

Understanding Source Selection

*Black Magic
or
Sensible Process?*



Outline

- Source Selection Objective and Organization
- Advisors and Evaluators Tasks
- Subfactor and Factor Chiefs Tasks
- SSAC and SSA Roles and Responsibilities
- Steps in the Source Selection Process
- Ground Rules, Guidance and Lessons Learned
- Summary
- Feedback

Source Selection Objective

“The objective of Source Selection is to select the proposal that represents the *Best Value*”

FAR 15.302

Best Value: “The expected outcome of an acquisition that, in the government’s best estimation, provides the greatest overall benefit in response to the requirement.”

FAR 2.101

Source Selection Factors

Mandatory

Briefing Focus

- **Mission Capability (MC)**

Programmatic, Performance, and Business Aspects

- **Proposal Risk (PR)**

Indicator of an Offeror's ability to execute the program within the proposed cost schedule, and performance baselines

- **Past Performance**

Historical evidence of recent and relevant contract performance

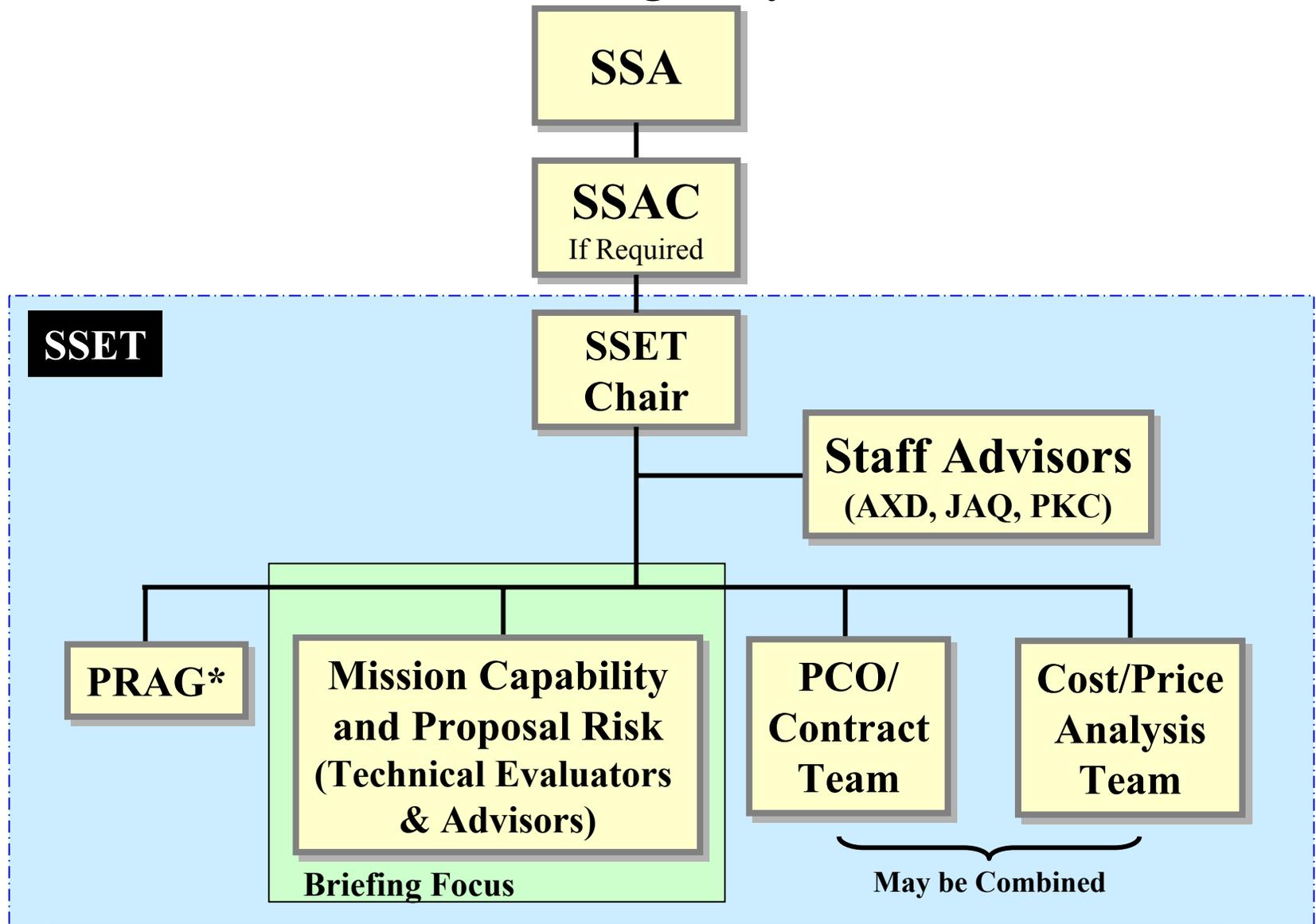
- **Price/Cost**

Most likely cost to the Government to perform proposed effort at contract completion

Each Factor uses a different evaluation process and definitions.

