Selection Statement for the
Acquisition and Business Support Services (ABSS) Contract

Request for Quotation (RFQ) No. NNM05Z32001Q

On August 31, 2005, I, along with other senior officials of the Marshall Space Flight Center (MSFC), met with the Source Evaluation Committee (SEC) appointed to evaluate quotations in connection with the Acquisition and Business Support Services (ABSS) acquisition.

I. PROCUREMENT DESCRIPTION

On July 7, 2005, I appointed members of the SEC which included representation from the Space Systems Programs/Projects Office, the Office of the Chief Financial Officer, and the Office of Procurement. Advisors with specific subject matter expertise were also appointed to support the SEC. The SEC utilized the predetermined evaluation factors and subfactors in formulating its assessment of the strengths and weaknesses for each Quoter.

This procurement was conducted in accordance with Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) Part 8 and GSA special ordering procedures permitted by FAR 8.402, utilizing GSA Federal Supply Schedule (FSS) 874-V, “Logistics Worldwide (LOGWORLD),” and as supplemented by GSA Solicitation TFTP-MB-008745-B (Refresh No. 2).

GSA included the following language in the Schedule to promote the use of small business by ordering activities: “When buying logistics services under Special Item Numbers 874-501 through 874-509, the ordering office, at its discretion, may limit consideration to those schedule contractors that are small business concerns. The limitation shall only be used when at least three (3) small businesses that offer services that will meet the agency needs are available, if the order is estimated to exceed the micro-purchase threshold.” This limitation was appropriate as market research revealed that a significant number of small businesses held the LOGWORLD Schedule and could provide the services required.

Sixteen small businesses had expressed an interest in this procurement. Additional time was included in the acquisition schedule to allow for any of these businesses to get on the LOGWORLD Schedule if they were not already on contract to GSA for this Schedule.

A Request for Information (RFI) was issued on April 12, 2005, to these sixteen small businesses to receive information regarding their compensation plans. Twelve small businesses responded to the RFI.

The Request for Quotations (RFQ) was issued on June 24, 2005, to seven of the twelve RFI respondents. The RFQ required Quoters to provide Acquisition and Business Support Services utilizing a performance-based contract. This procurement provides a prime contractor to perform, in a supporting role, acquisition and business support services. These services can include a wide range of operational and administrative disciplines in support of the Office of the Chief Financial Officer (CFO), the Office of Procurement, and other Offices and Directorates for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)/George C. Marshall Space Flight Center (MSFC), AL. This contract contains Organizational Conflict of Interest (OCI) and Limitation on Future Contracting clauses which prohibit the contractor from having any other contracts with NASA/MSFC as either a prime or any tier subcontractor. The awarded contract will be a performance based Firm-Fixed-Price Indefinite Delivery/ Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ) contract. Performance will be assessed through the use of surveys to determine price deductions for less than optimum performance. The period of performance will consist of one base year and four option years.

Two amendments were issued to the RFQ:

Amendment No. 1 was issued on July 11, 2005, answered questions received from industry regarding the RFQ and made clarifying revisions to the RFQ.

Amendment No. 2 issued on July 15, 2005, answered additional questions from industry regarding the RFQ, made additional clarifying revisions to the RFQ and the Model Order, and extended the due date for Volumes I, II, and IV to July 27, 2005.

On July 19, 2005, Volume III, Past Performance, was received from the following companies:

Belzon, Inc.
6767 Old Madison Pike, Suite 135
Huntsville, Alabama 35806

Digital Fusion Solutions, Inc.
4940A Corporate Drive
Huntsville, Alabama 35805

Eagle Systems & Services, Inc.
6221 West Gore Boulevard
Lawton, Oklahoma 73505

Quantum Research International, Inc.
991 Discovery Drive
Huntsville, Alabama 35806

On July 27, 2005, Volume I, Mission Suitability, Volume II, Price Factor, and Volume IV, Model Order were received from the following companies:

Belzon, Inc.
6767 Old Madison Pike, Suite 135
Huntsville, Alabama 35806

Digital Fusion Solutions, Inc.
4940A Corporate Drive
Huntsville, Alabama 35805

Eagle Systems & Services, Inc.
6221 West Gore Boulevard
Lawton, Oklahoma 73505

Quantum Research International, Inc. did not provide the additional volumes and provided correspondence that the company would not be pursuing this acquisition further.

