

## **GSA Acquisition Policy Federal Advisory Committee (GAP FAC) Industry Partnerships Subcommittee Meeting**

**December 7, 2022**

The General Services Administration (GSA) Acquisition Policy Federal Advisory Industry Partnerships Subcommittee convened for its first public meeting at 3:00 PM on December 7, 2022, virtually via Zoom, with Kristin Seaver, Chairperson, and Farad Ali, Co-Chairperson, presiding.

In accordance with FACA, as amended, 5 U.S.C. App 2, the meeting was open to the public from 3:00 PM to 5:00 PM EST

### **Subcommittee Members Present:**

Kristin Seaver, Chairperson	<i>General Dynamics Information Technology</i>
Farad Ali, Co-Chairperson	<i>Asociar, LLC</i>
Denise Bailey	<i>Milligan Consulting, LLC</i>
Nicole Darnall	<i>Arizona State University</i>
Nigel Stephens	<i>U.S. Black Chambers of Commerce (USBC)</i>
Anish Tilak	<i>Rocky Mountain Institute</i>
Keith Tillage	<i>Tillage Construction, LLC</i>
Dr. David Waggar	<i>Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries</i>
Dr. Kimberly Wise White	<i>American Chemistry Council</i>
Susan Lorenz-Fisher	<i>AmerisourceBergen Corp.</i>

**Absent:** Gail Bassette, Deryl McKissack, Mamie Mallory, Stacy Smedley

### **Guest Speakers and Presenters:**

Gordon Bitko	<i>Executive Vice President of Policy, Information Technology Industry Council</i>
Megan Petersen	<i>Vice President of Policy, Public Sector and Counsel, Information Technology Industry Council</i>

### **GSA Staff Present:**

Boris Arratia	<i>Designated Federal Officer</i>
Stephanie Hardison	<i>Deputy Designated Federal Officer</i>
David Cochennic	<i>GAP FAC Support Team</i>
Adam Sheldrick	<i>GAP FAC Support Team</i>

Skylar Holloway  
Cindy Thompson  
Daniel Swartz  
Jill Lamoreaux

*GAP FAC Support Team*  
*Closed Captioner*  
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*ASL Interpreters*

## **CALL TO ORDER**

Boris Arratia, Designated Federal Officer, opened the public meeting by welcoming the group and reviewing the GAP FAC full committee and subcommittee background. He then performed a roll call to confirm attendance and a quorum. After the quorum was met, he reviewed the ground rules for public comment.

## **WELCOME AND OPENING REMARKS**

Subcommittee Chairperson Kristin Seaver welcomed everyone and thanked everyone for their participation before going over the agenda. She conveyed the importance of broadcasting and getting as much public input as possible during the subcommittee's tenure. She stated the committee needs to hold itself accountable to ensure that they are refining its focus and getting into the things that can create an impact. It's important to stay aligned with the full committee.

Subcommittee co-Chairperson Farad Ali expressed his excitement about beginning to work on the Industry Partnerships subcommittee. He stated one of the things they are hoping to do is to have the committee chairs be able to debrief with other committee chairs regularly to ensure they are all on the same page.

## **ROAD MAP REVIEW AND DISCUSSION**

Chairperson Seaver mentioned the need to organize the work and what is the subcommittee's mission and expected outcome for the full committee. She stated that they need help identifying speakers for the next upcoming meetings. They will create a Google Doc for members to add speakers, who they are, and what they can bring to the meetings. The subcommittee needs to narrow priorities to bring to the full committee's attention on January 12, 2023. She then opened the floor for the guest speaker and subcommittee discussions.

## **INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIPS SUBCOMMITTEE SPEAKER AND DISCUSSION**

Maria Swaby, GSA Procurement Ombudsman & Industry Liaison, introduced Gordon Bitko and Megan Petersen from Information Technology Industry Council (ITI)

Megan Petersen launched into the background of ITI. ITI is a trade association of 80 members that represent global tech companies. They are looking at sustainability through an acquisition lens, as many government agencies are. There's always a procurement angle throughout the various policy initiatives, and ITI has been tracking these policy initiatives and requirements through the federal contracting process. Upon receiving the climate related executive order from President Biden, they began to discuss with members how the Government would implement some of these initiatives within the federal acquisition process.

