

CONTRACTING FOR SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

A Report Submitted to the:

***U.S. Army Engineer Institute for Water Resources
Kingman Building
Fort Belvoir, Virginia 22060***

Under

Contract Number DACW31-75-M-1574

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**INSTITUTE
FOR
WATER RESOURCES**

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JUNE 1976

IWR Contract Report 76-1

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By

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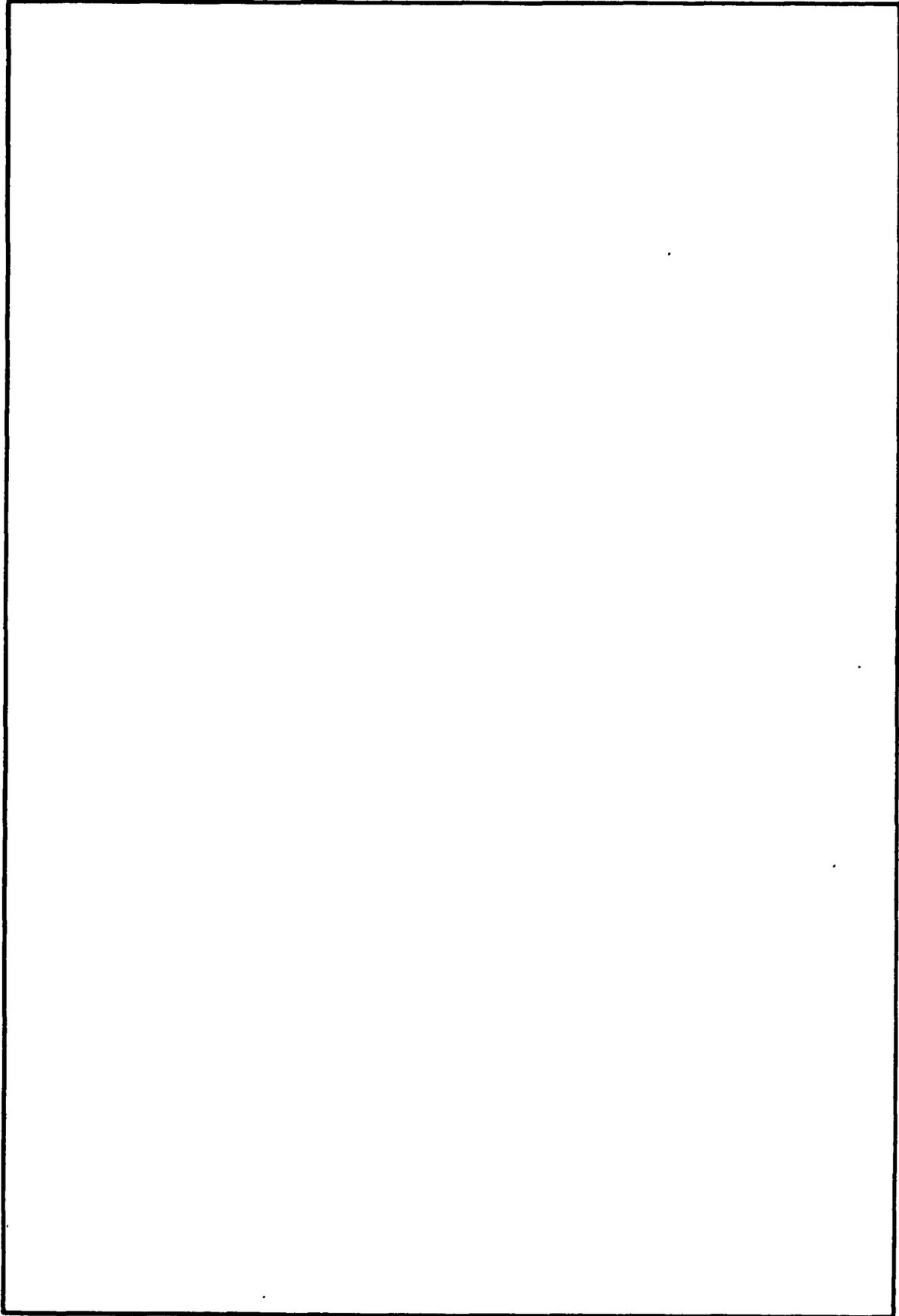
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20. ABSTRACT (Continue on reverse side if necessary and identify by block number) This report discusses the problems associated with traditional contracting procedures when applied to new and challenging fields, such as the analysis of the social impacts of public works projects. The report, which draws upon recent experiences of Corps of Engineers planning procedures and contractor personnel, includes a general discussion of the typical contracting process utilized by the Corps in contracting for professional services, and chapters dealing with market development and contractor selection, development of scopes of work, and maintaining and integrating contract results with other planning activities.		

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Chapter 1. . INTRODUCTION

Background

The enactment of PL 91-611, the River and Harbor and Flood Control Act of 1970, the adoption of the U. S. Water Resources Council Principles and Standards, and the continual refinement of Corps planning procedures have fostered the Corps' entry into Social Impact Assessment (SIA). Impact (or effect) assessment is now firmly embedded in these procedures and is taken to include social, economic, and environmental effects.

The Corps currently has few employees educated as social scientists. Thus, it is likely that many of the SIAs prepared in the next several years will be done by contract. Even after the Corps has a larger number of social scientists, some portion of the work, especially on large studies, will likely be done by contract. Contracting is not at all a new activity for the Corps and the Corps has a good reputation for its contracting procedures. However, the bulk of its contracts have been for architectural and engineering services, though a number of contracts for economic studies have been let in recent years. In contrast, a relatively small number of contracts for SIA have been let. Thus, SIA contracting is virtually a new field.

Contracting in a new field always presents some problems. For the contracting agency, those problems include locating the best qualified contractors in the new field (a market development problem), writing an adequate Statement of Work Tasks (a content problem), and adequate monitoring of the contract and utilization of the results (a procedural and learning problem).

For potential SIA contractors, there are the problems of gauging the size and general characteristics of the demand for SIA, learning about specific contracting opportunities, getting selected as a contractor, and adapting the theory, concepts, data, and methodologies of his or her field to the specific SIA application.

The social sciences are increasingly being used in the analysis of administrative and policy problems. Biderman and Sharp (Society, July-August 1975, p. 42) have noted that social science research and research-like work is being undertaken to contribute to policy development, planning, evaluation, and guidance for the expanded social programs of government.

Social impact assessment is one of these areas of applied social science. A considerable amount of serious work is being done to develop methodologies and data appropriate to the task of SIA. These efforts parallel the advances made in physical environmental impact assessment after passage of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969.

Effective contracting in this new field of Social Impact Assessment is a good strategy for accomplishing several objectives simultaneously. It can

- Be the means by which SIAs are prepared,
- Be an approach to developing and refining the field of SIA,
- Be a means of identifying competent practitioners,
- Be a guide to the cost and time requirements for SIA,
- Be a guide to the Corps in future staffing, and
- Help the Corps in fulfilling its mandates.

In order to achieve these various objectives, the contracting practices should be as effective as possible. The limited experience the Corps has had to date has not been fully satisfactory to either the Corps or their contractors. This was a key factor leading to the initiation of the present study of Corps contracting practice.

Study Objectives

The basic objective of this investigation was to indicate what modifications, if any, in standard Corps contracting practice might be appropriate to achieve, as quickly as possible, effective SIA contracts. This basic objective was further elaborated into three sub-objectives:

- To study and evaluate the experience of the Corps and its contractors in contracting for social studies,
- To study and evaluate the experiences of other agencies and firms and their contractors in contracting for social studies, and
- To recommend guidelines for SIA contracting in the Corps of Engineers.

