

AFTER ACTION REPORT

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
410th Contracting Support Brigade
2450 Stanley Road, STE 320
Fort Sam Houston Texas 78234-6102

MEMORANDUM FOR COL William A. Sanders, Brigade Commander

FROM: MAJ Nile L. Clifton, Contracting Officer

SUBJECT: After Action Report, 01 June 2010-19 September 2010, Port Au Prince, Haiti

1. This after action report is prepared IAW Brigade Policy
2. The following is information regarding the mission location itself:

Deployed Location: Port Au Prince / Gonaives / Saint Marc, Haiti

Deployed CCOs: MAJ Nile L. Clifton; SFC Darrick Bell

Duration of Site Survey: 01 June 2010-September 2010-19 September 2010

Duration of Deployment: 01 June 2010-19 September 2010

Contingency Purpose: In support of the NH10 Task Force (TF) efforts in Gonaives, Saint Marc and Port Au Prince (PaP), Haiti.

3. *Potential Sources of Supply:* See attached finalized payment tracker spreadsheet for list of vendors utilized by Task Force Kout-Man (Helping Hands). All of these vendors were also used during Operation Unified Response (OUR) and will be available should another Humanitarian Assistance Disaster Relief (HA/DR) mission arise. Most businesses are small, independently owned and operated. However, most of the well established businesses such as HAYTRAC (Caterpillar Dealer), Access Haiti (internet), Avis, Dollar, Budget and Europcar (rental cars) DRC Haiti / DRC Emergency Services (latrines, light sets) are family owned or are U.S. owned and operated firms and have operated in Haiti for decades.

a. *Host Nation Support:* We currently have no host nation support in the conduct of our contracts. Due to the current Haitian Government situation (earthquake and pending elections), the ability to react quickly to a request from the U.S Government, other than providing access to the country or providing National Police or Security Forces is diminished and would not be in the best interest of the U.S. Government.

b. *U.S. Embassy (USAID Simplified Acquisition Executive Office [SAO]):* During Operation Unified Response (OUR) and during support to NH10 Haiti, we were able to establish relationships with the contracting / agreement office at USAID run by Mr. Sunil Xavier. Mr. Xavier fully support cooperating with our efforts in Haiti and sends any potential vendors who inquiring about doing business with the U.S Government to our office.

In addition to Mr. Xavier, there are additional USAID personnel that are able to assist with specified life support requirements (fuel) and vendors who have or are supporting the U.S. Embassy in Haiti with support. Below is a brief description of the people and what their offices can provide in the way of assistance and information that can affect our contracting mission.

Mr. Chris Gomes, Executive Officer, Simplified Acquisition Office (SAO). This section manages Property management and all contracting actions under \$100,000. This office has several sections within his office to include the USAID Office of Procurement and works closely with any OFDA deployment team that arrives in country in the event of any HA/DR missions. Use this office as our initial entry point for contracts and for any updates on vendors who may be on the barred list for doing business with the U.S. Government.

Also under Mr. Chris Gomes is Mrs. Rose Emmanuel Nichols who works as a USAID Procurement Analyst. Her responsibilities include emplacing and managing all acquisitions up to \$250,000. She has reviewed out current vendor list and acknowledges that there are no vendors who were on the “barred” list with the USAID Contracting Executive Offices. Mrs. Nichols can provide additional vendors to the 410th and has agreed to work with us in the future.

Mrs. Nichols can assist with any fuel requirements for any potential JTF or HA/DR initial entry forces. The Embassy utilizes three (3) vendors that support the U.S. Embassy fuel requirements. These vendors are SOL, DINISA (business name NATIONAL) and TOTAL. The Embassy has a BPA with DINISA and her office can support any fuel requirements through the current BPA. Money can be MIPR'd from ARSOUTH to the MLO and the MLO would request the fuel on behalf of the military. Utilizing her office would negate the U.S. military from paying taxes and any Government of Haiti (GOH) fees.

Also under the USAID umbrella but not centrally located at the U.S Embassy in Haiti are Ms. Sara McElroy (202-712-0744; smcelroy@usaid.gov), and Ms. Katherine (Kate) Legates (305-437-3648 / 571-278-2469; klegates@usaid.gov), USAID, Office of Foreign Disaster Relief (OFDA). Mrs Legates is the SOUTHCOM USAID OFDA Contact for our Area of Responsibility.

OFDA specializes in foreign disaster relief specifically designed and tailored to provide commodities rapidly, anywhere in the world within the first critical hours and days. OFDA currently has Indefinite Quantity Contracts (IDC) in place with vendors in countries or nearby countries where disasters are most prone (Haiti is one of those countries identified).

OFDA has specialized teams called the Disaster Assistance Relief Team or D.A.R.T. These teams are made up of small numbers to personnel to include procurement and medical specialists, to include a military liaison (MLO). The MLO is specifically designed to interface

with the military to assist in procuring any items needed during the initial response and continue to coordinate and foster the working relationship with D.A.R.T, USAID and the military.

This is an untapped resource that could greatly assist our missions and could fundamentally change how we are able to provide support during disasters and provide support to any Task Force or Joint Task Force.

