



**US Army Corps
of Engineers®**

**Public Affairs Office
Honolulu District
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Fort Shafter, Hawaii 96858-5440**

**Contact: Dino Buchanan
or Joe Bonfiglio
Telephone (808) 438-9862**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 20, 2006

Army Corps Provides Model for Improving State Business Procurement Procedures

By Honolulu District Public Affairs

(FORT SHAFTER, HI - NR 27-06) The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Honolulu District recently participated in a round-table discussion about the fairness of Federal and State procurement practices by government contracting officials at the 2006 Hawaii Procurement Institute (HPI) Conference held at the East-West Center on the University of Hawaii Manoa campus.

Rick Totten, an attorney in Honolulu District's Office of Counsel, discussed the statutory requirements that govern the Corps of Engineers obtaining needed professional architect and engineering services under the Brooks Act (40 United States Code §§ 541-544). His presentation stressed that the federal system for selecting architect-engineering (A-E) firms is fair, open and competitive.

-MORE-

2-2-2 CORPS HPI

“My goals (for the conference) were to educate the private sector on how the Corps of Engineers system works, about its inherent fairness and to encourage more companies to get involved in the federal acquisition system,” Totten said.

HPI, which is a part of the University of Hawaii, Richardson School of Law, was established by the State of Hawaii legislature to educate, train, research, and report on procurement matters affecting the State of Hawaii and those with whom the State does business for its required goods, services and construction needs.

As the State of Hawaii is currently looking to transform its present procurement system into one that somewhat mirrors the federal government process, the conference focused discussion topics on how Professional Services Contracts were obtained in both the Federal and State sectors, how Suspension and Debarment are handled differently by each sector and included workshops dealing with small business matters.

HPI’s long term goal is to assist in the transformation of the way the State of Hawaii performs its procurement functions from its current patchwork procedures to one based on competition. This would be a new system with established contracting procedures, a system open to everyone and that is not dependent on political favoritism or affiliation.

-MORE-

3-3-3 CORPS HPI

Totten, who was the only federal sector representative invited to participate in the sessions, told an audience of distinguished legislators, State and County of Hawaii procurement professionals, academics and private sector contractors, that the federal procedures used to obtain professional architect and engineer services is a “qualification based system.”

“All firms who wish to perform A-E work in the federal sector can submit their qualification in the competitive process used,” Totten said. “It’s a process based on announced selection criteria and the criteria relate to qualifications possessed by private sector A-E firms.”

Totten’s presentation stressed that the federal system for selecting A-E firms is fair, open and competitive. Individual firms who are not selected can request a debriefing so it might become more competitive in the future.

“I encouraged more companies to get involved in the federal acquisition system and stressed the fact that the Honolulu District has a dedicated deputy to the commander whose sole job is to work with small, disadvantaged, minority owned, and women owned businesses, and ensure that these firms receive a fair portion of the Federal acquisition pie. This initiative is based on mandates from Congress, which are contained in numerous statutes, regulations and policy statements.”

-MORE-

4-4-4 COPRS HPI

Totten said that telling the Corps story and providing information and initiative to such a diverse professional-laden audience was a rewarding experience “that I would gladly repeat.”

“I enjoy telling the public about the fair acquisition system used by the Federal Government and the Corps vital role in building great projects and delivering related engineering services by our dedicated people for our Nation’s defense and the prosperity of our country.”

To learn how to do business with the Army Corps of Engineers, the following website provides a step-by-step approach to the Department of Defense Marketplace: http://www.acq.osd.mil/osbp/doing_business/DoD_Contracting_Guide.htm. You may also contact the Honolulu District Deputy for Small Business, Monica Kaji, at 438-8586 or email monica.a.kaji@usace.army.mil.

-HED-