

**CIC Attendees**

| <b>Government</b>   | <b>Industry</b>          |
|---------------------|--------------------------|
| Steve Harnig        | Peter Woodhull (Modus21) |
| Kelly Cannady       | Mark Miller (Chugach)    |
| Erica Smoak         | Linda Resler (SAIC)      |
| Sheela Casper       | Jessica Fletcher (Atlas) |
| Audrey Orvin        | Tad Walls (BAH)          |
| Jesse Seaton        | Manny Lovgren (Orbis)    |
| Todd Rollins        | Sallie Sweeney (Leidos)  |
| Christy Christopher |                          |
| Andrew Lucas        |                          |
| Kristy Penninger    |                          |
| John O'Connor       |                          |

**Opening Remarks**

Steve Harnig kicked off the meeting and welcomed all attendees. This month’s meeting was held via MS Teams. Steve stated we have seen a little less work coming through in Q4 vs usual, and he is interested to hear how Industry is keeping up with RFPs, RFQs, other changes, and would like feedback on how EOY is going from Industry perspective.

**Routine Discussion Topics**

**Discussion Topic 1 – Communication Challenges**

Steve mentioned the Industry concern submitted regarding remote work hampering ability to schedule meetings, both face-to-face and virtual. Steve stated this is one of the first times he has seen this equated to remote work possibly being the problem. He stated this is interesting because it would seem that people are able to do more in the virtual environment, and he would like more insight to take this feedback to his teams and IPTs.

Industry member stated this “concern” may be more of a comment, in that it is harder to reach out and schedule things, vs being able to “walk the hall” and drop by to set something up; basically the work environment in general is just different. Stated he has found government leads to generally be responsive, and it just takes a little more time and effort on his part. Another Industry member stated it goes back to finding out who is the point of contact, which has been previously discussed, and reminds all to reach out to John or Steve if unsure who is appropriate POC. Steve stated he has had several meetings with industry (including companies who are trying to become new entrants) that he has been able to set up, invite departments/IPTs, and this has been successful. Steve encourages all to continue to reach out to John and him to continue to make these connections/bridge the gap.

**Discussion Topic 2 – Process and Tools (Best Practices, and Training/Education of Industrial Base)**

Next SBIOL (October) agenda is going to be really packed. Mr. Troy Gunter, the new 2.0 SES at NAVWAR, and his deputy will be coming in and will be given some time. Steve will brief, and it is C4I’s “day” and they are our biggest department. Steve is unsure if there will be time to include any SEWP

training this time. Manny agreed the agenda is very full and it has been challenging to get everyone's timeslots allocated. Will work to get SEWP topic for future agenda.

### **Discussion Topic 3 – Barriers to Entry and How to Address**

Steve stated he needs to think more on how to address barriers. He set up meetings recently with companies who do not have any prime contracts at LANT, all small businesses. Steve mentioned we do compete things, but there is definitely some knowledge and experience required to break in. He would not say there are unique barriers, but ones that are seen other places as well. He stated that he will continue working with John and trying to continue bringing in new companies as we lose others out of the Defense Industrial Base. He stated we will soon be talking about our next incubator contract and what that is going to look like. He knows Industry also receives feedback on that, and we will bring the incubator strategy into the CIC to talk through. Steve stated he is a big fan of the incubator, although he knows there has been limited success there. He stated with the last one we awarded quite a few contracts, and then we hear from the contractors who do not get work, but maybe the incubator is a way we can help some companies break in.

Industry member states they know the history of the incubator and how it is working, and feels it is appropriate to bring that discussion to this venue.

#### **Open Discussion/Questions:**

**Industry submitted question 1:** From Gold Coast: SeaPort rep stated recertification of size standard will be required on every SeaPort Task Order RFP at award but will not be required to exercise an option year period. Can you discuss when this will go into effect at NIWC ATLANTIC?

