

GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION
Washington, DC 20405

January 30, 1991

FIRMR BULLETIN C-7

TO: Heads of Federal agencies
SUBJECT: Trail Boss Program

1. Purpose. This bulletin defines the Trail Boss Program, outlines GSA actions to implement the program, and provides guidelines for agency participation.
2. Expiration date. This bulletin contains information of a continuing nature and will remain in effect until canceled.
3. Contents.

Topic	Paragraph
Related material.....	4
Information and assistance.....	5
Definitions.....	6
Acronyms.....	7
Origin of the program.....	8
Program description.....	9
Agency responsibilities.....	10
The Trail Boss.....	10a
Trail Boss Charter.....	10b
Trail Boss Request.....	10c
GSA responsibilities.....	11
Cancellation.....	12
Contents of the Trail Boss Charter.....	Attachment A
Qualifications and Considerations for Selecting the Trail Boss.....	Attachment B
Statement of Qualifications of the Trail Boss...	Attachment C
Contents of an APR Submitted Under the Trail Boss Program.....	Attachment D

4. Related material.

FIRMR Section 201-20.305

TC 90-1

Attachments

FEDERAL INFORMATION RESOURCES MANAGEMENT REGULATION
APPENDIX B

FIRMR Bulletin C-7

5. Information and assistance.

General Services Administration
Agency Liaison Officer Program Division (KML)
18th and F Streets, NW
Washington, DC 20405
Telephone: FTS 241-0819 or (202) 501-0819.

6. Definitions.

"The Trail Boss Program" is an alternative approach for effectively managing major FIP resources acquisitions and implementation.

"The Trail Boss" is an individual with executive-level responsibility in an agency, experience with major FIP resource acquisitions, and the ability to deal successfully with multiple oversight organizations while building and managing an effective acquisition team.

"A Trail Boss request" includes:

- a. A Trail Boss charter that includes the information outlined in Attachment A.
- b. A statement of qualifications of the Trail Boss as outlined in Attachment C.
- c. An APR that contains the information outlined in Attachment D. The APR may cover one or more contracts for FIP resources.

7. Acronyms.

APR Agency Procurement Request
DPA Delegation of Procurement Authority
FIP Federal Information Processing

8. Origin of the program. GSA inaugurated the Trail Boss Program in the summer of 1987 as a result of preliminary findings from the Go-for-12 Program. These findings identified the need for a single manager for major FIP resource acquisitions and the need for a supportive environment for such managers. The program emphasizes the importance of individuals having the knowledge and skills to conduct sound and timely acquisitions. Key elements include: a single manager accountable for the programmatic, technical, and contracting aspects of the acquisition; education for managers to avoid acquisition

FIRMR Bulletin C-7

problems; management continuity throughout the acquisition; and a DPA from GSA early in the acquisition process.

9. Program description. The Trail Boss Program is an alternative to the traditional approach for major FIP resources acquisitions. Under the program, a single acquisition manager, the Trail Boss, has authority and responsibility to build and manage an effective acquisition support team by integrating programmatic, technical, and contracting functions.

The contracting officer on a Trail Boss team retains independent warranted authority. GSA, in turn, provides an early DPA, and assists agencies to make the program a success.

The Trail Boss Program consists of designating a qualified person to conduct and manage the acquisition; establishing and implementing a charter; and ensuring access to senior management officials and necessary resources. The principal objective of the program is to enhance the Government's ability to modernize its FIP systems through sound and timely acquisitions.

10. Agency responsibilities.

a. The Trail Boss. Agencies should select as Trail Boss an individual who is at a management level that allows for dealing effectively with oversight and regulatory organizations and who has the necessary authority and expertise to integrate the programmatic, technical, and contracting functions required to manage the acquisition. (See Attachment B.) Agencies should select one or more Deputy Trail Bosses, as necessary, to supplement the knowledge, skills, or abilities of the Trail Boss.

b. Trail Boss Charter. In accordance with FIRMR 201-20.305-3, agencies that participate in the Trail Boss Program shall develop and implement a Trail Boss Charter as outlined in Attachment A.

c. Trail Boss Request. Agencies may submit a Trail Boss request, as described below, to GSA for acquisitions meeting the following criteria:

(1) The acquisition should be in the early conceptual or requirements analysis stage at the time of request for participation in the program.

(2) The acquisition should obtain full and open competition.

(3) The acquisition must be critical to the agency's mission.

FIRMR Bulletin C-7

(4) The acquisition should be included in the agency's five-year plan for meeting its information technology needs.

(5) The acquisition must have the support of senior program, technical, and contracting officials.

d. Agencies should forward their Trail Boss request to:

General Services Administration
Authorization and Management Reviews Division (KMA)
18th and F Streets, NW
Washington, DC 20405

Telephone: FTS 241-1126 or (202) 501-1126.

11. GSA responsibilities. GSA will:

- a. Provide assistance in obtaining a DPA early in the acquisition process;
- b. Process the request within 20 workdays (plus 5 calendar days for mail time) of receipt of a complete Trail Boss APR;
- c. Monitor the progress of the acquisition;
- d. Continue working with agencies to tailor the program;
- e. Support the Trail Bosses;
- f. Evaluate and redirect the program, as required; and
- g. Conduct periodic reviews of an agency's Trail Boss Program as part of the Information Resources and Procurement Management Review Program.