Overall, USAID Contracting has a good relationship with 410th Contracting personnel supporting the Task Force. The 410th should continue to develop and foster this relationship by periodic coordination and information sharing with SAO.

(1) KEY USAID PERSONNEL CONTACTED/ VISITED:

- Mr. Sunil Xavier, Director, USAID Contracting
- Mr. Christopher R. Gomes, Executive Officer, Simplified Acquisitions Office, USAID
- Mrs. Rose Emmanuel Nichols, Executive for the USAID Office of Procurement.
- Mrs. Sara McElroy, Contracting Administrator, USAID, Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA)
- Ms. Katherine (Kate) Legates, Contracting Administrator, SOUTHCOM USAID, Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA)
- Mr. Leo Voyko, Management Council/Business Manager, USAID Contracting
- Mr. Charles Knight, Executive Officer, Simplified Acquisitions Office, USAID
- Mrs. Susan Voth, Assistant General Service Officer, Department of State

c. *Military Liaison Office (MLO)*: This office has rotated new personnel into the office since August 2010. The relationship between the MLO and the 410th Contracting personnel was nonexistent in the past. However, after coordinating efforts during the NH10 Haiti mission, the 410th and MLO have developed a good working relationship and currently, the MLO is very willing to support and work with our contracting efforts within the limits of their office.

The new Chief of the MLO-Haiti, Commander John Reed and his primary staff leadership, LTC Clifton Sawyer and Commander Harold Pierre, have reached out to the 410th for vendor list support. The MLO will be vital for immediate support during any Humanitarian Assistance/Disaster Relief mission with the JTF in the future.

Contact with the MLO should be made weeks in advance of travel to Haiti. This is in order to support access to the Embassy through the Regional Security Office (RSO). Personnel must carry their JPAS security clearance papers with them at all times in order to gain access to the Embassy, even if coordination has been made prior to arrival. If the deployment is from 90-120 or longer, a picture badge can be acquired through the MLO so an escort is not necessary. The MLO will be vital for immediate support during any Humanitarian Assistance/Disaster Relief (HA/DR) mission with the JTF in the future.

d. Local Transportation, Billeting, and Communication Resource Availability:

(1). During NH10 Haiti, we have utilized Firm Fixed Price (FFP) Contracts and BPAs with local car rental agencies in order to meet all the transportation requirements. A shortage of rental

vehicles exists throughout the country due to local rental car vendors' support of outside aid organizations and the UN. Most vehicles available are passenger vans, 4x4 four door trucks and four door Sport Utility Vehicles (SUVs). GPC card or paying agent on site are the preferred methods of payment by vendors. However, research must be done to determine if vendors can accept GPC payments. Because of the lack of infrastructure in Haiti, many vendors have no capabilities to use credit cards and only accept checks or cash.

(2). Cellular phones are the primary means of communication throughout the country with most LAN lines being severed. Recommend looking into the possibility of purchasing cellular phones that are compatible with the service provided overseas for each contingency kit. The Task Force purchased cell phones through DIGICEL with a business plan and had unlimited cell phone to cell phone service without having to purchase cards to put minutes on the phones. The cost to purchase twenty-five (25) cell phones were less than \$3000 and should be looked at as an option if we have additional missions in Haiti.

(3). Internet service is challenging across Haiti. The use of the BGAN communication system is critical to operations in Haiti. Any internet service, to include use of the BGAN is severely hindered by weather and rain. The last resort is to gain internet access through the U.S. Embassy. There is wireless capability at the swimming pool area or through a hard line in the Embassy building. In order to gain entry to the Embassy, you must be sponsored by the MLO and have a copy of your JPAS security paperwork.

(4). Billeting is a challenge in Haiti. The earthquake destroyed the Montana Hotel, which was the main hotel used by U.S military and U. S Embassy hotel for trips. However, in the Port Au Prince area, there is one (1) hotel that can accommodate a large group of personnel (five double rooms or larger) and that is the La Plaza Hotel, located in downtown Port Au Prince. This hotel can comfortably accommodate up to sixty (60) double rooms and forty (40) single rooms and has two (2) suites available for distinguished guests. The La Plaza has numerous conference rooms which to conduct business meetings and has a restaurant for breakfast, lunch and dinner meals. Outside of the Port Au Prince area, there are two (2) hotels that can house large groups, the Moulin Sur Mer and Club Indigo, both located in the Saint Marc area. All of these hotels have wireless internet capability in the restaurant or pool areas however; the La Plaza Hotel is the only hotel that has wireless capability in the rooms.

None of these hotels have passed the veterinarian food or water inspections. Water from these hotels cannot be used to prepare food or conduct personal hygiene other than showers and shaving. Brushing teeth should be done by an approved U.S. bottled water source. If contracts are awarded to these hotels, bottled water must be from an approved U.S. bottled water company. Bottled water can be added to lodging contracts for food preparation if needed. The COR must be present for breakfast and dinner food preparation to ensure U.S military and foreign national personnel directly supporting the mission do not get sick.