II. EVALUATION PROCEDURES

The quotations were evaluated in accordance with procedures prescribed by the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) and the NASA FAR Supplement (NFS). The Government evaluated the quotations in two general steps:

First – An initial evaluation was performed to determine if all information had been provided and that the Quoter had made a reasonable attempt to present an acceptable quotation. None of the Quoters were determined to be unacceptable.

Second – The acceptable quotations were evaluated against the three evaluation factors contained in the RFQ (i.e., mission suitability, price, and past performance). Based on this evaluation, the Government had the option, depending on the specific circumstances, to utilize one of the following methods: (1) Make selection and award without discussions; or (2) after discussions with the Quoters found to be within the competitive range, afford each Quoter an opportunity to revise its quotation, and then make selection.

Selection and award was in accordance with the evaluation factors set forth in the Instructions to Quoters section of the RFQ. Therefore, this selection was based on the best combination of technical merit (i.e., Mission Suitability score), Past Performance and Price. The evaluation was based on the premise that, if all quotations were of approximately equal merit with regard to Mission Suitability and Past Performance, award would be made to the Quoter with the lowest evaluated Price. However, the Government would consider awarding to a Quoter with a higher Mission Suitability score and higher Past Performance rating if the difference in Price was commensurate with added value. Conversely, the Government would consider making award to a Quoter whose quotation had a lower Mission Suitability score and a lower Past Performance rating if the Price differential between it and other quotations warranted doing so.

The RFQ prescribed three evaluation factors considered essential in a quotation: Mission Suitability, Price, and Past Performance. Quoters were advised that the three factors were essentially equal in importance. However, per FAR 15.304(e), Quoters were informed that all evaluation factors other than price, when combined, were significantly more important than price.

Mission Suitability: The quotations were assessed to determine the excellence of the proposed approach for satisfying the PWS and the Quoter's ability to perform. Mission Suitability consisted of four subfactors and received both an adjective rating and a numerical score:

A. Technical and Management Approach (300 points)
B. Staffing (400 points)
C. Key Personnel (200 points)
D. Safety and Health (100 points)

Each Quoter could receive a total of 1000 points in Mission Suitability. The applicable adjective ratings were "Excellent," "Very Good," "Good," "Fair," and "Poor." The definitions for the adjective ratings and percentile ranges are contained in the SEC Evaluation Plan.

Price: The adequacy, reasonableness and realism of the proposed fully burdened labor rates and burden rates applied to other direct costs were evaluated for each Quoter. The total estimated price for the base period and all option periods, as computed using the Government's IDIQ Evaluated Price Formula, were combined together, evaluated, and an evaluated price was reported to the Source Selection Authority (SSA). A confidence level assessment of the evaluated price of each quotation was made and reported to the SSA. Phase-in price was evaluated for adequacy and realism, and reported to the SSA. No adjustments were made to the Quoters' fully burdened labor rates or other direct costs burdens.

The proposed percentages for price deductions, as well as the entire quotation, were evaluated to determine is the Quoter would be adequately incentivized through order completion, and whether there would be excessive financial risk that could endanger satisfactory order performance.

Past Performance: The Quoter's overall corporate past performance, to include the corporate past performance of any proposed subcontractors (as opposed to that of proposed key personnel), on comparable or related procurement/project efforts was evaluated. Emphasis was given to the extent of direct relevant corporate experience and quality of past performance on previous contracts/orders that were relevant to the effort as defined in the RFQ. The Quoter's Lost Time Injury Rate (LTIR) was evaluated and reported to the SSA. The Quoter's voluntary turnover history for the past 3 years was also evaluated and reported to the SSA. This area was not numerically scored, but assigned an adjective rating and reported to the SSA for consideration in making the selection. The applicable adjective ratings were "Excellent," "Very Good," "Good," "Fair," and "Poor" as set forth in the SEC Evaluation Plan.

III. EVALUATION OF QUOTATIONS

All quotations received were determined to be acceptable and were evaluated consistent with the criteria identified in the RFQ. The findings of the Source Evaluation Committee were presented to me, the Source Selection Authority (SSA), on August 31, 2005. The quotation evaluation results are summarized below.

Belzon, Inc. (BI)

In the **Mission Suitability Factor**, this quotation did not have any deficiencies. This quotation received an adjective rating of Fair in Mission Suitability.

