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ORAL PRESENTATIONS IN THE MULTI-VENDOR SOURCE SELECTION PROCESS

In the spring and summer of 1997 FMSO employed acquisition reform approaches in the process of contracting for multi-year Information Technology (IT) services to support maintenance and system development initiatives. FMSO successfully employed the strategy of multi-vendor awards, thus allowing the continued participation of 8(a) vendors while providing access to large business providers of IT services. The use of multiple vendors fosters on-going competition related to cost and past performance throughout the life of the contracts and affords FMSO access to the cost benefits typically associated with small business. While still fostering partnerships with the larger, more mature commercial sources of IT integration services and IT architectural planning. During the pre-award process, oral proposals were conducted to allow vendors to communicate their technical and management approaches for the required services. This approach enhanced assessment of the contractors' teams and their management capabilities. We estimate that use of oral presentations and selection of four contractors for awards shortened the procurement administrative lead-time by approximately three to six months.

TECHNICAL AND ENGINEERING SUPPORT SERVICES FOR PMW 152, PMW 176 AND SPAWAR 05F.

SPAWAR recently completed a multiple award task order procurement for services to modernize Navy communications. Efforts under this contract include engineering and technical assistance in the conduct of requirements definition, shore system/subsystem engineering, design, integration, testing, evaluation, procurement and installation; planning, managing and logistics support for system implementation; planning and execution of developmental, operational, and acceptance tests; life cycle support planning for the Department of the Navy Defense Message System (DMS), Base Level Information Infrastructure (BLII) and Joint Maritime Communications Systems (JMCMS); and other technical and engineering services required to install an integrated Command, Control, Communications, Computers and Intelligence (C⁴I) suite into new construction ships and to update and modernize ships of the active fleet. Oral proposals were successfully utilized to expedite the technical review process. Two awards were made with both contracts having a maximum order limitation of \$98,100,000. The contracts provide that both awardees must be considered for each task, thus ensuring a healthy competitive environment throughout the life of the contracts to continue providing state of the art services in this rapidly changing technical area. Both awardees are committed to provide subcontracting opportunities to small and small disadvantaged businesses aggregating one-fifth of the orders received.

