

Considerations for Acquiring a New or Excess Boat on GSA



NOAA Small Boat Program



Misguided Priority List

- 50k in year end funding, so seize the opportunity, requirements are secondary
- Opposite is a high profile and well funded project (bigger is better)
- Focus is on vessel speed, appearance or brand name
- Entire budget goes to buy the biggest and best (maintenance/repairs are not considered)
- Simple, single purpose boat required, other potential operations not considered



NOAA Small Boat Program



Appropriate Considerations

- What is the primary mission and potential future work
- Intended operational area
- Required capacity and stability considerations for over the side lifting
- Deck space and protected environment for scientific or sampling gear
- Will a trailer be required and is there an adequate tow vehicle available (often a secondary consideration)
- Operator requirements - license, specialized gear, crew training
- Available local maintenance and repair support
- Anticipated annual budget for maintenance, fuel and repairs



NOAA Small Boat Program



Kickoff Procedure

- Meeting between VOC, Operators, P.I.s and Managers
- Reach out to similar NOAA operations for lessons learned
- Draft the statement of work with specific requirements
- Share the SOW with the VPC (if applicable) and LOSBO for additional assistance
- For custom built or complex requirements you must contact the SBP Engineer
- Both the SBP engineer and inspector are available to help on all boat procurements at no cost to your program



NOAA Small Boat Program



Maintenance, Repair and Storage

- Consider annual upkeep costs, talk with others
- Assure maintenance, repairs, and dockage are included in the operating budget
- Do you have a secure dock or storage location
- Seasonal use and preparation required during down time
- When repairs are needed is support readily available



NOAA Small Boat Program



No Free Boat

- Excess boats or those transferred from another agency require the same considerations
- Larger vessels must involve the SBP engineer or inspector
- Environmental issues must be considered (asbestos, lead paint, ...)
- Utilizing the SBP services will help prevent unexpected surprises



NOAA Small Boat Program



Stability and Construction Requirements



NOAA Small Boat Program



Class A, I, and II Vessels not permitted in Exposed Waters unless:

- They have a complete stability evaluation specific for “Exposed Waters” or
- They have been reviewed and recommended by the Stability Working Group or
- The vessel operates with a support vessel sufficient for emergency response.



NOAA Small Boat Program



Stability items that need to be considered:



- Operating area is CRITICAL
- Carrying capacity of personnel
- Carrying capacity of “scientific gear”
- Davits for lifting gear over the side
- Open water tanks on deck for marine life



NOAA Small Boat Program



Construction items that need to be built in:



- Watertight integrity such as hatches and bulkheads.
- Fuel range to sustain ops in heavy weather delaying return to port.
- Shelter for occupants during inclement weather.
- Adequate scantlings for ocean use.
- Accessibility to bilge spaces for maintenance and inspection



NOAA Small Boat Program



Safety items that need to be built in:



- Fire suppression systems and vent closures
- Provisions for mounting of liferafts
- Handrails
- Bilge alarms and bilge pumps
- Egress paths and emergency lighting



NOAA Small Boat Program



In summary:



- It is imperative that all mission requirements are carefully thought out and defined before bids can be requested.
- The process can not be rushed. Be careful of the “design by committee” vessel.
- It is much more feasible and cost efficient to engineer and build in safety features during construction.
- In most cases, vessels can not be altered after construction to meet more stringent requirements.



NOAA Small Boat Program





?



NOAA Small Boat Program

