

**MEETING MINUTES REPORT – 2013-7  
PROCÈS VERBAUX DE LA RÉUNION – 2013-7**

<b>MEETING RÉUNION</b>	<b>TEMPORARY HELP SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE COMITÉ CONSULTATIF DES SAT</b>				
<b>PLACE ENDROIT</b>	Place du Portage, Phase III, Tower C Boardroom 5C2 101	<b>DATE DATE</b>	24 September / Septembre 2013	<b>TIME HEURE</b>	1300 to 1600

**MEETING AGENDA – ORDRE DU JOUR**

1. Opening Remarks
2. Acceptance of THSAC Meeting Minutes from August 27, 2013
3. National Strategy for THS
4. Vendor Performance Review
5. THS Update – RENEWAL
6. Implementation THS Utilization Reporting Update
7. Update to the THS Website
8. Update THS Training – Learning Harmonization
9. Round-table Questions

**MEETING ATTENDEES – PARTICIPANTS À LA RÉUNION**

<b>NAMES - NOMS</b>	<b>ORGANIZATION / PROJECT AND ROLE – ORGANISATION OU PROJET ET RÔLE</b>	<b>PRESENT</b>
Pascale Archambault	Acting Senior Director – Professional Services Procurement Directorate (PSPD), Acquisitions Branch (AB), PWGSC – CHAIRPERSON	√
Dan Moorcroft	QMR Consulting & Professional Staffing	√
Jeremy Ingle	ACSESS	√
Martin Chenier	ACSESS	√
Matt Harrington	ACSESS	
Meredith Egan	ACSESS	√
Eric Joannis	ACSESS	
Paul Gagnon	Portage Personnel	√
Brenda Harlow	Natural Resources Canada (NRCan)	
Caroline Carson	Health Canada	√
Lucie Lambert	Library and Archives Canada	
Dominique Mongeon	Library and Archives Canada	
Patricio Comas	Department of Fisheries and Oceans	
Roland Dimitriu	PWGSC Materiel Management	√
John Penhale	PWGSC, Procurement Strategy and Performance Management Directorate	
Cheney Boutilier	PWGSC, Office of Small and Medium Enterprises and Strategic Engagement	√
Claire Niedbala	PWGSC, Office of Small and Medium Enterprises and Strategic Engagement	
Helen Seto	PWGSC, Office of Small and Medium Enterprises and Strategic Engagement	
Patricia Barcellos	PWGSC, Office of Small and Medium Enterprises and Strategic Engagement	√
Rose Spirito	PWGSC, Procurement Strategies Division	√
Lan Mao	PWGSC, THS Team Lead	√
Mark Newman	PWGSC, A/THS Team Lead	√
Stephanie Riley	PWGSC, THS Team	√

**Meeting Minutes**

**#1. Opening Remarks**

- Round table introductions.
- Pascale Archambault was introduced as the Acting Senior Director, Professional Services Procurement

Directorate. She will be replacing the previous Committee Chair, Vincent Robitaille in the coming months because Vincent has accepted and a 4-month assignment as the Acting Director General for PWGSC's Commercial Acquisitions and Supply Management Sector.

- It was announced that the THS Team Lead, Lan Mao will move to a new job at PWGSC on October 7, 2013. At the end of the meeting she was thanked for all of her hard work and contributions to the THS team.
- Mark Newman was introduced as the replacement THS Team Lead for a 4-month acting period that commenced on September 23, 2013.
- PWGSC provided an overview of the agenda for this meeting.
- An item concerning THSAC Terms of Reference was deferred to the next THSAC meeting to allow more time for PWGSC to incorporate changes, and simultaneously allow for the new THS Team Lead to resume to baseline a final draft for review.

## **#2. Acceptance of THSAC Meeting Minutes from August 27, 2013**

- All in concurrence.
- Following this agenda item, Pascale Archambault was required to leave the meeting due to other commitments. Rose Spirito assumed the role of Committee Chair for the balance of the meeting.

## **#3. National (Goods & Services Procurement) Strategy for THS**

- Further to the updates provided by John Penhale, OSME-SE back in June concerning the iterative steps to be taken for the development of a National Strategy for THS, discussions took place as summarized below.
- PWGSC tabled a preliminary draft of Temporary Help Services scenarios, with proposed survey questions for suppliers. The survey is intended to be a government needs analysis exercise, and it was noted that a similar draft of hypothetical THS scenarios, but with proposed survey questions for clients has been prepared. Examples of scenarios: Administrative Support Pool, Coordinated Resources, Operational/Seasonal, Long Term Absence, Scarce Knowledge Worker, Flexible Workforce, Project Team.
- It was agreed that THSAC supplier members and their regional counterparts will review the draft scenarios and proposed questions, and provide their feedback to THS (see corresponding action item below). As part of the review, issues such as the following should be considered: i) Are the scenarios and questions appropriate and clear? ii) Are any scenarios and questions missing? iii) For each scenario, are clients already being serviced that way in the THS industry?
- It was explained that PWGSC's Client Engagement Sector was involved in the preparation of the draft scenarios and questions, and obtained input from Client Departments.
- The draft scenarios are a basis for discussion and will be used for consultation and stakeholder engagement.
- It was emphasized that the scenarios should not be reviewed in the context of the current tools.

