

believe they may be entitled to additional benefits under the EUC08 program, or who wish to inquire about their rights under the program, should contact their State Workforce Agency.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Scott Gibbons, U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, Office of Unemployment Insurance, 200 Constitution Avenue NW., Frances Perkins Bldg. Room S-4524, Washington, DC 20210, telephone number (202) 693-3008 (this is not a toll-free number) or by email: gibbons.scott@dol.gov.

Signed in Washington, DC, this 16th day of February 2012.

Jane Oates,

Assistant Secretary, Employment and Training Administration.

[FR Doc. 2012-4294 Filed 2-23-12; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4510-FW-P

LEGAL SERVICES CORPORATION

Sunshine Act Meeting

DATE AND TIME: The Legal Services Corporation's Promotion & Provision for the Delivery of Legal Services Committee will meet March 9, 2012. The meeting will commence at 12 p.m., Eastern Standard Time, and will continue until the conclusion of the Committee's agenda.

LOCATION: F. William McCalpin Conference Center, Legal Services Corporation Headquarters Building, 3333 K Street NW., Washington, DC 20007.

PUBLIC OBSERVATION: Members of the public who are unable to attend but wish to listen to the public proceeding may do so by following the telephone call-in directions provided below but are asked to keep their telephones muted to eliminate background noises. From time to time the presiding Chair may solicit comments from the public.

CALL-IN DIRECTIONS FOR OPEN SESSIONS:

- Call toll-free number: 1-866-451-4981;
- When prompted, enter the following numeric pass code: 5907707348
- When connected to the call, please immediately "MUTE" your telephone.

STATUS OF MEETING: Open.

MATTERS TO BE CONSIDERED:

1. Approval of Agenda
2. Approval of minutes of the Committee's meeting of January 20, 2012
3. Discussion of Committee members' self-evaluations for 2011 and the Committee's goals for 2012

4. Discussion on use of video taping of Committee presentations for preservation and dissemination

5. Facilitating grantee staff to participate in "peer" review visits of other grantees and/or OPP program quality visits

6. Public comment

7. Consider and act on other business

8. Consider and act on adjournment of meeting

CONTACT PERSON FOR INFORMATION:

Katherine Ward, Executive Assistant to the Vice President & General Counsel, at (202) 295-1500. Questions may be sent by electronic mail to FR_NOTICE_QUESTIONS@lsc.gov.

ACCESSIBILITY: LSC complies with the American's with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act. Upon request, meeting notices and materials will be made available in alternative formats to accommodate individuals with disabilities. Individuals who need other accommodations due to disability in order to attend the meeting in person or telephonically should contact Katherine Ward, at (202) 295-1500 or FR_NOTICE_QUESTIONS@lsc.gov, at least 2 business days in advance of the meeting. If a request is made without advance notice, LSC will make every effort to accommodate the request but cannot guarantee that all requests can be fulfilled.

Dated: February 21, 2012.

Mattie Cohan,

Senior Assistant General Counsel.

[FR Doc. 2012-4441 Filed 2-22-12; 4:15 pm]

BILLING CODE 7050-01-P

NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

Notice of Buy American Waiver Under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009

AGENCY: National Science Foundation (NSF).

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: NSF is hereby granting a limited exemption of section 1605 of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Recovery Act), Public Law 111-5, 123 Stat. 115, 303 (2009), with respect to the purchase of the propulsion shaft bulkhead seals that will be used in the Alaska Region Research Vessel (ARRV). These seals protect the vessel from progressive flooding in the event of an emergency.

DATES: February 24, 2012.

ADDRESSES: National Science Foundation, 4201 Wilson Blvd., Arlington, Virginia 22230.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Jeffrey Leithead, Division of Acquisition and Cooperative Support, 703-292-4595.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: In accordance with section 1605(c) of the Recovery Act and section 176.80 of Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations, the National Science Foundation (NSF) hereby provides notice that on February 15, 2012, the NSF Chief Financial Officer, in accordance with a delegation order from the Director of the agency, granted a limited project exemption of section 1605 of the Recovery Act (Buy American provision) with respect to the propulsion shaft bulkhead seals that will be used in the ARRV. The basis for this exemption is section 1605(b)(2) of the Recovery Act, in that propulsion shaft bulkhead seals of satisfactory quality are not produced in the United States in sufficient and reasonably available commercial quantities. The total cost of the two required propulsion shaft bulkhead seals (~\$82,000) represents less than 0.1% of the total \$148 million Recovery Act award provided toward construction of the ARRV.