Source Selection Organization

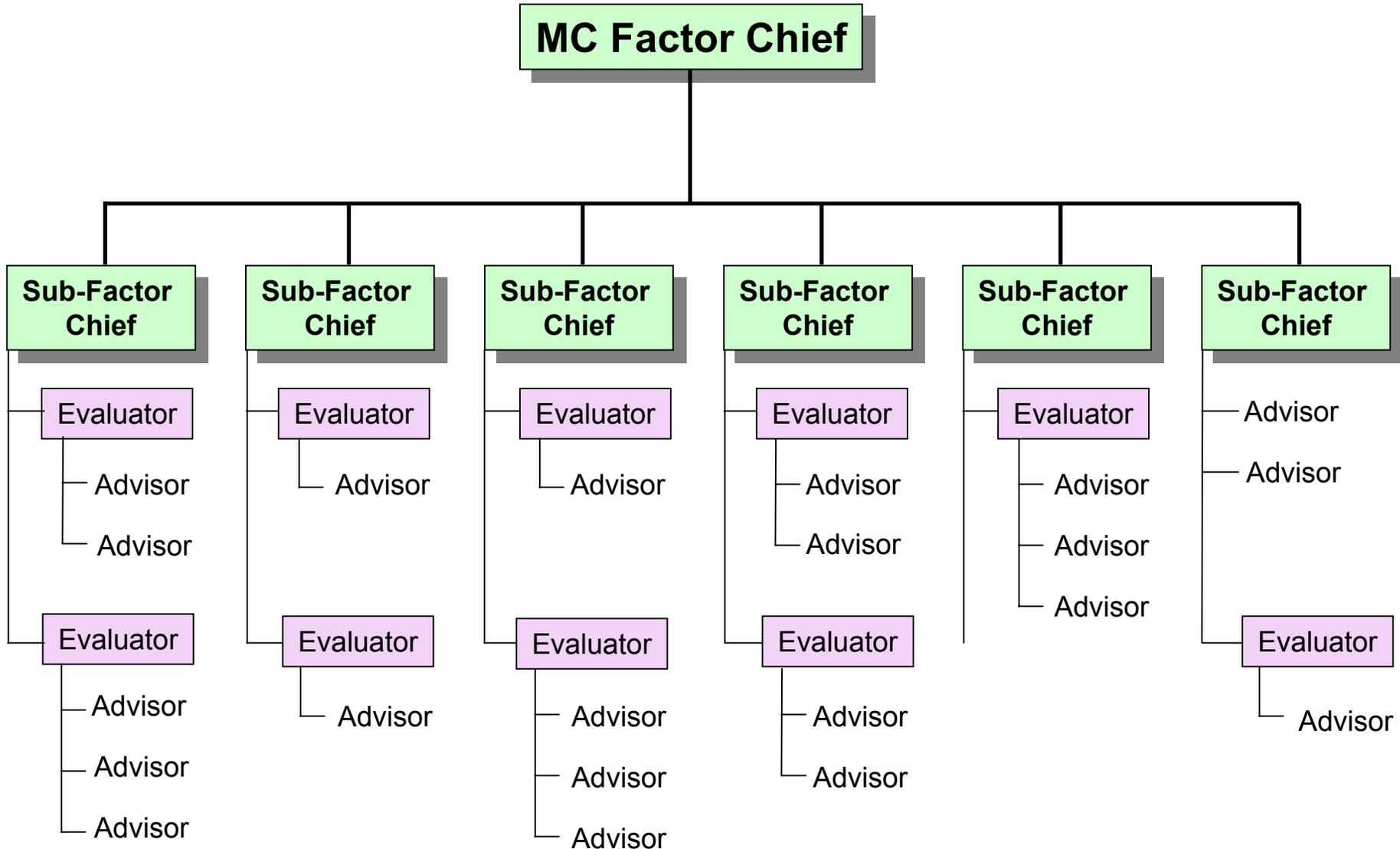
Median And Agency Procedures



* Use of PRAG to evaluate Performance Confidence is optional for Median Acquisitions

MC Factor Team Organization

“Typical”