Under the **Technical and Management Approach Subfactor**, this quotation received an adjective rating of Good. BI received one significant strength, two strengths, one significant weakness, and no weaknesses. These findings, as summarized, include the following:

Significant Strengths: 1

BI is a local company near MSFC with the Program Manager having full authority and complete autonomy to manage all activities associated with this contract.

Strengths: 2

BI has an automated system, "Program Control Status," for task management to measure, evaluate and report cost and schedule performance.

BI utilizes a mentor/protégé process to cross-train employees and to provide on-the-job training for new and junior employees.

Significant Weaknesses: 1

BI does not fully understand the Performance Work Statement (PWS) requirements as demonstrated by their plan to use contract administrators, general clerks and procurement analysts to support the Business Support function. In addition, their plan to integrate their Project Control System with NASA's IFM software highlights their lack of understanding of the capabilities provided by the technical tools available to the Quoter.

Under the **Staffing Subfactor**, this quotation received an adjective rating of Poor. BI received no significant strengths, one strength, four significant weaknesses, and two weaknesses. These findings, as summarized, include the following:

<u>Strengths</u>: 1

BI proposed to provide Phase-in at no cost to the Government.

<u>Significant Weaknesses</u>: 4

BI's mapping of the company's labor categories to MSFC positions shows a lack of understanding of the MSFC positions as demonstrated by mapping non-exempt clerical categories to exempt professional categories.

BI submitted "target" direct labor rates instead of firm fixed price, as required by the RFQ and as demonstrated by their intent to apply a ±20% range variance to quoted labor rates.

BI's proposed salaries for exempt personnel do not meet IGCE levels and introduce staffing risks. Also, the maximum vacation allowance of 3 weeks after 5 years is noncompliant with Service Contract Act (SCA) requirements of 4 weeks after 20 years. Otherwise, the compensation package benefits would have been adequate to current employees (good insurance, retirement, etc.).

BI provided no evidence of the availability and commitment of any incumbent personnel.

<u>Weaknesses</u>: 2

BI accepted excessive staffing risk by relying primarily on the 2-week phase-in period to give them time to staff the contract adequately with qualified personnel.

BI did not provide the IRDT-CS templates for separate fully burdened overtime labor rates for all non-exempt labor categories as required by the RFQ.

Under the **Key Personnel Subfactor**, this quotation received an adjective rating of Very Good. BI received one significant strength, no strengths, no significant weaknesses, and no weaknesses. These findings, as summarized, include the following:

<u>Significant Strengths</u>: 1

BI proposed a Program Manager who is well qualified, with on-site MSFC experience and with some experience with MSFC Acquisition and Business practices and processes. References are very good.

Under the **Safety and Health Subfactor**, this quotation received an adjective rating of Fair. BI received no significant strengths, no strengths, no significant weaknesses, and one weakness. These findings, as summarized, include the following:

<u>Weaknesses</u>: 1

BI did not provide clear traceability to the Data Requirements Document for the Draft On-site Safety and Health Plan.

In the **Price Factor**, the adequacy, reasonableness and realism of BI's proposed fully burdened labor rates and burdens applied to other direct costs were evaluated. Then BI's fully burdened labor rates and burdens applied to other direct costs were applied to NASA's "IDIQ Price Evaluation Formula" (as published in the RFQ). The SEC calculated the evaluated price, including base and all option years, to be $24,644,000. BI's proposed phase-in costs, as identified separately from the evaluated price, were reported to the SSA. Adjustments to the proposed phase-in costs were not made; however, the overall adequacy and realism of the proposed phase-in costs were reported to the SSA. The SEC determined that BI's evaluated price yielded a price confidence of Low.

In the **Past Performance Factor**, this quotation received an adjective rating of Very Good in Past Performance.

BI received one significant strength, two strengths, no significant weaknesses, and one weakness. These findings, as summarized, include the following:

<u>Significant Strengths</u>: 1

BI had excellent references from past customers.

<u>Strengths</u>: 2

BI had eleven years direct relevant experience with DOD, providing business, resources, budget, administrative, data processing and acquisition support, but not on as large a contract as the ABSS procurement ($1.28M - $4.35M, versus $28M).