I. Background

The Recovery Act appropriated \$400 million to NSF for several projects being funded by the Foundation's Major Research Equipment and Facilities Construction (MREFC) account. The ARRV is one of NSF's MREFC projects. Section 1605(a) of the Recovery Act, the Buy American provision, states that none of the funds appropriated by the Act "may be used for a project for the construction, alteration, maintenance, or repair of a public building or public work unless all of the iron, steel, and manufactured goods used in the project are produced in the United States."

The ARRV has been developed under a cooperative agreement awarded to the University of Alaska, Fairbanks (UAF) that began in 2007. UAF executed the shipyard contract in December 2009 and the project is currently under construction. The purpose of the Recovery Act is to stimulate economic recovery in part by funding current construction projects like the ARRV that are "shovel ready" without requiring projects to revise their standards and specifications, or to restart the bidding process again.

Subsections 1605(b) and (c) of the Recovery Act authorize the head of a Federal department or agency to waive the Buy American provision if the head of the agency finds that: (1) Applying the provision would be inconsistent with the public interest; (2) the relevant

goods are not produced in the United States in sufficient and reasonably available quantities and of a satisfactory quality; or (3) the inclusion of the goods produced in the United States will increase the cost of the project by more than 25 percent. If the head of the Federal department or agency waives the Buy American provision, then the head of the department or agency is required to publish a detailed justification in the **Federal Register**. Finally, section 1605(d) of the Recovery Act states that the Buy American provision must be applied in a manner consistent with the United States' obligations under international agreements.

II. Finding That Relevant Goods Are Not Produced in the United States in Sufficient and Reasonably Available Quality

The ARRV is specifically designed to meet a low underwater radiated noise standard that relates to fish hearing (Specification Section 073.2). This standard is critical to science operations in that if the noise from the vessel is too high, the behavior of the species being studied will be changed, which negatively impacts the population data being collected. If the vessel does not meet this low underwater radiated noise standard, the science mission requirements will not be met. All modern research vessels are being built with low underwater noise in mind not only because of improved science capabilities but also because of the growing understanding of the negative environmental effects of noise in the water, particularly for marine mammals. One significant path for vessel noise to be transmitted into the water is from rotating or vibrating machinery that is in contact with elements of the ship's structure, such as bulkheads (walls) and decks (floors). The vibration then goes directly into the water from the hull. The way to prevent this is to eliminate direct contact with the ship's structure or lower it to acceptable levels using properly designed vibration mounts made of a flexible material, such as rubber or springs.

The ship's main propulsion shafts, which connect the electric drive motors to the azimuthing thrusters (Z-drive), are a significant source of vibration. The vessel has two main thruster units for speed, ice breaking, and maneuverability, and it therefore has two propulsion shafts. Originally, both the motor and the thruster were in the same compartment. However, the hull had to be lengthened six feet due to weight, which necessitated the creation of a separate motor room. Because of

U.S. Coast Guard requirements to prevent progress flooding between compartments in the event of damage to the hull, all penetrations (including the shaft) require a means to make the opening water tight. Therefore, the technical requirements that were developed by UAF for selecting the propulsion shaft bulkhead seals used in the ARRV include:

1. Certified by the American Bureau of Shipping (ABS).
2. Withstand water pressures when flooding in the hull is over 10 feet deep.
3. Sized to properly fit the diameter of the propulsion shaft.
4. Accommodate all angular and directional fluctuations of the shaft when rotating.
5. Accommodate shaft speeds up to 1079 RPM.
6. Suitable for the marine environment (temperatures, contact with sea water, bilge water, etc.).
7. Be split seal/housing type to allow installation and/or removal after shaft installation.
8. Be non-contact type under normal operations to prevent shaft vibration from transmitting to the hull.