Study Procedure

The basic study procedure consisted of interviewing those most directly involved in contracting for social impact assessment studies:

- Planners in the Corps of Engineers, primarily in District and Division offices,
- Contractors in the private sector who have performed work for the Corps,
- Representatives of other governmental agencies and private sector organizations who have contracted for social effect assessment,
- Contractors who have worked for these other organizations,
- Social scientists in universities who have done research and/or applied work in social impact assessment or closely related fields.

Wherever possible, these interviews were face-to-face interviews in the office of the interviewee. In some cases, interviews were by telephone and, in other cases, information was obtained by correspondence.

In addition to the interview work, numerous copies of Work Statements, Contracts, Reports, Budgets, Preselection Lists, Qualification Forms, Organization Charts, etc., were obtained. These enabled evaluations of the level of detail, specific contract provisions, approaches to contractor selection, etc.

A brief literature search revealed some information on the general process of procuring social services, primarily in evaluation research, through contract. Apart from the legal literature on contracts, there was little material found on contracting practices.

Chapter 2. CONTRACTING PROCESS

Contracting in the Corps is done in the Districts. Each District employs variations of a general format within the context of various contracting regulations that pertain to the Corps. These regulations are exceedingly complex and detailed. Their complexity has the effect of restricting rather than expanding the options used in the Districts. For example, available options include sole source, competitive price negotiations, and fixed price or cost reimbursable contracts. Selection procedures may be based on qualifications, proposals, or a combination thereof. In practice, contracts are usually handled as an Architect/Engineer fixed price procedure with selection based on qualifications.

The preparation and execution of a contract are the responsibility of the District Supply and Procurement Divisions. However, for maximum effectiveness in contracting, planners in a District office need to be aware of the general options available and the procedure for using them.

Both Corps planners and contractors repeatedly emphasized in our interviews that some brief overall guide to the contracting process was needed in order to work more effectively. The same views were expressed in the review comments on the draft of this report. Widespread misconceptions in the Corps about the contracting process indicate the desirability of such a guide. The preparation of such a guide was not the purpose and is beyond the scope of this study, as it would require an additional set of interviews with those responsible for contracting regulations in OCE and with Contracting Officers in several Districts and Divisions.

The basic elements of the contracting process are briefly described below to provide a context in which to analyze contracting for social studies.

Objectives

The contracting process is designed to achieve several objectives:

- Engage a contractor who is able to perform the work competently,
- Reduce the chance of favoritism in the award of contracts,
- Reach a clear understanding of the respective roles of both the Corps and the contractor in the contractual relationship,

-Provide a clear record of what has transpired in the process of letting the contract, and

-Meet the legal requirements of a contract.

Process and Stages

The entire contracting process may be divided into several stages. From the standpoint of the planner (the person with the need for services provided by contract) the stages include a) Pre-Contract Preparation, b) Solicitation, c) Contractor Selection, d) Negotiations, and e) Finalizing Contract. At this stage, Contract Monitoring and Administration begin and continue until completion of the contract. These matters are discussed in Chapter 5.

Pre-Contract Preparation

In the pre-contract stage, the Corps District develops a Plan of Study for the entire project. Work elements are defined and decisions are made about whether they will be executed in-house or by contract. Approval to use contracts for these work elements are obtained from the appropriate authorities within the Corps, and funds are programmed. Both planners and Supply and Procurement personnel are involved in these pre-contract preparations.

Solicitation

In the solicitation phase, an announcement of the general description of the work is placed in the Commerce Business Daily. Either qualifications or proposals may be requested. The predominant request is for qualifications, since proposals are rarely used. In response to this announcement, interested contractors submit letters of interest and statements of qualifications or proposals. In the past, qualifications have been submitted on the Form 251. This form is being replaced by the Forms 254 and 255 which state qualifications in general and for specific projects.

The Corps reviews these qualifications and checks them for relevance and competence. The list may be supplemented with other Statements of Qualifications on file with the District. The Section with primary responsibility collects the responses and compiles a list of interested contractors.

Selection

The details of the selection process vary considerably from District to District. In general, a Preselection Board is appointed by the District Engineer which meets and reduces the list of interested contractors to a small number, frequently 5, of the best qualified candidates.

The Preselection Board's work is followed by the appointment of a Selection Board, again by the District Engineer. The Selection Board usually reduces the list to 3 candidates, placed in rank order by a voting process. These candidates are then contacted to ascertain their continued interest and ability to accomplish the work in the allotted time. Having received this information from the candidates, the list is submitted to the District Engineer for his approval and selection. Approval from higher authority may be required, depending upon the circumstances of the contract.

Negotiations

After the selection is made, the contractor is notified and supplied with a detailed Scope of Work, prepared by the Project Coordinator. A District Negotiator is also supplied with the Scope of Work. At a suitable time, negotiations on work tasks and fee take place. Assuming successful negotiations, agreement is reached, the Negotiator writes up the proceedings and turns it over to the Procurement Division.

Finalizing Contract

The Procurement Division, with a record of the Negotiations, prepares the contract and forwards it to the Contractor for signature. When the contract is returned to the Corps, it is signed by the District Engineer and a Notice to Proceed is issued.

Variations and Notes

Within the general context described above, there may be many variations, not discussed here. It is important to note a few items, however. If a Sole-Source contract is used, there must be a Determination of Findings to justify the decision to use a sole source. This procedure is frequently used with State or local agencies or universities. There is also a distinction between contracts for services and products. In the former, the output is a certain amount and kind of personal services. In the latter, the output is a product, and the type of contract is a Purchase Order.

Discussion of Contracting Practice

Contracting practice within the Corps has developed over a long period of time. Each detail has been included to deal with some issue. It is a process that can work quite well.

It is important to note some of the characteristics of this process, however, in order to evaluate its suitability for blanket application in social impact assessment contracting. Some of these characteristics make it difficult to develop good contractual relationships in a new field, such as social impact assessment; others are advantageous.

It is also important to note that Corps procedures are not typical of those commonly used by other agencies to engage the services of contractors. Advertisement of "Requests for Proposals" is a more common approach, with contractor selection based on an evaluation of the proposal content as well as the contractor's qualifications.

First, since the contractor selection process is based on qualifications, heavy reliance is placed on paper credentials and on other work done in the past for the Corps and others. For work of a kind that is frequently done by a Corps District, and for which there is a well-defined and accepted set of principles of practice, such as in surveying, soil mechanics, hydraulics, etc., this is an excellent practice. It is so, however, primarily because the work to be performed can be prescribed in considerable detail, standards of performance can be written, and the ability of contractors can be judged on the basis of past work done for the Corps on similar projects.

In social impact assessment, on the other hand, the field is not yet as well-defined, accepted principles of practice are still in the process of being developed, and credentials are not as easy to evaluate as in some other fields. Also, few contractors have done social impact assessment work for the Corps; thus, the base of experience is meager.

Second, the announcement process is strongest for kinds of work in which there is a well-established market. Under such conditions, potential contractors know where to look for announcements and can interpret from the brief announcements the kind of work involved. In social impact assessment, the market is not yet well developed. Consequently, there are likely to be many qualified contractors who are not aware of the fact that the Corps has work to be done under contract in this field. Moreover, contractors who might develop capability in this field are less likely to do so if they are not aware of the market size.

Third, it should be noted that the process is generally more effective in eliminating from consideration those who are not well-qualified than it is in securing the best qualified contractor in the field. For social impact assessment contracts, there is a good chance that qualified contractors would be eliminated from consideration, primarily because they had not previously done directly comparable work that could be examined and judged by the Corps. To secure the best contractors in the field, and to be reasonably sure this had been done, would require additional time and money. This may not be justified for all projects because in general the Corps needs consistently competent work rather than the best available. There appears to be a need, however, for at least some of the contracts for social impact assessment to be undertaken by the best contractors, in order to advance the state-of-the-art.

Alternative Forms of Contracting

At least four alternative forms of contracting may be discussed and compared with the usual Corps practice. They are:

- Request for proposals from any firm,
- Limited competition on content, without fee,
- Limited competition on content, with fee,
- Sole source.