She continued explaining that ITI was part of the Council of Defense & Space Industry Association (CODSIA) and led the drafting of comments in response to the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) Case 2021-016: *Minimizing the Risk of Climate Change in Federal Acquisitions*. The comments focused on leveraging existing standards and initiatives and avoiding implementing something new. Avoiding the one size fits all approach to sustainability, the Government should be open to considering different inputs of what sustainability looks like in terms of the federal supplier base. ITI is currently leading the FAR Case 2021-015: *Disclosure of Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Climate Related Financial Risk*, which is a deeper dive into their earlier recommendations.

She mentioned ITI had engaged a consultant to gather data from members to help look at the existing regime of standards that are relevant in terms of what members are already using to track their greenhouse gas emissions, how they are reporting, and what's publicly available. It was important to figure out how they could make this information helpful for the acquisition workforce within the federal Government. They don't want the Government to reinvent the wheel, but they want them to leverage existing data. They understand that sometimes having an overwhelming volume of information can be hard to process when making decisions about sustainable suppliers, so our goal is to try to merit industry feedback based on standards and best practices related to sustainability and with a focus toward practical implementation of giving tools to federal contracting officers that they can use to start to consider this information in federal procurement. The results are ongoing, but they have developed a supplier sustainability scoring model to arm contracting officers with the sustainability information needed for the procurement process.

Megan Petersen handed the conversation to Gordon Bitko to dive deeper into their model.

Gordon Bitko shared many approaches, standards, and pieces when looking at greenhouse gas emissions. He stated when looking at it from the procurement side, it can be a burden on a contracting officer to try to understand all the different things that can be done. This model is a standard meta approach that can map all the work already done by other organizations that support the Government that is trying to be sustainable. The idea is to provide procurement deciders and contracting officers the ability to look at the standards in their totality. This will be a scoring database that will allow evaluators to know whether a company is hitting its goals. They can pull this data together to give to the GSA or others who may be a decision maker in a government agency. The model allows the scores to be mapped, which provides the evaluator with an understanding of whether the company is effectively hitting its goals. ITI has started the process of building the model and questionnaire.

## **INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIPS SUBCOMMITTEE OVERVIEW: QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

**Q:** Farad Ali: The scoring system is going to be technology driven, where you input data, and it shows you where you place yourself. What is the background on the functionality of how that would work?

**A:** Gordon Bitko: It is notional for now, but there will be a database that maps the data and translates it to the customer. They are still figuring out the scoring logistics to determine what will be most useful and who can see what.

**Q:** Farad Ali: Will someone be able to get a debriefing or read the data?

**A:** Gordon Bitko: Still sorting through logistics on that, but procurement officers can have a procurement that could be so impactful to the Government's greenhouse gas budget that they would want to do a deep dive into it. For the majority of them, they will probably not do a debriefing on it. For the majority, it's important to know we are looking at companies that meet the requirements. The certification score will tell us the companies are doing that.

**Q:** Kristin Seaver: Keeping in mind the supplier pool, inclusions, and small business when bringing innovation. Designing a tool like this, is there any thought to the end users?

**A:** Megan Petersen: The goal of the model is to provide for different ways to account for sustainability. If a small business hasn't built out all its reporting, it will still be able to break down and answer these questions that feed the data in and map it for them

against an existing standard. Our goal is to have this template available initially as a self-assessment tool for vendors and suppliers that provide products to the Government.

Gordon Bitko: The Government needs to make important decisions regarding this process and determine whether or not they want to accept data from individual companies or through a third-party attestation that requires audits and provides additional reviews.

**Q:** Chairperson Seaver: Does the Government determine what gets measured, which helps provide the different datasets for scoring?