### **ACTION ITEMS:**

- THS will schedule a meeting with THSAC supplier members to take place in approximately 2 weeks to obtain their feedback regarding the draft scenarios and questions. Similarly, a meeting with THSAC client members will be scheduled in the same timeframe.
- THS will provide THSAC members with a recap of the objectives of the national strategy for THS to support their review of the draft scenarios and proposed questions.

### **Postscript:**

- On Wednesday September 25, 2013, a draft of hypothetical THS scenarios, with proposed survey questions for suppliers was e-mailed to the THSAC supplier focussed participants. The supplier representatives were also invited to participate in a meeting scheduled for Tuesday October 15, 2013 to discuss the preliminary draft questionnaire proposed for suppliers.
- Similarly on September 25, 2013, a draft of hypothetical THS scenarios, with proposed survey questions for clients was e-mailed to the THSAC client focussed participants. The client representatives were also

invited to participate in a meeting scheduled for Wednesday October 16, 2013 to discuss the preliminary draft questionnaire proposed for clients.

- To explain the objectives of the national strategy for THS, the invitations to the two meetings included hyperlinks to the PWGSC National Strategy for Procurement of Goods and Services as it pertains to the Professional Services National Procurement Strategy, as well as links to some other key policy statements that support the action to develop a national strategy for THS. The primary objective of the national strategy is to review scenario-based situations to find better ways for government to benefit from THS. The focus is on the THS needs of government, and not the THS tool itself. The strategy is also intended to align client demand and industry supply or capacity, and to improve access to value added services to help client departments own and manage their services more effectively.

#### **#4. Vendor Performance Review**

- The vendor performance issue concerning replacement of personnel was addressed (see item #5 below).

#### **#5. THS Update – RENEWAL**

##### **Q1 Refresh**

- PWGSC reported that 4 bids were received during the Q1 refresh solicitation period that closed on June 30, 2013. Two bidders were found compliant, and two were found non-compliant.

##### **Schedules for Q2 Refresh and Upcoming Renewal**

- The proposed revised schedule for the Q2 refresh was presented. There was concurrence with the following:
  - i) Changing the Q2 solicitation closing date from September 30 to October 24, 2013; and
  - ii) Changing the Q2 evaluation period to be from October 25 to December 31, 2013.
- There was also agreement to change the upcoming renewal solicitation period to be from October 25, 2013 to January 3, 2014.

##### **Draft Communiqué to Existing Suppliers to a THS Supply Arrangement or Standing Offer**

- A draft communiqué was presented to the THSAC members.
- The communiqué will outline changes to the THS methods of supply to be introduced via the upcoming renewal solicitation. The communiqués will be distributed shortly after the issuance of the renewal solicitation.

##### **Validity Period for Standing Offer Search Results**

- The THSAC members agreed to a proposed wording revision to the THS Standing Offer to introduce an option for users to extend the 10 working day validity period for a SO search result for the selected offeror(s) for up to 45 calendar days from the date that the search result was printed.
- Obtaining security clearances for personnel was given as one of the most common administrative delays that could require a user to extend a SO search result validity period.

##### **Replacement of Personnel (Mitigation)**

- The THSAC members agreed to the proposed revision to the bidder and offeror certification sections of the THS RFSA and RFSO respectively to address replacement of personnel prior to or after contract award for the SA, and prior to or after call-up issuance for the SO.
- It was noted that the proposed wording for the upcoming THS RFSA and RFSO was vetted by PWGSC legal, and will undergo a final QA legal review before the THS renewal solicitations are issued.

##### **Multiple Levels of Education**

- Administrative revisions to Annex "A" (THS classifications) of the SA and SO for THS were expected to be made to address the classifications where multiple levels of education requirements are listed under the Minimum Mandatory Qualifications.
- It will be clarified that when multiple levels of education requirements are listed in Annex "A" (THS classifications) of the SA and SO, a bidder need only provide evidence of a resource's highest level education to meet the minimum mandatory requirements.

**Grandfather Certification**

- The next THS RFSA (EN578-060502/H) and RFSO (E60ZN-110002/E) will include Annex H for grandfather certification to allow existing suppliers to be grandfathered under THS. This has been modified to extend to the Code of Conduct (i.e. board of directors as provided in the last solicitation remain valid).