12. Cancellation. FIRMR Bulletin 55 is canceled.

Thomas J. Buckholtz
Commissioner
Information Resources
Management Service

FIRMR Bulletin C-7
Attachment A

CONTENTS OF THE TRAIL BOSS CHARTER

1. Purpose. State the purpose of the acquisition as it relates to the agency's mission.
2. Trail Boss Status and Line of Authority. Describe the scope of authority of the Trail Boss, the reporting structure for the Trail Boss and for the acquisition support team (paragraph 4., below), and the contracting officer's relationship to the Trail Boss. Include access paths to upper management.
3. Designation of Trail Boss Program Participants and Delineation of Authority. Describe the responsibility and authority of the Trail Boss as it pertains to the overall acquisition and to the contracting actions in particular. Specify the anticipated length of time that the Trail Boss and support team designations will remain in effect, and procedures to replace the Trail Boss, Deputy Trail Bosses, or other team members in the event of vacancies.
4. Acquisition Support Team. Define the role of the acquisition support team that will support the Trail Boss. Describe the composition of this team in terms of required positions and skills (e.g., technical, contracting, clerical, administrative, budget, legal, etc.).
5. Responsibilities of the Trail Boss. Delineate the specific roles of the Trail Boss and the Deputy Trail Bosses, if applicable. These responsibilities must encompass key activities and functions that the Trail Boss should accomplish.
6. Statement of Agency Commitment. Include a statement of the agency's commitment to--
 - (a) Follow the provisions of the Trail Boss Charter for the life of the acquisition;
 - (b) Assign a Trail Boss and, if necessary, Deputy Trail Bosses, for the life of the acquisition;
 - (c) Maintain a qualified acquisition support team for the life of the acquisition;
 - (d) Review the Trail Boss acquisition at least every 12 months, on the anniversary of the GSA delegation, and advise GSA of any problems and of any corrective actions taken;

FIRMR Bulletin C-7
Attachment A

- (e) Cooperate with GSA reviews of agency actions; and
- (f) Coordinate with GSA to evaluate the Governmentwide Trail Boss Program.

FIRMR Bulletin C-7
Attachment B

QUALIFICATIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS
FOR SELECTING THE TRAIL BOSS

1. Qualifications. The Trail Boss should have the following knowledge, experience, and education:

- (a) Significant Federal experience with at least one major FIP system acquisition and knowledge of Federal and agency acquisition policies and practices.
- (b) Technical knowledge relevant to the acquisition proposed for the Trail Boss Program, knowledge of life-cycle management, and experience in implementing a major system.
- (c) Program experience relevant to the acquisition.
- (d) Knowledge of basic management principles and experience with their application.
- (e) Knowledge of Federal and agency budget policies and procedures.
- (f) Knowledge of project management strategies and experience in managing a major technical project.

2. Considerations for Selecting a Trail Boss. Review of the following factors helps to identify candidates and select the Trail Boss and Deputy Trail Bosses:

- (a) Number of recent years of management experience with FIP systems.
- (b) Approximate percentage of such experience in line management positions designing, implementing, operating, or maintaining major FIP systems.
- (c) Understanding of the agency's program and mission requirements.
- (d) Experience serving in a lead role on successful FIP resources acquisitions.
- (e) Grade level of the candidate.
- (f) Organizational impact of the assignment.

FIRMR Bulletin C-7
Attachment C

STATEMENT OF
QUALIFICATIONS OF THE TRAIL BOSS

1. List the name, position title, and organizational identity of the Trail Boss and, if applicable, Deputy Trail Bosses.
2. Outline their experience and education with FIP resources acquisitions.
3. Describe planned education or training that will provide the Trail Boss and Deputy Trail Bosses with additional necessary knowledge and skills to accomplish the Trail Boss assignment.

FIRMR Bulletin C-7
Attachment D

CONTENTS OF AN APR
SUBMITTED UNDER THE TRAIL BOSS PROGRAM
(The Trail Boss Charter and the Statement of Qualifications of
the Trail Boss must be submitted with the APR.)

1. Agency Information. Provide agency name, address, primary location of the FIP system, and the position title, telephone number, and organizational identity of the Trail Boss and Deputy Trail Bosses responsible for and authorized to conduct the acquisition.
2. Program Title and Description. Provide the program title and a brief but specific description of the major agency program that the Trail Boss acquisition will support; a brief but specific description of the current FIP resources supporting the program; and a general description of the major elements required to support the program during its system life.
3. Estimated Acquisition Costs. Provide the estimated overall cost of the contract action. A DPA resulting from this submission will cover the estimated costs over the system life.
4. Major Milestones. Provide a schedule indicating the projected completion of major milestones for the life of the acquisition.
5. Regulatory Compliance. Provide a statement indicating that the agency will comply with all applicable regulations or will obtain the appropriate deviations from regulations.
6. Agency Remarks. Provide additional information concerning any of the above items or other special conditions associated with the acquisition as necessary for understanding the APR.
7. References. Provide references to relevant past GSA guidance, meetings, briefings, and telephone discussions concerning this acquisition.
8. Agency Signature. The APR must be signed by the agency's designated senior official or a designee.