Request for Proposal (RFP)

In this approach, the Corps prepares documents outlining its conception of the work to be done, and asks for proposals on the work. The proposals describe the methodology to be used, the organization of the contractor to do the work, the personnel who would do the work, etc. A separate fee proposal may accompany the content proposal.

After receiving the proposals, the Corps reviews them and compares the overall suitability of the proposal with the work to be performed. The award is then made to the selected contractor. This general approach is similar to that usually used in making research grants and contracts, and is the predominant approach of some government agencies.

The advantages of the RFP approach are:

- It increases the range of ideas and potential methodologies that might be used in doing the work. The Corps could either

incorporate those ideas in performing the job or consider those originating from unsuccessful contractors in preparing RFPs for future work.

-It more fully displays the competence of a contractor.

-It enables the Corps to spot potential troublesome aspects of doing the work that had not previously been thought of.

-The Corps prepares at an early date a more detailed statement of the situation and the work to be accomplished, to supply to respondents to the RFP.

Disadvantages of the RFP approach include the following:

-It is expensive and time-consuming for contractors to prepare proposals.

-It tends to give an advantage to contractors with an organization large enough to absorb the overhead of proposals that do not lead to contracts.

-It is expensive and time-consuming to review a large number of proposals.

-Ethical questions might be raised if the ideas of one unsuccessful contractor were incorporated into the work program of the successful firm.

Limited Competition, without fee

In a limited competition, the Corps follows its regular practice up to the point of reducing the list of qualified candidates to some small number, say three. Then it asks each of these candidates to submit a proposal, without compensation. Selection is then based on the proposals.

The advantages of this approach are the same as the RFP approach, except that the total economic cost of proposal preparation is much lower than is often the case with RFPs, because the number of proposals is reduced.

The disadvantages of the process are also essentially the same as for the RFP approach for the competing contractors.

Limited Competition, with fee

This process differs from the limited competition without fee only in that after having made the selection of the firms to engage in the competition, the Corps enters into a small contract with each selected contractor to prepare a proposal.

The advantages of this approach are essentially the same as the previous two approaches, with an additional advantage. There is reason to believe that contractors take the proposal preparation process more seriously if they are paid to do it. Moreover, it does not pose such a hardship on competing, but losing contractors. An additional advantage is that, since the proposals are really contract completion reports, information contained in them could be used to prepare the final work statement for the selected contractor. The latter point could conceivably also be a detriment, if a contractor felt that he wanted to withhold certain information in order to prevent another contractor from using it.

If this approach is used sparingly on unusual and complex projects, it can sharpen the methodology employed in the project, increase the data base, and give more assurance of having selected the best of the available contractors.

Where this approach is used, it should be with a simple Purchase Order, with the same sum paid to all contractors asked to participate. A streamlined process is called for.

Sole Source

Sole-Source contracting is advantageous when it is possible to identify a contractor uniquely qualified for the task. It is especially appropriate for SIA contracts when a contractor has already done a substantial amount of social data collection and analysis in the project vicinity. Another favorable situation for Sole-Source contracting is when one contractor is clearly in the forefront of the field.

Compatibility with Present Corps Practice

If one of the alternative forms of contracting is used (except for Sole Source), the role of the Selection Board would change in many Districts. Since all involve the preparation and evaluation of proposals, the Selection Board would have to become more involved in content review than is presently the case. Alternatively, the Selection

Board could go through a two-stage process of selecting the 3 candidates, receiving proposals and having them reviewed by content specialists, receiving the proposal evaluations prepared by the content specialists, and then making the selection. Other variations are possible.

All things considered, the four alternative contracting forms are not major departures from current practice. Each is consistent with existing laws and regulations followed by the Corps. Only one, the unlimited competition, seems to be undesirable, primarily because it is so costly to administer. The combined RFQ/RFP approach, with or without fee for proposal preparation, seems worthy of more widespread use.

Chapter 3. MARKET DEVELOPMENT AND CONTRACTOR SELECTION

As noted in the previous chapters, Social Impact Assessment is a relatively new contracting field for the Corps. Consequently, the market is not as yet well-developed, i.e., the suppliers and the purchasers do not have well-established, well-understood ways of contacting each other and meeting the other's needs in the contractual arrangement.

In addition to the market development issue, since SIA is a new contracting field, many of the contractors will not have done previous work for the Corps. New scientific disciplines are involved, which are generally unfamiliar to Corps staff members. Thus, making good selections from the various candidate contractors cannot be done with as much confidence as is the case for architects and engineers unless special measures are taken. These issues are taken up in this chapter.

Current Setting

Within the Corps

Many Corps staff members tend to lack confidence in what social scientists have to offer to Corps planning. This seems to be based in part on a lack of experience in working with social scientists. There is a widespread feeling that the desired output from social scientists must be quantitative and predictive in order to be useful in Corps planning. In cases where Corps staff members have dealt with social scientists, there have been, on occasion, problems with communication and expectations. The social scientist needs to be made aware of what Corps planning is and Corps planners need to become familiar with the methods and contributions of social scientists.

The Corps uses a combination of mass media and personal contacts to make known the availability of work to be performed under contract. The mass medium employed is the Commerce Business Daily, which has a wide circulation among contractors interested in doing work for some agency of the Federal Government.

Personal contacts generally are at the initiative of contractors. Representatives of consulting firms routinely visit District offices to make known their qualifications and to learn of prospective work. Such contacts, up to a point, are welcomed by the Districts because they provide an opportunity to appraise the competence of the firms.

All potential contractors eventually make contact with the Districts in a formal and impersonal manner, formerly through the submission of a Form 251 (being converted in 1975-76 to Form 254 and 255). These are standard forms for declaring qualifications. The Form 251 was designed for architects and engineers. No Corps staff member interviewed considered it adequate for portraying the qualifications of a firm interested in doing SIA work. This view was also shared unanimously by representatives of consulting firms. The newer Forms 254 and 255 are generally regarded as more appropriate.

Selection of a contractor is influenced heavily by the Corps' knowledge of previous work done by the candidates. There seems to be a preference for awarding a small contract to a contractor before considering an award of a large contract.

Contractors

From the standpoint of potential contractors, the Corps' approach to announcement and selection may be either good or bad. For contractors that have done work for the Corps and/or understand the Corps' mode of operation, it is a workable system. For those who haven't done work for the Corps before, the system doesn't work as well. The reasons are partly communication problems, and partly the result of different approaches used by other agencies.

The announcement does not necessarily reach those who might be well-qualified to do the work, for a variety of reasons. Some potential contractors, especially those who have not previously done work for the Federal Government, are unaware of the CBD. Some contractors, who are aware of the CBD, do not subscribe to or read the CBD on a regular basis. Their reasons are as follows:

- "The amount of effort and time required to read the CBD is large, considering the percentage of projects of interest."

- "If a project is being advertised in the CBD, it is probably too late to bother sending in a statement of qualifications." There is a widespread feeling that informal processes predominate in getting Corps contracts. "If you don't already know about the project and, for some reason, have an inside track on it, you might as well not respond to the CBD announcement."*

*This is not a new idea. It is expressed in the 1962 Small Business Administration brochure, "Small Business and Government Research and Development", Small Business Management Series No. 28, quoted in Guttman and Willner, 1975, p. 33.

- "If my Form 251 is on file, our firm should be considered for a project whether or not I make an explicit expression of interest."

Making personal visits to District offices is regarded as a touchy, doubtful strategy to the uninitiated, since some prospective clients frown on such visits while others welcome them, as does the Corps.

