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COMMERCE ACQUISITION MANUAL 1307.70

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Category Management



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1307.70

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SECTION 1 – OVERVIEW

1.1 Background

Each year the Federal Government spends hundreds of billions of dollars on common goods and services, such as software, mobile devices, and professional services. However, the lack of mechanisms to support agency collaboration on common contract solutions has resulted in billions of dollars in missed cost avoidance opportunities, inefficient contract duplication, and limited adoption of Government and industry best practices. To address these issues and related implementation challenges the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) issued Memorandum M-19-13, *Category Management: Making Smarter Use of Common Contract Solutions and Practices*,¹ in March 2019. This memorandum established category management actions for agencies to undertake to bring “Spend Under Management” (SUM) and leverage common contract solutions and practices.

To implement the guidance provided in Memorandum M-19-13, the Department of Commerce (DOC or the Department) issued a “Department-wide Strategic Sourcing Policy” on April 15, 2019 (Appendix B). This policy codified the “enterprise-wide strategic sourcing program (SSP) to leverage the collective buying power of the [Department’s] bureaus and offices in the purchasing of common goods and services.” In addition, starting in August 2019 the Department continued to manage spend by establishing mandatory-use policies for a series of contracts awarded outside of its strategic sourcing program.

1.2 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to prescribe the general requirements for the establishment, governance, and use of strategic sourcing initiatives (SSI(s)) and other mandatory sources throughout the Department under its “Spend Under Management” activities while managing small business and socio-economic program goals. This policy is provided as supplemental guidance to the Department-wide Strategic Sourcing Policy established on April 15, 2019, located in Appendix B.

1.3 Applicability

The requirements of this chapter are applicable to all acquisitions within the Department of Commerce.

1.4 Policy

It is the policy of the Department of Commerce to use category management practices consistent with the requirements of the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) Part 8 and in balance with its statutory socioeconomic responsibilities and the need to diversify the Department’s small business supplier base.

END OF SECTION 1

¹ <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/M-19-13.pdf>

SECTION 2 – ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 Senior Procurement Executive (SPE)

To fulfill the responsibilities with respect to the strategic sourcing program the SPE shall:

- a. Approve waivers to the strategic sourcing program for mission critical requests without a vote from the Acquisition Council;
- b. As Chair of the Acquisition Council, approve waivers to the strategic sourcing program when consensus is reached;
- c. Attend bureau-level Acquisition Review Boards (ARBs) for first consideration and mandatory SSIs up to \$75 million; and
- d. Review and approve or disapprove the categorization of SSIs as first consideration or mandatory-use.²

2.2 Bureau Procurement Officials (BPOs)

To fulfill their responsibilities with respect to the strategic sourcing program the BPOs shall:

- a. Proactively collaborate with and support data gathering, business case development, and requirements definition activities of Shared Services Procurement Office (SSPO) in the development of SSI(s);
- b. Adhere to Departmental strategic sourcing policies and governance procedures including operating characteristics of all SSIs;
- c. Maintain records of decisions to not source a required product or service available on a first consideration SSI through the SSI; and
- d. Ensure that all Purchase Requests, as applicable, for supplies/services available through the strategic sourcing portfolio are reviewed and submitted to SSPO, in accordance with the process outlined by the Acquisition Council.³

2.3 Enterprise Services – Acquisition

To execute its strategic sourcing responsibilities, SSPO shall:

- a. Conduct, every two years, an opportunity analysis using spend data from the Federal Procurement Data System, the Office of Acquisition Management Data Warehouse, SUM data available through the Acquisition Gateway, and other sources to identify the Department's common items;
- b. Present the results of the opportunity analysis to the Acquisition Council with prioritized recommendations for future SSIs;
- c. Prepare business case analyses of selected opportunities including requirements developed across the Department and present them to the Acquisition Council for approval;
- d. Recommend categorization of new and recompeted SSIs as mandatory, first consideration, or available to the Acquisition Council;
- e. Adhere to Departmental strategic sourcing policies and governance procedures;
- f. Adhere to Federal and Departmental acquisition regulations and policies in the planning,

² This categorization of an SSI is known as its "Operating Characteristic" and may be the following: "mandatory", "first consideration", or "available".

