

INTERAGENCY SUSTAINABILITY WORKING GROUP

December 10, 2008 Meeting Report

INTRODUCTION

The Interagency Sustainability Working Group (ISWG) held its 41st meeting on December 10, 2008. The working group is chaired by Matt Gray of the Department of Energy's (DOE) Federal Energy Management Program (FEMP). The ISWG is composed of members representing 20 major Federal departments and a number of independent agencies serving on the Interagency Energy Management Task Force (IATF). The December 10 meeting was held at the Washington Convention Center in conjunction with the Ecobuild/AEC-ST Fall Conference in Washington, D.C. and was open to both Federal and non-Federal members. The next meeting, scheduled for February 24, 2009, will be held from 1:00 PM – 4:00 PM at the American Institute of Architects in Washington, D.C.

AGENCY UPDATES

Department of Energy (DOE) – Currently, DOE has 20 Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED®)-certified buildings; two buildings have been certified at the platinum status.

DOE's Building Technologies Program is requesting submissions from groups in both the public and private sectors seeking recognition as members of the High-Performance Green Building Partnership Consortia. The request for submissions was published in the Federal Register on December 2, 2008.

General Services Administration (GSA) – In January 2009, the Office of Applied Science will be changing its name to the Office of Federal High-Performance Green Buildings. As mandated by the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (EISA), the office will “ensure full coordination of high-performance green building information and activities within the government.”¹

After 14 months of work, GSA has released *Sustainability Matters*, a 225-page book of case studies and industry best-practices, providing details of GSA's sustainability initiatives and strategies. The publication is available in hard copy and on flash drives. The flash drive also contains material from the book, *Workplace Matters* (focusing on how people behave within the workplace) and

¹ FedCenter Web site:

http://www.fedcenter.gov/Announcements/index.cfm?id=9203&page_id=1606

the report, *Assessing Green Building Performance* (which looks at 12 of GSA's green buildings and how they are performing in terms of energy, water, customer satisfaction, operations and maintenance, etc.).

GSA will also be releasing a sustainable buildings guide update, featuring a section that details ecological economics and the way in which the government does business.

PRESENTATIONS

- *LEED Version 3 Update* – Jeremy Cohen, U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC)
- *Updates on the High-Performance Federal Building Database* – Matt Gray (DOE-FEMP) and Sara Farrar-Nagy, National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL)
- *Report from the ISWG Transition Team* – Matt Gray (DOE-FEMP)
- *January 2009 Scorecard Process and OMB Update* – Cyndi Vallina, Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and Juan Lopez, Office of Federal Environmental Executive (OFEE)
- *Overview of President-Elect Barack Obama's Economic Recovery Plan* – Video from December 6, 2008, Weekly Address (www.change.gov)
- *Sustainable Return on Investment* – Christopher Behr (HDR, Inc.)
- *Q&A on the New Sustainable Building Guidance* - Matt Gray (DOE-FEMP)

The PowerPoint presentations have been included as attachments.

ISWG MEETING NOTES AND PRESENTATIONS

LEED Version 3 Update

Jeremy Cohen of USGBC, presented information regarding *LEED Version 3*, detailing pending updates to the LEED Green Building Rating System, as well as changes to both LEED online and the Green Building certification process. The official rollout of these changes is slated to begin in February 2009, with all scheduled changes in place by September 2009.

A number of adjustments will be made to the LEED Green Building Rating System, including:

- The current group of rating systems will switch to a 100-point scale
- Point reallocations will put more emphasis on climate change
- Regional credits will be introduced; bonus credits will be awarded within the identification category; and points will be reserved for regional credits

Enhancements will also be made to the [LEED Web site](#), including improved efficiency for project management, streamlined reporting, aggregated metrics,

and credit alignment. An online “book shelf” tool has been developed to assist with whole building design and construction projects. Specific data has been segmented according to LEED credits (energy, water, sites, etc.). The online book shelf was created to help meet LEED objectives, goals, and priorities related to green building.

Mr. Cohen also discussed pending changes to the Green Building certification process. The Green Building Certification Institute (GBCI), which oversees the development and delivery of the LEED Professional Accreditation Exam, and “serves as a resource for the building industry, providing access to tools, directories and information,” will be implementing a tiered system for administering its credentials beginning in May 2009. The GBCI was established with the support of the U.S. Green Building Council to “administer credentialing programs related to green building practice and standards.” The new credentialing system will allow for a differentiation between professionals with varying skill levels and specialties. Existing LEED Accredited Professionals (APs) and those who are six months into their training have been “grandfathered in” under the new program. The new categories will include:

- LEED Green Associate (LEED GA): For LEED entry-level/LEED generalists
- LEED Accredited Professional Plus (LEED AP+): For people who have passed the LEED Green Associate exam and also have a technical specialty (e.g., new building design and construction, operations and maintenance)
- LEED AP Fellow: GBCI is in the process of establishing this particular criteria

Updates on the High-Performance Federal Building Database

Matt Gray provided background information regarding updates to the [High-Performance Federal Buildings Database](#). The database, which may be accessed through a number of Web sites, such as the [Whole Building Design Guide](#) or the [FEMP Web site](#), serves to showcase Federally-owned buildings, highlighting such key features as energy-efficient practices, renewable energy technologies, project financing, building materials and land use. The High-Performance Federal Building Database is an extension to the [High-Performance Buildings Database](#), which was developed by DOE and NREL.