**Validity Period for Resource Security and Method of Payment**

- The next THS RFSA and RFSO will include updates to the RFS and RFA respectively to address the validity period for resource security, and the method of payment.

**#6. Implementation THS Utilization Reporting Update**

- An updated summary of THS quarterly utilization report(s) including Quarter 1 for fiscal year 2013 - 2014 was presented.
- Prior to Q1, a trend from SO to SA usage was evident.
- Supplier representatives expressed concern that the latest Q1 data suggests an increase in SO usage.
- Q2 data is expected to be available by October 15, 2013.
- PWGSC reported that existing databases for THS utilization report data are in the process of being migrated to MS Access 2007. It is expected that increased reporting capabilities will be available after this conversion.

**ACTION ITEMS:**

- PWGSC will compare the Q1 utilization report data to the Q2 data when it is available to determine if the Q1 data was just an anomaly.
- PWGSC will review the Q1 utilization report in relation to the reported spike in SO usage.

**#7. Update to the THS Website**

- PWGSC has published the minutes for meetings held from November 2012 to May 2013 on the THS website. Meeting minutes will continue to be published on an ongoing basis.

**#8. Update THS Training – Learning Harmonization**

- THS is in the process of purging the list of THS users in order that it will consist of “active” users only. This exercise is expected to be completed in October 2013, and it will ensure that when the THS online training module is launched, it will be directed to active THS users only.
- The THS online training module leverages information from the Professional Services (PS) online training modules, which the THSAC members were given the opportunity to provide feedback on, and to take into consideration for the development of the THS online training module.
- Piloting of the THS online training module is expected to start in 2014.

**ACTION ITEM:**

- THSAC members will be given access to a development version of the online training module for “Using PWGSC’s Standing Offers and Supply Arrangements to Obtain Temporary Help Services (THS) in the National Capital Area (NCA)”, and will be requested to provide feedback to THS by October 8, 2013,

**Postscript:**

- On September 30, 2013, THSAC members were notified that they could access the development version of the THS online training module via a hyperlink between September 24 and October 4, 2013, and they were requested to review the contents and provide comments back to THS by October 8, 2013. The deadline for feedback was later extended to October 15, 2013.

## #9. Round-table Questions

- It was agreed that the scheduling of regular THSAC meetings would be changed from monthly to every 2 months. This would not preclude the possibility of having an interim THSAC meeting when and if necessary.
- A supplier member identified a concern that some bidders have been known to falsify information (e.g. work experience) concerning personnel resources when responding to a THS RFA or RFS. PWGSC responded by noting that suppliers are supposed to be screening candidates to ensure that work experience is in line with the needed experience. Clients should be validating information as necessary, and are encouraged to conduct reference checks to validate the qualifications of resources whenever they deem necessary.
- Suppliers were reminded of the Code of Conduct, and the integrity of their actions. Clients are encouraged to validate, and report issues to the PWGSC THS Authority, which will be assessed on a case by case basis.
- An ACSESS member indicated knowledge and evidence of another supplier tampering with PWGSC forms in terms of restricting resource movement between THS suppliers and confirming resource availability. PWGSC requested that the items be tabled to PWGSC by providing the “manipulated” form.
- According to a supplier member, some clients including PWGSC are promoting the use of the SO for THS over the SA. A PWGSC client representative refuted this claim, and reported that this was not the case in his department.
- A supplier member suggested that THS users should be required to have minimum mandatory training before using the THS SO or SA. The member felt that THS should take the lead for this training, and that it should be clarified when the THS SA should be used instead of the SO.
- PWGSC believes that THS users should have broad procurement training (e.g. Statement of Work preparation, Bid evaluation etc.), which goes beyond the training specific to the THS tool that PWGSC currently provides, and commented that mandating functional specialist training for THS users might be an option at some point in the future.
- PWGSC noted that PWGSC or Treasury Board can't force clients to have specific procurement training as a prerequisite to using the THS SO or SA.
- An ACSESS member identified the following four principles that should guide THS users: honesty, integrity, fairness, and respect (for suppliers and suppliers' personnel).

### **ACTION ITEM:**

- More details concerning the document tampering incident mentioned above will be provided by the ACSESS member to PWGSC for review.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, November 26, 2013

Time: 1300 to 1330 Registration with Commissionaire

Meeting: 1330 to 1600 Meeting Timeslot

Location: Place du Portage, Phase III, Tower C – **PDP Boardroom 3C2 101**

### **Postscript:**

- PWGSC postponed the next meeting to **Thursday December 5, 2013** (Same timeslot, **PDP Boardroom 11C1 101**) due to member illnesses.

**Meeting adjourned at 16:05 pm**