BI received several awards and recognitions in 2003, including Better Business Bureau Torch Award for Marketplace Ethics, Chamber of Commerce Small Business of the Year, Family Business Award, and Inc. 500 Magazine list for fastest growing privately-held companies nationally.

<u>Weaknesses</u>: 1

BI had an increasing rate of voluntary turnover. It was 6.45% in 2002, 7.32% in 2003, and 10.87% in 2004.

Digital Fusion Solutions, Inc. (DF)

In the **Mission Suitability Factor**, this quotation did not have any deficiencies or significant weaknesses. This quotation received an adjective rating of Very Good in Mission Suitability.

Under the **Technical and Management Approach Subfactor**, this quotation received an adjective rating of Very Good. DF received two significant strengths, three strengths, no significant weaknesses, and one weakness. These findings, as summarized, include the following:

Significant Strengths: 2

DF has an excellent understanding of the Performance Work Statement (PWS) as demonstrated by their elaboration on activities within each PWS element.

DF is a local company near MSFC with the Program Manager having full authority and complete autonomy to manage all activities associated with this contract.

Strengths: 3

DF has a Management Control System (MCS) consisting of automated tools, techniques and processes for managing the effort.

DF has a comprehensive training program which includes coaching, mentoring and internal ABSS specific training courses.

DF has demonstrated their commitment to security by their plans to build and deploy and "OCI" Management Module" to provide a centralized data repository and to implement an OCI Policy Review Committee for oversight of all contracts.

Weaknesses: 1

DF's Program Manager's effectiveness as the overall manager of the ABSS contract would be diminished by his also serving as the Acquisition Team Lead.

Under the **Staffing Subfactor**, this quotation received an adjective rating of Very Good. DF received two significant strengths, one strength, no significant weaknesses, and no weaknesses. These findings, as summarized, include the following:

Significant Strengths: 2

DF's compensation package has sound and attractive policy for insurance, retirement, leave and other benefits. The package allows carryover of vacation and sick leave at the level of 160 hours for vacation and 240 hours for personal/sick leave. The maximum rollover of personal/sick leave for an incumbent is 240 hours.

DF committed to retaining the incumbent workforce as evident by gaining commitments from approximately 60% of current employees, targeting incumbents in recruiting efforts, and showing innovation by establishing a new cost center to enable enhancement of the compensation package to attract and retain incumbents.

<u>Strengths</u>: 1

DF proposed to provide phase-in at no cost to the Government.

Under the **Key Personnel Subfactor**, this quotation received an adjective rating of Excellent. DF received three significant strengths, one strength, no significant weaknesses, and no weaknesses. These findings, as summarized, include the following:

<u>Significant Strengths</u>: 3

DF's Program Manager is well qualified with directly related Acquisition Support experience managing the current MSFC Procurement Service Support contract, extensive contract phase-in experience (PSC), and with some direct MSFC Business Support experience. References are very good.

DF's Business Support Lead for the Project Team is well qualified with direct experience under the current MSFC ESTS contract supporting various projects. References are excellent.

DF's Business Support Lead for the CFO/CIO Team is well qualified, with direct experience under the current MSFC ESTS contract supporting the CFO and the CIO. References are excellent.

<u>Strengths</u>: 1

DF designated two positions as Key in order to capitalize on available experienced personnel, which provides continuity of service, ensures a seamless transition, and supplements the Program Manger's experience.

Under the **Safety and Health Subfactor**, this quotation received an adjective rating of Good. DF received no significant strengths, no strengths, no significant weaknesses, and no weaknesses.

In the **Price Factor**, the adequacy, reasonableness and realism of DF's proposed fully burdened labor rates and burdens applied to other direct costs were evaluated. Then DF's proposed fully burdened labor rates and burdens applied to other direct costs were applied to NASA's "IDIQ Price Evaluation Formula" (as published in the RFQ). The SEC calculated the evaluated price, including base and all option years, to be

$26,184,000. DF's proposed phase-in costs, as identified separately from the evaluated price, were reported to the SSA. Adjustments to the proposed phase-in costs were not made; however, the overall adequacy and realism of the proposed phase-in costs were reported to the SSA. The SEC determined that DF's evaluated price yielded a price confidence of High.

In the **Past Performance Factor**, this quotation received an adjective rating of Excellent in Past Performance.