Several of the consultants, who had not previously done work for the Corps, expressed distrust of the Corps. They doubted the Corps was really interested in getting a fair assessment of social effects, but was rather more interested in getting a project justification. In one District, the Corps distributed a memorandum to contractors stating their intention to use any data supplied by the contractor, reserving, however, the right to disagree with interpretations of that data. One contractor said the Corps would have to prove its serious intent to accept an impartial assessment before he would consider working for the Corps.

Many social science contractors do not, at this time, seem to be aware of SIA work. Inasmuch as most of this work has materialized within the last two years, this is hardly surprising. An additional factor is that some qualified social scientists do not want to be aware of SIA work, because of a distaste for applied work and a concern about "selling out".

Contractors doing work in the social sciences are usually management consultants, research institutes, or A-E firms. Colleges and universities are sources of expertise, either in a contracting capacity or as consultants to work with a contractor.

Staffing in consulting firms depends upon the expected workload or market for services. For example, when environmental impact assessment gave promise of producing a substantial amount of work for an extended period of time, A-E firms added biologists, meteorologists, landscape architects, etc. to meet this demand. As of summer, 1975, not many consulting firms were convinced the market for social impact assessment was large enough to justify full-time employment of persons able to do this kind of work. Some said they would like to get into the field, but expected to operate by hiring part-time persons, consultants from universities, or perhaps joint ventures with other firms, until the size and stability of the market was better defined. One firm, active in environmental impact assessment, has maintained social science capability for the past two years, but is now dropping that capability because it had been unable to attract enough work. Moreover,

the contracts were so small that high overhead costs were entailed.

Facilitating Market Development

Market development can be done through some combination of advertising and direct solicitation of new contracting firms into the market.

Advertising

The Corps will want to use some combination of mass media and personal contact in its advertising efforts. Measures that might be taken in addition to CBD include placing advertisements in journals and newsletters read by social scientists and presentations at social science professional society meetings on the nature of Corps SIA work and the contracting process.

The formal announcement of information about service contracts would probably be more effective if it were published less frequently, perhaps weekly, and were limited to contracts for consulting and R & D services. It may be desirable to request that the Department of Commerce consider making this change. The advantage of such a change would be a smaller number (1/5) of issues to read, and not having to bother with all the advertisements for supply of materials and equipment.

The Corps might also consider using something like EPA's EXPRO. EXPRO is an announcement of R & D work that EPA expects to have done outside the agency, either by contract or grant. It is a prognosis, not a firm commitment, but does give a great deal of useful information to potential contractors, both as to what might and what will not be done. The approximate dollar volume is also given in EXPRO and is useful to prospective contractors. Some District personnel thought this might be excessively burdensome on them, but it is likely their reactions to the proposal presumed a document with more detail and certainty than would be required. Such a document could be issued either Corps-wide, from OCE, or at the Division or District level. If done at the OCE level, it would be issued shortly after Congress passed the appropriation bills for the coming year, and be broken down by District and project. It could be limited to projects on which SIA work, or more likely socio-economic-environmental assessments, was to be done.

Another approach is direct solicitation of new entries into SIA contracting. In addition to advertisements in professional society newsletters and journals, there could be a general ingathering of qualifications at a District, Division, or Corps-wide level. Form 254

would provide suitable information for such an ingathering. One consultant suggested that potential contractors be encouraged to describe their qualifications in whatever terms seemed most appropriate. This could then serve as a partial guide in establishing and comparing qualifications of firms to do SIA work.

The Portland District has sent a solicitation form to universities in its region, asking for statements of qualifications. A copy of the form is attached. (APPENDIX A).

Their experience indicates that mailings should be sent out during the middle of the university quarter or semester. Letters should either be addressed to a person or worded in such a manner as not to imply sex bias. It should carry the signature or endorsement of a Corps social scientist, or someone whose title indicates involvement with SIA work. An invitation to visit the signer of the letter is desirable.

This direct solicitation approach is not looked upon with favor by all. The counter argument to the Portland approach is that it may attract irrelevant individuals, people without the initiative and capability to seek out SIA work. This argument would seem more relevant if the Portland approach were used frequently over a long period of time rather than in an ad hoc, market development fashion.

A-E firms could be encouraged to link up with or staff up with social scientists.

Social Science Advisory Committees could be used in the Districts to act as liaison between the Corps and the social science community.

In any direct contacts with social scientists, the Corps could make it known that it welcomes personal visits to the District office.

Contractor Selection

Having made at least some contact with contractors capable of doing SIA work, the next problem is contractor selection. This will be discussed in the context of existing contracting practices and modified conditions. One general comment applies in both cases. All social scientists interviewed considered it important to review the specific experience of the persons who would be doing the work. Titles alone are inadequate.

Existing Conditions

Under usual Corps contracting procedures, the selection process is one of carefully reviewing the qualifications of the contractor candidates emerging from the preselection process and comparing these qualifications with the requirements of the contract. After the Preselection Board reduces the list of potential candidates, the Selection Board rates the candidates, in essence thereby making the selection, and passes this recommendation on to the District Engineer and possibly higher authority for approval. Contract negotiations may begin shortly thereafter. If negotiations are successful, the selection is made. In the event of unsuccessful negotiations, the second highest candidate would be contacted to begin negotiations.

The key ingredients in the selection process appear to be the composition of the Preselection and Selection Boards, the information contained in materials available to the Boards about the candidates, and the amount of information given to the Preselection and Selection Boards about the candidates and work requirements from the technical specialists working on the project within the Corps.

The composition of the Preselection and Selection Boards varies considerably from District to District. In some cases, they are made up of persons with long experience and high rank in the District. In other instances, the Boards are made up of persons closer to the individual projects and tend to be younger and with lower rank. For maximum effectiveness in selecting good SIA contractors, at least one of the members should have some understanding of social science methodology.

Information contained in materials available to the Boards about the candidates relevant to evaluation of qualifications appears to be deficient at the present time for the task of determining qualifications to perform social impact assessment. It is essential to look beyond the Form 251 or 254. The resumes of persons working with the contractor and, where possible, previous similar work should be examined.

If the District has established a Social Science Advisory Committee, its advice can be sought both as to the kinds of expertise and experience needed for a particular large, sensitive SIA as well as for an evaluation of the credentials of contractor candidates.

Higher ranked candidates should be asked to make presentations that would more fully display their qualifications. Such presentations could bring out the degree to which the candidate is familiar with the area and with obtaining local sources of information.

At some point in the selection process, the question: "Who is qualified to do social studies?" will be encountered. In judging qualifications, the Corps needs to look for people who are trained in the methods of social science (field work, surveys, demographic analysis, etc.), and who know the relevant sources of data and how to use them. Ordinarily, this kind of competence is found in persons with the Masters or Doctorate in their field, or in persons with extensive work experience. Relevant social science fields include sociology, anthropology, political science, social psychology, and economics. Persons with backgrounds in related fields or subfields including history, archeology, demography, geography, and journalism may also readily contribute to work in social impact assessment.

Modified Conditions

The modifications in current usual Corps contracting practice suggested in Chapter 2 include the preparation of proposals by the Contractor. The proposal should include a discussion of the methodology to be used, the content to be explored, the anticipated outputs, and a staffing and management plan.

Having received the proposals, any of the options suggested for existing conditions could be used, with the exception that evaluation is based on proposals and qualifications rather than qualifications alone.

Chapter 4. DEVELOPMENT OF SCOPE OF WORK

The Scope of Work contains the description of work tasks to be performed by the parties to the contract: the Corps and the Contractor. A Scope of Work may be developed in several ways:

-It may be a detailed description of each item of work to be performed and how it is to be done;

-It may contain only very general language, with the details to be filled in by the Contractor (and not made a part of the contract document) or, as the project proceeds, by joint agreement between the Contractor and the Corps;

-It may describe a set of procedural steps to be followed in arriving at work tasks, methodology, or both.

