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U . S . T R A D E A N D D E V E L O P M E N T A G E N C Y

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March 9, 2017

Re: Freedom of Information Act Requests 2015-005, 2016-024, 2017-001, 2017-009

This responds to your FOIA requests, previously identified in the acknowledgment letters with tracking numbers USTDA 2015-005, dated February 9, 2015; USTDA 2016-024, dated September 6, 2016; USTDA 2017-001, dated October 19, 2016; and USTDA 2017-009, dated January 17, 2017. You asked for:

1. "a copy of the ALL AGENCY MEETING NOTES at USTDA dated during the following time period: January 1, 2013, to present" in USTDA 2015-005;
2. "a copy of each of the All Agency Meeting Notes documents during calendar year 2013" in USTDA 2016-024;
3. "a copy of the USTDA 'All Agency Meeting' notes for meetings during Calendar Year 2012" in USTDA 2017-001; and
4. "a copy of the 'All Agency Meeting Notes' (which was the name given to senior staff meeting minutes at USTDA) for the time period calendar year 2016" in USTDA 2017-009.

Based on your request, U.S. Trade and Development Agency conducted a search that was reasonably calculated to uncover all relevant documents.

All responsive records are released subject to redactions for personal privacy, as indicated. If you choose to appeal, please submit the appeal in writing, describing the issue and basis for the appeal, within 60 days from receipt of this letter. The appeal should include the tracking numbers and be addressed to:

FOIA Appeal Authority  
U.S. Trade and Development Agency  
1000 Wilson Blvd, Suite 1600  
Arlington, VA 22209

There is no charge for processing this FOIA request. If you have any questions, you may send an email to [foia@ustda.gov](mailto:foia@ustda.gov) or call (703) 875-4357 and ask to speak with Ms. Jennifer Van Renterghem or myself.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Doug J. Choi". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "D" and a trailing flourish.

Doug J. Choi  
Assistant General Counsel

## **November 02, 2012 All Staff meeting Minutes**

### New Staff Introductions –

The following individuals have joined USTDA in the last month and were introduced at the meeting.

-Jasper Nagashima introduced Catherina Barrientos (goes by Kathy) who is working at the 16<sup>th</sup> floor reception desk. Kathy is joining USTDA from the private sector.

-Lori Donovan introduced Garth Hibbert who is the new Senior Contracts Specialist in the contracts office. Garth is joining USTDA from the Department of Defense's, Defense Logistics Agency.

### Egypt

Heather Lanigan provided a presentation on the recent trade mission to Egypt sponsored by the U.S. Chamber of the Commerce. The trip was the second largest trade mission ever sponsored by the Chamber, and included 50 U.S. companies and senior members of the U.S. government (USG). The delegation met with President of Egypt Mohamed Morsi, Prime Minister Hesham Kandil, Egyptian cabinet members, Members of Parliament, Heads of Egyptian political parties and business leaders. Carl Kress and Heather represented USTDA on the mission and signed two grants. The USTDA grants constituted two out of three of the main USG deliverables for the trip. Lee mentioned that the benefits of the trip included praise for USTDA from both the private sector and the senior USG participants as well as highlighting USTDA's strong program in Egypt specifically, Egypt:Forward. Lee also commended the MENAE team for strategically signing the grants in a public setting, in front the private sector delegation which led to increased visibility for the Agency. Attached is the slide show from Heather's presentation.

### Personnel Announcements

The following personnel transitions are occurring in the coming weeks. These changes are an acknowledgement of the talent in the agency and will provide opportunities for USTDA staff to learn new skills and expand portfolios.

-MENAE Country Manager Heather Lanigan has been asked to detail for one year to the State Department's Middle East Transitions Office. This request is a testament to Heather and USTDA's excellent work in the region.

-Katherine Michaud, in the grants office, is moving to the MENAE region on detail as country manager to fill Heather's position.

-Scott Greenip will also move to MENAE region as will the Central Asia portfolio. Scott's expertise and role with the traditional power sector team will compliment the region's traditional power focus.

### Office Space Update

In order to accommodate some of the recent personnel changes, the sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) regional team will be moving to the office space currently occupied by the Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) team. The LAC team will be moving to the space currently occupied by the South and South East Asia (SSEA) regional team. The SSEA team will be moving to the space currently occupied by the SSA team.

### Update on Performance Appraisal Review (PAR) process

Lee provided an update on the efforts to standardize the PAR process to ensure consistency throughout the Agency. Moving forward, supervisors or “raters” must consult with “reviewers” before meeting with employees who are being evaluated to ensure that everyone is “rated” using the same standards. This standardization will not only help ensure fairness and transparency in the process, but also to make certain the Agency is rewarding outstanding performance as bonuses are tied to both grade and PAR score. Lee invited Agency staff to reach out to senior management if they had questions or concerns with the PAR process. PARs must be completed by Friday, November 9.

## **December 11, 2012 All Staff Meeting Minutes**

### New Staff Introductions –

The following individuals have joined USTDA in the last month and were introduced at the meeting.

-Paul Marin introduced the two new project analysts for the sub-Saharan Africa region. Chris Giglio and Meredith Schuessler are both returning to USTDA as they both served as past interns.

-Carl Kress introduced Jonathan Chu the new project analyst for MENAE.

### Bloomberg Interview

Tom Hardy provided information about the taping of an interview by the Bloomberg Sunday television show “Capitol Gains.” The crew filmed at USTDA the day following the all staff meeting. The show is scheduled to air sometime at the end of December following Face the Nation on Sunday mornings on CBS.

### Office Moving Day

Peggy gave instructions for office moving day and thanked Eatrice and others for their work organizing logistics.

### Project Analyst / Evaluation Analyst consolidated contract

Peggy and Enoh provided an update on the project/evaluation analyst consolidated contract. Lori posted a notice in FedBizOps following the meeting requesting information from vendors. This request for information (RFI) is essentially conducting market research on the capabilities of firms to provide the types of services required under a consolidated contract. Peggy and Enoh thanked the current project analysts and staff, particularly Andrea Lupo who have provided input into the process thus far.

### U.S. – ASEAN Smart Grid Workshop in Hanoi, Vietnam in November

Henry and Pinsuda provided a read out of the smart grid workshop held in Hanoi, Vietnam in early November. The workshop brought together government and private power sector stakeholders from the ASEAN region to discuss U.S. technology and solutions. Lee spoke at the opening of both days of the workshop and participated in activities throughout. The event was well attended by the U.S. private sector and initial reports of follow on activity are very positive. Commerce U/S Francisco Sanchez also addressed the attendees.

### Under Secretary Sanchez Infrastructure Trade Mission in Indonesia and Vietnam

Commerce U/S Francisco Sanchez led an infrastructure trade mission of signature U.S. companies to Jakarta, Indonesia and Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam that coincided with

the USTDA smart grid workshop. Mark Dunn participated for USTDA during the entire mission, however Lee was able to participate in Hanoi alongside U/S Sanchez. Lee then led the mission on behalf of the U.S. government to Ho Chi Minh City. To the benefit of the companies on the mission, nearly every Vietnamese government minister recognized USTDA in meetings as many had been past grantees or were familiar with the Agency's work. We are receiving very positive feedback from Commerce following the mission.

#### Ethics Update

Ziyang reminded everyone of the annual ethics training requirement that must be completed by USTDA employees. Please see the email from Ziyang entitled "2012 Annual Ethics Training," for the relevant materials.

#### U.S. – Africa Clean Energy Development and Finance Center – Doing Business in Africa Campaign

Paul Marin provided a read out from the launch of the U.S. – Africa Clean Energy Development and Finance Center that was recently launched as part of the Doing Business in Africa campaign announced by Commerce Acting Secretary Blank in Johannesburg. After the Acting Secretary announced the Center, Paul participated on an interagency panel at an event sponsored by the Corporate Council on Africa. The Center is a joint project with USTDA, OPIC and Ex-Im to assist sub-Saharan African energy developers implement clean energy projects while promoting U.S. private sector participation. Jason Nagy will lead the center for USTDA.

#### U.S. – Latin America Aviation Summit

Nathan Younge provided a read out from the recent aviation summit held in Miami, Florida. The summit brought together aviation stakeholders from throughout Latin America and showcased U.S. technology and project solutions. Lee opened the summit and participated in events throughout all the three days. Also in attendance was TSA Administrator Pistole, Ex-Im Bank Chairman Hochberg and Commerce A/S Nicole Lamb Hale. The total attendance was approximately 300. By all accounts, this event was a tremendous success.

#### CFC Update

Lisa Bonnikson provided an update on the Federal Combined Campaign. Employees have multiple ways to participate and donate. USTDA staff can see Lisa or any of the CFC leads for more information.

## All Staff Meeting Notes – January 11, 2013

### **New Staff Introductions –**

Carl introduced **Nadya Saber** who is the new Project Analyst Contractor with MENA/EE. Nadya comes to USTDA most recently from NYC. Carl sent an email with her bio earlier this week.

Carl also mentioned **James Boohaker** the new intern in MENA/EE. Josh will send around an email with his bio today. Carl noted that James was not in attendance at the all staff meeting, but that he would introduce him properly at the next staff meeting.

### **Innovation Award –**

Nathan Younge was awarded the 2012 Innovation award for his two-year effort to enhance and standardize, at no-cost to the Agency, the *Glidepath* and *Travel Action Memo*.

Additionally, the Award committee recommended and Lee presented an Excellence Award to Steve Lewis for his outstanding work expanding the visibility of USTDA through social media and graphic design.

### **Themes and Goals for 2013 - Efficiency and Managing with Data**

Lee reported that she has met with many in program and operations since the new year began and asked all staff in the Agency to set bold and specific goals in 2013 with the overall goals of increasing efficiency and managing with data. She noted that boldness is why the Agency has been so effective in the past. A summary of the discussion is below.

#### **Program Efficiencies**

Geoff is leading a process to evaluate our current project management process in two phases. The first phase is to standardize the managing the middle tracking system. Using standardized fields will be helpful as we move forward with our new global project analyst contract. The final configuration will be presented to senior management by end of the month and implemented immediately.