Failure to meet any of these technical requirements would jeopardize safety and operability, and would prevent the vessel from meeting the specified low underwater radiated noise requirements.

The unique aspect of the MIDE Marine propulsion shaft bulkhead seal is its hydrogel embedded foam. This foam enables the seal to not contact the rotating shaft during the majority of its life. When a flooding event occurs, the hydrogel embedded foam uses the water from the flooding to swell and provide a robust and reliable seal against the shaft, protecting the vessel from progressive flooding. Rigorous testing to U.S. Navy standards has demonstrated that the seal can operate for up to 1,000 hours with the seal engaged after a flooding. By not normally contacting the shaft the seal has no wearing components (which means less maintenance and easier installation), and for the ARRV has the added benefit of not transmitting any shaft vibrations to the hull. In an emergency situation, meeting the low underwater radiated noise standards is of no concern. MIDE Marine is a U.S. company based in Massachusetts, but manufactures their product overseas.

The shipyard conducted trade publication and web based searches for bulkhead and shaft seals of all types. A web search generated an initial list of 189 U.S. companies that might manufacture the required seal type. Ultimately, the list was reduced to forty (40) by researching those that had

marine applications. A detailed review of the forty (40) remaining companies was conducted and only one company (MIDE Marine) was found to have an ARRV compliant non-contact type propulsion shaft bulkhead seal. Further discussion with MIDE Marine revealed that the seals are manufactured overseas. The shipyard decided to pursue the propulsion shaft bulkhead seal available from MIDE Marine, a U.S.-owned company, as the only supplier whose product meets technical requirements, but this purchase still requires an exemption due to foreign manufacture.

In the absence of a domestic manufacturer that could provide requirements-compliant propulsion shaft bulkhead seals, UAF requested that NSF issue a Section 1605 exemption determination with respect to the purchase of foreign-supplied, requirements-compliant propulsion shaft bulkhead seals, so that the vessel will meet the specific design and technical requirements that, as explained above, are necessary for this vessel to be able to perform its mission successfully. Furthermore, the shipyard's market research indicated that propulsion shaft bulkhead seals compliant with the ARRV's technical specifications and requirements are commercially available from a U.S. company within their standard product line, but are manufactured overseas, which necessitates an exemption.

NSF's Division of Acquisition and Cooperative Support (DACS) and other NSF program staff reviewed the UAF exemption request submittal, found that it was complete, and determined that sufficient technical information was provided in order for NSF to evaluate the exemption request and to conclude that an exemption is needed and should be granted.

III. Exemption

On February 15, 2012, based on the finding that no domestically produced propulsion shaft bulkhead seals meet all of the ARRV's technical specifications and requirements and pursuant to section 1605(b), the NSF Chief Financial Officer, in accordance with a delegation order from the Director of the agency signed on May 27, 2010, granted a limited project exemption of the Recovery Act's Buy American requirements with respect to the procurement of propulsion shaft bulkhead seals.

Dated: February 17, 2012.

Lawrence Rudolph,
General Counsel.

[FR Doc. 2012-4235 Filed 2-23-12; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7555-01-P

NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

Notice of Buy American Waiver Under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009

AGENCY: National Science Foundation (NSF).

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: NSF is hereby granting a limited exemption of section 1605 of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Recovery Act), Public Law 111-5, 123 Stat. 115, 303 (2009), with respect to the purchase of the superior holding power balanced anchors that will be used in the Alaska Region Research Vessel (ARRV). These anchors are required in order to accommodate the vessel's ice breaking bow shape and they will save weight.

DATES: February 24, 2012.

ADDRESSES: National Science Foundation, 4201 Wilson Blvd., Arlington, Virginia 22230.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Jeffrey Leithead, Division of Acquisition and Cooperative Support, 703-292-4595.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: In accordance with section 1605(c) of the Recovery Act and section 176.80 of Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations, the National Science Foundation (NSF) hereby provides notice that on February 15, 2012, the NSF Chief Financial Officer, in accordance with a delegation order from the Director of the agency, granted a limited project exemption of section 1605 of the Recovery Act (Buy American provision) with respect to the superior holding power balanced anchors that will be used in the ARRV. The basis for this exemption is section 1605(b)(2) of the Recovery Act, in that superior holding power balanced anchors of satisfactory quality are not produced in the United States in sufficient and reasonably available commercial quantities. The total cost of the three (3) required anchors (~\$42,360) represents less than 0.1% of the total \$148 million Recovery Act award provided for construction of the ARRV.