³ [Acquisition Council Decision Memorandum re: Department of Commerce Shared Services Acquisition Organization dated April 10, 2016](#)

acquisition, administration, and reporting of strategic sourcing procurements, including procedures established in Commerce Acquisition Manual (CAM) Chapter 1307.1, *Acquisition Planning*;

- g. Process orders on behalf of all bureaus for items included in the strategic sourcing portfolio based on the SSI's approved operational characteristics;
- h. Review requests for waivers from use of mandatory SSIs and refer them to the Acquisition Council for decision if denied. Include data relevant to waivers in the regular reports provided to the Acquisition Council⁴;
- i. Include an allowance, as practicable, for use of a purchase card for all SSIs;
- j. Draft and publish to the Enterprise Services portal ordering instructions for purchase card holders to use all applicable SSIs.
- k. Address any comments or conditions that arise from the SPE's participation in bureau-level acquisition review boards up to \$75 million.
- l. In addition to the ARB requirements outlined in CAM 1307.1, hold a bureau-level ARB for any first consideration and mandatory use SSIs valued at \$10 million to \$50 million and the SPE shall be invited to participate.

2.4 Office of Acquisition Management

To perform oversight of the Department's strategic sourcing program and SSPO's operation and management of the portfolio, the Office of Acquisition Management shall:

- a. Develop, issue, and oversee compliance with policies necessary to enable the strategic sourcing program;
- b. Review and provide feedback on the opportunity analysis, business case analysis, and other reports prior to their presentation to the Acquisition Council;
- c. Ensure SSPO has access to the data necessary to perform its responsibilities with respect to the strategic sourcing portfolio;
- d. Monitor compliance by all procurement bureaus with the operating characteristics identified for each SSI;
- e. Document and maintain records of recommendations of the Acquisition Council and decisions relative to the strategic sourcing portfolio; and
- f. Notify the Department Management Council (DMC) of new SSIs approved for inclusion in the strategic sourcing portfolio.

2.5 Acquisition Council

To fulfill its responsibilities with respect to the strategic sourcing program the Acquisition Council shall:

- a. Review the opportunity analysis and recommendations provided by SSPO and recommend to the SPE opportunities for which a business case should be developed;
- b. Review business case analysis for proposed SSIs, recommend approval or disapproval to the SPE, including operating characteristics, and target dates for initiation;
- c. Proactively collaborate with and support data gathering, business case development, and requirements definition activities of SSPO in the development of SSIs;
- d. Review and vote on proposed waivers of mandatory use of an SSI denied by SSPO; and
- e. Collaborate and coordinate with other CXO Councils on the identification and selection of opportunities for inclusion in the strategic sourcing portfolio.

⁴ [Acquisition Council Decision Memorandum 2020-01](#)

2.6 Program Officials

To fulfill the program office's responsibilities with respect to the strategic sourcing program, Program Officials shall:

- a. Fulfill all responsibilities and adhere to all procedures identified in CAM Chapter 1307.1;
- b. Identify and develop requirements for SSIs;
- c. Designate a technical point of contact for each SSI approved by the SPE for First Consideration or Mandatory Use;
- d. Review new and recompeted SSI acquisition packages;
- e. Participate in integrated project teams (IPTs) for SSIs when established;
- f. Provide dedicated and qualified technical evaluation team members for SSI evaluation/source selection activities;
- g. Nominate a Contracting Officer Representative (COR) to support SSI contract administration (e.g., vendor calls, commodity teams, etc.);
- h. Implement, as appropriate, commodity teams to provide support for SSI acquisition packages.

2.7 Official Responsible for Category Management Data Analytics

To fulfill the requirements of OMB memorandum M-19-13 the official responsible for category management data analytics has been appointed by the Senior Accountable Official and is identified below:

Information Technology Specialist
Program Management Policy and Oversight Division
Office of Acquisition Management

END OF SECTION 2

SECTION 3 – STRATEGIC SOURCING PROGRAM

3.1 Background

The Department's strategic sourcing program is comprised of a portfolio of SSIs. Each SSI is constructed based on a data-driven analysis of the Department's spending habits and anticipated future Department-wide requirements. The spend data is used to identify possible common goods and services for SSIs and to develop leveraged, often volume-based, negotiating positions for the purpose of delivering the best value to the Department.

