

COMMERCIAL ACTIVITIES PANEL (CAP)

NATIONAL SOCIETY OF PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS (NSPE)

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Brief Summary Statement concerning government outsourcing

- ❖ Improved quality, performance, and economy can be realized in a Federal outsourcing architecture since skill sets and resources can be ideally matched to tasking. That is, the resource team(s) could be optimally selected to fit the task. In the conventional resource-fixed or in-house arrangement, resource numbers and skills are limited – and serve to drive the tasking and project scheduling. Outsourcing provides unlimited resource configurations and choices that permits aggressive project planning and accelerated project scheduling.
- ❖ Federal agency outsourcing to private sector capitalizes on resource choices while permitting maximum flexibility. Esoteric skills and talents sometimes needed in projects can be used as needed, yet made available for re-use by others when the work is completed. A fixed resource structure force-fits special talents and skills into routine tasking when specialized skills are not needed – often causing resources to be unchallenged rather than having an opportunity to sharpen their skills.
- ❖ The timing is appropriate to implement a change and transition to an outsourcing method for the Federal workforce since about half of the 1.8 million Federal employees will be eligible to retire within the next few years.
- ❖ Outsourcing is consistent with the performance goals of the Office of Management and Budget to capitalize on private technology and standards and to streamline regulatory functions as described in OMB Circular A-119.
- ❖ The outsourcing model program proposed by the NSPE for the Federal government describes the Federal government as comprised of a small number of skilled Program and Project Managers (PM's) that are also well-versed and qualified in the technical specialties managed. Most production

functions are contracted and performed by the private sector, and the government functions to coordinate the efforts of the private sector resources. The PM's are highly-skilled in their technical craft, in addition to being skilled managers, and are comprised of licensed and registered architects and engineers where architectural and engineering (A&E) services are being performed. This model also identifies adjacent private A&E entities conscripted into the program to perform independent oversight or serve as a Independent Validation and Verification Agent (IV&V) to perform detailed technical auditing of services and deliverables when needed. All program A&E functions have the ability to provide IV&V services when there is no conflict of interest in the reviewed work..

- ❖ The NSPE model also shows the private A&E activities as empowered to perform government regulatory functions on behalf of the agency. Functions such as plan review and approval, rulemaking and rule research could be performed by sanctioned private entities who compete for the work.
- ❖ The GSA program that provides non-Brooks Act engineering and architectural support work could be expanded – however, the Brooks Act provisions presently does not permit GSA to offer professionally licensed A&E services on the GSA schedule.
- ❖ National Recognized Testing Laboratories (NRTL), such as Underwriters Laboratories (UL), Electrical Testing Laboratories (ETL), and the Canadian Standards Association (CSA) should be considered for conscription into the program to provide additional highly-specialized technical resources to participate in government design-development, research, and acquisitions – particularly in the area of harmonization of global standards
- ❖ The Commercial Activities Panel (CAP) should consider establishing a Professional Working Group comprised of organizations such as the National Society of Professional Engineers, the American Institute of Architects, and the Consulting Engineers Council to assist the CAP in the development of Federal outsourcing models and criteria. These associations can provide the CAP with up-to-date access to professional resources and information regarding credentialing and costs.