Assigning Evaluators & Advisors

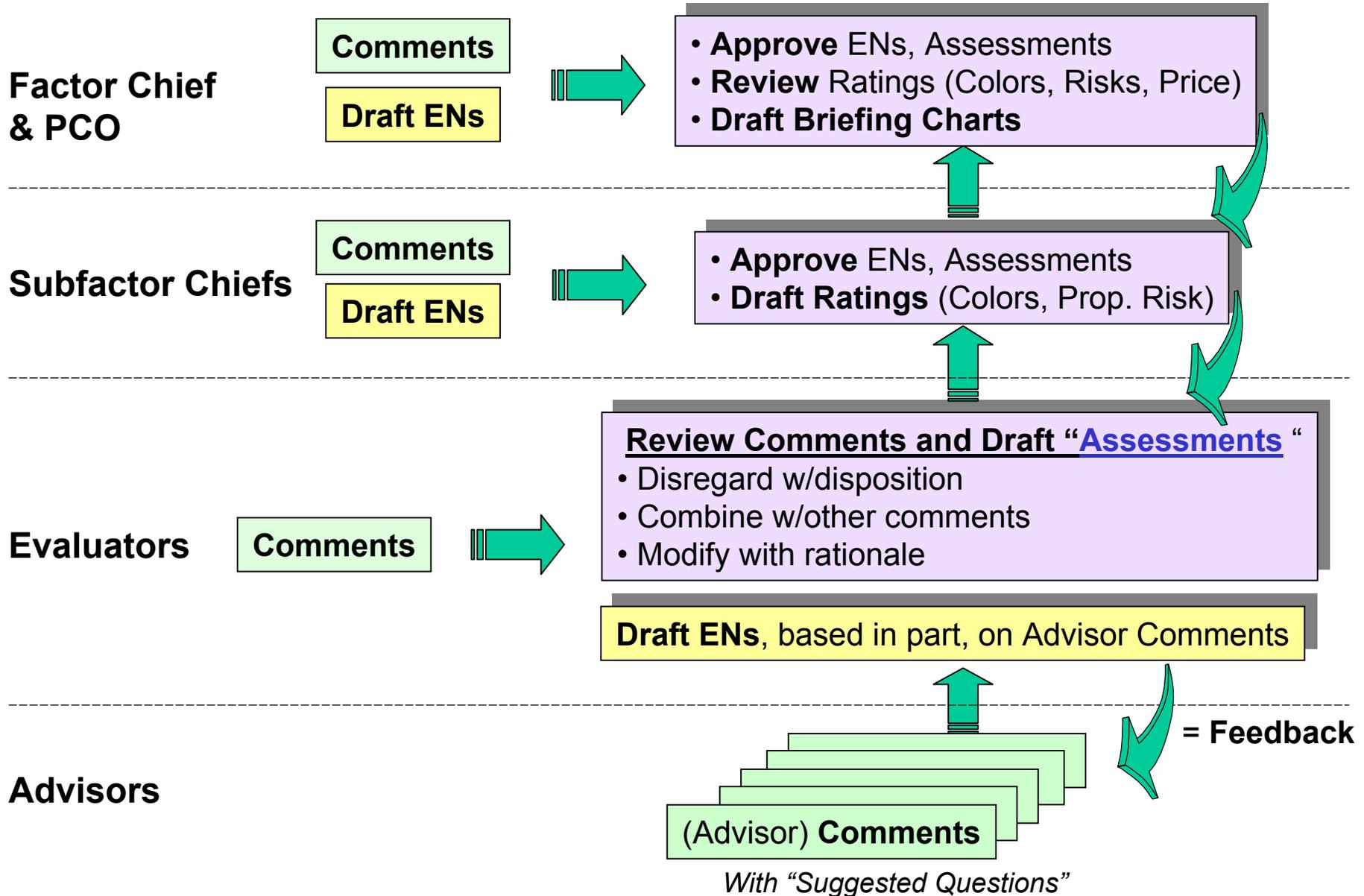
“Access to offeror proposals must be restricted to only those portions for which the advisor’s expertise is required in the evaluation.” (5315.303-90 (g) (1))

		Evaluators and Advisors							
		Sam	Jim	Shelia	Phillis	Bob	Bill	Harry	Linda
Eval or Adv?		E	A	A	E	A	E	E	A
Sub-Factor 1									
	Criteria a	P	A	A					
	Criteria b		P	A					
	Criteria c	P		A					
	Criteria d				P	A			
	Criteria e				P	A			
	Criteria f			P	A	A			
	Criteria g						P	A	
	Criteria h							P	A
	Criteria i						A	P	
		Phil	Dave	Steve	John	Bob	Stephanie		
Eval or Adv?		E	A	E	A	E	A		
Sub-Factor 2									
	Criteria a	P	A						
	Criteria b	P	A						
	Criteria c			P	A				
	Criteria d			P	A				
	Criteria e					P	A		
	Criteria f					P	A		

This approach can ensure that every criteria is covered

PROCESS OVERVIEW

“Rollup”



Evaluators and Advisors

Evaluators and Advisors

- **Evaluators & Advisors (Government & Non-Government):**
 - Non-Government Evaluators/Advisors must be identified in the Source Selection Plan (SSP)
 - FFRDC can perform as MC/PR Evaluators /Advisors and PRAG Advisors
 - Contractor personnel can be MC/PR Evaluators/Advisors only if their contract allows them to perform these duties or there is an approved Determination/ Decision Document* (DDD)
 - POC: J.A. Taniguchi SMC/AXC
 - Do not determine final ratings or assign rankings of proposal
- **Staff Advisors:**
 - AXD, PKC, JAG, Aerospace personnel from SMC staff that review products and provide advice to source selection teams

****SAF/AQX Memo and Policy 23 Jul 01, Subject: Air Force Advisory & Assistance Services.***

Evaluator Tasks

- **Read** entire proposal
- **Comment**, as a minimum, on portions of proposal not covered by advisors (using same “thought process” as advisors)
- **Review** Advisor Comment Forms including recommended ENs
 - Consolidate, edit, combine, disregard Advisor Comments with rationale in Disposition Block of Comment Form
- **Draft** Assessments
- **Draft** ENs based, in part, on comments
- **Ensure** that draft briefing “bullets” are detailed and descriptive of comments

Mission Capability

Definitions

- **STRENGTH - AFFARS 5315.301-90**

A significant, outstanding, or exceptional aspect of an offeror's proposal that has merit and exceeds specified performance or capability requirements in a way beneficial to the Air Force, and either will be included in the contract or inherent in offeror's process.