**Discussion:** Steve stated Jesse has been tracking this, and the notes from last meeting are where we still stand. Jesse confirmed there is no real update, and he has reached out to see if there has been any draft guidance from SeaPort, which was supposed to have been done by end of this month (August). Jesse stated we are still getting questions on RFPs. Jesse stated he has not seen anything, and the information that was shared at Gold Coast does not seem to be completely in agreement with what was shared by the NAVSEA team. NAVSEA has indicated they will be sending out guidance to everyone (including contract holders), and are looking at making some potential changes. Unsure when these changes will go into effect, could be next calendar year. Jesse stated NIWC Atlantic will not make any change until either we see a change in the basic contract, in the SOPs, or if the PCO reaches back and specifically tells us to start implementing something, and this information will also be given to the contract holders. Steve stated we will follow their lead, guidance, and direction.

Industry member states he met with reps from SeaPort program office at Gold Coast, and it was his understanding they will be putting out guidance. Also mentions they will be here for the Eastern Defense Summit, so it will be briefed there. Steve stated he has asked to be included on the planning committee for the event.

**Industry submitted question 2:** Also from Gold Coast: Primes required to handle enforcement of insurance and CMMC requirements on 1099 contractors? At Gold Coast this was discussed, and it was suggested that Primes are highly discouraged from using 1099 contractors in support of contracts on SeaPort as it will be extremely difficult to validate that CMMC requirements can be met by subs. Can you elaborate on this topic and whether there will be further guidance with regard to 1099 support?

**Discussion:** Steve stated he has not heard anything from CMMC in a while, and certainly nothing on requirements for 1099s. He stated we will go to Michelle DeForest and/or Damon Shivvers to see if there is an update.

**Open Discussion:** Steve mentioned we have 30 days left in the fiscal year. From a data standpoint, our numbers are a little down in Q4 in terms of number of actions and obligations, but coming into Q4 we were roughly \$300M ahead of schedule in obligations as compared to last year. Unsure exactly how this will flow out, but he would assume Industry is seeing pretty high volume. Asked for feedback from Industry members on EOFY.

One Industry member stated no specific observations, but volume has been high, responsiveness has been very good, and quality of RFPs has been better. Another member stated it is not just NIWC Atlantic with high volume, but across the board from all agencies; it has been a busy last quarter. An Industry member states she has been supporting NIWC Atlantic less than in prior years, but has observed very quick-turns on VA work, or GSA, generally 7- to 10-day turns.

Industry member stated one thing seen a lot this year is when option year renewal falls into EOFY time period, it tends to be awarded day of, or day before. States it is impacting CAC renewals, access issues, etc. Kelly Cannady stated we have tried to move those over the years to not fall into Q4, as these are hard to manage and track. Sheela Casper stated we do not delay or hold awards, rather encourage them to initiate the requests prior to having the funding in place, so these actions can be worked. Timing of the options is looked at to see if the first-phase period can end some time other than September. Steve asked if Sheela managed the option exercise timing, or if it is a COR, etc. Sheela stated we do not manage those at the order level in 2.0 and the COR is responsible for initiating the request to exercise an option. Sheela discussed AMS and its ability to utilize the Planned Future Action (PFA) function so options can be tracked better to assist the CORs to initiate option exercise sooner. Industry member stated funding issues can also cause these award dates to get moved/shortened.

Steve advised that contractors can try to help IPTs and CORs understand schedules and make sure they understand the option is coming up, make sure communication is happening.

Industry member adds TINA covered actions – NIWC PAC and NAVAIR – Industry struggling to meet that requirement. Generally with NIWC Atlantic, with communication, they have gotten good support. Steve mentioned this is a continuing education thing, to ensure contracting officers know processes associated with things like that, which may be a little complex on the contractor side.

Industry member stated IWRP first round of classified opportunity came out last week, and attended the Industry Day. Some concern on the speed of those turns, questions around JWICS access, etc. Steve and Jesse stated they have not heard this feedback from consortium/members' standpoint. They are looking at best avenues to ensure they reach the pool of vendors. Jesse would appreciate specific feedback, through Giancarlo or someone else affiliated with IWRP. There will be quite a few more of these problem statements coming through, and they will be quick turn.

**Wrap-up:** Next session will be held early FY24, and we will plan to go back to hybrid for future meetings. Please send proposed topics and/or questions to Manny for discussion at next meeting.