3.2 Policy

Contracting Officers, purchasing agents, and purchase cardholders shall use the DOC strategic sourcing program as described herein for all requirements met by available SSIs. The following ordering tenets apply to the Department's strategic sourcing program:

- a. All SSIs listed on the Enterprise Services Portal shall be designated based on their operational characteristic (mandatory-use, first consideration, or available);
- b. All ordering from SSIs, except purchase card orders, shall be conducted by SSPO, unless otherwise designated or delegated; and
- c. Purchase cardholders shall place orders within their authority directly with the SSI Contractor on those SSIs for which purchase card transactions are authorized. For items/services on SSIs that do not provide for use of a purchase card, cardholders may purchase those items/services, using procedures specified for non-SSI purchase card acquisition, outside of the SSIs without following the waiver process identified below.

A current list of available SSIs is located on the [Enterprise Services Portal](#). The portfolio will be continually updated as new SSIs are added and will contain any alternative designations from the policy that are applicable to an SSI.

3.3 Operating Characteristics

Since its origination in 2012, the required usage of portfolio options has been defined as either "mandatory", "first consideration", or "available". The Acquisition Council decides which operational characteristic will be assigned to each SSI in consideration of SSPO's recommendation and documents the decision in a decision memorandum.

Mandatory Use: Requirements for products or services available under SSIs designated for mandatory use must be sourced through the portfolio unless a waiver is issued. The ordering activity for all orders issued under a mandatory use SSI, other than purchase card orders, shall be SSPO unless otherwise designated by the SPE. The Director of SSPO or the SPE may also waive the mandate for SSPO to be the ordering authority for a particular order on a case-by-case basis. Additionally, the strategic sourcing portfolio may include initiatives directed by the other CXO Councils for mandatory use across the Department. Such initiatives will be governed by the operating characteristics determined by the governing CXO Council.

First Consideration: Requirements for products or services available under SSIs designated for first consideration must be evaluated for sourcing through the portfolio. The decision not to source the requirement through the portfolio must be documented in the file. A decision not to source the requirement through the portfolio may not be justified solely on a preference to retain responsibility for the acquisition and management of the requirement in the requiring bureau. The justification must

be based on urgency, mission requirements, demonstrably preferential terms, conditions, or prices, or similar basis. The ordering activity for all orders issued under a first consideration use SSI, other than purchase card orders, shall be SSPO unless otherwise designated by the SPE. The Director of SSPO or the SPE may also waive the mandate for SSPO to be the ordering authority for a particular order on a case-by-case basis.

Available: SSPO may create additional contracts, which incorporate the reporting requirements of SSIs and are available to meet the requirements of all bureaus but are neither “first consideration” or “mandatory” use. Such contracts shall be considered “available” for use throughout the department, however, because they are neither “mandatory” or “first consideration” they will not be subject to the governance process described herein.

Requirements for products or services available under SSIs designated as available may be sourced through the SSI or through any other acquisition method at the discretion of the contracting officer. There is no requirement to document the decision not to use an SSI designated as available. The ordering activity for all orders issued under an available use SSI, other than purchase card orders, shall be SSPO unless otherwise designated by the SPE. The Director of SSPO or the SPE may also waive the mandate for SSPO to be the ordering authority for a particular order on a case-by-case basis.

3.4 Governance

Responsibility for strategic sourcing program strategy remains with SSPO while oversight of the execution of the strategic sourcing portfolio is performed jointly by OAM and the Acquisition Council. The flowchart found in Appendix D lays out the overall process by which new SSIs will be presented, considered, and added to the strategic sourcing portfolio.

3.5 Exceptions

Requirements for products or services available under SSIs designated for mandatory use must be sourced through the portfolio unless a waiver is issued. There are three types of allowable exceptions from mandatory use of SSIs:

- a. **Unique Requirement Exception** – A customer who requires an item not provided through the DOC strategic sourcing portfolio is naturally exempt.

Example: A customer who has a requirement for a high-performance brand-name computer. If that high-performance brand-name computer is not available under existing SSIs, even if similar items are available, the action is waived.