The Scope of Work evolves throughout the early stages of contracting. It is usually rewritten several times before the work is actually performed. A general statement is written when the Plan of Study for the entire project is drawn up. Another description of required work is written for the Commerce Business Daily. A more detailed version is supplied to the Project Negotiator and the Contractor candidate before beginning negotiations. The statement may be rewritten one or more times to achieve agreement on budget, methodology, or scope. After work has begun, the work statement may again be rewritten if one or both parties to the contract find the work statement is not adequate. However, many of those interviewed stated that after a contract was signed and work initiated, contractors found it difficult to make any substantial modifications, especially if the contract is a short one, as for a Post-Authorization or Existing Project study.

Writing a good Scope of Work has been hampered by the lack of a clear understanding on the part of the Corps and contractors of what is required and needed in social impact assessment. Some contractors reported that the Corps really didn't know what they wanted at the negotiations stage. One contractor didn't want to write the Scope of Work without being sure the Corps understood what it involved. Another said the Corps knew what it didn't want but not what it did want. In other cases, contractors reported that Corps personnel knew better than the contractor what was wanted. In some instances, it appeared the contractor thought its purpose was to develop a project justification rather than an impact assessment. All persons interviewed felt that time spent on good Scope of Work preparation was a good investment.

Ordinarily, social impact assessment is such that a detailed description of each work item cannot be written in advance of field work. Rather, the answers to a number of questions are sought, much as was prescribed in the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969. Indeed, Section 122 poses a number of similar questions. Through a series of field and office investigations, the Contractor refines these general questions, answers them, and perhaps develops new questions.

The burden of framing the questions falls on the Corps in its normal approach to contracting, because the Scope of Work is prepared by the Corps, and the Contractor is selected on the basis of qualifications. In alternative approaches to contracting, especially in one of the approaches utilizing Contractor proposals, the burden is partly shifted to the Contractor, in that the Contractor may suggest what some of the significant questions are, and what approaches, from a methodological standpoint, may be used to answer them.

The following section examines briefly the purpose and nature of social impact assessment. It discusses why social impact assessment is done, the general methodologies used, the nature of the data and its interpretation, and the outputs which may be expected.*

Purpose of Social Impact Assessment

Social impact assessment is done to help understand who (what social groups) are affected by the proposed actions, where they are located, and how and when these groups are affected. Such knowledge is expected to help the planner propose better alternatives (ones which have more benefits and fewer adverse consequences) and to help decision-makers all along the line make better choices among the alternatives.

*It should be noted that social studies may be done in Corps planning for purposes other than impact assessment. For example, they may be done in order to provide the planner with a better understanding of the area and the social context within which the planning takes place. Ideally, in pre-authorization feasibility studies, the social studies would start at the beginning of the planning investigations and continue through the final selection of the recommended alternative. Thus, the social studies would be not only impact assessments but would serve to sensitize the planner to conditions and relationships he might not otherwise recognize and give the planner a better understanding of how the relevant social systems function.

The general process of public works planning is based on, at some point, proposing alternative plans and then assessing the various effects of each alternative from different standpoints. The classes of effect assessment have grown over the years. At one time, they were primarily physical effects, legality, and financial feasibility. Later, economic effects were added and, still later, environmental and social effects.

Until just a few years ago, these various effects were assessed from the standpoint of the entire society. Benefits and costs were to be considered "to whomsoever they may accrue". The distributional question was not explicitly addressed in planning. In the case of Corps planning, the entire society was the nation. Now, they are also assessed from the standpoints of the local region and of the various affected groups. This change is a direct reflection of the increased attention being given to distributional effects. Overall efficiency is not considered sufficient if in the process of obtaining that efficiency certain individuals or groups must suffer uncompensated losses, or receive, at the expense of society, inordinate benefits. Social impacts are highly distributional in character because different social groups are affected differently by a public action.

These changes are compatible with the overall purpose of public works. They have always been built with the ultimate aim of being of worth to the society, providing economic and social benefits. The distributional questions and qualitative issues regarding the relationship between people and plans are being incorporated because they are issues which have prompted the concern of citizen groups, public works critics, and, later, legislative bodies.

In appraising these distributional effects, several more specific questions are asked:

-Who is benefitted by the project? In other words, what social groups, geographic areas, or classes of people (urban, rural, rich, poor, upstream, downstream, etc.) are likely to be better off with the project?

-Who is hurt or adversely affected by the project?

-How and when are these groups affected? Will persons have to move because of the project, leaving ancestral homes and friendship patterns behind? Will the lifestyle of persons be changed and, if so, in what ways? Will the project lead to significantly increased or decreased population in the area, with attendant effects on required services, available taxes to pay for the

services, etc.? Is the social structure of the area compatible with the need to assume long-term responsibility for the project? Can expected beneficiaries actually receive the benefits?

-When will the effects occur? Some effects occur during the planning period, others occur during the acquisition of land, some occur during the construction of the facilities, some begin when the project is completed and may continue on for generations.

-What measures could be taken to enhance the positive effects and reduce or mitigate adverse effects?

The social impact assessment should be expected to show any positive, beneficial effects that could be considered in deciding whether to accept any alternative proposed actions. Similarly, any negative, adverse impacts should be brought out in such a way as to either enable modifying the plan to eliminate or reduce these effects or to abandon the proposed action.

In addition to improving the plan by refining its features and redirecting the planning program's goals and directions, there is, of course, the legal imperative of doing social impact assessment. The legal imperative derives from the considerations cited above, and has been institutionalized by the enactment of laws requiring such assessment. The legal base includes Section 122 of PL 91-611, the National Environmental Policy Act, and the 1972 Water Pollution Control Act Amendments. The Water Resources Council Principles and Standards have a somewhat different status but are consistent with the other cited laws in requiring a social accounting as part of the information provided in the planning process.

Section 122 instructs the Secretary of the Army to "promulgate guidelines designed to assure that possible adverse economic, social, and environmental effects relating to any proposed project have been fully considered in developing such project, and that the final decisions on the project are made in the best overall public interest, taking into consideration the need for flood control, navigation, and associated purposes, and the cost of eliminating or minimizing such adverse effects and the following:

1. Air, noise and water pollution;
2. Destruction or disruption of man-made and natural resources, esthetic values, community cohesion and the availability of public facilities and services;

3. Adverse employment effects and tax and property value losses;
4. Injurious displacement of people, businesses and farms; and,
5. Disruption of desirable community and regional growth."

Nature of Social Effect Assessment

Guidelines

The Guidelines for Assessment of Economic, Social and Environmental Effects of Civil Works Projects, ER 1105-2-240, written in response to Section 122, set forth some principles that are to be followed. First, impact assessment is regarded as an integral part of the planning process; in other words, it is not an add-on feature after everything else is done. Second, it is to be regarded as an iterative process in which the findings in some step may call for repeating previous steps.

The Guidelines require that certain effects (those specifically mentioned in the law) be identified and evaluated. The social effects mentioned in the law include displacement of people, esthetic values, community cohesion and (desirable) community growth. Noise is also listed as a required social effect in the Guidelines. While it is clearly required in the Act, it is arguable that it is an environmental rather than a social effect.

Other social effects are cited in the Guidelines, as illustrative, sample effects. It is not to be considered complete or limiting. This language explicitly recognizes one of the principal characteristics of social impact assessment, namely that one doesn't necessarily know what some of the effects might be until after doing field and office studies.

Data and Methodology

Social data is inherently different from much of the data collected on the physical environment. It is frequently data showing relationships among individuals and social groups, or the way people perceive their environment and objects in that environment, attitudes, values, etc. Such data is usually called qualitative data and, sometimes pejoratively, "soft" data. Yet it is the kind of data most appropriate to the situation being studied. Ethnicity, religion, the strength of ties to a homesite are examples of kinds of data that could only inappropriately be described in numbers.

