

To: Chair of Business Panel
From: Chair of Technical Panel
Date: 24 November, 1999
Subject: Technical Panel Summary of Best and Final Offers

Scores and ranking

| | Average Score |
|--------------------------------------|---------------|
| 1. VECO Polar Resources | 84 |
| 2. Raytheon | 74 |
| 3. TransArctic Associates | 73 |
| 4. University of Nebraska at Lincoln | 71 |



Four of five panelist ranked VECO Polar Resources first in technical merit.

Discussion.

VECO Polar Resources (VPR) offered a significantly improved Best and Final Offer (BAFO) over the original proposal. Two key areas were addressed. First, VPR named their full management team and they provided complete past-performance information on VECO. This allowed the panel to properly evaluate past performance (very good to excellent), experience (well matched to the requirements) and organizational approach, which was sound. They also made critical clarifications in the role of SRI, who will support communications, IT and technical development and maintenance of instrumentation. Their approach was reasonable. The panel also noted significant improvements in the description of the planning cycle and program plan development. The approach, which focused on the application of project management techniques was straight-forward, disciplined, inventive, appropriately scaled, and thorough. In the area of field support VPR showed considerable strengths in the areas of supporting multiple small-scale academic research projects in the field. VECO chose to submit a completely revised proposal, and took the opportunity to make other minor improvements throughout

Raytheon's initial proposal was well presented and acceptably covered all aspects of the statement of work. In the BAFO they made only one significant change, and that was to drop their connection to University of Alaska, Fairbanks. This modified their approach to project planning and field support, but not significantly, as the panel had already raised concerns about the mechanisms linking UAF and Raytheon. Concerning management systems, the core of Raytheon's MIS basically exists, having been developed for another client, and in the BAFO Raytheon showed that the system has been adopted for a range of client and scales. Raytheon has been awarded the Antarctic contract, and it is likely that benefits would be derived in sharing resources, particularly in IT and construction, though the BAFO did not emphasize these aspects. An area of weakness that remains is the management team's lack of significant experience supporting multiple *small-scale* academic research projects in the field, and particularly the lack of polar field experience. Raytheon attempted to address this in the BAFO, but were successful only to a limited extent.

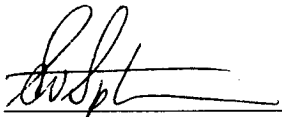
TransArctic Associates (TAA), in their Best and Final Offer, made some significant changes, but most appeared to weaken the proposal rather than strengthen it. The initial proposal was considered the strongest, drawing on the polar experience and approaches of the parent companies, albeit supporting much larger-scale projects. The proposal remained sound overall but several weakness were introduced in the BAFO. In the area of program plan development, TAA acknowledged that the ALIS system was not the sophisticated system depicted in the original proposal, being essentially a material management system available over a wide area network. Other COTS and development applications would be integrated later, but the software tool to do this, KEWi, was poorly described in the BAFO, despite a lengthy discussion on the governments concerns during orals. In the area of engineering and construction the TAA BAFO was considered to have a major weakness in the discussion of the expansion of the winter-over facility at Summit, Greenland. TAA's approach addressed options that would only be acceptable for summer use. In

the winter, TAA's proposed solution would not work. This error weakened the credibility of the more general discussion on engineering approach elsewhere in the proposal. In addition, TAA eliminated an engineering position without any discussion on how this would improve the offer. TAA added Greenland Contractors to the proposal, but they described a process where by TAA would ask GC for proposals to support work, but also develop their own and choose which one was best. The panel considered this a weak partnering arrangement. An area of relative weakness noted in the original proposal is the proposed management team's lack of any significant experience supporting multiple *small-scale* academic research projects in the field. This was not acceptably addressed, despite some attempts to bolster claims of science support experience in resumes, and the addition of a Science Coordinator, but the individual named was poorly qualified to undertake this key role, and not well integrated into TAA's functionally-based management approach

University of Nebraska at Lincoln (UNL) significantly improved their offer in the BAFO. They proposed introducing modern management tools in program plan development, and, using the resources of their subcontractor ATCO/Frontec, they made significant improvements in their approach to supporting field communications. UNL drew on ATCO/Frontec again to address performance measure and the discussion of SH&E issues. While the panel recognized that performance from the perspective of the NSF's COTRs is generally good, we noted that some in the science community supported by UNL do not consider the performance so strongly. UNL addressed some of the concerns, but did not recognize that communication problems exist between them and the community they support. In this light, several panelist remain skeptical that significant improvements can be made.

Recommendation.

In conclusion, the technical panel observes that VECO Polar Resources have proposed a superior offer and recommends VPR for award of the Arctic Research Logistics Support Service contract.


Simon Stephenson
Chair of Technical Panel

11/24/99
Date

Veco BAFO Cost Proposal

CPU-99-005