Purchase of these items should go through the regular servicing acquisition office. No additional documentation or approval is required.

- b. **General Exception** – A customer who requires an item that is available under SSIs designated for mandatory use must be granted an exception by the Director of SSPO⁵ before that item may be procured outside of an available SSI.

⁵The Department’s Strategic Sourcing Policy (Appendix B) states that the Acquisition Council must grant an exception before an item available on a mandatory use SSI may be procured outside of the SSI. [Acquisition Council Decision Memorandum 2020-01](#) codifies that in accordance with this policy, the Acquisition Council has determined that all one-time only requests to waive the mandatory use of an SSI shall be first reviewed by the Director of ES-A.

c. **Mission Critical Exception**

The Senior Procurement Executive reserves the right to approve waivers for an item that is available under SSIs designated for mandatory use for mission critical requests.

3.5.1 Process for Granting Waivers

a. **General Exception Process**

- 1) The customer shall submit a request for a waiver to SSIs designated for mandatory use to the Director, SSPO, with sufficient information and supporting documentation to enable the director to determine if an exception is appropriate.
- 2) The request for a waiver will result in one of the following actions:
 - i. **Approval:** Approval shall result in a waiver for the mandatory use of the SSI on the subject acquisition. The Director, SSPO, shall provide written documentation of all such waivers for inclusion in the contract file and include a record of all approvals in its regular reporting under the SSP.
 - ii. **Denial:** If denied, the customer may request a referral to the Acquisition Council for a decision. That referral will lead to one of the following actions:
 - A. **Approval:** Consensus of the Acquisition Council to exempt an acquisition will result in a waiver from the mandatory use of the SSI on the subject acquisition.
 - B. **Denial:** Non-consensus to exempt an acquisition will result in referral of the request to the DMC for a waiver determination, if requested by the customer.

b. **Mission Critical**

- 1) The customer shall submit a request for a waiver to SSIs designated for mandatory use on a mission critical basis to the oam_mailbox@doc.gov. The request shall contain sufficient information and supporting documentation to enable the Senior Procurement Executive to determine if an exception is appropriate.

END OF SECTION 3

SECTION 4 – MANDATORY ENTERPRISE-WIDE CONTRACTS

4.1 Background

The Office of Management and Budget’s Memorandum M-19-13, *Category Management: Making Smarter Use of Common Contract Solutions and Practices*, issued in 2019, directs agencies to annually establish plans to reduce unaligned spending and increase the use of Best-in-Class solutions for common goods and services, in balance with small business and other statutory socioeconomic responsibilities. Unaligned spending involves purchasing in a decentralized manner and not conforming to category management principles, including strategic oversight and disciplined consideration of performance data to understand prices paid by other Federal customers or metrics to improve results. As such, certain contracts have been established for mandatory use by DOC’s acquisition community and are components of the Department’s SUM strategy.

4.2 Operating Characteristics

Information for each contract, as well as waiver and exception procedures are located in Appendix C.

END OF SECTION 4

SECTION 5 – CATEGORY MANAGEMENT AND SMALL BUSINESS AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROGRAM GOALS

5.1 Background

The Government is committed to promoting a stronger and clearer alignment between the acquisition stewardship practices promoted by category management and the goal of achieving its small business and socio-economic program goals as established by the Small Business Act, 15 US Code (USC) Chapter 14A, as amended. The category management infrastructure built to help the Government become a more organized and informed buyer can be effective in supporting agencies as they work to achieve their small business and socio-economic program goals.

5.2 Purpose

The below actions outline the Department’s policy and plans for achieving SUM while managing small business and socio-economic program goals within category management.

5.3 Policy

The achievement of socio-economic and other small business goals shall be prioritized over achievement of category management and Best-in-Class goals if the achievement of all goals is not possible. Bureaus and operating units will remain fully responsible for meeting and exceeding their small business and socio-economic small business contracting goals. The process for receiving SUM credit for contracts⁶ awarded to small businesses and socioeconomic small businesses is as follows:

- a. The Department will automatically receive Tier 2 SUM credit towards agency category management goals for all awards made to certified and self-certified socio-economic small businesses. For purposes of this guidance, “socioeconomic small business” refers to 8(a) and other small, disadvantaged businesses, women-owned small businesses, service-disabled veteran-owned small businesses, and small businesses working in HUBZones.
- b. The Department will receive Tier 1 SUM credit for spending awarded to a small business contractor other than a socio-economic small business, including under smaller decentralized set-aside contracts, if that award is designed to achieve small business goals and is conducted pursuant to a comprehensive, organized, agency-level strategy.