Answers to the questions, such as the distributional questions posed earlier, will require both raw data and interpretation of that data. Examples of answers to the questions "who is affected and how" might be as follows:

- "The farming community upstream of the dam would be divided and would lose its principal institutions (new high school, church, park) as well as 30% of the farm land in the community."

- "There is great anxiety among the middle-aged farm owners in the community about the alternatives. Since land prices are high and little land is for sale at any price, these farmers would be forced into a new occupation or would have to move at least 50 miles away to begin anew."

- "The population is predominantly elderly and little vacant housing is available. A large construction labor force would make it very difficult for these people to pay rent out of fixed incomes and support the increased service demands (police, fire, schools, etc.) of the labor force."

- "Thirty out of 100 farms in the lower valley would benefit from the project through receiving a more stable irrigation supply, and reducing vulnerability to erosion of topsoil."

The data collected for the social impact assessment studies enters directly into community social profiles. A profile is a combination of information about what has happened in the past (historic) and information about what exists now. It includes information about the social composition of the area, the issues regarded as important, and the attitudinal and value orientation of various groups and individuals. SIA, by definition, is future-oriented and must include forecasting. The data collected should support the forecasts.

Certain kinds of information might be collected for every study, especially demographic and historical data. However, for any given alternative course of proposed action, a particular set of social studies would ordinarily be undertaken designed to be responsive to the particular characteristics of that course of action. For example, the psychological impact of emergency evacuation might be an important consideration only in non-structural alternatives. The elimination of historic and culturally significant features might be an important consideration in structural means. In wastewater management, conventional treatment methods (physical/chemical or biological) have smaller land requirements (thus, less displacement of people) than do land disposal

methods. Also the public image of land disposal of waste waters may be an exceedingly important factor.

While there would appear to be a great deal of social data in existence, and indeed there is, it will likely be necessary to collect primary field data in order to fulfill the requirements of Section 122. This is because the available social data is weighted heavily toward census-type information rather than toward social structure, attitudes, issues, and values. The level of aggregation for some social data may be inappropriate for project analysis. For example, one may have opinion poll information available for an entire State, whereas for project analysis, it needs to be for portions of a county. All persons interviewed in this study thought field studies were an essential ingredient of acceptable work on social effect assessment.

Some of the principal methodologies employed in the collection of social data include the following:

- Demographic analysis
- Depth interviewing
- Content analysis of documents
- Map and airphoto interpretation
- Survey research
- Participant observation
- Ethnography

One of the persistent myths about social science data is that it is easily obtained and relatively inexpensive. In fact, this is not the case. Considerable time is needed to plan the research and to code, tabulate and analyze the data. Actual data collection is often, relatively speaking, less time-consuming than the analysis, especially if survey or interview methods are used. One person interviewed, himself a physical scientist, said that persons with physical science backgrounds greatly underestimate the time and effort needed to collect and interpret social data. Careful attention to sample selection and observational techniques is required. Alternative interpretations are tested and the most probable selected. Careful wording of the findings is then required to prevent such mistaken impressions as believing there is a simple cause-effect relationship when it is actually more complex,

and that the aggregate effects on a social group will apply equally to all members of the group.

Work by social scientists may be descriptive or analytical. In doing descriptive work, the social scientist's special expertise is in deciding what kind of data are relevant, how it can be collected, and how it can be organized and presented in a useful fashion. In doing the analytical work, the social scientist seeks relationships among social variables, in order to understand the functioning of social systems and to make projections.

Procedural Suggestions

There are a number of measures of a procedural nature that can be used to develop a good Scope of Work. Some of these were suggested by Corps personnel and others by contractors.

First, a pre-study of the problem could be undertaken, either by Corps staff or with a small contract, with or without new field work, to explore the nature of the significant social impact issues for the project. In one District, small contracts were let to develop the Study Design which was then executed in a larger, subsequent contract.

Second, a general list of work statement items, such as given in Sec. 122, could be suggested. Modifications of the list would be made to meet the case at hand. These guidelines shouldn't be so specific as to severely constrain the contractor. The inclusion of possible methodologies in the contract, however, could aid in communication.

Third, a panel of experts could be used to help develop a suitable Scope of Work. A number of those interviewed reacted favorably to the idea of a consulting or advisory panel convened to help define the Scope of Work.

A fourth suggestion that might be considered, especially for a study of relatively long duration, say more than a year, and that may be of some complexity, is to proceed in stages, with certain identifiable outputs to be produced at each stage that form the basis for deciding what is to be done in the next stage. A list of possible outputs is given in Table 1. This approach emphasizes making maximum use of information produced in the investigations.

Table 1. Identifiable Outputs

Delineation of relevant study area

Social history of area

Social profile of area, including maps and interpretations

Scenarios of the future

Survey questionnaires

Survey results

Issue lists

Content analyses of correspondence, news coverage, meeting transcripts, etc.

Identification of affected publics

Mapping of social relationships

Behavior settings list

Maps and descriptions of significant places and objects

Summary of social effects for each alternative

Summaries of leadership interviews

Chapter 5. MONITORING AND INTEGRATION WITH CORPS PLANNING

Setting for Social Impact Assessment

The ease and effectiveness with which SIA contracting may be done in a Corps District depends on the importance ascribed to social impact assessment by key people in the District office. The importance is likely to depend upon:

- The intrinsic importance of social effects for a particular project
- Support and/or pressure from higher authority, especially OCE and BERRH
- Support and/or pressure from groups outside the Corps, such as OMB, the Water Resources Council, Congress, citizen groups, and other government agencies (federal, state, and local).

The intrinsic importance for a particular project would likely be judged by the degree of concern about social effects already evidenced by persons involved in project planning, both within and outside the Corps. Examples include projects that have effects on low-income housing, recreation, Indian tribal lands, etc.

The attitude of the Project Coordinator is another factor in SIA contracting. Several issues condition this attitude. First, some feel frustration at having to use a contractor rather than doing the work in-house. The Coordinator has to spend a considerable amount of time preparing for, monitoring, and using the results of a contract. Thus, he may well feel that with a little more effort, he could have done the job in-house and been more sure of the usefulness of the product. A few feel they were hired to actually do social impact assessment, rather than handling contracts for impact assessment. Others like to have the work done by contract and take a major role in integrating contractual and in-house work.

A second issue in the Project Coordinator's attitude is the degree to which he understands Corps contracting procedures. Some do not appear to understand the process very well. Although the contracting process is not particularly complex, it can appear complex, full of "red tape", and unnecessarily cumbersome. Those who do understand the process are better able to use it effectively.

A third issue in the Coordinator's attitude is the degree to which he or she trusts a particular contractor or contractors in general. Comments from some Corps personnel reflected a distrust of contractors in general, because of what they felt was a propensity of some contractors to take on jobs they were not qualified to do, their inability to write well, their failure to interpret data, etc. (As is discussed elsewhere, a similar distrust was found among some contractors about the willingness of the Corps to accept a good SIA). Others respected the competence of contractors and were pleased to be able to have a wide range of expertise on tap.

Another issue, in addition to the attitude of the Coordinator, is his knowledge about what is desired and needed in SIA. Since this is a relatively new field, it is understandable that many Project Coordinators don't know what is wanted and needed in social impact assessment. Thus, the Coordinator will have to rely heavily on the execution of a process rather than on the Coordinator's ability to specify exactly what is to be done.

Monitoring of Work

Both contractors and Corps personnel felt there was a critical need for good monitoring of contracts for social impact assessment. From the Corps standpoint, this is needed in order to:

- Insure the contractor and the Corps have a common understanding of what the contractor is to do,
- Insure there is a common understanding of what the Corps is to do,
- Provide for an early assimilation of the results of the work into the Corps planning process,
- Insure that the reporting format is of maximum use to the Corps,
- Provide for an adequate transfer of the information supplied by the contractor to the Corps,
- Reduce delays in the latter stages of report preparation.

