

**ASPRS Special Committee on
Guideline for Procurement of Photogrammetric Services**

**Status Report as Prepared for the ASPRS Board and Executive Committee
2/24/09**

The committee's efforts since the Denver Board meeting have primarily included reviewing comments submitted in response to the Draft for Review Procurement Guidelines Document published last October.

Background

The draft for review was announced via press release and was available for download Oct. 16, 2008. The document was also announced at the COGO and NGAC meetings the third week of October, published in the November issue of PE&RS and presented to Excom and the ASPRS Board at the Denver conference. A hot topic session was not held in Denver, but is scheduled for Baltimore.

Draft for Review Comments and Responses

The comment period was scheduled to close Jan. 15, 2009. A few comments were e-mailed prior to that date; most came in on the 15th and a few came in two to three weeks after that. Comments submitted included the "participating firms" memo submitted by seven private firms, a few e-mails from private individuals and responses from URISA, GITA, the California GIS Council and CAGIS.

The majority of the responses referenced the "participating firms" memo, reiterated a common theme opposing ASPRS endorsement of QBS methods as the preferred method for professional services and strongly encouraged the final version of the document to be rewritten to treat cost based selection processes, such as "best value" and "lowest acceptable technology" equal to qualifications based methods. In many cases, the document appeared to have been misinterpreted; there were statements by several of the responders that the document was an attempt to expand the Brooks Act and licensing to encompass all mapping services. In fact, the document includes specific bullets and language stating the opposite. Most of the responses did not acknowledge those statements or the Guidelines inclusion of a cost based selection approach recommended as an alternative when an organization opts not to use the Brooks Act process.

The committee met Jan. 27 to develop a response to the comments submitted. The committee felt that many of comments reflected a philosophical objection to QBS and did not accurately represent the intent of the document. Past efforts by the committee to develop a list of services that were "less professional" and therefore appropriate for other cost based processes, were not successful. Primarily, the problem is that this is very case specific and a hard line cannot be drawn. After review of all comments, the committee felt that the current document's approach to endorse QBS, but also provide an alternative when QBS could not be used, was well justified in the document and is consistent with and supported by both current ASPRS policy and the strategic plan. In the absence of any specific recommendations for revisions or modifications to clarify the intent of the document, the committee unanimously felt that no changes to this overall approach were warranted.

The committee's summary of comments, response and proposed action items is attached with this report. The committee carefully considered all of the comments and made every effort to respond to all specific and substantive comments and recommendations. Several revisions are proposed, including clarifying the distinction between products and services, adding a section to address implementation and others. The full text of all comments is posted on the committee's web page and can be accessed from the committee link on the draft for review distribution page at: <http://www.asprs.org/guidelines>.

Current Status

The committee's summary response was sent to each of the responding organizations Feb. 24, concurrent with this submittal to the Board. The letters sent out to these organizations summarize the intent of the document, primarily with regards to the misconception that the document endorses licensing and Brooks Act procurement for all services. It is important the Guidelines be well understood. The committee has requested that these organizations provide specific reference to the sections of the text that need clarification to ensure that our intent to adopt the NCEES Model Rules distinction between surveying and non-surveying is clearly stated.

Proposed Action Items

Final Document

The committee intends to submit a final version of the document, incorporating the changes and actions outlined in the summary response, by March 6, 2009 for the Board's consideration and eventual approval.

Further comment and ongoing discussions prior to the Board Meeting

The committee has requested that further written comment outlining any specific sections of text that are confusing be submitted by March 3 in order to be incorporated into a final submittal to the Board, either directly or by reference. We recognize the timeline is short.

This issue will be on the COGO agenda at their March meeting (the week before the conference) and a Hot Topic Session will be held Wednesday, March 11. Also, the representatives of the firms that submitted the "participating firms" memo and the California GIS Council have both expressed an interest in meeting in Baltimore to discuss their concerns. The committee intends to facilitate these meetings if possible. Any conclusions or results from these meetings, the COGO discussions or Hot Topic discussions will be summarized for the Board's consideration.