- **PROPOSAL INADEQUACY (PI) - AFFARS 5315.301-90**

An aspect or omission from an offeror's proposal that may contribute to a failure in meeting specified minimum performance or capability requirements.

- **MISSION CAPABILITY (MC) DEFICIENCY - FAR 15.301**

A material failure of a proposal to meet a Government requirement

Mission Capability

Strength “Stars” *



Exceeds requirement with **minor** benefit to the Government



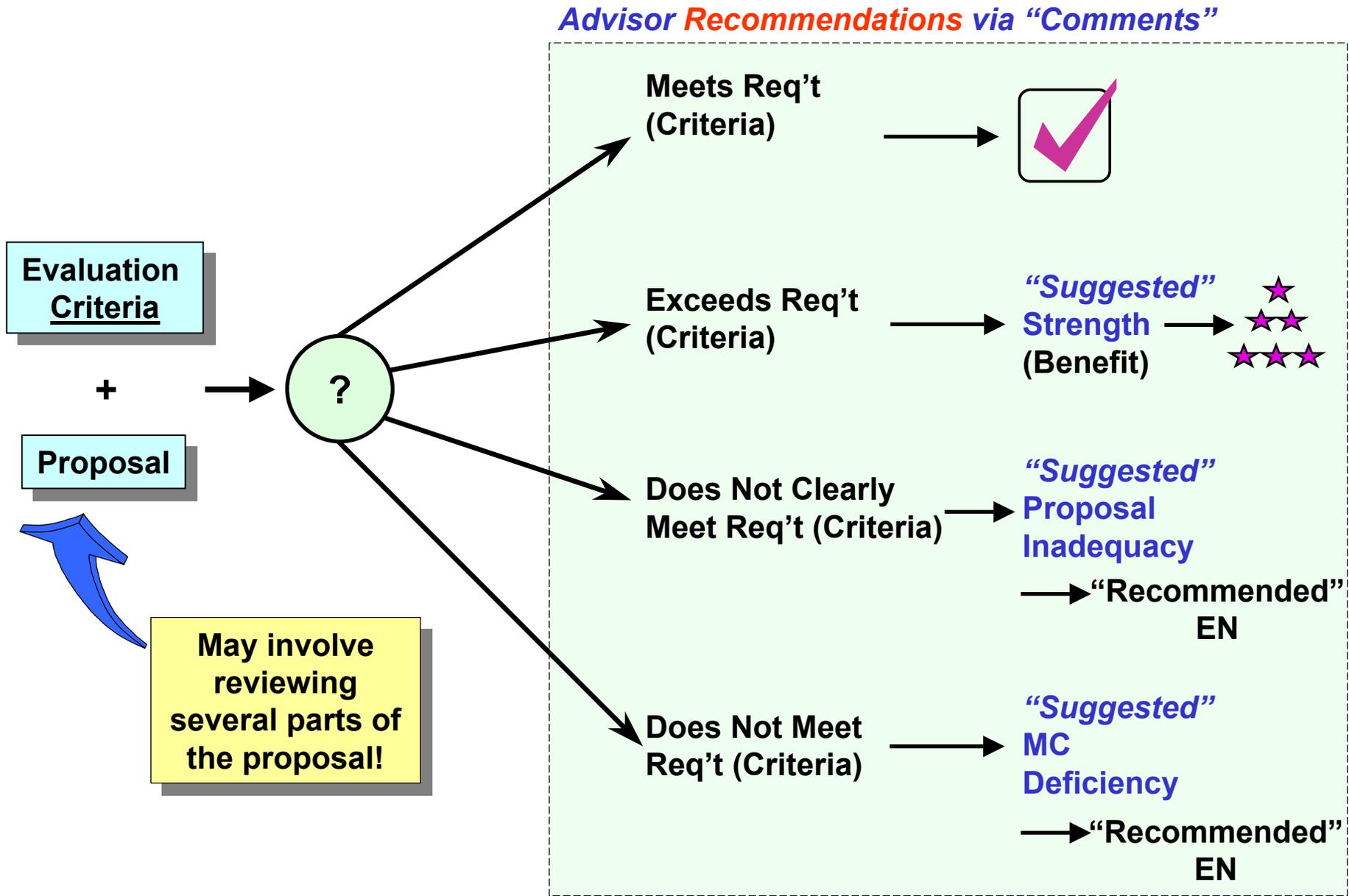
Exceeds requirement with **moderate** benefit to the Government



Exceeds requirement with **major** benefit to the Government

*** SMC practice is to subjectively assign “Stars” to strengths to stratify benefits to the Government**

MC “Thought Process”



Comment Form

Member
Offeror
Proposal
2

Factor
Subfactor
Element
Criteria
1

Comments | Related Asmts | Related ENs

Reviewed By:

Status	Author	Date/Time created	Cmt ID
Submitted	ESSAdmin	23-Feb-00 15:27	1

RFP Ref	<input type="text" value="sec m, page 1"/>
Proposal Ref	<input type="text" value="tech vol, page 4"/>

Bullet	Suggested
<input type="text" value="hull design more than adequate"/>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;"> Strength (*) Strength (****) Strength (**) Strength (*) Prop Inadeq MC Deficiency PR: Weakness PR: Sig Weakness PR: Deficiency Meets Criteria </div>