I. Background

The Recovery Act appropriated \$400 million to NSF for several projects being funded by the Foundation's Major

Research Equipment and Facilities Construction (MREFC) account. The ARRV is one of NSF's MREFC projects. Section 1605(a) of the Recovery Act, the Buy American provision, states that none of the funds appropriated by the Act "may be used for a project for the construction, alteration, maintenance, or repair of a public building or public work unless all of the iron, steel, and manufactured goods used in the project are produced in the United States."

The ARRV has been developed under a cooperative agreement awarded to the University of Alaska, Fairbanks (UAF) that began in 2007. UAF executed the shipyard contract in December 2009 and the project is currently under construction. The purpose of the Recovery Act is to stimulate economic recovery in part by funding current construction projects like the ARRV that are "shovel ready" without requiring projects to revise their standards and specifications, or to restart the bidding process again.

Subsections 1605(b) and (c) of the Recovery Act authorize the head of a Federal department or agency to waive the Buy American provision if the head of the agency finds that: (1) Applying the provision would be inconsistent with the public interest; (2) the relevant goods are not produced in the United States in sufficient and reasonably available quantities and of a satisfactory quality; or (3) the inclusion of the goods produced in the United States will increase the cost of the project by more than 25 percent. If the head of the Federal department or agency waives the Buy American provision, then the head of the department or agency is required to publish a detailed justification in the **Federal Register**. Finally, section 1605(d) of the Recovery Act states that the Buy American provision must be applied in a manner consistent with the United States' obligations under international agreements.

II. Finding That Relevant Goods Are Not Produced in the United States in Sufficient and Reasonably Available Quality

The specification for the ARRV originally called for standard "stockless" anchors (the stock is the cross arm below the ring on an old-fashioned style anchor), which are in common use on commercial and military vessels. The design requirements in the specification for the anchoring system on the ARRV include:

1. Approved by the American Bureau of Shipping with regard to operability, quality and size/holding power (6,000 lbs).

2. The anchors drop immediately upon release.

3. The anchors do not jam in the hawse pipe (chain pipe between the hull and deck).

4. The anchors do not move when stowed in heavy seas.

5. The anchors "self-stow" against the hull.

Failure to meet any of these technical requirements would have severe negative impacts on safety. Anchors are required not only for routine use in port or during operations, but in an emergency situation (for example, the loss of propulsion) to keep the vessel from going aground, damaging the hull and sinking. In this situation, the anchors must release from the ship quickly and efficiently. If proper anchors are not used, the safety of the vessel and the lives of everyone on board would be jeopardized. The ARRV is approved by the American Bureau of Shipping (ABS) to ensure safe design, construction, and vessel operation.

Since proper storage of the anchors in the bow of the ship is often difficult to achieve, the specification also called for the shipyard to construct a physical mock-up of the anchoring system, which includes the anchors, anchor pockets (recesses in the bow that keep the anchors from protruding beyond the hull), hawse pipes, and anchor winches. Through this process, it was found that the stockless anchor would not store properly in the pockets that were required to accommodate the ARRV's specialized ice-breaking bow. To protect the anchors during ice operations, the pockets were originally set as high in the bow as possible. The only way to make the stockless anchor work would be to put the pockets excessively close to the water line, but that would be contrary to American Bureau of Shipping and international regulatory guidance for ice-classed vessels. Through continued testing with the mock-up, it was found that only a "balanced" anchor would work with the pockets in the proper location. A balanced anchor always stows with the flukes (the "hooks" that penetrate into the bottom) in the same position.

The specification originally called for three (3) anchors; one on each side of the bow and one spare on deck. This configuration is typical for all commercial and military vessels. As part of the design effort to reduce weight, the shipyard originally proposed eliminating the spare anchor, which was not considered prudent by UAF. As an option, the use of three smaller, lighter "superior" holding power anchors was proposed during the anchoring system evaluation. This