The second phase will be a long term evaluation of potential choke points or inefficiencies in USTDA program process. This phase will explore methods for recording key dates during the project development timeline. After the new tracking system is in place the Agency will be able to better examine how to improve the system with the ultimate goal of lessening the time it takes to deliver the assistance in the field. Recognizing that we may benefit from an off-the-shelf project management tool, Andrea and others will lead a small task force to evaluate various options for the Agency.

Geoff stated that the working group that is updating the model proposal for the website will be finalizing its works soon. The ultimate goal is to give companies a more easily understandable entry point to USTDA.

#### Managing with Data – Glidepath

Moving forward, Glidepath updates should be available to Nathan by 4:45 pm on Thursdays so it can be distributed on Friday and reviewed by senior management and the Regional Directors before the RD meeting on Monday. The Glidepath should be a tool the Agency uses to track activity, and thus should be updated regularly.

#### Evaluations –

Lee noted the great work with new data.

#### Contracts –

Garth commented that outside of the required regulations and statutes governing federal contracting, the contracts office is currently evaluating processes and looking for possible efficiencies.

Lee has asked that a plan be created to track and manage the end dates of contracts.

#### Finance –

Liz reported that Finance staff is creating a strategic plan and documenting processes in order to increase efficiency. They are cross training and evaluating ways to work more closely with contracts and program. They invited suggestions from anyone in the Agency.

#### Grants –

Lee commented that Pat and the Grants office implemented the new close out procedure.

#### Admin –

A new system for hiring is currently being utilized.

#### OGC

Enoh reported OGC is finalizing its strategic plan. The plan will contain specific goals for speeding up current processes and creating efficiencies.

#### Public Affairs

Public Affairs will build upon their recent work by releasing a strategic plan soon.

#### CIO

Tom reported that there are lots of ongoing processes with TDAMIS II. He also noted that the Sharepoint system was recently deployed on the intranet. He is also evaluating a new electronic approval and signature process for OE action memos and time slips.

#### Misc ideas for process discussion –

-Michael DeRenzo reiterated the need to document goals so they could be measured and evaluated at the end of the year.

-Alain Lopez would like to create a digital committee to evaluate bottlenecks and paperwork processes that can be streamlined.

-Brandon Megorden suggested that there are lots of immediate changes or “low hanging fruit” that could be implemented to save time.

-Sarah Shapiro suggested a comment box or other safe space or forum for brainstorming. She also suggested a process for submitting questions in advance of the larger discussion to accommodate those in the Agency who may not feel comfortable raising issues in a larger group.

-Christine Campigotto suggested that everyone could meet in their respective Departments and generate ideas to present to the larger group.

-Geoff noted that no one should be worried that an efficiency suggestion would be interpreted as a criticism.

#### Conclusion

Following the discussion, it was decided that each regional team or operational unit meet to discuss ideas for process improvements and efficiencies before the next all staff meeting so it may be discussed in detail. In the interim, if staff have suggestions or ideas that could be implemented immediately they should convey those to Peggy or place them in the comment box. Lee stated that the long term goal of this process was to figure out a way for all of these ideas to be communicated.

#### CFC Campaign Update –

Lisa Bonnikson reported that the Agency nearly doubled its goal of \$8,500 by collecting over \$16,000. The bake sale raised over \$200 and the coin drive raised \$30.

#### Congressional Affairs –

Tom Hardy reported that Congress reached a deal on the “fiscal cliff,” but the sequester and debt ceiling will need to be addressed again in March. Additionally, the current Continuing Resolution (CR) expires on March 30.

#### Employee Viewpoint Survey results

The 2012 Federal Employee Viewpoint survey results for USTDA were recently published. Lee noted that the scores were lower than last year, but that the response rate was lower. Senior management is reviewing the results and feedback to see what we can learn would like to discuss at an all staff meeting. Everyone will receive a calendar invite soon. The survey can be found on our website at the link below. It is also available on the Intranet in the HR section.

[http://www.ustda.gov/otherinfo/USTDA\\_2012\\_FederalEVSResults.pdf](http://www.ustda.gov/otherinfo/USTDA_2012_FederalEVSResults.pdf)

**Regional Manager for Asia – Mark Dunn**

Mark Dunn gave a presentation on his work staffing the USTDA office in Bangkok. His power point is attached.



# USTDA Bangkok









Welcome

HIS EXCELLENCE PRES. BENIGNO S.

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The ceremony of signing the Grant Agreement



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US Trade and Development Agency

&

TỔNG CÔNG TY CẤP NƯỚC SÀI GÒN

Saigon Water Corporation



Thành phố Hồ Chí Minh, 01 / 09 / 2009















## All Staff Meeting Notes – February 6, 2013

Lee began the meeting by thanking the IRC for setting up the room while accommodating multiple events that day in the Business Center.

Lee also asked for suggestions for a term for the “staff meeting.” She noted that “first Friday,” may not always be applicable because of scheduling. She suggested perhaps “community meeting,” but wanted additional input.

### New Staff Introductions

Jamie Merriman introduced **Blair Mersinger**. Blair is at USTDA on a one year detail from the Department of Energy’s Office of African and Middle Easter Affairs. Jamie noted that the sub-Saharan Africa team is excited to have her on board and that she will be a valuable resource for the energy sector team as well.

Carl Kress acknowledged **James Boohaker** as the intern in MENAEU and thanked him for his continued good work.

Geoff Jackson mentioned **Elizabeth Vish** as the new intern in East Asia. Elizabeth is currently at Johns Hopkins and has lived in Africa and Asia.

### COR Training

Garth Hibbert provided information on the new acquisition workforce training certification (see attached power point). Notably, COR’s who are currently at Level II will be “grandfathered” in as level II. Garth stated that he has a list of COR’s and will provide training information and websites to obtain the required CLP points.

Lee thanked Garth and Lori Donovan for completing the research that made the training possible and remarked that one of the most valuable parts is that our work at USTDA will be a resource for ongoing training.

### Strategic Planning

Geoff Jackson reported on the schedule for this year’s strategic planning. It is scheduled take place the week of July 29 – August 2. The planning will be a retreat-type exercise. He noted that with efficiency in mind, the planning team wanted to start the process earlier to make it easier for all the units involved. Geoff thanked Diana and the evaluations team for committing to have the necessary data available by the start of planning. If anyone has feedback or questions please let Geoff or Andrea know.

Geoff also reported that the team working on the consolidated project management database will have it ready to go online next week. The consolidated project management database will standardize the managing the middle process to improve efficiency and ready the Agency for the

new project analyst contract. The project analysts are currently working to move the current data over to the new system.

Additionally, a similar team will be looking for a long-term consolidated project management software solution. The team will review current commercially available systems including those used by the World Bank and others. Geoff emphasized that both of these teams are different from the Digital Committee that Tom is chairing.

Lee complimented everyone who participated in the strategic planning scheduling process and the development of consolidated project management database management tool. She noted that the process was thoughtful and involved quick action.

### **Travel Update**

Carolyn Hum reported that GSA has contracted with a new provider for travel management and beginning in October 2013 there will be a change in the travel processing software. This will primarily affect travel processors and approvers. USTDA staff will still use World Wide Travel Service to book travel.

Additionally, Carolyn reported that because of new guidance issued by State, new passports will “official” and not “diplomatic.” The process for issuance will be the same and there should be no hindrance to travel abroad. She noted that many countries require six months of passport validity to issue a visa thus some staff may need to renew soon. Paul Cecchini stated that the passport issuance timeframe can be anywhere from one week to one month. Carolyn is confirming whether diplomatic visas are still required for official passports. Also, access to the diplomatic lines at airports using an official passport can vary from country to country.

### **Contingency Planning**

Jon Wright reported that senior management continues to monitor the situation with respect to the potential spending cuts known as the “sequester.” He noted, that the American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012 delayed the cuts until March 1, 2013, however the situation remains the same as with previous communication from Lee and senior management. Should cuts occur they would come from USTDA’s program budget and not require furloughs or contract cancellations.

### **Follow Up from Previous Meetings**

#### **Resurvey**

Leila Afas reported that she will send a link to resurvey the agency to follow up from the Employee Viewpoint Survey (EVS). The survey will contain 20 questions and everyone will have a week to respond. A committee was formed to formulate the questions and they are tailored to the specific environment at USTDA. Due to legal restrictions, some of the questions may be for federal employees only. The survey is anonymous and many recommendations

received in the past were implemented. The four main categories of questions involve 1.) training and personal development 2.) opportunities for advancement 3.) security preparedness and 4.) knowledge sharing. The next EVS survey is scheduled to be administered in March 2013.

#### Digital Committee

Tom Hardy solicited staff to become members of the Digital Committee. The committee is a forum for sharing ideas with the IT team that may better serve the Agency.

#### Agency/Solutions Committee

Lee reported that following the last All Staff meeting, the idea of an agency committee composed of non-management members to be a forum for voicing ideas for Agency improvement was raised. The list of committee members would be open and published on the Intranet. Lee noted that moving forward all Agency committees (i.e. Diversity Committee, Digital Committee etc) would be listed on the intranet.

Lee emphasized that “we heard you.” She noted that lots of discussion had occurred since the last meeting about the notion of a “safe place,” and that this type of committee could be a place to raise issues.

#### Public Affairs assistance standardizing online registration for IQC contractors

Leila Afas reported that USTDA events on contractor/vendor websites many times did not properly identify the Agency. Thus in an effort to maintain branding while not stifling creativity in marketing, public affairs is creating a standard online registration for IQC events. The standardization will also reduce the chance for error. Public affairs is consulting with IQC contractors as the new plan is developed and rolled out. Contractors will continue to track and manage the names and information of registrants.

#### Training

Peggy Philbin reported that all teams are submitting 18 month training plans by Monday. The plans should focus on three types of training options: 1.) leadership 2.) skill based and 3.) personal development. She also noted there has been a strong desire for project management certification training and that Leila was involved in developing a program that could be potentially offered on-site at USTDA.

Lee asked that a mechanism or forum be created for people to get together and share past and current training experiences. Pinsuda Alexander suggested perhaps a training library could be established. Lee concluded by reinforcing that the training plans are due by Monday and that if anyone has questions to please see Peggy.