Narrative
Requirement States: hull able to sustain xxx pressure Offeror Stated: hull design comprise of abc material which will sustain 2xxx Comment: offeror proposes a hull material design that will sustain two times Effect/Benefit: hull integrity increased Suggested EN language:

Record: of 4

Dis	position
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

3

4

5

COMMENTS

Selector	Defs	Criteria
	Asmt	EN

View:

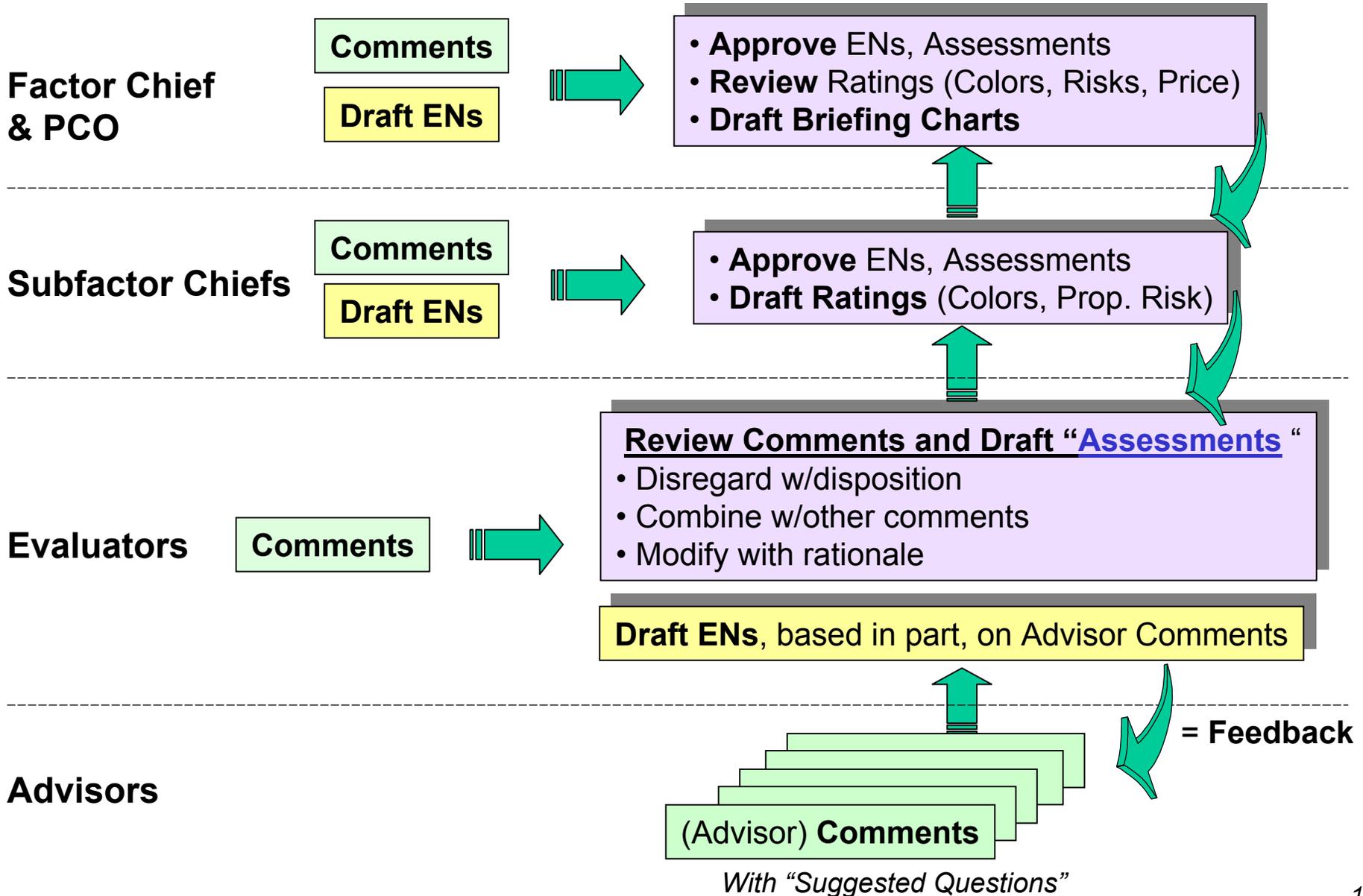
Filter is OFF

Buffer

*** Read-Only ***
 Reviewed by another user.

Asmts:	ENs:
<input type="button" value="▶"/> <input type="text" value="1"/>	<input type="button" value="▲"/>

“Rollup”



Assessment Form

The screenshot shows the 'Assessment' application window. At the top, there are fields for Member (essadmin), Offeror (Alpha Beta), and Proposal (Primary). Below this is a table with columns: Factor (Mission Capability), Subfactor (Technical), Element (Space Vehicle), and Criteria (1.1.1). A red arrow points to the 'Criteria' field.

Below the table are tabs for 'Assessments', 'Related Comments', and 'Related ENs'. The 'Assessments' tab is active, showing a table with columns: Asmt Type (Strength), Status (Open), Author (ESSAdmin), D/T created (23-Feb-00 15:37), and Asmt ID (1). A red arrow points to the 'Asmt Type' field.