From the standpoint of the contractor, good monitoring is needed to:

- Reduce the chance of major re-writing or re-orientation of reports in the latter stages of the contract,

-Prevent major re-interpretations of work tasks after work is well underway, and

-To be sure the Corps knows what the contractor did and what was found.

In order to enhance the chance of achieving these objectives, a number of steps should be taken. First, a reporting schedule should be contained in the contract. This may be either a prescription of dates on which certain material is to be provided or a specification of stages of work completion at which time certain reports are to be made and/or conferences held between Corps and contractor.

All Corps personnel interviewed on this subject felt there should be an early conference, shortly after work begins on the project. Others should be spaced in accordance with the kind of work to be performed. When the work results in information requiring interpretation before proceeding further, there should ordinarily be a conference at that stage. Typical check points would include after the research plan and questionnaire drafts are prepared, after initial tabulation of data, after preliminary analysis of data, and after completion of a draft report.

The assignment of responsibility for monitoring in both the Corps and the contracting organization should be clear in the contract. In the Corps, there are distinct advantages in having more than one person responsible for monitoring, particularly for the larger and more complex studies. The same is true for the contractor. Both contractors and Corps personnel interviewed complained about the turnover of personnel on the other side of the contract. This meant that in each conference there was a need to again go over ground that had been covered in a preceding meeting. Worse, from the contractor's standpoint, was the situation in which a change in Corps personnel resulted in changes of interpretation of the Scope of Work, with each new person assigned to contract monitoring.

There are a number of reasons for change of personnel. In addition to the standard ones of illness and death, there may be resignations or transfers on either side. The present age structure within the Corps is such that there is a considerable amount of personnel mobility, within Districts and among the various offices of the Corps and other agencies.

In addition to these essentially negative reasons for multiple responsibility, is a positive one: wider transfer of knowledge about

social effects within the Corps. To maximize the usefulness of the work of a contractor, it is desirable to have wider exposure of the contractor's work within the District office. Although many persons in the District may read the final reports and perhaps participate in a final briefing on their contents, the checkpoint conferences should provide a much better appreciation of what goes into the report and how it may influence Corps planning.

The use of experts in SIA from outside the District, in addition to the contractor, may be considered, and ordinarily should be in major studies. If such experts are used, they should be involved in both the preparation of the Scope of Work and in the monitoring process, and it should be stipulated in the contract.

In social impact assessment, some of the interpretation needs to be done by those affected, i.e., members of the public. Thus, there should be a role for members of the public in the monitoring process. This may be handled either in the general public involvement program for the project or as a separate part of the social impact assessment studies. Generally, the contractor would want to and should be encouraged to check his writeup with his original sources. He should also be encouraged, and in some cases required, to go to a larger audience to check both the accuracy of his information and the validity of his interpretation. Because the contractor will usually have a broader perspective than any one group or agency, and because of the contractor's special training and experience, ultimately, the contractor must rely on his or her professional judgment in interpreting the data.

While some monitoring conferences may involve the contractor coming to the District office to make a presentation, alternate patterns should be considered. Two contractors reported holding checkpoint conferences in the field, including local officials and citizens. Thus, the Project monitor or coordinator was enmeshed for a time in the social and physical context being studied by the contractor.

Integration with Corps Planning

Currently, social effect assessments are being done on many kinds of projects, including Pre-authorization studies, Post-authorization studies, and Existing Projects. The integration of the SIA into each of these types of studies may differ considerably. Each class is discussed briefly. However, Section 122 and the Guidelines are quite clear on one point, as noted earlier, namely that the impact assessments are integral parts of planning, not add-ons.

Pre-Authorization Studies

The Pre-Authorization study is typically of long duration, perhaps extending over several years. It entails the collection of basic data and a detailed examination of the situation. The end product of the study is a set of recommendations about what to do. They may be to authorize the construction of certain facilities or the adoption of certain policies, or to do nothing.

For SIA studies to be of maximum benefit, in the entire planning effort, they should begin early and have numerous outputs throughout the planning process. In the early stages, these might include a description of the social setting, a delineation of the issues regarded important by area residents, an identification of the groups having a stake in the planning process, an assessment of needs, goals, and objectives. These findings would, of course, be refined throughout the planning period. Those doing the social studies should interact frequently with the other members of the planning team in order to convey to the other members of the planning team the social context of the situation and to formulate elements to be studied later in the planning process.

As the planning process proceeds to the stage of alternative development, the impact assessment can become much more detailed. The affected groups can be more accurately delineated and the ways in which they are affected more highly elaborated.

Post-Authorization Studies

In the Post-Authorization study, a plan has already been adopted and authorized by Congress. Many projects were authorized before effect assessment was a routine part of the planning process. Therefore, the impact assessment is done as a new effort to bring the planning information up-to-date, to ascertain whether any of the effects are serious enough to warrant modification of the project, and whether any steps should be and can be taken to reduce adverse impacts.

These studies are ordinarily done in a much shorter time than is the case for Pre-Authorization studies. Three to twelve months seems to be a common range.

Since the basic project features have been established, the impact assessment may proceed directly from an examination of the effects from this particular arrangement of facilities and programs.

Existing Projects

For these studies, the situation is quite different than for either of the others. The difference derives from the fact that for existing projects, there is an experience record of what has happened. Social, economic, and physical adjustments have occurred.

These adjustments may have resulted in problems that can be observed in the field. For example, the construction of Gavins Point Dam on the Missouri River eventually resulted in an increased water table in Niobrara, Nebraska. This problem was severe enough to bring about action to move the town to a higher elevation.

There are numerous examples of high recreational usage and water supply implications of Corps projects, far beyond expectations and, for the older projects, such as Lake Sidney Lanier in Georgia, not even authorized purposes. Under such conditions, the facilities and supporting institutions may not be adequate to cope with the large numbers of people who use the reservoirs for recreation, and the competition for use of the resources severe.

For an existing project, the assessment of impact is done partly as an evaluation study of what has taken place, and to suggest whether modification in operations or project facilities and programs need to be made. Such studies are being done on the Upper Mississippi River in the Great River Study, and in the ongoing monitoring program initiated on the McClellan-Kerr Multiple Purpose Arkansas River System by the Southwestern Division and the Institute for Water Resources. "The basic approach to impact analysis in this study (McClellan-Kerr) is to begin with physical changes in the river regimen introduced by the project, determine the direct uses made by people of these changes, trace these changes through second and higher order impact and then weigh these impacts by the values placed on them from a number of perspectives." (IWR Research Report 75-R3).

At least some effects have already been manifested, which reduces the range of conjecture. Projection is still required, but it is done for a known configuration of facilities and an existing set of physical, economic, and social adjustments.

Because Social Impact Assessments are done for Pre-Authorization and Post-Authorization studies and for existing projects, and because District offices are organized so differently, the contract for the studies may originate in any of several branches, sections, or divisions of a District office. While it would normally be expected to

come from the Planning Units, it may be elsewhere.

A problem that arises from this organizational situation is that such experience as has been acquired in SIA contracting in one organizational unit, such as Planning, may not be passed on and applied when the contract originates elsewhere. For a District that has one or more social scientist on its staff, it would appear to be desirable to have the social scientist(s) participate in SIA contracting District-wide. A cross-indexed catalog, indexed by project, class (pre, post, or existing), and Project Coordinator, of both completed and upcoming SIAs, both by contract and in-house, would be a useful adjunct.

Chapter 6. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The actions needed to contract more effectively for Social Impact Assessments are not concentrated at any one place. Certain actions are appropriate in the Districts while action might be more appropriate by OCE, IWR, BERH, or the Divisions in other cases. Moreover, steps could be taken by other agencies, especially the Department of Commerce and OMB.

Districts and Divisions

To develop the market more quickly, Commerce Business Daily announcements could be supplemented with other means. For example, there could be a release of more detailed Scopes of Work to potential contractors on request. Advertisements could be placed in social science newsletters and journals. Presentations could be made at meetings of social science professional societies. Direct solicitations of local colleges and universities could be done to determine interest in SIA, as has been done by the Portland and San Francisco Districts.

