

SBO/SBAP
National Steering Committee
Monthly Teleconference
December 10, 2002

Attendance: Region 1: Ron Dyer; Region 2: Maria Rivera, Marian Mudar; Region 3: Richard Rasmussen, Terry Polen; Region 4: Linda Sadler, Tony Pendola; Region 5: Amelia Gooding, Phyllis Strong; Region 6: Christa Townsend; Region 7: Dan Nickey; Region 8: Nick Melliadis, Bonnie Rouse; Region 9: Marcia Manley, Robert White; Region 10: Sally Tarowski; USEPA: Angela Suber; chair: Mark Shanahan.

The participants approved the November 12, 2002 minutes.

USEPA Strategic Plan and Goal 5

The Strategic Plan has become more of an internal planning document that will probably drive budgeting and resource allocation. The fifth goal is "Compliance and Stewardship". This goal includes the work of the SBO and would most directly affect the 507 Programs. If business assistance is not mentioned, there is a potential for the various offices to minimize the importance and thus, not allocate any funds or staff to this. The Budget Office is not enthused about including business assistance in the Strategic Plan because it is difficult to measure. The proposed final Plan is slated for late December in the Federal Register. NSC members voiced concerns that years have been spent building programs to provide multi-media business assistance to ensure compliance by small businesses in particular and that to exclude this would be akin to taking a giant step backwards. There are many offices designated within Goal 5: OECA, Karen's Office, Planning, etc. and it was suggested that the Steering Committee develop a statement on behalf of the group to submit when the Federal Register notice is issued. Ron Dyer volunteered to draft the statement with assistance from Marian Mudar and Marcia Manley. It was also suggested that the Chairman work with Karen's office to meet with the EPA Offices affected by Goal 5 to ensure the 507 Programs are recognized.

Reports on Subcommittees

Subcommittees are meeting and many are developing draft documents. As noted last conference call, when minutes are developed, Mark will send to all NSC members. Due to other issues, this agenda item was given less discussion time than originally planned.

USEPA and PTE Definition

An update on this issue was provided in that the courts had validated EPA's definition by remanding it back to them to define. EPA did not change the definition. It was suggested that the NSC talk to and work with RTP and work on the definition as it relates to and impacts small businesses. This was referred to the technical subcommittee to carry forward.

Update on 2003 Annual SBO/SBAP Conference in Baltimore

The planning committee met in Baltimore on November 13 and 14. Meeting was productive. It was noted that while there will be fewer topics; attendance at the individual sessions was expected to increase. The Planning Committee had two items that they needed the NSC's assistance with. The first item was relating to the subcommittees. The working groups format worked so well last year that members wanted to continue. If the same subcommittees and basic issues were retained, the Planning Committee would like 2-3 items from each subcommittee that they are "struggling" with. Perhaps issues or items that the subcommittees will not be able to address prior to the annual conference or would like to have input on from the larger group. These can wait until later to submit but the subcommittees should be considering them. The second item that the Planning Committee wanted assistance with was 1-2 nominations or success stories from each state for a small business recognition award. The Planning Committee would select the winner and the award would be given at the annual conference by Administrator Whitman. Nomination should be made to the Regional Steering Committee Representative no later than January 13th. They should then be immediately forwarded to Mark.

National Assistance Providers Forum and CAAC

The form was held in Texas with about 300 attending. There were approx. 10-12 representatives from the 507 Programs, with the majority of attendees from the compliance assistance sectors. Few enforcement staff were present. Assistant Administrator Swarez appeared to be unaware of the 507 Programs. The key issue discussed was the Strategic Plan as outlined above. It was suggested that a meeting with all three assistant administrators affected by Goal 5 be arranged. Mark will pursue more information. Angela though this was a good idea and a possibility that Karen's office could be involved in.

Meeting adjourned at 3 p.m., EST with no time to spare.

These minutes respectfully submitted by Marcia Manley (NV) and Robert White (CA), Region IX.