#### Comment Box – Due Diligence

Enoh addressed a comment that came into the inbox concerning due diligence and amount needed to protect the Agency. Enoh reported that she addressed the comment at the country manager / project analyst meeting. She also reported that the Agency is exploring a possible new Lexis/Nexis dashboard tool that may streamline the due diligence process. The pilot will begin the week of March 5 with training for project analysts. Enoh concluded by stating how much she appreciated the feedback.

#### Comment Box – Contracts

Peggy and Lori addressed a comment in the comment box that focused on delays in the contract office. Peggy and Lori reported that they have met and began to examine processes. Lori stated that she appreciated the feedback and would sit down with the regional teams individually to get more specific feedback.

#### Misc

Carl Kress asked about the difference between the sequester and the expiration of the current continuing resolution. Jon and Tom responded that the potential sequester is scheduled to occur on March 1 absent Congressional action and the expiration of the continuing resolution is scheduled to occur on March 31 and also requires Congressional action.

Geoff announced that Thursday was the Lunar New Year party and all are welcome.

## All Agency Meeting Notes – March 15, 2013

### New Staff Introductions

Carolyn Hum introduced **Cecelia Salinas**. Cecelia is working in the administrative department processing travel documents along with Paul. Cecelia remarked that she just came from Santa Fe, New Mexico and had been at USTDA for a month. She graduated from college last May.

Paul Marin welcomed **Brandon Megorden** as a new Country Manger for sub-Saharan Africa and noted that he has done a fantastic job and has brought terrific insight in the few weeks with the team.

Paul also noted that **Ryan Blumenow** has left to take a job in private sector and the region is in the process of hiring another local staffer in Johannesburg.

Geoff Jackson welcomed **Isabel Sepulveda** as a new Country Manager. Isabel is currently working closely with Andrea Lupo handling special projects, in particular the current life cycle costing initiative.

Henry Steingass welcomed **Jamie Merriman** who just moved to the South and Southeast Asia team from sub-Saharan Africa. He also noted that Nadya Saber is working with his region part-time. Henry also wished (b) (6) a Happy Birthday.

(b) (6) said that she is excited to be working on the India portfolio and announced that she and former USTDA staffer (b) (6) were getting married that weekend.

### Contracts Log

Lee stated that achieving efficiency has been a priority for the year and that she is very excited about the work being done on a variety of topics. She noted that she is thankful that people in the Agency are making time to do this work alongside their busy schedules.

Garth Hibbert presented the new contracts log and described how it looked similar to the Glidepath, but incorporated the different acquisition milestones. He noted that the current version only captured actual dates, but solicited feedback as to whether it would be helpful to have planned dates included as well.

Michael DeRenzo stated that this new log would be very helpful for expectations and planning purposes. Peggy Philbin added that it will help increase transparency.

Lee specified that it will be accessible on the intranet for everyone to access, but not everyone will be able alter the data.

Enoh Ebong noted that OGC will rename the current OGC “contracts” log to the “secondary agreement” log.

Lee noted that Peggy is working with the Regional Directors, Finance and Contracts every week to find drop dead dates for obligations. She also pointed out that this new system will help the managing the middle process by using data. She noted that it is something the Regional Directors should utilize on a very regular basis.

### **Management and Operations Strategic Plan**

Liz Gustafson announced that everyone will be receiving a copy of the inaugural Management and Operations strategic plan via email. It will include individual plans for Admin, Finance and Contracts. With a focus on efficiency, each team as well as the group as a whole has set goals for the rest of the year. Liz said that they welcome and appreciate any feedback from others.

Lee stated that work on the plan was excellent and after the group presents to senior management they will roll out the plan to the entire agency.

### **Evaluations and OGC Trip to Brazil and Peru**

Diana Rossiter, Dave Ross and Alain Lopez gave a read out of their recent trip to Brazil. They were joined by Nathan Younge and Rodrigo Mota. Nathan and Alain also traveled to Peru.

#### ***Brazil***

Diana reported that in Brazil they attended 37 meetings and 5 legal roundtables over 7 days in 6 cities, including a side trip that Nathan took to sign a grant. The eval team was able to evaluate 47 projects. Diana noted that they were able to participate in the 3<sup>rd</sup> formal roundtable of the Aviation Partnership and appreciated having the eval process included early in the negotiations.

In Sao Paulo the team visited EcoRodivias, a current grantee that had utilized U.S. Intelligent Transportation Systems technology. Dave noted that eval may have discovered a recent contract with GE. The group also met with the Association for Solid Waste Management. While participating in a waste-to-energy RTM members of the Association met with the EPA, and since that time applied for and received a grant to create an atlas of greenhouse gases to map the energy potential of solid waste sites. The Association has hired a U.S. contractor to perform the work.

Dave also reported that the team learned that Renova, a past grantee, currently has a contract for the sale of wind turbines with Alstom, a French company that has manufacturing in the U.S. He noted that eval is following up to learn more.

In Rio de Janeiro, the team discovered that MRS Logistica, a grantee with previously documented success with GE, is now working with AECOM as a result of participating in an RTM. Also in Rio, the team met with the State Civil Defense Secretariat's emergency operations center. Prior to USTDA's grant, the center was responding to events ad hoc,

however, now they have action plans and are working with U.S. companies to utilize U.S. technologies.

Next in Recife, the group visited the Suape port project. For the past several years, the Agency has not been able to get in touch with this grantee to conduct an evaluation, however thanks to Rodrigo and Nathan, the group secured a meeting and learned that the port has purchased a significant amount of U.S. products including cargo scanners, H.P. servers and software. The port has also had a major developmental impact on the city and its residents.

Alain reported that in Brazil a national federal procurement law was conflicting with USTDA's program by potentially preventing Brazilian public sector entities from selecting U.S. companies due to the lack of an open international procurement. Alain met with over 20 individuals on the topic and they advised him that it would likely not be a problem for the program. OGC is now seeking a written concurrence from the Brazilian Department of Justice on this issue.

### ***Peru***

Alain also reported that USTDA has encountered a problem with the Peruvian authorities seeking to tax our grants. Alain and Nathan met with many different entities in country, including reps from USAID, the U.S. Ambassador and the Peruvian Ministry of Foreign Relations. Through these meetings it was established that a 1951 agreement with the U.S. exempts USTDA's funds from taxation. Alain stated that he is in the process of working with State to draft a diplomatic note to confirm.

Paul Marin asked the eval and LAC teams if there was a common thread between success and project sponsors in Brazil. Diana responded that success may be coming from working with the same grantees for over a decade. She noted that eval is putting together a brown bag to discuss their findings on this matter.

### **Turkey Webinar Read Out (Trade Talk)**

Carl Kress reported on the recent webinar conducted by USTDA along with the U.S. Embassy and the Commercial Service in Turkey. Carl described how during a recent trip he began brainstorming with the Senior Commercial Officer (SCO) on ways the U.S. Government can facilitate U.S. company involvement in the opportunities associated with the construction of third Istanbul airport. It was decided that a webinar would be the best way to present the information and gauge company interest. USTDA and Commerce co-marketed the event which led to participation by 58 companies. Public Affairs branded the event as "Trade Talk." Lee spoke along with the Ambassador and the SCO. Public Affairs recorded the webinar and have posted it on our website.

Lee noted that this type of event should be placed in the innovation category and encouraged others to apply this method to other priority sectors and countries.

Geoff asked Carl about the next steps in the procurement. Carl detailed that companies are required to pay \$50,000 for a copy of the tender documents and that the SCO had a sense of the U.S. companies who have purchased it and are interested in pursuing opportunities. He noted that if timeline remains the same, companies will submit bids by May. Lee remarked that this is the beginning of the concession stage and that the airport is a large project which will require a lot of work.

Carl concluded by stating that if a Turkish consortium wins the master contract, then his team will begin to consider RTM's to get U.S. companies involved with the opportunities that follow.

Henry noted that there are projects similar to the third Istanbul airport in other countries and that this model could apply. Lee noted that USTDA was approached by Commercial Service and the Ambassador because they recognized that USTDA had the necessary contacts to convene the right private sector group.

Carl also gave a special thanks to Steve Lewis for setting up and running webinar.

### **Sequester Update**

Jon Wright reported that there have been some questions regarding post-sequester travel and training. He noted that senior staff recognizes that travel is an essential tool for USTDA and that everyone currently strives to operate as efficiently as possible. He noted that Peggy does currently scrutinize all travel, however OMB has asked the Agency to provide "heightened scrutiny," when it comes to travel and training. He noted that the conversation starts in the region about what kind of travel is necessary to fulfill the mission and that the evaluation of travel will be on a case-by-case basis. Jon described how he recently pulled himself from Lee's upcoming trip to Colombia after taking a hard look at the schedule and determining that Nathan and Jacob could provide the necessary support for the Director while also managing the required meeting schedule and logistics.

Peggy reported on training. She noted because of USTDA's efficiency there are few places to look for cuts. She stated that it is a balancing act between the Agency mission and the required cuts. With respect to the training initiative, Peggy noted that a lot of Agency time had been spent on developing the current training initiative and that she is cautiously optimistic that some of the training can move forward. She asked that staff prioritize their top choices so that she may review the budget from that perspective.

She mentioned that an additional resource for training management will become available when the administrative office hires a person for the new position.

Tom Hardy reported that the sequester is likely remain in effect. He stated that the House has passed a CR bill and that some accounts such as SEED transfer funding was zeroed out. He noted that in the House passed bill the State and Foreign Operations account remained at the

sequestered level. He said that there is concern that the sequester levels may become the new baseline for appropriations.

### **Working group evaluating timeline for grants**

Lee reported that the group that is currently evaluating USTDA's timeline for grants has produced a report using FY 2011 dates. She noted that they are tweaking data and will present findings soon. She thanked the group for their hard work.

### **Employee Viewpoint Resurvey – Interim Report**

Keith Eischeid reported that the group that prepared the employee viewpoint resurvey was continuing to analyze the results and prepare recommendations and would present to the Agency in the near future. Keith noted that the following areas were identified as areas of assessment: knowledge sharing, training and professional development, awards and recognition, workload and expectations and emergency preparedness. He thanked the volunteers who were in the group: Evelyn Bryant, Blanche Twardowski, Kendra Kintzi, Pinsuda Alexander, Leila Aridi Afas and Eric Toler.