The addition of social scientists to District and Division level staffs would help in developing the market, writing SIA contracts, coordinating and monitoring contracts, and interpreting SIA findings to other staff members.

District planners should know that contracting may be a part of their responsibilities. It would be desirable to write this into job descriptions. Planning should be provided with adequate information on the general principles of contracting and contracting options available.

Several options are open for improving the Scope of Work. A small study design contract could be let. This would be especially appropriate for large, complex jobs. While this delays the time somewhat for beginning major investigations, it allows for the development of well-thought-out work plans before starting the main study. Alternatively, a small panel of consultants might be used to help define the problem and context, as well as the Scope of Work. The same panel might be used later in monitoring, especially at an early Checkpoint Conference and in review of the Report Draft. A Social Science Advisory Committee that meets periodically to discuss social science/social impact aspects of Corps projects and planning would be of assistance in reviewing Scopes of Work and suggesting methodology and data sources. These committees might be organized at either the District or Division level.

Most Districts would probably find it to their advantage to use a fuller range of the available contracting options open to them under Corps regulations. The most promising alternative to usual practice is the RFQ/RFP approach, a limited competition. The Preselection

process would operate as at present to reduce the number of candidates to, perhaps, the best three. These candidates would then be invited to submit proposals (with or without the payment of a small sum by Purchase Order). The selection would then be made on the basis of the proposals.

Where the timing is favorable, a District might consider consolidating the SIAs for several projects into a single contract. Contractor overhead costs would be lower than for several small contracts, as would be the Corps overhead. Data collection could be more effective and complete. This would be the case where many of the same basic data sources, including interviews, were consulted for several studies. A potential disadvantage of such an arrangement would be difficulty in coordinating the SIAs with economic and environmental impact assessments.

Where possible, more than one person should monitor a contract. This prevents interruptions or major changes in contract interpretation. It also helps spread the experience in the District office. Since the Corps is seeking to increase its expertise in this area, such an arrangement should be quite appealing.

To help facilitate integration of the SIA findings into other planning efforts, a contract provision that provides for a small amount of personal services, perhaps one or two weeks of effort after the report has been completed would be desirable.

Headquarters

As part of its ongoing training program, it would be helpful if more planners, especially Project Coordinators, were given the opportunity to attend short courses on contracting. These courses should deal not with the legal aspects of contracts, but with the objectives of contracting and the process of selecting contractors, developing Scopes of Work, and contract monitoring. Ideally, this would be offered at the Division level, both to give an adequate audience and to display, through student interaction, the differences among Districts in their approach to contracting. As part of these courses, it would be very helpful to have a brief guide to contracting for distribution to the participants in the course and for consultation in the Districts. Here, as in the courses, the emphasis would be on procedures and purpose, rather than on legal aspects and technicalities. The basic elements of contracting, with consideration of the principal contracting approaches, can be condensed into a few flow charts, with several pages of text for each approach.

Early feedback of OCE and BERM reaction to effect assessments would accelerate the development of experience at both headquarters and field levels. This might be done by reviewing routinely a small sample of

Scopes of Work, partially completed, and completed impact assessments, in a preliminary way, while they were still at field level.

OCE could publish a summary of Corps budget each year, in a manner similar to EPA's EXPRO. These summaries would show the funds likely to be available for outside studies and the approximate kinds of studies to be done. Only the general magnitude of budgets need be published.

OCE, through IWR, could profitably initiate, build, and maintain files on social impacts of water resources facilities and programs. Also, community and social group equivalents of the Human Relations Area Files could be compiled, probably on a bibliographic basis. Both these activities could be done as a joint effort with other agencies, especially the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Interior, and the Department of Agriculture. The Water Resources Council would be an appropriate coordinating agency. Funding an ongoing university program would be a good avenue for handling these programs.

The Corps should continue to develop and refine its computer and data base capability in order to easily provide contractors and District planners with basic demographic profile tables at the appropriate level of detail. The existing SIRAP system appears to have the necessary characteristics, but is not being used as much as it should be. District planners thought SIRAP did not have sufficient capability to provide small-area data, though much of the data is available for the smallest U.S. geographic area, the block group. Also, unless the planner used SIRAP frequently, it was considered too hard to use.

The disparity of perceptions between field planners and OCE about SIRAP's capabilities, ease of use, and general usefulness point to the need for more educational programs for field planners, including hands-on experience. These programs should routinely include opportunities for field planners to talk about difficulties they have in using SIRAP.

Good SIA work will often need to employ questionnaires and interview schedules. The current process for using them on Corps work is excessively cumbersome and slow, in that OMB approval is required. It would be of considerable help if this approval were delegated by OMB to either the Districts, the Divisions, the Federal Regional Centers, or, in the case of university contracts, the Human Subjects Committees. In such delegation, the review criteria to be applied would also be specified, and perhaps become part of all SIA contracts. Adoption of this recommendation would both accelerate the review process and prevent the omission of survey work as a methodology by contractors who do not want to wait for a lengthy review.

Continued research on SIA methodology is needed, either by IWR or by the National Science Foundation and the Office of Water Research and Technology.

Department of Commerce

The very important Commerce Business Daily would become much more effective in reaching SIA contractors if it were not such a burden to read it. This burden could be eased by separating announcements of R & D and A/E service from those for supply of materials, equipment, etc., and publishing the services announcements weekly rather than daily. Such a format would allow printing longer word descriptions than are presently being used.

REFERENCES

- Antle, Lloyd George, An Overview of the Impact Study of the McClellan-Kerr Multiple-Purpose Arkansas River System, IWR Research Report 75-R3, Ft. Belvoir, Va., July 1975.
- Biderman, Albert D. and Sharp, Laure M., "Social Research Performers", Society, V. 12, No. 5, July/August 1975, pp. 42-47.
- Guttman, Daniel and Willner, G., The Shadow Government, Pantheon Books, New York, 1976.

APPENDIX



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
PORTLAND DISTRICT CORPS OF ENGINEERS
P O BOX 2946
PORTLAND, OREGON 97208

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF: NPPSU-PR

Name: _____

Institutional Affiliation: _____

Present Position: _____

Length of time with present institution: _____

Business Address: _____

Telephone: _____

(Additional sheets may be used if necessary.)

1. List research areas or topics in which you specialize or have had experience (e.g., community leadership, social change in rural areas, etc.)

2. List research methods in which you specialize or have had experience (e.g., analysis of census data; analysis of documents and records; etc.)

3. Education (college, degrees, year, major)

4. Memberships in professional associations.

9. Please submit reprints of reports or articles that best illustrate the type of work you do.

10. Any other information that would aid the Corps in assessing your capabilities for social effects analysis, or citizen participation projects.

11. Title of your university or college office for negotiating Federal contracts:

12. Standard university or college overhead charges for contracts:

Note: A standard curriculum vita may be substituted for the questionnaire, provided that the vita contains all of the information requested in the questionnaire.

Willeke, Gene E.

Contracting for social impact assessment / by Gene E. Willeke and Carol A. Willeke. -- Fort Belvoir, Va. : U.S. Army Engineer Institute for Water Resources, 1976.

42 p. (IWR contract report ; no. 76-1)

1. Contracts and specifications. 2. Water resources development - Social aspects. 3. Social surveys. I. Title. II. Willeke, Carol A., joint author. III. Series: U.S. Institute for Water Resources. IWR contract report no. 76-1.

HD1694.A42 U584 no. 76-1 627 .U584

Willeke, Gene E.

Contracting for social impact assessment / by Gene E. Willeke and Carol A. Willeke. -- Fort Belvoir, Va. : U.S. Army Engineer Institute for Water Resources, 1976.

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