4. Issues/Problems Affecting Contracting Process:

(a) The workweek is Monday through Saturday. Businesses are open 0800-1530 with businesses closing at noon on Saturday. There are no businesses open on Sunday. Unlike the United States, the use of the internet is not a priority. It can be several days before an answer is reached through e-mail. Vendors can be reached by cell phone or by going to see them face to face at their business. This is the preferred method for most vendors.

(b) Inadequate item descriptions were given on Performance Work Statements (PWS). The majorities of the PWSs received were generic and cut and paste from previous exercises and not customized for the Haiti environment. On numerous occasions, incorrect dates were provided and slang terminology was used. The use of U.S. based measuring numbers were used instead of utilizing the metric system or terms for heavy equipment were used that were unfamiliar to the Haitian vendors. *Pictures are a tremendous resource in assisting vendors in determining exactly what requirement is needed.*

Contracts should be written clearly and concisely, so vendors know exactly what is expected. Contracting personnel should meet or at a minimum, speak with potential vendors, prior to the solicitation phase of the contracting process, to determine how vendors invoice or charge for services (by day, week, month, hour, cubic meter...etc). Finally, good rapport and open and candid communication with vendors will prevent payment delays and problems during the performance of the contract.

(c) French and Creole are the main languages spoken in Haiti; most people can understand and speak English. It is important to use translators (rental car driver, or TF interpreters) to clearly communicate your point when speaking with local nationals or laborers who are performing the work on the contracts.

(d) There is no shortage in unskilled laborers. However, Haiti lacks specialized/technical expertise personnel. Generally the TF or unit who is being supported can supply the necessary expertise to correct most issues. However, due diligence should be taken when locating any technical laborer. A good resource to reach to is USAID who can supply a list of personnel who can perform these mechanical issues.

(e) Next year, ARSOUTH is looking at having the NH11 in CAP Haitian Haiti. Research has been done through vendors in the Port Au Prince area and through USAID Contracting Executives and it has been determined that most of the vendors who have the capability to support large and relatively complicated requirements will have to come from the central industrial base in Port Au Prince, Haiti. Delivery charges and the ability to support requirements quickly will be severely limited the farther away from PaP the mission is. Vendors supporting missions in CAP Haitian will travel up to seven (7) hours and longer depending on the type of vehicle, to support operations. The roads to this location are over mountains and many roads are unimproved. There are long stretches of roads that are not lit and are very dangerous to travel on at night.

The SPOD at CAP Haitian has the same capabilities as the seaport in PaP. The container/vehicle holding area are smaller but can support any Task Force Seaport Operations. Vendors in

CAP Haitian can support small quantity requests for rental vehicles, rebar (Haitian standard), concrete, sand, concrete aggregate and some bulk water capabilities. The ability to support large life support / mission requirements is scarce and vendors from PaP should be utilized to support requirements. Outside of PaP, the Dominican Republic can support the NH11 mission with equipment and resources. These vendors have a more robust equipment and transportation base. However, transportation can be problematic at the border crossing, which can delay receipt of equipment for weeks.

All service type requirements should be identified well in advance and CCOs should deploy with funding for initial requirements.

5. *Special Notice for future COs*: In the future, contracting officers must insert themselves early and often in the mission planning process. This will alleviate issues with the PWS and SOW's. It also allows the contracting team to begin to identify vendors, make initial contact and begin to inform the vendors of future requirements.

6. *CCO Training Recommendations*: Although these missions are "exercises" to the requiring activity, it is a real-world contracting mission for the 410th and CCTs. Teams must be trained in contingency contracting operations and competent enough to operate autonomously; making sound contracting decisions. Continue to train on basic contracting skills through classes provided at the Mission Installation Contracting Command (MICC), 410th CSB /916th CSBn and training through the 802nd Contracting Squadron at Lackland AFB.

Teams should train on the use of the BGAN for internet service in potentially austere locations and develop alternative communication sources to prevent delays in the ability to provide contracting support.

7. *Success Stories*: The relationship between the Task Force S4, Contracting and ARSOUTH G8 was strong. This only occurred because all parties involved had open, candid lines of communication between each other and with the vendors. We trained each other on what our responsibilities were and were a united front when addressing vendors or contracting issues. Contracting and G8 personnel should inject themselves into, and become a part of the Task Force. This instills a sense of camaraderie and trust rather than the Task Force viewing contracting as an outsider, removed from the process.

8. *Lessons Learned*: Face to face meeting with vendors and the customer to discuss any issues / concerns with the contract performance or payment issues should be a "best practice". This alleviates any language barriers and misunderstandings when communicating through phone or internet. In addition, these meetings allowed the Task Force and contracting personnel to discuss future requirements and allowed vendors to begin gathering resources and sub-contractors in order to be competitive during the solicitation phase.

9. Please contact MAJ Nile Clifton or SFC Darrick Bell 210-295-5875 or 210-295-6129 for any questions or additional information on Haiti.

MAJ NILE L. CLIFTON JR.
Contracting Officer
410th Contracting Support Brigade

Attachments:

1. Vendor List/ Payment Tracker
2. Final Lessons Learned and Quad Chart Outbrief