### **Agency Committee Concept**

Sarah Shapiro reported that she is working with Lee and others to create a standing permanent fixture or body beyond the comment box for bringing forward issues and concerns. She stated that the initial idea is that the committee or body would include working level members of the Agency from different departments with the goal of working to solve problems from the micro level. The idea is not yet fully formed. There could be monthly meetings. It could be viewed as a "living comment box." She noted that lots of ideas will be considered from the Employee Viewpoint resurvey recommendations.

Lee noted that the information considered by the body would be public and the participants would be public so members of the Agency would know who to talk to when they have an issue.

### **Misc**

Carolyn Hum reported that the new microwave for the 16<sup>th</sup> floor kitchen had been ordered.

Lee reported that she had received feedback in the comment box and that the issue was being taken seriously.

## All Agency Meeting Notes – April 17, 2013

### New Staff Introductions

Tom Hardy introduced **Albert Santiago**, USTDA's new Deputy Chief Information Officer. Albert comes from DHS where he worked in infrastructure security. He also served in the Army.

Andrea Lupo introduced **Katie Jones** who is providing administrative assistance to the program team. Katie is a recent graduate of Virginia Tech and has worked at the World Bank and a Ukrainian non-profit. She has a background in Russian language and studies.

Geoff Jackson introduced **Sean Miner** who is interning in East Asia. Prior to USTDA, Sean spent three years in China and worked for Pepsi in Chicago. He is now pursuing his MBA at George Washington University.

### FY 2014 Budget Request

Lee discussed the President's FY 2014 budget request increase for USTDA. She noted that this year's increase of almost 24 percent was an affirmation by the Administration of everything the the Agency is doing in an increasingly difficult budget environment where many received reductions. She thanked everyone for their hard work. She reported the reasons cited by OMB for the increase were strategic planning and prioritization as well as the ability to say no to funding when it cannot be used purposefully. She gave a special thanks to the evaluations team and noted that they had spent a lot time demonstrating our process to OMB. Lee mentioned that NSS had played a very significant role in our increase, even making a personal intervention with OMB.

Tom Hardy reported that the President's budget request contained a request for authority to consolidate the trade agencies. He noted that the language and structure was not new and that this was the same proposal put forward last year. Tom stated that he sees no movement on the Hill towards consolidation at this time.

### Sequester

Lee said a few words about the impact of the sequester on USTDA and other agencies in the federal government. She noted that USTDA's cut came mostly from program, but that OMB asked agencies to spread the cuts into OE as well which meant cuts to travel and training for the Agency. She noted, however, that some agencies are experiencing furloughs. Lee asked that everyone at USTDA be sensitive to colleagues in other agencies who may be dealing with pay cuts. She also mentioned that for some of USTDA's partners like FAA and DOE the sequester may impact their international programs as they prioritize domestic operations. This could impact RTM's or other programs that require coordination with other agency partners. Lee acknowledged that the sequester is causing pain for everyone and is being imposed on the

Agency from the outside. She noted that in some cases individuals have even personally picked up costs to keep functions running normally.

#### Travel

Peggy Philbin reported that the travel budget is being cut by \$60,000 due to the sequester. She also mentioned that this year the Agency is moving through its travel budget at a faster pace than in the past. There is approximately \$200,000 of funds remaining for the rest of the fiscal year and the front office will be requesting travel plans from the regions and office units in order to properly budget for the remainder of the year.

#### Discretionary Awards

Peggy also reported that OMB recently issued a memo that impacts discretionary awards or bonuses *SEE ATTACHED MEMO*. It stated that awards should not be issued while sequestration is in place unless legally required (ie collective bargaining agreements). This may mean that bonuses for FY 2013 will be reduced or eliminated. The bonuses issued at the end of the calendar year 2013 (during FY 2014) are funded from FY 2013 funds. This does not affect within-grade increases or promotions.

#### **Eagle Horizon**

Peggy reported that each year agencies are required to participate in a planning exercise for COOP (Continuity of Operations Plan) in the event of an emergency. She stated that this year is an internal exercise and it is scheduled for Thursday, April 18. It will begin a call at 7:30 with the Emergency Response Group (ERG) and be followed by a notification to the entire agency using send word now. The scenario for the exercise is that the building has been damaged and the agency has been displaced for at least six months. Peggy said that group would report out the findings following the exercise.

#### **White House Twitter Chats**

Steve Lewis reported on a series of upcoming twitter chats that USTDA will be hosting during World Trade Month in May with the core USG trade promotion agencies. Steve noted that public affairs was inspired by a recent Twitter chat hosted by the White House on internship opportunities the federal government. The first chat is scheduled for May 9 with the ultimate goal of driving traffic to the BusinessUSA website and will be promoted by the White House and the interagency. Steve noted that USTDA is making history with this inaugural Twitter chat focused on trade promotion and wanted to give a special thanks to Dave Kunkel who put together a microsite to capture the event and to Jon Wright for connecting him to the appropriate people at the White House.

## **Wellness Room**

Lee reported that the room under construction on the 15<sup>th</sup> floor will be the wellness room for the agency. She noted that this room has been under planning and consideration for a couple of years, but that the Agency now had the money to build. The room was created in response to employee survey results from a and recognizes family life. The room should be available to nursing mothers and in the event that someone is not feeling well. Lee asked that the room be used for wellness only and not be used for other purposes.

## **Grant process timeline**

In January the Agency began its focus on efficiency. Lee acknowledged that a group composed of Lida, Scott, Jamie and Pinsuda took it on their own to review past USTDA grant data and create a timeline. Lee noted generally that people in the Agency responded to the call for efficiency by volunteering their time and put forward great ideas.

*SEE ATTACHED PRESENTATION given by Lida, Scott and Jamie*

Following the presentation a discussed ensued. Brandon Megorden asked about the percentage projects in the data set that contained a grant amendment. Scott Greenip said he would follow up to get an answer. Scott also mentioned that 69 days was the “theoretical minimum” for a USTDA grant. Carl asked if some of the delays were due to the workload from RTM’s etc.

Sarah Shapiro reported that the model proposal format would be ready soon and would contain a checklist and expectations document that would be available on the website. She noted that a separate expectations document was being generated for desk studies and only being shared with companies.

Lida commented that many of the delays in the process were due to communications issues and areas where there were no action forcing events, especially during parts of the process that were external to USTDA.

Lee concluded by sharing that when someone asked her how she would describe the Agency today she said words such as “startup,” “new ideas,” and “energy.” She also recognized that obligations, RTM’s and contracts were all still happening and that they can take a toll, but that she was confident all the changes taking place and efficiencies being achieved would make the Agency better for the future.

## **Resurvey Group Update**

Before introducing the resurvey group, Lee thanked the team of Leila, Keith, Kendra, Eric, Evelyn and Pinsuda.

*SEE ATTACHED PRESENTATION given by Leila, Keith and Kendra.*

Following the presentation Leila noted that the resurvey efforts had demonstrated a clear commitment to improve processes and the work environment. She also reported that the annual Employee Viewpoint Survey would be coming shortly.

Lee thanked the team again acknowledging the time it took to analyze the survey results and put forward recommendations.

She noted that senior management is committed to ensuring that the workload in the Agency is fair. However, information needed to be gathered and shared so that group leaders within the Agency could manage in a fair way. She asked that as the Agency moves through the process that people communicate and try to be honest and trust each other.

### **Comment Box**

Lee reported that a comment was left in the comment box recognizing Paul Allen for his great work at USTDA.

### **Misc**

Blair Mersinger reminded everyone that Africa Day is Tuesday, April 23 at 2:00 p.m. in the Business Center

Jonathan Chu reported that the summer intern committee was planning a brown bag for resume building, an interagency panel discussion, local tours and possibly an ice cream social.



EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT  
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

April 4, 2013

M-13-11

MEMORANDUM FOR THE HEADS OF EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

FROM: Danny Werfel  
Controller

SUBJECT: Ongoing Implementation of the Joint Committee Sequestration

Section 251A of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act (BBEDCA), as amended, on March 1, 2013, required the President to issue a sequestration order canceling \$85 billion in budgetary resources across the Federal Government for the remainder of fiscal year (FY) 2013. This action was required due to the failure of the Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction to propose, and the Congress to enact, legislation to reduce the deficit by \$1.2 trillion.

The Administration continues to urge Congress to take action to eliminate the Joint Committee sequestration and restore cancelled budgetary resources as part of a balanced agreement on deficit reduction. However, until Congress takes such action, executive departments and agencies (agencies) must continue to implement the reductions required by sequestration.

This memorandum provides further guidance on specific issues regarding the management and implementation of sequestration that the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) preliminarily addressed in prior memoranda. OMB previously issued guidance on the appropriate implementation of sequestration in Memorandum 13-03, *Planning for Uncertainty with Respect to Fiscal Year 2013 Budgetary Resources*; Memorandum 13-05, *Agency Responsibilities for Implementation of Potential Joint Committee Sequestration*; and Memorandum 13-06, *Issuance of the Sequestration Order Pursuant To Section 251A of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985, as Amended*.

**Appropriate Use of Existing Reprogramming and Transfer Authority**

Sequestration provides an agency with little discretion in deciding where and how to reduce spending. All non-exempt budget accounts in a given spending category must be reduced by a uniform percentage, and the same percentage reduction must be applied to all programs, projects, and activities (PPAs) within a budget account. However, depending on an agency's account structure and any existing flexibilities provided by law, some agencies may have a limited ability to realign funds to protect mission priorities. As directed by Memorandum 13-03, in allocating reduced budgetary resources due to sequestration, agencies should generally "use

any available flexibility to reduce operational risks and minimize impacts on the agency's core mission in service of the American people." Agencies should also "take into account funding flexibilities, including the availability of reprogramming and transfer authority."