Below the table are fields for RFP Ref (sec m, page 1) and Proposal Ref (tech vol, page 4). There are checkboxes for EC, SFC, FC, PCO, SSET, and SSA. Below these are fields for Level (xx) and Briefing Bullet (hull design more than adequate). A red arrow points to the 'Briefing Bullet' field.

The 'Narrative' section contains a text area with the following text:
Requirement States: hull able to sustain xxx pressure
Offeror Stated: hull design comprise of abc material which will sustain 2xxx pressure
Comment: offeror proposes a hull material design that will sustain two times the desire pressure
Effect/Benefit: hull integrity increased
Suggested EN language:
A red arrow points to the 'Narrative' text area.

At the bottom, there is a 'Disposition' field. A red arrow points to the 'Disposition' label.

On the right side of the window, there is a panel titled 'Assessments' with a table showing Selector, Defs, and Criteria (EN). Below this are 'New' and 'Move' buttons. Further down is a 'View' dropdown set to '<ALL>' and an 'Apply Filter' button. Below that, 'Filter is OFF' is displayed. There are 'Buffer' buttons: 'Copy', 'Paste', and 'View'. At the bottom right, there are two columns: 'Comments' (with a list containing '1') and 'ENs'. Each column has 'Link' and 'Del' buttons.

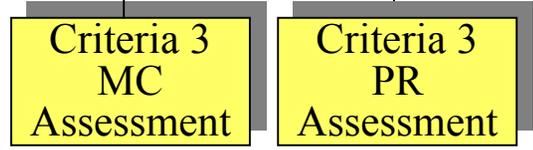
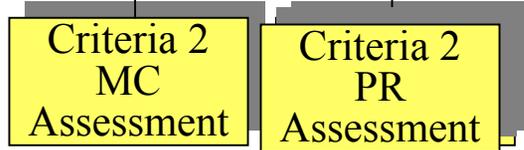
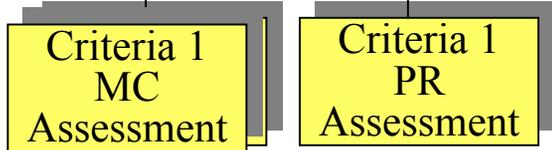


Subfactor Chief

Criteria 1 Assessments

Criteria 2 Assessments

Criteria 3 Assessments



Criteria 1 "Lead" Evaluator



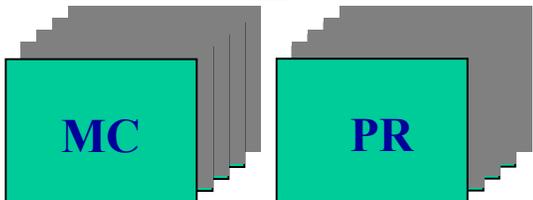
Criteria 2 "Lead" Evaluator



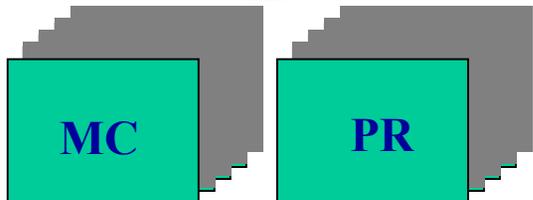
Criteria 3 "Lead" Evaluator

2*

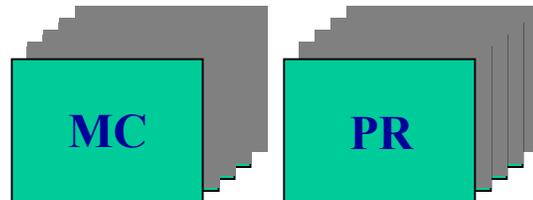
1*



Criteria 1 Comments



Criteria 2 Comments



Criteria 3 Comments

1* Comments are made by Advisors & Evaluators

2* Filtering process reviewing all comments, disposition, redirect incorrectly made comments

What Are Evaluation Notices

- Evaluation Notices (ENs) are exchanges with offerors
- The purpose of an EN is to:
 - Ask the contractor questions about a proposal
 - Insufficient information to make a determination
 - Point out a short-coming in the proposal
 - Resolve conflicts between different proposal parts

Evaluation Notice Form

Evaluation Notice

Member: Offeror: Proposal:

Factor	Subfactor	Element	Criteria
Mission Capability	Technical	Space Veh	1.1.1

1 →

ENs | Related Comments | Related Assessments

EN Type	Category	Author	D/T created	EN ID	EC	SFC	FC	PCO	SSET	SSA
Communication	Deficiency	ESSAdmin	23-Feb-00 15:45	1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>					

2 →

RFP Ref:

Prop Ref:

Topic: Status:

3 →

Narrative

Requirement States: propulsion at xxx or greater
Offeror Stated: at most vehicle has xxx-2.5

Comment: offeror proposes a value of 2.5 less than the desired propulsion
Effect/Benefit: not enough propulsion to reach desired orbit

Suggested EN language:
.....