DF received two significant strengths, one strengths, no significant weaknesses, and no weakness. These findings, as summarized, include the following:

<u>Significant Strengths</u>: 2

DF had excellent references from past customers.

DF has been successfully performing a similar project for DOD as a subcontractor to CSC for over three years.

<u>Strengths</u>: 1

DF has performed on two contracts similar to the size of the ABSS Procurement and apparently more complex. The two relevant contracts cited by DFI, ranged from approximately $15M to $24.4M in total, including options, while this procurement is expected to be about $28M in total.

Eagle Systems & Services, Inc. (ES)

In the **Mission Suitability Factor**, this quotation did not have any deficiencies. This quotation received an adjective rating of Fair in Mission Suitability.

Under the **Technical and Management Approach Subfactor**, this quotation received an adjective rating of Fair. ES received one significant strength, one strength, three significant weaknesses, and one weakness. These findings, as summarized, include the following:

<u>Significant Strengths</u>: 1

ES's employees working under the current Procurement Support Services contract who have committed to ABSS are well trained to provide Acquisition Support.

<u>Strengths</u>: 1

ES has a comprehensive training program which includes coaching and mentoring.

Significant Weaknesses: 3

ES does not fully understand the Business Support Services function as evident in their attempt to cross reference their acquisition support experience to Budget Integration and Analysis and Business Systems Performance Work Statement (PWS) requirements.

ES's Program Manager's local autonomy is low, with staffing, contract modifications and deliverable approvals retained at the corporate level.

ES's Program Manager has more supervisory responsibilities than he can fulfill adequately, which includes directing personnel assigned to each Task, monitoring performance weekly, and monitoring MSFC work area manager directions for compliance with PWS scope.

Weaknesses: 1

ES's organizational lines of authority and responsibility are unclear as demonstrated by the two support staffs reporting directly to both the Program Manager and the two leads, with the leads also having direction and guidance responsibilities.

Under the **Staffing Subfactor**, this quotation received an adjective rating of Poor. ES received one significant strength, no strengths, five significant weaknesses, and one weakness. These findings, as summarized, include the following:

Significant Strengths: 1

ES has 43 percent of the incumbent workforce already working for the company in the area of Acquisition Support and have submitted Letters of Commitment.

Significant Weaknesses: 5

ES's compensation package proposes high family health insurance costs and no additional insurance coverage (dental, vision, life, ADD, etc.), while single coverage is reasonable; weak retirement, leave, and other benefits.

ES provides no evidence of the availability and commitment of incumbent business support personnel. ES recognizes retention as a moderate risk even after mitigation strategy implemented.

ES's mapping of the company's labor categories to MSFC positions shows a lack of understanding of the MSFC positions, as demonstrated by mapping unrelated categories such as accountant, acquisition manager, database administrator, and SME1 (Subject Matter Expert) to budget analyst positions. It appears that labor rate was the criteria for selection rather than job description.

ES is noncompliant with the minimum hourly fringe rate required by the SCA, as demonstrated by fringe displayed on Job Description/ Qualification forms.

ES will not have sufficient time for phase-in related activities because they planned for 4 weeks, based on an assumed contract award date of September 1, while the RFQ stipulates a phase-in start date of September 16 and allows only 2 weeks until start of the base period.

Weaknesses: 1

ES does not understand the Program Analyst skill requirements as indicated by their aligning it with Acquisition Support rather than Business Support in experience requirements.

Under the **Key Personnel Subfactor**, this quotation received an adjective rating of Good. ES received no significant strengths, no strengths, no significant weaknesses, and no weaknesses.

Under the **Safety and Health Subfactor**, this quotation received an adjective rating of Good. ES received no significant strengths, no strengths, no significant weaknesses, and no weaknesses.

In the **Price Factor**, the adequacy, reasonableness and realism of ES's proposed fully burdened labor rates and burdens applied to other direct costs were evaluated. Then ES's proposed fully burdened labor rates and burdens applied to other direct costs were applied to NASA's "IDIQ Price Evaluation Formula" (as published in the RFQ). The SEC calculated the evaluated price, including base year and all option years, to be $26,969,000. ES's proposed phase-in costs, as identified separately from the evaluated price, were reported to the Source Selection Authority. Adjustments to the proposed phase-in costs were not made; however, the overall adequacy and realism of the proposed phase-in costs were reported to the Source Selection Authority. The SEC determined that ES's evaluated price yielded a price confidence of Moderate.