Consistent with this guidance, agencies with reprogramming or transfer authority should continue to examine whether the use of these authorities would allow the agency to minimize the negative impact of sequestration on core mission priorities. In doing so, agencies must consider the long-term mission, goals, and operations of the agency and not just short-term needs. For example, agencies should avoid taking steps that would unduly compromise the ability to perform needed deferred maintenance on facilities, invest in critical operational functions and support, conduct program integrity and fraud mitigation activities, and pursue information technology or other infrastructure investments that are essential to support the long-term execution of the agency's mission. Similarly, while agencies with carryover balances or reserve funds should consider appropriate use of these funds to maintain core mission functions in the short term, it is important not to use these funds in a manner that would leave the agency vulnerable to future risks due to a potential lack of available funds in future years.

Agencies should consult with their OMB Resource Management Office (RMO) to assess options for utilizing existing authorities and ensure that any proposed actions appropriately balance short-term and long-term mission priorities. Agencies must also consult closely with their OMB RMO on any proposed actions that would reduce carryover balances or reserve funds below historical levels.

### **Funding for Agency Inspectors General**

Funds for agency Inspectors General (IGs) from non-exempt accounts are subject to sequestration under the March 1, 2013 sequestration order. The head of each agency has the final responsibility for implementing the reductions required by sequestration. Upon making such determinations, IGs have the final responsibility for determining how their authorized budgets will be allocated.

To the extent an agency has discretion in implementing reductions to IG funding due to sequestration, agency heads should be mindful of the independence of the Office of Inspector General and should consult with the IG on a pre-decisional basis on matters that may impact IG funding. In particular, agencies must remain cognizant of the provisions in section 6 of the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended, which outline the need for IGs to maintain the appropriate resources and services necessary to perform their statutory duties and describe the manner in which IG budgets are requested.

In cases where IG funds are not intermingled with other agency funds and exist as their own PPA, the IG should be provided full discretion to determine how to implement the reductions required by sequestration. In cases where IG funds are intermingled with other agency funds within a PPA, while the specific amount of reductions will vary by agency and account, a benchmark that should be considered by the head of the agency—in consultation with the IG—is to apply a percentage reduction to IG funds that is same as the average percentage reduction for all other funds within the PPA. Upon determining the amount of the reduction for

IG funds in such cases, the agency head should then defer as appropriate to the IG in determining how the IG manages the reductions.

Agencies should consult with their OMB RMO throughout this process as well.

### **Discretionary Monetary Awards**

OMB Memorandum 13-05 directs that discretionary monetary awards should not be issued while sequestration is in place, unless issuance of such awards is legally required. Discretionary monetary awards include annual performance awards, group awards, and special act cash awards, which comprise a sizeable majority of awards and incentives provided by the Federal Government to employees. Until further notice, agencies should not issue such monetary awards from sequestered accounts unless agency counsel determines the awards are legally required. Legal requirements include compliance with provisions in collective bargaining agreements governing awards.<sup>1</sup>

Consistent with past guidance, certain types of incentives are not considered discretionary monetary awards for the purposes of this policy. These include quality step increases (QSIs); travel incentives recognizing employee savings on official travel; foreign language awards for mission-critical language needs; recruitment, retention, and relocation incentives (3Rs); student loan repayments; and time-off awards. While these items are permitted, in light of current budgetary constraints, they should be used only on a highly limited basis and in circumstances where they are necessary and critical to maintaining the agency's mission. In addition, consistent with the policy set forth in the *Guidance on Awards for Fiscal Years 2011 and 2012*, jointly issued by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) and OMB on June 10, 2011, spending for QSIs and 3Rs should not exceed the level of spending on such incentives for fiscal year 2010.

With respect to Federal political appointees, agencies should continue to follow the policy set forth in the August 3, 2010 Presidential Memorandum, *Freeze on Discretionary Awards, Bonuses, and Similar Payments for Federal Political Appointees*. OPM previously issued guidance on implementation of this memorandum.

### **Reducing Burden for State, Local, and Tribal Governments**

To the extent agencies provide grants or other forms of financial assistance to States, localities, or tribal governments, agencies should consider if there are ways to help such entities mitigate the effects of funding reductions due to sequestration through reducing administrative burdens or other standard administrative processes, consistent with applicable legal requirements associated with the funds provided. In doing so, agencies should consult closely with their State, local, and tribal partners to determine whether such steps enable public funds to be used in a more cost-effective manner.

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<sup>1</sup> Consistent with legal requirements, agencies may consider engaging in discussions with employees' exclusive representatives to explore revisions to such provisions in existing collective bargaining agreements, in recognition of this guidance.

Getting a USTDA Grant:  
How Long Does it Take?

....

A Project Process Timeline Review

# Overall Findings

## Length of USTDA Process:

- Completed projects: 18.4 months (median)
- All Projects: 20.7+ months (median)\*

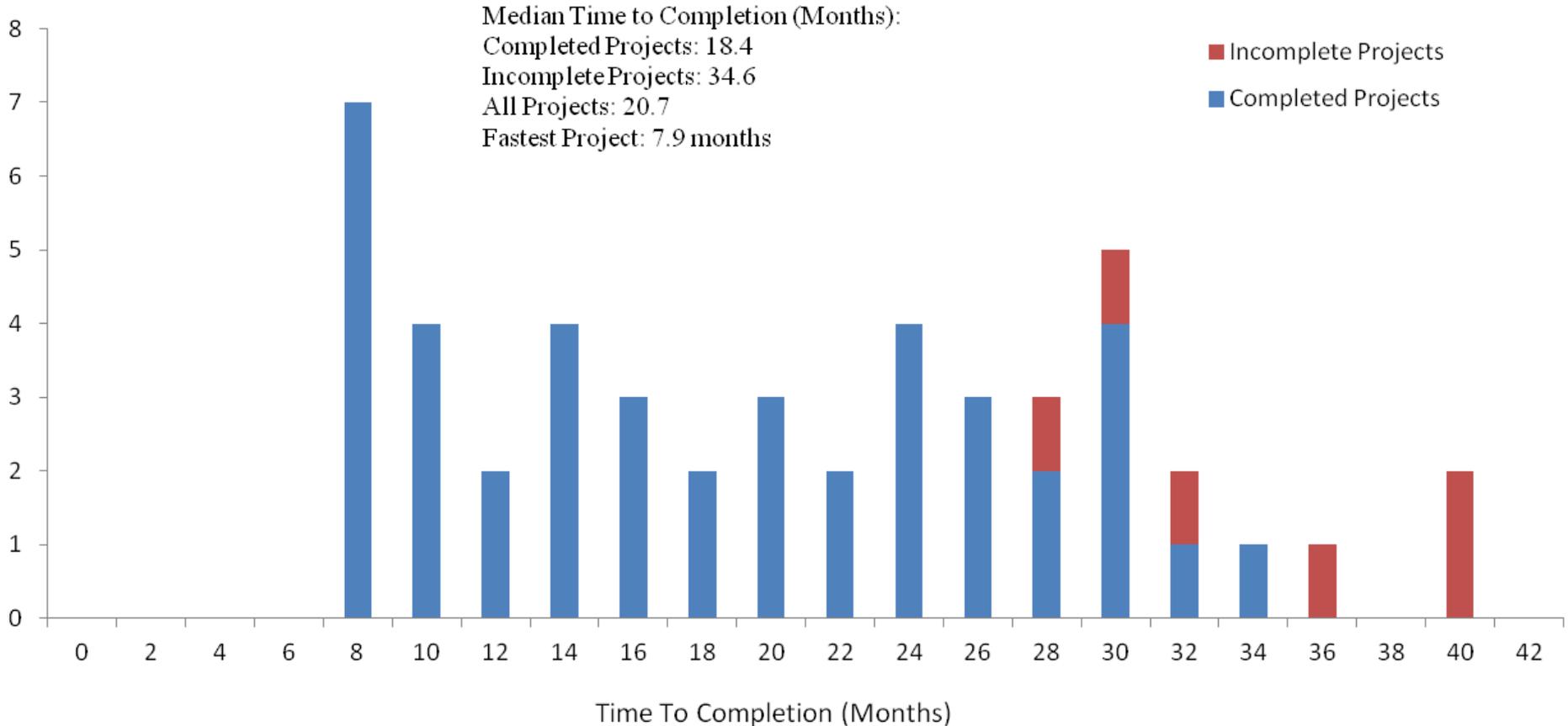


\* If open FY 2011 projects reached contract approval as of 3/12/2013)