END OF SECTION 5

⁶ For purposes of this chapter the term “contract” has the meaning as defined in section 2.101 of the FAR and includes orders under parent contracts and agreements.

SECTION 6 – REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

6.1 Enterprise Services – Acquisition

- a. SSPO will provide semi-annual reports (by May 31st and November 30th) to OAM and the Acquisition Council identifying those items, available within the strategic sourcing portfolio, that have been purchased outside of an SSI, to assist with OAM's oversight and BPOs enforcement responsibilities.
- b. SSPO shall report, at least annually (by November 30th), to the Acquisition Council on the overall status of the portfolio.
- c. Jointly with OAM, SSPO will provide reports to the DMC on the activities of the Acquisition Council relative to the strategic sourcing portfolio.

6.2 Office of Acquisition Management

- a. OAM, on behalf of the Acquisition Council, jointly with ESA, shall brief the DMC at least semi-annually and as requested, on the status of the strategic sourcing portfolio including any waivers issued.

6.3 Bureau Procurement Officials

- a. In order to receive credit as described in Section 5.3 (b) the Office of Acquisition Management will utilize FPDS-NG to generate a list of awards to small business concerns that were not awarded utilizing a Tier 1, 2, or 3 contract vehicle and send it to the Senior Bureau Procurement Officials on a quarterly basis. The Senior Bureau Procurement Officials shall validate or revise the list in accordance with the instructions and due dates provided. Those offices not utilizing FPDS-NG shall submit a full listing of applicable awards to the OAM mailbox (oam_mailbox@doc.gov) within 10 business days of the end of each fiscal year quarter.

Other reporting requirements for contracts awarded outside of the strategic sourcing portfolio are contained in Appendix B.

END OF SECTION 6

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A – DEFINITIONS

Best in Class -- Spending managed at the Government-wide level through use of BIC solutions that have been identified through a collaborative interagency process by acquisition category experts within the Government as offering the best pricing and terms and conditions within the Federal marketplace and reflecting the strongest contract management practices.

Category Management -- The business practice of buying common goods and services as an enterprise to eliminate redundancies, increase efficiency, and deliver more value and savings from the Government's acquisition programs.

Spend Under Management -- Spend on contracts that meet defined criteria for management and data-sharing maturity.

Strategic Sourcing -- The structured and collaborative process of critically analyzing an organization's spending patterns to better leverage its purchasing power, reduce costs, and improve overall performance.

APPENDIX B – DEPARTMENT-WIDE STRATEGIC SOURCING POLICY



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Office of the Deputy Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20230

DATE: April 15, 2019

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chief Financial Officers
Chief Information Officers
Bureau Procurement Officials
Heads of Contracting Activity
Department of Commerce Purchase Cardholders

FROM: Karen Dunn Kelley 
Deputy Secretary of Commerce

SUBJECT: Department-wide Strategic Sourcing Policy

BACKGROUND

In 2012, the Department of Commerce (DOC) established an enterprise-wide strategic sourcing program (SSP) to leverage the collective buying power of its bureaus and offices in the purchasing of common goods and services. The SSP has demonstrated success through significant cost avoidance for all business units in DOC and has accelerated ordering processes to better support mission requirements.

The SSP continually focuses on achieving five primary objectives:

- Lower overall unit pricing relative to the market;
- Eliminate redundant contracting actions for common goods and services and thus reduce burden on bureau contracting offices enabling them to concentrate on mission essential procurements;
- Centralize ordering processes resulting in accelerated requisition-to-order lead times;
- Enhance procurement data collection and fidelity to assess DOC spending and address OMB Data Act requirements;
- Achieve small business goals including socioeconomic goals.

The SSP is comprised of a portfolio of Strategic Sourcing Initiatives (SSIs). Each SSI is constructed based on a data-driven analysis of the Department's spending habits. The spending data is used to identify possible common goods and services for an SSI and to develop leveraged negotiating positions for the purposes of delivering the best value to the Department.