4 →

Record: of 2

Disposition:

ENs

Selector	Defs	Criteria
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Cmt: Asmt:

New Move

View:
Apply Filter
Filter is **OFF**

Buffer
Copy Paste View

Comments:	Asmts:
<input type="text" value="2"/>	<input type="text" value="2"/>

Link Del Link Del

Proposal Risk Assessment Defined

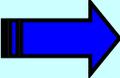
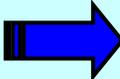
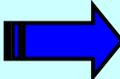
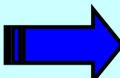
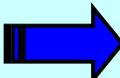
AFFARS 5315.305 (a)(3)(B)

“**Proposal risk assessment** focuses on the risks and weaknesses associated with an offeror’s proposed approach. Assessment of risk is done at the sub-factor (or element, if used) level, and includes potential for disruption of schedule, increased cost, degradation of performance and the need for increased Government oversight as well as the likelihood of unsuccessful contract performance. For any risk identified, the evaluation must address the offeror’s proposal for mitigating those risks and why that approach is or is not manageable....” *[emphasis added]*

Proposal Risk “Thought Process”

- **Proposal Risk includes key five aspects:**
 - **Schedule**
 - **Cost**
 - **Performance**
 - **Offeror’s Risk Mitigation Plans**
 - **Gov’t oversight --> result or impact of risky approach**
- **Therefore, the proposal risk evaluation should integrate these five multi-faceted aspects:**
 - **Schedule (IMS)**
 - **Cost (Cost Volume)**
 - **Performance (MC Volume = proposed approach)**
 - **Offeror’s “Risk Mitigation”/Handling plans (MC Volume, if requested)**
 - **Gov’t oversight probability (result of evaluation)**

Proposal Risk “Thought Process”

Key Aspects of Proposal Risk	Sources of Proposal Information
Disruption of Schedule	 Integrated Master Schedule (IMS)
Increased Cost	 Cost Volume or Manpower Tables
Degradation of Performance	 MC Volume => proposed approach
Offeror’s Risk Mitigation (Plans)	 Mitigation Plans in MC Volume, if requested
Need for Increased Gov’t Oversight	 Likelihood of Oversight (result of evaluation)

Proposal Risk

Definitions (*FAR 15.301*)

- **NO WEAKNESSES** (*not defined in FAR*)

- **WEAKNESS**

A flaw(s) in a proposal that increases the risk of unsuccessful contract performance

- **SIGNIFICANT WEAKNESS**

A flaw in a proposal that appreciably increases the risk of unsuccessful contract performance [*emphasis added*]

- **PROPOSAL RISK (PR) DEFICIENCY**

A combination of Significant Weaknesses in a proposal that increases the risk of unsuccessful contract performance to an unacceptable level

MC & PR: THE DIFFERENCES ^a

	MISSION CAPABILITY	PROPOSAL RISK
FOCUS	DOES THE PROMISED PERFORMANCE MEET <i>THE SOLICITATION REQUIREMENTS</i> ?	WHAT ARE <i>THE RISKS</i> OF MEETING SOLICITATION RQMTS IF PERFORMED AS PROMISED?
ISSUE	WHAT IS <i>QUALITY OF PERFORMANCE-BASED OUTCOME</i> ?	WHAT RISKS ARE INHERENT IN OFFEROR'S <i>APPROACH</i> ?
ASSESSMENT	(MEETS) STRENGTH PROPOSAL INADEQUACY <i>MC</i> DEFICIENCY	(NO WEAKNESSES) WEAKNESS SIGNIFICANT WEAKNESS <i>PR</i> DEFICIENCY