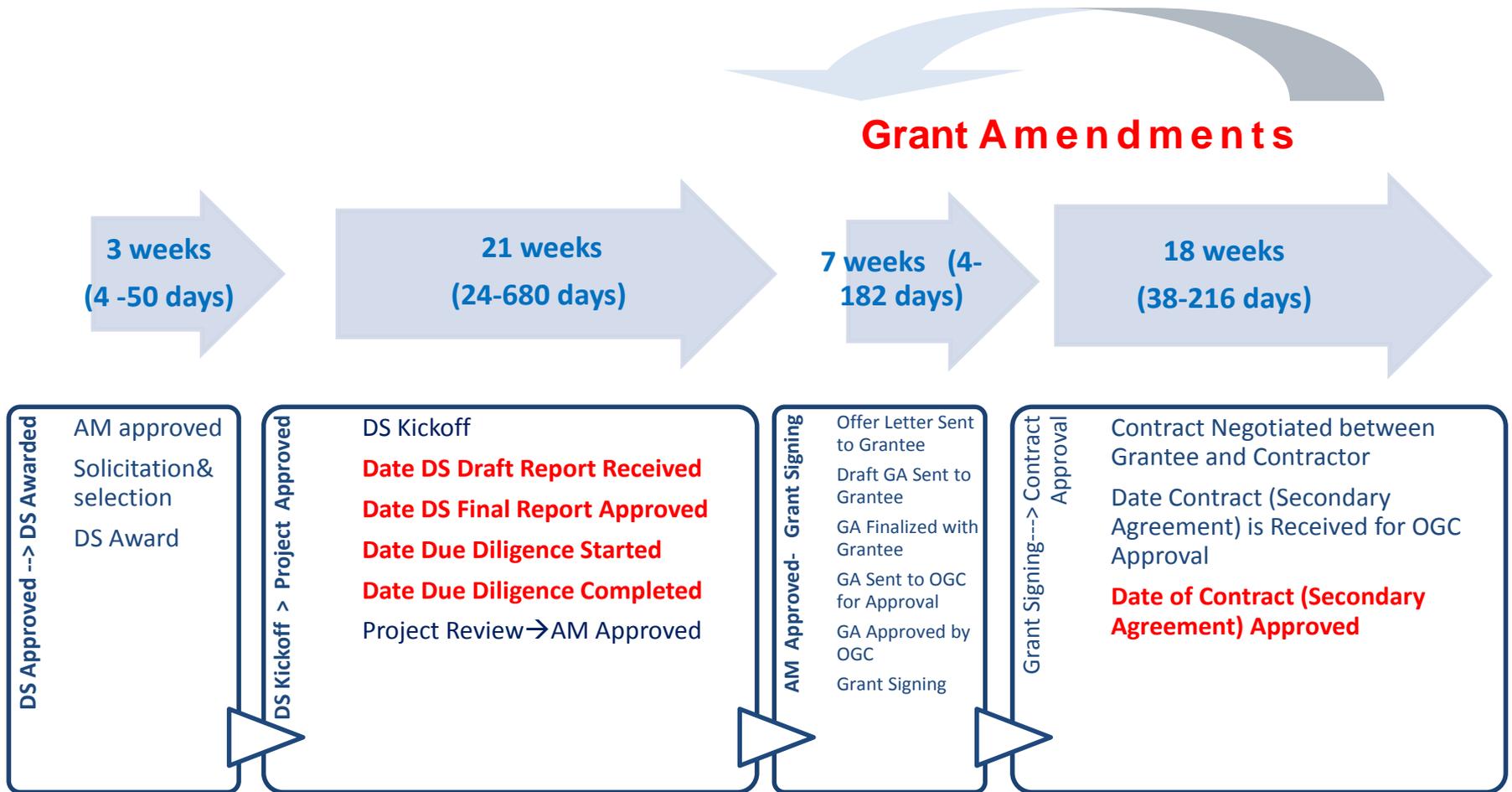
# Overall Findings

## Distribution of Time to Completion (months)

# of projects

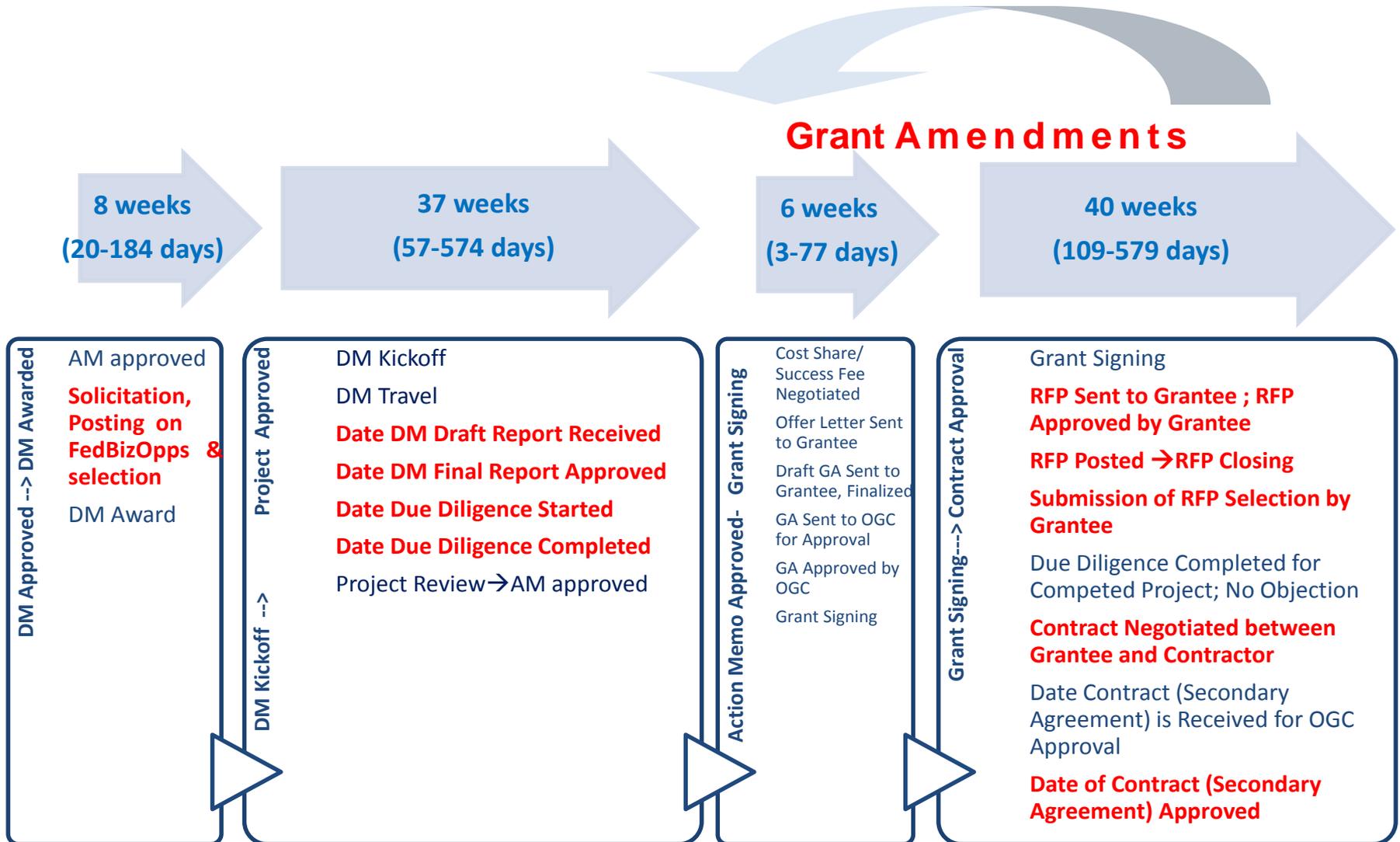


# Sole Source Projects via Desk Study



\* Red denotes areas of delay

# Completed Projects via Def. Mission



# Reasons for Delays\*

- **Grantee Related**

- Grant or RFP required amendment/changes (7)
- Grantee delay in approving documents (5)
- Grantee delay for political reasons or delay in signing (2)
- Grantee delay other (5)

- **USTDA**

- USTDA Internal contributing to delay (6)
- USTDA funding issues (under CR, no funding at end of FY, etc.) (5)
- USTDA process confusing (1)

\*From Program Staff Comments - Numbers of projects experiencing this type of delay are listed in parentheses and multiple responses were allowed

# Reasons for Delays (Continued)

- **FS/TA Contractor**
  - FS/TA Contractor delays- contract negotiation; proposal/info submission (5)
- **Other**
  - Due Diligence / Political Issues (7)
  - DM/DS Contractor Delay (3)
  - Grant de-obligated / cancelled (or in process) (3)
  - DM needed to be rebid, no responsive bids first time (2), same DM
  - Multiple reasons (unspecified) (1)

Numbers of projects experiencing this type of delay are listed in parentheses - multiple responses were allowed

# Ideas for Improving the Review and Development of Documents by Grantees and Contractors

- **Provide timelines, guidelines and expectations to US companies and grantees**

**Status – Program working on letter to grantees and Sole Source Contractors Expectations document**

- **Provide template documents for early review and put documents online**

- a) Sample Grant Agreement and mandatory clauses
- b) Cost Share / Success Fee Agreement
- c) RFP template
- d) Model Contract

**Status – OGC working on fillable form, Program and OGC working on Proposal Format**

- **Concurrent Review of Secondary Agreement Contracts on Sole Source Projects**

**Status – OGC and Program working on piloting this**

- **Best Practice for Secondary Agreement Contracts**

**Status – OGC working on this**

# Ideas for Improving the DS/DM Process

## 1. Bundled DS/DM contracts within high demand sector/subsectors

- a) Fewer, higher value contracts, offered on FedBizOpps to draw from maximum qualified pool

Status – Being Piloted with Nigeria Energy DM

## 2. Improve Guidance on Desk Study Process. Identify contract performance measures

- a) Reduction in payment for delays or reports requiring extensive revision?

Status – Being Evaluated by Program and Contracts

## 3. Assess use of government resources for proposal evaluation

- a) NREL
- b) FAA/MITRE
- c) USTDA internal

Status – Piloting with NREL (SSEA) on DS

## 4. Improved guidance on DS process for U.S. companies

Status – Being drafted by Program



# Follow-up Employee Survey Recommendations

**U.S. Trade and Development Agency**

April 17, 2013

[www.ustda.gov](http://www.ustda.gov)

# Overview

- In response to the results of the Employee Viewpoint Survey, USTDA convened a working group to develop a follow-up survey for all staff to help **drill down on specific topics** that surfaced during the initial survey.
- The follow-up survey included a total of 21 customized questions, designed to reflect the Agency's unique program and environment. These targeted questions provided an opportunity for all staff to **comment and elaborate on their responses.**
- The Follow-Up Survey was shared with all staff in February. **A high percentage of staff (40 total participants) responded with meaningful comments and suggestions.**

# Survey Results

Several questions garnered a high number of comments and responses.

These questions primarily fall into five categories:

- **Knowledge Sharing:** 4, 5, 6
- **Emergency Preparedness:** 8
- **Career Development and Training:** 10, 11, 15, 17, 18
- **Awards and Recognition:** 19, 20, 21
- **Expectations and Workload:** 2

# Knowledge Sharing

## Recommendations:

- **Share minutes from RD and administrative meetings** with all staff
- **List Agency committees and their members** on the Intranet and include their projects and status
- Encourage each work unit to provide a **brief update at First Friday** meetings

# Emergency Preparedness

## Recommendations:

- Schedule a Dept. of State **presentation on security training/emergency preparedness** for overseas travel
- Include the names of **CPR certified staff** who would like to be listed on the Intranet and **post a designation** outside their offices
- Ask travelers to **carry emergency contact numbers when they travel overseas** (Post, USTDA 24 hr emergency number (supervisor, colleague), etc.)