Currently, there are 45 Federal case study projects, with 28 listed as LEED certified. In 2008, seven case studies were added to the database. The High-Performance Federal Building Database provides users with both ideas and results for developing sustainable building systems and features.

Report from the ISWG Transition Team

Matt Gray provided a status report on behalf of the ISWG Transition Team, which is co-led by Matt Gray and Kevin Kampschroer of GSA. The Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ), which oversees the Federal Government’s

environmental efforts, requested that all working groups under Executive Order 13423 establish an operational plan for the next Administration. The ISWG Transition Team has held two meetings (in October and December) and is in the process of drafting a document cataloging the group's accomplishments and establishing recommended priorities and tasks for going forward under the new Administration. The draft plan will be available in January, at which point all Federal ISWG members may provide comment.

January 2009 Scorecard Process and OMB Update

Cyndi Vallina of OMB and Juan Lopez of OFEE provided an update to the January 2009 Scorecard process. Administered by OMB, the [Executive Branch Management Scorecard](#) is a system that tracks the rate in which Federal departments and major agencies execute government-wide management initiatives. An e-mail was sent to senior officials on December 5, 2008, confirming the January 9, 2009, deadline. A Senior Officials meeting has been tentatively, scheduled for February 18, 2009, and scorecards will be available on this date. OMB and FEMP may send out another e-mail regarding scorecard requirements and what information is needed to complete the scorecard assessment.

OMB has asked each agency to provide the name of a career, senior-level official who will act as a senior-level official during the transition process, as the majority of the senior-level officials are political appointees. A number of the senior-level officials will be departing their offices on January 20, 2009.

OMB is reviewing agency input on EISA, Section 434, which outlines that policies must be in place detailing construction, energy-using equipment, and equipment upgrades within federally-owned buildings. Several agencies have submitted their existing policies to OMB. OMB is scheduled to report to Congress on this issue the week of December 15, 2008.

Overview of President-Elect Barack Obama's Economic Recovery Plan

Matt Gray presented a [video clip from President-Elect Barack Obama's weekly address](#), which initially aired on December 6, 2008. The video featured an overview of the President-Elect's proposed economic recovery plan, including a segment referencing the value of federal green buildings and their connection to green jobs.

Sustainable Return on Investment

Christopher Behr of HDR, Inc. presented information on Sustainable Return on Investment (SROI or Sustainable ROI). Sustainable ROI is a method developed by [HDR, Inc.](#) for evaluating green investments and assessing different project priorities in the energy, building, and transportation sectors. Sustainable ROI is a consensus-driven process, which integrates cost-benefit analysis, risk analysis,

and defined performance metrics. It measures items such as building data (e.g. architecture, HVAC, lighting, and plumbing), on-site energy data (e.g. photovoltaics, biomass, wind, solar, and geothermal), economic data (e.g. capital costs, rebates/incentives, and discount rate), and location and site-specific data (e.g. soil types, climatic data). This data is measured against environmental performance (e.g. pollutants, green house gas, water use, solid waste, and storm water runoff) economic performance (e.g. lifecycle operations and maintenance savings, efficiency, discounted payback, and net present value), and social performance (e.g. green jobs, community involvement and education, and improved reliability, access). For additional information regarding Sustainable ROI, contact Christopher Behr at Christopher.Behr@hdrinc.com, or Lidia Berger at Lidia.Berger@hdrinc.com.

Q&A on the New Guidance on High-Performance Federal Buildings

Matt Gray led a question and answer discussion on the new guidance on High-Performance Federal Buildings. The guidance was issued on December 5, 2008, and includes revised Guiding Principles for new construction and major renovations, new Guiding Principles for existing buildings, clarification of reporting guidelines for entering information on the sustainability data element in the Federal Real Property Profile (FRPP), and an explanation of how to calculate the percentage of buildings and square footage, which are compliant with the Guiding Principles for agency scorecard input. A comment resolution document was released in conjunction with the guidance and serves as a “living document” (thus subject to change), and helps to clarify the material in the guidance. Both the guidance and the comment resolution document have been posted to the [Whole Building Design Guide](#). The discussion, as well as answers and statements, will be incorporated into the Comment Resolution for the Guidance as necessary.

Wrap Up

Matt Gray thanked the ISWG members for their participation. He announced that the next ISWG meeting is scheduled for February 24, 2009, and will be held from 1:00 PM – 4:00 PM at the American Institute of Architects in Washington, D.C. Mr. Gray also mentioned that due to a full agenda, a separate meeting may be scheduled to present an update from the ISWG Transition Team.

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