**A:** Gordon Bitko: Yes, the Government is the one who has the expectations and requirements, and we map to that part of the Government's output through the data map.

**Q:** Nicole Darnall: Do you have a sense of the general landscape of standards? What does that look like among your members? What standards are they using? Does one business use one type of standard versus what some of your other members might be using?

**A:** Gordon Bitko: Yes, there isn't a single uniform standard. Some companies are global and are complying with standards that will be more accepted globally. The standard meta approach will allow companies not to duplicate their efforts but give them credit for the work they have already completed.

**Q:** Nicole Darnall: Do you have a sense of where your member companies are connecting with the International Sustainability Standards Board, and are they aligned with what the board is doing?

**A:** Gordon Bitko: Unsure where they stand right now.

Megan Petersen: I think it makes sense for us to follow up and ask specifically about their engagement.

**Q:** Anish Tilak: Have you investigated moving forward toward one standard instead of multiple?

**A:** Gordon Bitko: It's not clear that the Government is the right group to pick a single standard. Our members feel that when the Government chooses a particular standard, it creates an imbalance in the market. Some areas of concern are when the

Government prefers a particular standard as the approach in a space where there are different standards and solutions.

**Q:** Chairperson Seaver: Are there similar efforts going on with smaller organizations, or are the larger organizations shepherding them along?

**A:** Gordon Bitko: We work with larger organizations, and our associates work to represent smaller companies. The majority of them likely wait until the regulation shows up before they start to engage.

**Q:** Farad Ali: Are there any opportunities for us to inform smaller businesses about how to engage with larger businesses to reach those goals?

**A:** Gordon Bitko: The smaller groups hold forums for their members where you can address that with them.

**Q:** Boris Arratia, on behalf of Denise Bailey: How do we build access and pipelines for small firms?

**A:** Gordon Bitko: It's an important piece of the mission you all need to think about. As we continue to build this model, we will be engaging with more stakeholders that represent small businesses.

**Q:** Nigel Stephens: How can the data collected be leveraged to help decide how to reach the minority, underserved communities, women-owned businesses, etc?

**A:** Gordon Bitko: Currently don't have an answer for that, but the government decision-makers and procurement executives are going to have to figure out a way to prioritize and balance all those different requirements.

## **PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT/COMMENTS**

None.

## **AREAS OF FOCUS**

Chairperson Seaver reviewed the below mission statement and asked for feedback.

Mission Statement (*Proposed*): The Industry Partnerships Subcommittee will investigate ways to expand a climate focus on Federal acquisition while reinforcing inclusion, domestic sourcing, small business opportunity, and innovation from an

industry standpoint. This includes identifying and addressing gaps in sustainable attributes standards for the goods and services that the Federal Government buys.

There was a consensus that the statement needs to be clarified and that we must be aware of our and our partners' roles. The mission statement needs to be refined, and subcommittee members must think about how they want to clarify it. There will be a mission document in Google Drive to add their thoughts. Go in there, edit it and add to it.

The Industry Partnership priorities also need to be refined. Now that the subcommittee is better acquainted, make sure you review all priorities to see if we need to add, delete, categorize, or sub-prioritize the priority points. That will be something committee members will consider over the next meetings.

Chairperson Seaver mentioned they will go over a list of priorities that are solution based, but we need to focus on a mission statement for now.

### **CLOSING REMARKS**

Chairperson Seaver stated that it was a great first subcommittee meeting. There will be two more subcommittee meetings before the full committee meeting on January 12, 2023.


### **ADJOURNMENT**

Boris Arratia adjourned the meeting and reminded everyone that subcommittee meetings would be every other week. The meeting adjourned at 5:00 PM EST.

I hereby certify that, to the best of my knowledge, the foregoing minutes are accurate and complete.

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Kristin Seaver  
Chairperson  
GAP FAC Industry Partnerships Subcommittee

6/16/2023

DocuSigned by:  
  
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Farad Ali  
Co-Chairperson  
GAP FAC Industry Partnerships Subcommittee

6/16/2023