# Career Development & Training

*Given the constraints on training expenditures imposed by sequestration, we present these recommendations for initial planning prior to execution.*

## **Recommendations:**

- **Define the process** for requesting and approving training; develop a form, write SOPs (cost/time limitations) - new Administrative staff
- Develop a **comprehensive training plan by occupation**, to include curricula, training programs and resources, specific course offerings, etc.
- Create **training library** on the Common Drive for digital documents and in another location for physical ones.
- Explore the possibility of participation in other USG agency activities such as the career development center, FSI courses, mentoring programs, etc.

# Awards & Recognition

*Given the constraints imposed by sequestration, we present these recommendations for awards and recognition.*

## Recommendations:

- Establish a **working group to determine** the guidelines, categories, criteria, and process to nominate, etc. for awards, for example:
  - ✓ Jeans days/ice cream socials for reaching group targets (obligations, audit, Feds Feed Families, etc.)
  - ✓ Certificates of achievement for outstanding accomplishments
  - ✓ Team building exercises, etc.

# Areas for Further Evaluation

The Agency Committee will be a forum to collect ideas and present them to the appropriate department. Topics for Agency Committee consideration include:

- All Agency training programs
- Mentoring
- Team building activities (running club)

# Other Topics

- Expectations and Workload
  - ✓ Briefing Books
  - ✓ Temporary assistant to support administrative tasks for program staff as a pilot
- Workload volume and distribution within work units as well as across the Agency (30%) – this must be explored further on an individual basis

# Other Suggestions

- Career Advancement and Opportunities
  - Details and rotations
  - Longer term TDYs
  - Mentorship opportunities

## All Agency Meeting Notes – May 3, 2013

### **Operations Management Operations Strategic Plan**

Before the presentation, Lee encouraged everyone to read the *Operations Management Strategic Plan*. She noted that the operations team makes things happen seamlessly and that everyone at USTDA is not always aware of all of the work that goes into making things happen seamlessly.

*-SEE ATTACHED PRESENTATION-*

Mickey Bivins began by stating that the team started the planning process with the question “who are we?” She noted that the ultimate conclusion was that the Management Operations team is the team that can “find, fund, fix and figure out anything.” Next, Lori Donovan described how the planning process had highlighted what the contracts office was doing right while also identifying opportunities for improvement. These opportunities included producing an FAQ’s document for different stages of the contract lifecycle.

Following Lori, Liz Gustafson noted that the planning for continuing resolutions had helped increase the Agency’s 5-year average spend rate and that the finance office would continue improving the process. She also mentioned possible future brown bag lunches on topics such as “invoice processing” and “understanding the EIS report.” Finally, Carolyn Hum highlighted the planning around the new travel system implementation and the IRC’s effort to scan and digitize all files for easier storage and access. Lee acknowledged Peggy Philbin for her work on the plan and with the operations management team in general.

### **Travel Update**

Peggy discussed the required cuts to the travel budget under sequestration; noting that the Agency was required to cut \$55,000 from the travel budget. This cut combined with an increase in the overall average cost of trips (likely due to general airfare cost increases) and an overall increase in the amount of Agency travel is necessitating a reduction in travel for the rest of the fiscal year. Peggy stated that the ultimate decisions would be made by the regions, but the amounts allocated would be reduced and that staff should plan accordingly. Peggy remarked that USTDA employees should take comfort from the fact that like other agencies, there are no required furloughs or pay reductions.

### **Interns**

Isabel Sepulveda discussed the planning for the arrival of the summer interns. She commended the planning committee of Blair Mersinger, Jonathan Chu, John Liszewski, Chris Giglio and Meredith Schuessler for their work. Some of the activities include an interagency panel discussion, a brownbag on resume tips, offsite lectures, tours and social activities. She asked

that regional teams try to integrate interns into their day-to-day activities as much as possible such as including them into RTM business briefings and off-site lectures.

### **Trip Readout**

Lida Fitts reported on a recent trip to China. Lee was able to sign a number of grants and participate in numerous consultations with U.S. firms. She also met with the leadership of all three cooperation programs. The first day she participated in an AmCham breakfast with Under Secretary Bob Hormats from State. Lida highlighted that Lee was able to witness a couple of contract signings, and that her participation served as a helpful action forcing event for the outside parties. Lida also described an event the region helped put together for Secretary Kerry, which was his only event outside of his meet and greets with the new Chinese leadership. Kerry spoke to the annual meeting of the Energy Cooperation Program membership and emphasized the importance of U.S. company participation in advancing U.S. – China relations and policy goals around climate change reduction. After his remarks, Lee toured the exhibition booths alongside Secretary Kerry and Ambassador Locke.

Lee praised the work of Geoff, Lida and Verinda in China. She noted how valuable and well known USTDA's activities, specifically the cooperation programs, are to the business community and both governments.

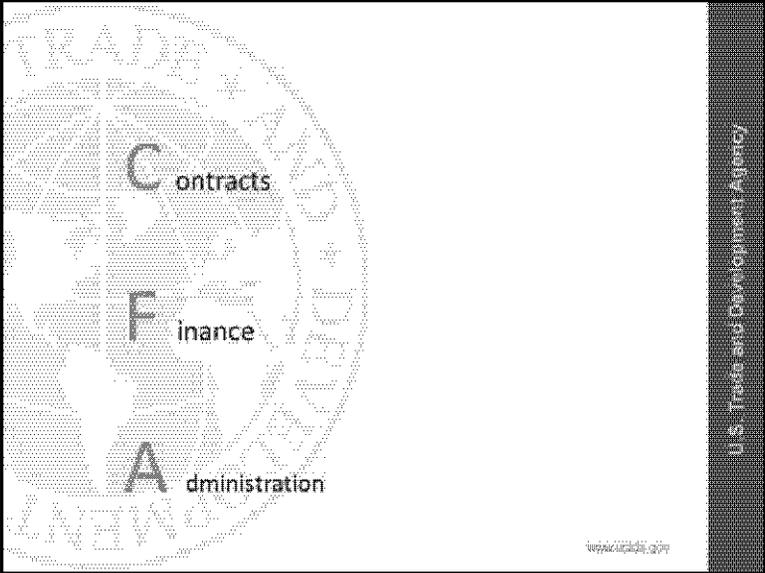
### **CFC**

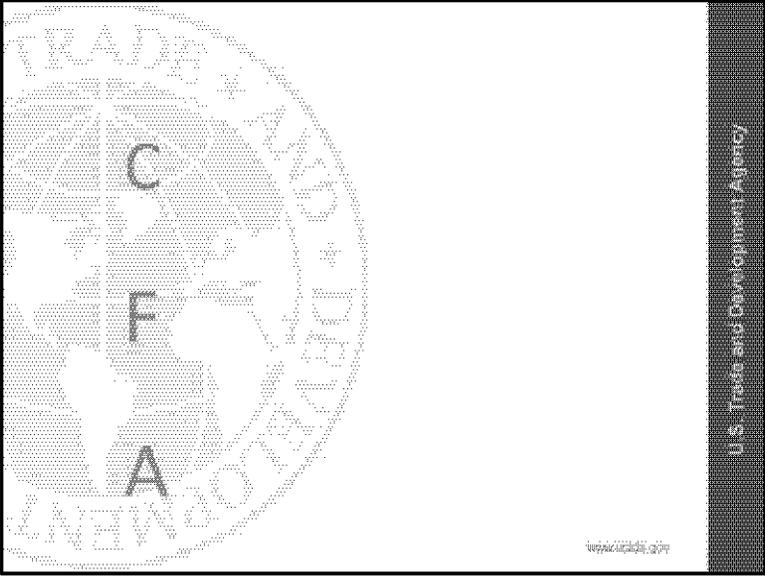
Lisa Bonnikson reported that USTDA received a "Summit" award from the Combined Federal Campaign for increasing contributions by over three percent from the year before. She also reported that the Agency has been nominated for a "President's Award."

### **Updates**

Steve Lewis reminded everyone of the upcoming Twitter chats for World Trade Month. The first one is scheduled for May 9.

Enoh Ebong reported that Ziyang Fan was recognized as a "Young Asian-American Leader," by the Committee of 100. She noted that the group was founded in the 1990's to increase U.S. – China relations. Among the founders of the group are the celebrated architect I.M. Pei and musician Yo Yo Ma.





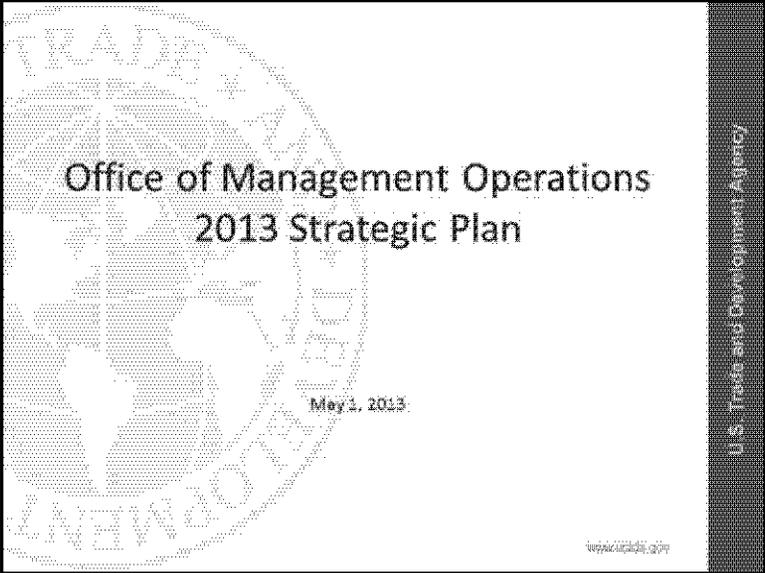
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READING IS THE KEY TO SUCCESS

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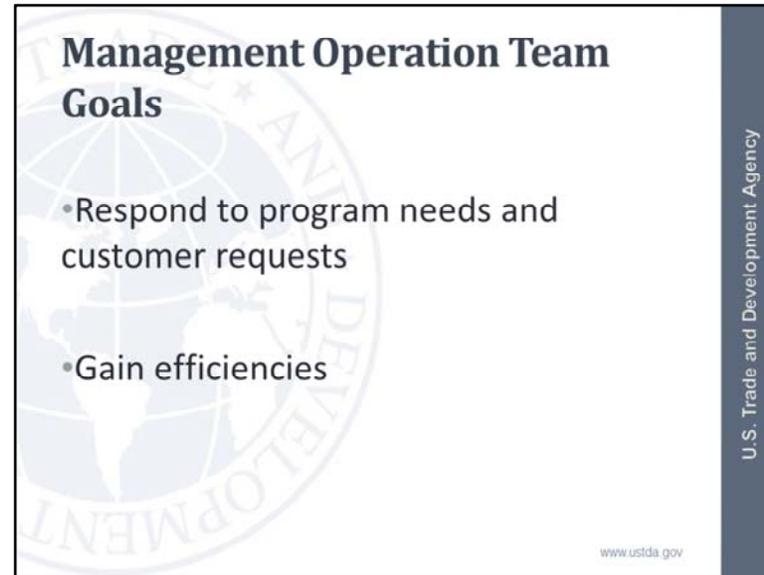
U.S. Trade and Development Agency





[With ADMIN, CONTRACTS, and FINANCE superimposed on the three books]

Setting the picture – this is USTDA, everyone full to the brim with creative and far-reaching projects, constantly juggling while focusing on gaining efficiency (to free up some fingers and toes for new projects).