In the **Past Performance Factor**, this quotation received an adjective rating of Good in Past Performance.

ES received no significant strengths, three strengths, one significant weaknesses, and no weakness. These findings, as summarized, include the following:

Strengths: 3

ES had Good to Excellent references from past customers.

ES has had three years of directly related Acquisition Support experience by providing such support to MSFC since July 2002.

ES has performed on one contract similar to the size of the ABSS Procurement. The relevant contract cited by Eagle was $19.8M over five years, while this procurement is expected to be about $28M in total.

Significant Weaknesses: 1

ES has an excessively high turnover rate in personnel, with 14.16% in 2002, 21.27% in 2003, and 17.72% in 2004. Also, has had difficulty in attracting and keeping qualified and trained personnel on the MSFC contract.

IV DECISION

Immediately following the SEC's presentation on August 31, 2005, I met in executive session with the key senior advisors who attended the presentation and were familiar with the RFQ. These advisors included representatives from the Office of the Chief Financial Officer and the Office of Procurement. I solicited and considered their views in reaching my decision. With respect to the process and findings, we concluded that the evaluation plan was followed, and the evaluation of the quotations was comprehensive, thorough, and well-documented. We noted that during the presentation the SEC was well prepared and presented a clear analysis supporting their findings. When questioned, the SEC was able to give in-depth responses demonstrating a strong command of the information contained in the quotations.

As a preliminary matter, we noted that NASA received three acceptable quotations. However, I noted that this was not a close competition between the Quoters, with DF having a clear advantage in two of the three factors. In Mission Suitability, DF received an overall adjective rating of Very Good while BI and ES received ratings of Fair. DF had a numerical score that was near the top of the Very Good adjectival range. BI had a numerical score that was near the top of the Fair range. ES had a numerical score that was near the bottom of the Fair range. The difference in numerical scores revealed that DF had a significant advantage in the Mission Suitability factor. It was my conclusion that this scoring differential was supported by the underlying findings with the overall strengths of DF far outweighing those of BI or ES. DF was rated as Excellent in Past Performance, BI as Very Good, and ES as Good. DF had a clear advantage in Past Performance.

While DF had an evaluated price that falls between BI and ES, DF's evaluated price received a price confidence rating of High. After probing the SEC's determinations as to price confidence, I concluded that a more appropriate price confidence rating for DF is a rating of High/Moderate. Also, I noted that although the evaluated price for BI was the lowest, BI was determined by the SEC to have a price confidence of Low. I concur with the SEC's determination as to BI's evaluated price and rating of price confidence. Furthermore, I concur with the SEC's determination that ES's evaluated price was the highest of the three Quoters. And finally, I concur with the determination that ES's price confidence rating is Moderate.

In probing the SEC during its presentation and taking into consideration its evaluation of the quotations against the prescribed evaluation criteria contained in the RFQ, I conclude that the successful Quoter is Digital Fusion Solutions, Inc. A more detailed statement of the rationale for my decision follows.

DF had the highest overall Mission Suitability adjectival rating, and was significantly higher than either of the other two Quoters. As stated above, DF received an adjectival rating of Very Good. A comparison of the Quoters in Mission Suitability revealed that DF received the highest adjectival ratings in three of the four Mission Suitability subfactors.

In the Technical and Management Approach subfactor, DF received an adjectival rating of Very Good, while BI received a rating of Good and ES received a rating of Fair. We noted the fact that DF's excellent understanding of the Performance Work Statement, along with the fact that their Program Manager was granted full autonomy, provided DF a distinct advantage. This advantage for DF was a discriminator due to the nature of the work that will be performed under this contract.

In the Staffing subfactor, DF received an adjectival rating of Very Good, while both BI and ES received adjectival ratings of Poor. I noted DF's significant strengths in 1) submitting a compensation package with a sound and attractive policy for insurance, retirement, leave and other benefits; and 2) in recruiting the incumbent work force by providing evidence of commitment of approximately 60 percent of the incumbent work force. These significant strengths are a discriminator in light of the criticality of recruiting and retaining a highly skilled workforce that is required to possess very unique skills. As part of their focus on recruiting and retaining this highly skilled workforce, DF provided for the greatest rollover of incumbent accrued personal/sick leave as compared to the other two Quoters.