The purpose of this policy is to outline the Department's strategic sourcing policy and exception request process related to Department-wide SSIs.

POLICY

Effective immediately, DOC Contracting Officers, purchasing agents, and purchase cardholders shall use the DOC SSP as described herein for all requirements met by available SSIs. The following ordering tenets apply to the Department's SSP:

- All SSIs listed on the ES Portal are mandatory-use, unless otherwise designated.
- All ordering from SSIs, except purchase card orders shall be conducted by ES, unless otherwise designated.
- Purchase cardholders shall place orders within their authority directly with the SSI Contractor on those SSIs for which purchase card transactions are authorized. For items/services on SSIs that do not provide for use of a purchase card, cardholders may purchase those items/services outside of the SSIs without following the waiver process identified below.

A current list of available SSIs is located on the ES Portal. The portfolio will be continually updated as new SSIs are added and will contain any alternative designations from the policy that are applicable to an SSI.

EXCEPTIONS

The DOC SSIs are targeted for specific items or groups of items. The SSP does not dictate program requirements. There are two types of allowable exceptions from this mandatory use policy:

- 1) Unique Requirement Exception – A customer who requires an item or items not provided through the DOC SSP is naturally exempt.

An example is a customer who has a requirement for a high-performance Apple/Mac computer. If Apple/Mac computers are not available under existing SSIs, even if similar items like Dell computers are available, the action is waived. Purchase of these items should go through the regular servicing acquisition office. No additional documentation or approval is required.

- 2) General Exception – A customer who requires an item or items available under the DOC SSP must be granted an exception by the Acquisition Council, chaired by the SPE, before that item may be procured outside of an available SSI. The SPE, Deputy SPE, and Bureau Procurement Officials are the primary voting members. The rationale for the exception must be presented to the Acquisition Council members and subjected to a vote. The outcome of the vote will lead to one of the following actions:
 - a. Consensus to exempt an acquisition results in a waiver from the mandatory use of the SSP on the subject acquisition.
 - b. Non-Consensus to exempt an acquisition defers the exemption request to the DMC for a waiver determination.
 - c. OAM, with support from ES, will brief the DMC quarterly on all exemptions/waivers that were granted pursuant to paragraph a. of this section.

The SPE reserves the right to approve waivers for mission critical requests without waiting for a vote of the Acquisition Council.

APPENDIX C – TABLE OF MANDATORY ENTERPRISE-WIDE CONTRACTS

Mandatory Use Contracts					
	Name	Description	Operating Characteristics	Exception/Waiver Procedures	Other Requirements, Considerations or Information
1	Business Applications Solution (BAS) Contract	The BAS contract includes the following solutions: core financial management solution; acquisition management; property management solution for personal property, real property, and fleet management; and enterprise data warehouse and reporting solutions.	Enterprise Services – Acquisition is the exclusive contracting office authorized to issue orders. The Departmental Management Council has designated this contract as a mandatory source.	Exceptions from mandatory use of this contract shall be approved by the Departmental Management Council.	N/A
2	Personnel Action Request, Payroll, and Benefits Services (PPB) contract	The PPB contract includes a full range of PPB services and corresponding system administration, customer relationships, and operations management solutions.	Enterprise Services – Acquisition is the exclusive contracting office authorized to issue orders. The Departmental Management Council has designated this contract as a mandatory source.	Exceptions from mandatory use of this contract shall be approved by the Departmental Management Council.	N/A
3	National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) NWave contracts	The NWave program provides network services.	NOAA is the is the exclusive contracting office authorized to issue orders. The DOC Chief Information Officer (CIO) has designated NOAA's NWave program as a mandatory source for TICAP services for bureaus within the Herbert C. Hoover Building (HCHB)	Waivers and exceptions from the mandatory use of NWave for network services within HCHB must be approved by the DOC CIO. Existing TICAP services within HCHB shall be phased out in coordination with the implementation of the NWave program and those contracts shall not be renewed.	N/A

APPENDIX D – STRATEGIC SOURCING PROCESS FLOWCHART AND GOVERNANCE

