Adding Environmental Attributes to Federal Procurement Requirements (Task N.135)

Statement of Need

The Federal Government is required by law, Executive Orders, and other federal and departmental policies to reduce waste and minimize the environmental impacts of its activities. In most cases, this task begins with the acquisition of goods and services. Through the procurement of environmentally preferred products, federal agencies can minimize the use of hazardous or toxic substances, promote the use of recycled materials, improve energy efficiency, reduce the volume of waste for disposal, improve worker health and safety, reduce operating costs, and save taxpayer dollars.

The National Defense Center for Environmental Excellence (NDCEE) was tasked by the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) and the Joint Group-Environmental Attributes (JG-EnvAtt) Steering Committee to identify, evaluate, and summarize federal directives that are relevant to meeting the objectives as set forth by the Joint Logistics Commanders (JLCs). This project is in the Conservation Pillar.

Identified Alternatives

For the initial focus of this effort, two high-priority environmental attributes were selected for evaluation: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Comprehensive Procurement Guidelines (CPG) and Department of Energy (DOE)-designated energy efficient products. The selection criteria, as defined by the JG-EnvAtt Steering Committee, included three items: department policy priority, definability, and life-cycle cost benefit. Other environmental attributes will be considered at a later date. Thirty potential environmental attributes are being considered for eventual inclusion in this task.

Demonstration and Justification

Environmental Attribute Codes (ENACs) will be generated for the environmental attributes that are being evaluated. The ENACs will be two-digit alphanumeric codes that will be used to sort products that are contained in the Federal Logistics Information System (FLIS): a database that contains procurement information for the Federal Government. Each of these product codes contains 240 code elements including national stock number, manufacturer's name, procuring agency, and standard price. The proposed ENACs would become part of the product code for each product.

Subject to the results of this initial effort, other environmental attributes will be added to the FLIS in the future. This is contingent on positive results and a favorable recommendation from the Steering Committee as well as a favorable response from the JLCs. Using recycled materials and energy-efficient products will save money for the Federal Government.

Government POCs
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Status
Completed

Implementation

The designated ENACs will be added by the DLA to the FLIS. The system will be tested by the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, EPA, DOE, and other federal agencies. Training of future federal users will be required. A feedback mechanism to evaluate benefits will be developed. These and other discussion issues will form the basis of future Steering Committee meetings. The NDCEE is available to support the Steering Committee in future testing/training/transitioning activities.

Follow-Up

Future work will be aimed toward selecting and evaluating additional attributes and communicating the results to interested Government organizations.