In the Key Personnel subfactor, DF received an adjectival rating of Excellent, while BI received an adjectival rating of Very Good, and ES received an adjectival rating of Good. It is my determination that while BI's Project Manager was rated by the SEC as being a Significant Strength as part of that team, this individual is more appropriately rated as a Strength. I concur with the SEC's conclusion that DF had an advantage over the other two Quoters based on the qualifications of the key personnel proposed.

In the Safety and Health subfactor, DF received an adjectival rating of Good, BI received an adjectival rating of Fair, and ES received an adjectival rating of Good. The RFQ had requested only a draft submittal of the Safety and Health Plan, which was evaluated against the Safety and Health Core Process Elements contained in the Data Requirements Document, with emphasis on safety in the work place.

It was noted that DF had an overall greater number of significant strengths and fewer overall weaknesses. And, as already noted, DF had a higher score in three of the four

Mission Suitability subfactors. From all of the foregoing information, I concluded that DF had an advantage over both BI and ES in the Mission Suitability factor.

We next considered the Price factor. We noted that ES had the highest evaluated price with Moderate price confidence. DF's evaluated price was considered competitive. The SEC evaluated each Quoters' fully burdened labor rates and burdens applied to other direct costs. Evaluated prices were calculated for each Quoter using the IDIQ Evaluated Price Formula and were presented to me. In addition, the SEC presented their findings of High confidence of the evaluated price for DF, Low confidence for BI, and Moderate confidence for ES. I determined that BI had a slight advantage in the Price factor that was substantially mitigated by the rating of Low for price confidence. As noted previously, I took exception to DF's High cost confidence rating and I determined that the rating should be High/Moderate for price confidence for DF.

In the Past Performance factor, DF received an adjectival rating of Excellent, BI received an adjectival rating of Very Good, and ES received an adjectival rating of Good. I concur with the consensus of the SEC that DF has a clear advantage in Past Performance. We noted that the year to year increases in voluntary turnover rates for BI had reached double digits (over 10 percent), and that ES had a most recent turnover rate of over 17 percent; whereas there were no negative findings for DF in this area of Past Performance. These high turnover rates were a discriminator in developing the assessments and adjectival ratings for this factor.

Applying the evaluation factors to this selection, it is my determination that DF's high Mission Suitability score and high Past Performance adjectival rating together are the key discriminators and outweigh Price. DF received the highest overall adjectival rating of Very Good in Mission Suitability. Although DF's proposed price is greater than BI, the SEC evaluated both quotes for price reasonableness and completeness/realism. As discussed earlier, the SEC determined that BI's offer had a price confidence rating of Low. Furthermore, BI had a Mission Suitability score that was substantially less than DF's with BI having Past Performance of Very Good as compared to DF's rating of Excellent. Therefore, BI's lower price, which has low price confidence, does not merit selecting BI over DF, which has a substantially higher Mission Suitability score and a clear advantage in Past Performance. With regard to ES, DF has a substantially higher Mission Suitability score, a substantially higher Past Performance rating and a lower evaluated price, along with a slightly higher price confidence rating. In balancing the tradeoff between Mission Suitability score, Past Performance rating and Price, the anticipated enhanced performance of DF is well worth the additional price incurred versus BI. Furthermore, in light the SEC's determinations of the lower Past Performance rating, lower Mission Suitability score, and higher evaluated price of ES, DF is the clear choice for award of this contract. I, along with my team of senior advisors, concurred with this assessment of these firms.

I would like to note that we engaged in a discussion regarding whether to proceed directly to award or to enter into discussions with the Quoters. We noted that the RFQ expressed NASA's intent to award without discussions and the Quoters were to submit their best, most realistic and competitive quotations. It was very clear from the initial findings that DF fully understood the overall requirements of the RFQ and could perform the contract without follow-on competitive range discussions. Consequently, we concluded that there was nothing to be gained by proceeding with discussions and we had sufficient data to make a reasoned selection. Therefore, we decided to make selection and award based on the initial quotations received.

After polling all of my advisors and getting their inputs, I concluded that Digital Fusion Solutions, Inc. provided the best value for the Government. Consequently, I select Digital Fusion Solutions, Inc. for award of the Acquisition and Business Support Services contract.

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Stephen P. Beale Date