The slide features a light blue background with a faint circular seal of the U.S. Trade and Development Agency. The seal contains a globe and the text 'U.S. TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY'. The title 'Management Operation Team Goals' is positioned at the top left. Below it, two bullet points are listed. A dark blue vertical bar on the right side contains the text 'U.S. Trade and Development Agency' written vertically. The website address 'www.usida.gov' is located at the bottom right of the slide.

**Management Operation Team Goals**

- Respond to program needs and customer requests
- Gain efficiencies

www.usida.gov

U.S. Trade and Development Agency

Intended as segue to individual office goals and as a reinforcement of the collaboration and customer service. Provides explanation of the intent of our strategic planning process.

First bullet – our assessment and planning process was focused on how to most efficiently address opportunities for improvement and meet customer needs

Second bullet – we considered each others' requirements and processes as well as the needs of the program offices

The slide features a light blue background with a faint circular seal of the U.S. Trade and Development Agency. The seal contains a globe and the text 'U.S. TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY'. The title 'Management Operation Team Goals' is positioned at the top left. Below it, two bullet points are listed. A vertical dark blue bar on the right side contains the text 'U.S. Trade and Development Agency' in white. The website 'www.ustda.gov' is located at the bottom right of the slide.

**Management Operation Team Goals**

- Capitalize on integrated solutions
- Be accountable to external audiences and requirements

www.ustda.gov

U.S. Trade and Development Agency

First bullet – we’re listening and will find solutions; the strategic planning is fluid and will continue to be germane to the agency’s needs

Second bullet – we have external audiences; keeping them happy is good for USTDA - and statutorily required ☺



With Contracts on middle book.



## **Contracts Office Goals**

- Acquisition Planning and Contract Administration
- COR Training and Development
- Data Management and Quality Assurance
- IQC Contractor Outreach

[www.usida.gov](http://www.usida.gov)

U.S. Trade and Development Agency

With very brief expansion on each with more expansion to follow on the first two.



- Acquisition Planning
- Contract Administration

[www.usida.gov](http://www.usida.gov)

U.S. Trade and Development Agency



With Finance on lower book.

## Finance Office Goals

- Financial Planning for the Program
- 2013 Performance and Accountability Report (PAR)
- Physical Inventory

[www.usda.gov](http://www.usda.gov)

## Finance Office Goals

- Interagency Transfers
- Staffing, Employee Development and Communication
- Improve and Enhance Financial Procedures

www.usda.gov



With Admin on upper book.

## Administrative Office Goals

- Human Resources
- Employee Development and Training
- Facilities Management/General Services

[www.usda.gov](http://www.usda.gov)

## Administrative Office Goals

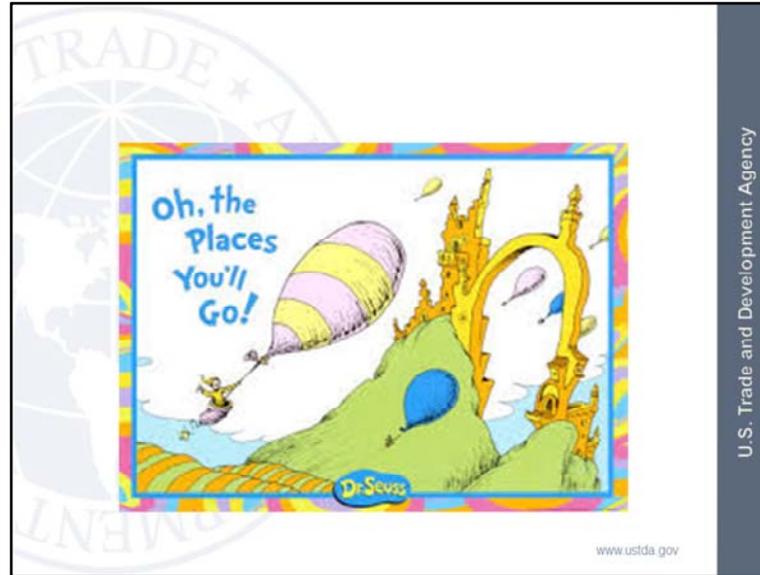
- Internal Controls
- Security Management and COOP
- Information Resource Center (IRC)

www.irs.gov

READING CAN  
F Find  
Fund  
Fix  
Figure out  
A NYTHING

www.ck12.org

U.S. Trade and Development Agency



...when we're all working together. Summary statement that USTDA can trust us to take them to new and exciting levels of efficiency and accomplishment - the sky is our limit. [Perhaps Steve can superimpose We'll over You'll but this can work either way]

## All Agency Meeting Notes – June 4, 2013

### Introductions

Lee introduced **Clark Jennings**, the new Senior Advisor for Policy and Operations. Clark has a background in the private and public sectors and worked in the Executive Office of the President. Clark stated that he was thrilled to be at USTDA and excited to be in a place where he learned something new every day.

Tom Hardy introduced **Anna Humphrey**, USTDA's new speechwriter. Anna worked on the President's 2008 campaign and at Booz Allen Hamilton. Most recently, she was supporting the Chief Information Officer at the White House.

Enoh Ebong introduced **Ellen Marks**, the OGC summer intern. Ellen is currently a law student at Washington and Lee in Virginia. She is originally from (b) (6) and has international legal experience from a previous internship in DC.

Diana Rossiter introduced **Ruth Woodward**, the summer intern for evaluations. Ruth studied at the University of Virginia, spent time in France and is headed to the London School of Economics in the fall. She is originally from (b) (6).

Henry Steingass introduced, **Saquib Ashan**, the summer intern in South and South East Asia. Saquib is finishing his master's degree at SAIS. He interned at State's Energy Bureau last summer and is very interested in energy, transportation and ICT issues.

### Updates

Carolyn Hum reminded everyone to complete the Employee Viewpoint Survey by Friday, June 7. She reported that 73 percent of the agency had participated. She also reminded everyone of the anti-harassment and anti-retaliation training next Thursday, June 13 at 9:00 a.m. in the Business Center.

Additionally, Carolyn reminded everyone that the nursing and lactation room is open and that OPM has provided guidance which requires a private space and lock. Lee stated that while we have nursing mothers, the room is to only be used for that purpose. She apologized for the confusion and noted that the room was mandated by OPM and the Affordable Care Act.

### Long-Term Strategic Plan

Jon Wright reported that a draft of the Agency long-term strategic plan had been sent to OMB. He reported that the plan is required by OMB and that the Agency has an advantage because much of the strategic planning already taking place will satisfy the requirements. Jon noted that

the plan is in outline form now and contains no dramatic policy shifts for the Agency. The final plan is due to OMB in December.

### **Travel and Training Update**

Jon Wright reported that the Agency was seeking to modify its sequestration spending plan with OMB to shift some original reductions in travel and training to other parts of the operating expenses budget. Jon was speaking with OMB on Tuesday to discuss options.

### **U.S. – Asia Pacific Clean Energy Partnership (U.S. – ACEP) experiment**

Henry Steingass reported that the South and South East regional team has partnered with the Worldwide team to generate a greater pipeline of clean energy projects in South East Asia by reaching out to the U.S. private sector. He noted that this outreach is in support of the Administration's U.S. – Asia-Pacific Clean Energy Partnership (U.S. – ACEP) initiative aimed at boosting energy sector investment in the region. Henry remarked that this was not an official call for proposals rather a marketing campaign highlighting the program and focus on the region. Henry pledged to report on the progress at the next All Agency meeting.

Isabel Sepulveda detailed that she has been working with Mark Dunn, Pinsuda Alexander, OGC and Public Affairs to distribute information through the Foreign Commercial Service, the American Chambers of Commerce in the region and the various clean energy associations. She noted that the materials direct companies to the new proposals portal on the USTDA webpage. Isabel is working with Andrea Lupo to initially review incoming proposals and is tracking their sources to be able to evaluate the program's effectiveness.

### **Remote Telework Pilot Program**

Lee reported that the Agency was establishing a one-year remote telework pilot program as an experiment. Michael DeRenzo is moving to California and this was an opportunity to have a presence for the Agency in California to cover RTM's and speaking engagements and to retain a well-trained employee. Lee noted that after a year the Agency will assess the data from the program and make a determination as to whether to extend it. She noted that the pilot is an example of USTDA's flexibility.

Next, Blanche Twardowski presented the program details.

[SEE ATTACHED PRESENTATION]

Paul Marin thanked Lee for being creative with Agency policy. He also noted that as a manager he never viewed telework as a right, rather a privilege for those who earned it and that Michael was certainly in that category.

Michael thanked Lee and Senior Management for the opportunity to participate in the pilot and committed to working through any communications challenges his remote location may present. He concluded by saying that he is honored to continue to work for the Agency.

The program details will be on the intranet and anyone can come to Lee, Blanche or Peggy with questions.

### **Conclusion / Announcements**

Lee concluded by stating that there were no comments in the comment box and no issues from the Agency Committee.

Enoh Ebong announced that the selection process for new attorneys was going well and that they would likely increase their staffing levels by July.