS team, and the work that we’re doing. I hope that your questions and the comments that you have, have been satisfying to you, but I also know that your comments will be -- will enable us to have even a better contract vehicle.

I know that the end result is our federal customers and our industry partners as well, but most importantly it’s to our employees and how we can do everything we can to train them to become even better at what they do. Simply put, what we will do together in the coming months and years are going to make government more efficient, it’s going to ensure that our contracting expertise for human capital, and training expertise is used strategically and effectively. This new way of doing business will be a win for all of our agencies across government and a win for all of you in this room as our partners. In the past, as you know, when an agency had a human capital challenge or training need, its leaders had to decide whether to reach out to a fellow agency and say, “Hey, we have this need, can you help us? Do you have somebody that you’ve used who was very effective with that?” It’s maybe perhaps a problem, or an issue, or they had to go out onto the open market to try to find a contractor that could help meet its needs. That took time. It took resources. And frankly, the result was not always the best solution to meet the agency’s needs.

HCaTS is going to change that. Now when agency leaders have a need, all they need to do is pick a phone or send an
email to our HRS team at OPM. We’ll find the vendors who are best suited to meet their needs. And our assistance is not going to end there. OPM will work with agencies to make sure they are getting what they need and are satisfied with the solution. Joseph tells me wonderful stories of how we’ve been able to actually come in at that pre-decisional level to interview, and have a conversation with our agency leaders and trainers, and say, “You think you may need this, but let’s talk about it a little -- a little bit to make sure that’s exactly what you need, or whether, in fact, you may need something entirely different.” Oftentimes, they’re looking for training that’s going to help them solve a complex problem that is vexing them.

With HCaTS, we -- the agency and the contractor will know that OPM’s HR staff, whom -- where we are experts in this area because I’ve charged Joseph and his staff to be the experts in this area, that we can bring that expertise onto the case. Agencies will save time, they will get better value, and they know that they’re getting the best training and solutions for their employees. And here’s what it means for the contractors. You will have one central place to market your federal business. You know you will be dealing with the experts in contracting and human capital management and those who know the most about what the customer needs and what you can deliver. The entire contracting process will be smoother and quicker, which I know you care a lot about. And that means that over the course of a year, you’ll be able to do more work. You won’t have to worry about where your contract is. You’ll be able to know because you have one point of contact -- contracting. The federal government spends $4 billion a year on human capital training and education.

At a time when every agency is facing continued tight budgets and increasing demands for skill development, we believe that this new contracting vehicle is extremely important. It is especially critical as we face new opportunities and new demands that advances in technologies bring. Our OPM-GSA partnership also aligns with the president’s management agenda and his goal to use federal strategic sourcing to achieve government-wide savings and efficiencies. And it will also help us at OPM deliver on the -- our promise to agencies to help them untie the knots that make it difficult for them to recruit and hire the
talent that they need. Just two months ago, I unveiled a comprehensive human capital strategy that we call REDI. R-E-D-I. And that stands for recruitment, engagement, diversity, and inclusion. REDI is driven by three innovative concepts. First, all decisions must be based on data. We need to increase our use of digital tools to attract and engage a model workforce. And lastly, that stakeholder partnerships and collaboration, it has to be at the heart of everything we do. Through REDI, we stand ready to help agencies with their human capital needs so that they can continue to build the talented, dedicated, and diverse federal workforce now and for many years to come.

Through the work that we will do together to implement HCaTS, we will be able to make sure that agencies get access to human capital strategies they need to succeed in that goal. Together, we will help provide them with the tools to find the right candidates for the right jobs and enable them to do that faster and more effectively and we will customize these strategies to exactly fit the problem or development issue that each agency may bring to us. We are partners with all departments and agencies in that effort. You can help us deliver on that promise to the agencies, which means that all of us will be able to deliver to the American people a more effective and efficient federal government. So, we are looking to you for ideas on how to innovate, on how to better deliver this training to federal employees across government, and to make sure that we are up to date; in fact, we are ahead of the wave in the training and the development that we do for our federal employees. We are the largest employer in this country. We need to be leading all industry in the development of our human capital. That is what I have charged Joseph to do. Now, through the partnership that we’re establishing with HCaTS and to you, you must help us do that more effectively, more efficiently, and with the innovation that our employees deserve.

It’s not good enough to think about how we’re doing it today. I need for you to think about what our workforce needs tomorrow and the many tomorrows after that. Our workforce is changing. You already know that 40 percent of our workforce is eligible to retire in the next five years. You also know that technology is a critical skills that we
need to prepare -- and the use of that -- of technology, we need to prepare our employees to use. We need to fill a pipeline in many areas, but especially at the millennial and the mid-career levels because those retirees are leaving and the pipeline is not full to replace them. We are going to call on you to help us get that done. So, I want to thank you for taking the time, for being here today, and embarking on a new adventure with us, GSA, and OPM. I hope that you’ve had your questions answered, and as a result of this Industry Day, we’ve taken another step forward. We’re going to look forward to your -- our partnership with you in support of the 2 million people in our federal workforce. They deserve the very best. We must be ready to give that to them and I appreciate your effort in making sure that that happens. Thank you.

[applause]

Tiffany Hixson:
Well, thank you all for attending. And we’ve got a number of things to get back to you on and we’ll work on that over the next couple of days with the -- a goal of getting some updates out for the Virtual Industry Day on -- is it Tuesday or Wednesday? Wednesday. So, thank you very much and have a great Memorial Day weekend.

[end of transcript]