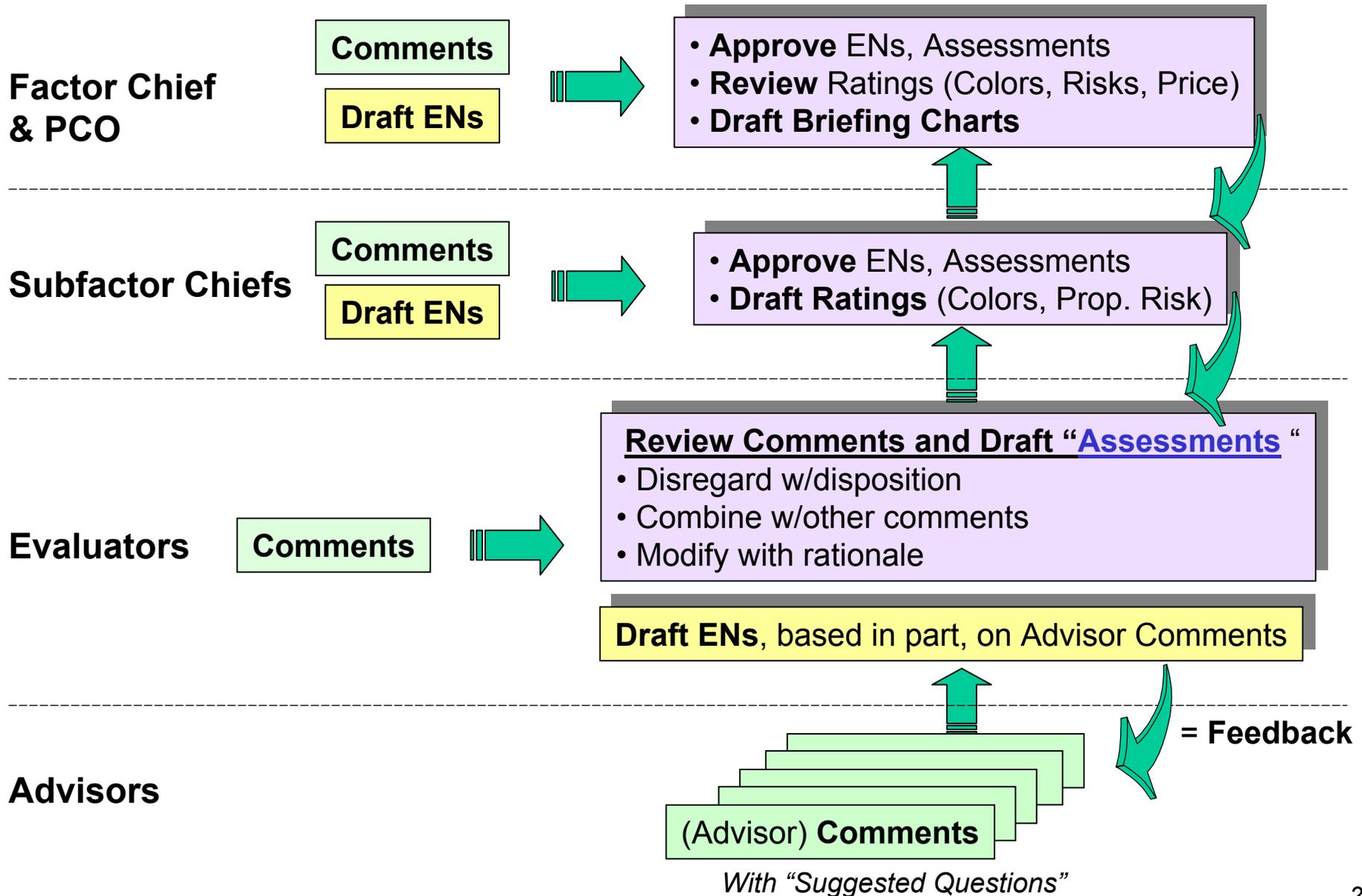
*Subfactor Chief and
Factor Chiefs*

MC Subfactor Chiefs and Factor Chief *

** Note: Factor and Subfactor Chiefs are not prescribed in AFFARS Part 5315.3, but are typically used to organize the assessments of the SSET members*

- **Subfactor Chiefs** integrate inputs for Subfactor Evaluators, and Advisors
 - Consolidate & disposition Evaluator and Advisor comments
 - **Recommend** Subfactor ratings and Proposal Risk ratings
 - Screen and **recommend** ENs
 - Disposition EN resolution recommendations
- **Mission Capability Factor Chief** integrates inputs of all Subfactor Chiefs, Evaluators and Advisors
 - Determines MC Subfactor color **ratings**
 - Determines Proposal Risk **rating** for each Subfactor
 - Work with PCO to **finalize** ENs
 - Work with Cost Team on Probable Cost Analysis, if applicable

“Rollup”



MISSION CAPABILITY RATINGS

AFFARS 5315.305(a)(3)

MISSION CAPABILITY					
■	■	■	■	■	■
PROPOSAL RISK					
L	H	M	M	M	L
CONFIDENCE					
HC	C	C	SC	C	C
PRICE OR COST					
\$ PRICE / \$ PC					

EXCEPTIONAL

EXCEEDS specified minimum performance or capability **REQUIREMENTS** in a way **BENEFICIAL** to the Air Force

- No Deficiencies
- “Blue” driven by degree of benefit to Govt
- One or more Strengths (one may not be enough)

ACCEPTABLE

MEETS specified minimum performance or capability **REQUIREMENTS** necessary for acceptable contract performance

- No Deficiencies
- May have Strength(s) insufficient to justify “Blue”

MISSION CAPABILITY RATINGS

AFFARS 5315.305(a)(3)

MISSION CAPABILITY				
■	■	■	■	■
PROPOSAL RISK				
L	H	M	M	L
CONFIDENCE				
HC	C	C	SC	C
PRICE OR COST				
\$ PRICE / \$ PC				

MARGINAL

DOES NOT CLEARLY MEET some specified minimum performance or capability ***REQUIREMENTS***, but any proposal inadequacies are correctable

- No deficiencies
- One or more proposal inadequacies drives yellow rating
 - **Proposal Inadequacy** = An aspect or omission ... that may contribute to a failure in meeting specified minimum performance or capability requirements.
- Discussions should resolve most (if not all) Yellows
- Contract is “awardable” with yellow rating

UNACCEPTABLE

FAILS TO MEET specified minimum performance or capability ***REQUIREMENTS***. Proposals with an unacceptable rating are **NOT AWARDABLE**

- **Deficiency** -- fails to meet one or more requirements
- Degree of failure: Egregious to very minor; described in narrative

Proposal Risk Ratings

AFFARS 5315.305(a)(3)(ii)

- **High**

Likely to cause significant disruption of schedule, increased cost or degradation of performance. Risk may be unacceptable even with special contractor emphasis and close Government monitoring

- **Moderate**

Can potentially cause some disruption of schedule, increased cost, or degradation of performance. Special contractor emphasis and close Government monitoring will probably be able to overcome difficulties

- **Low**

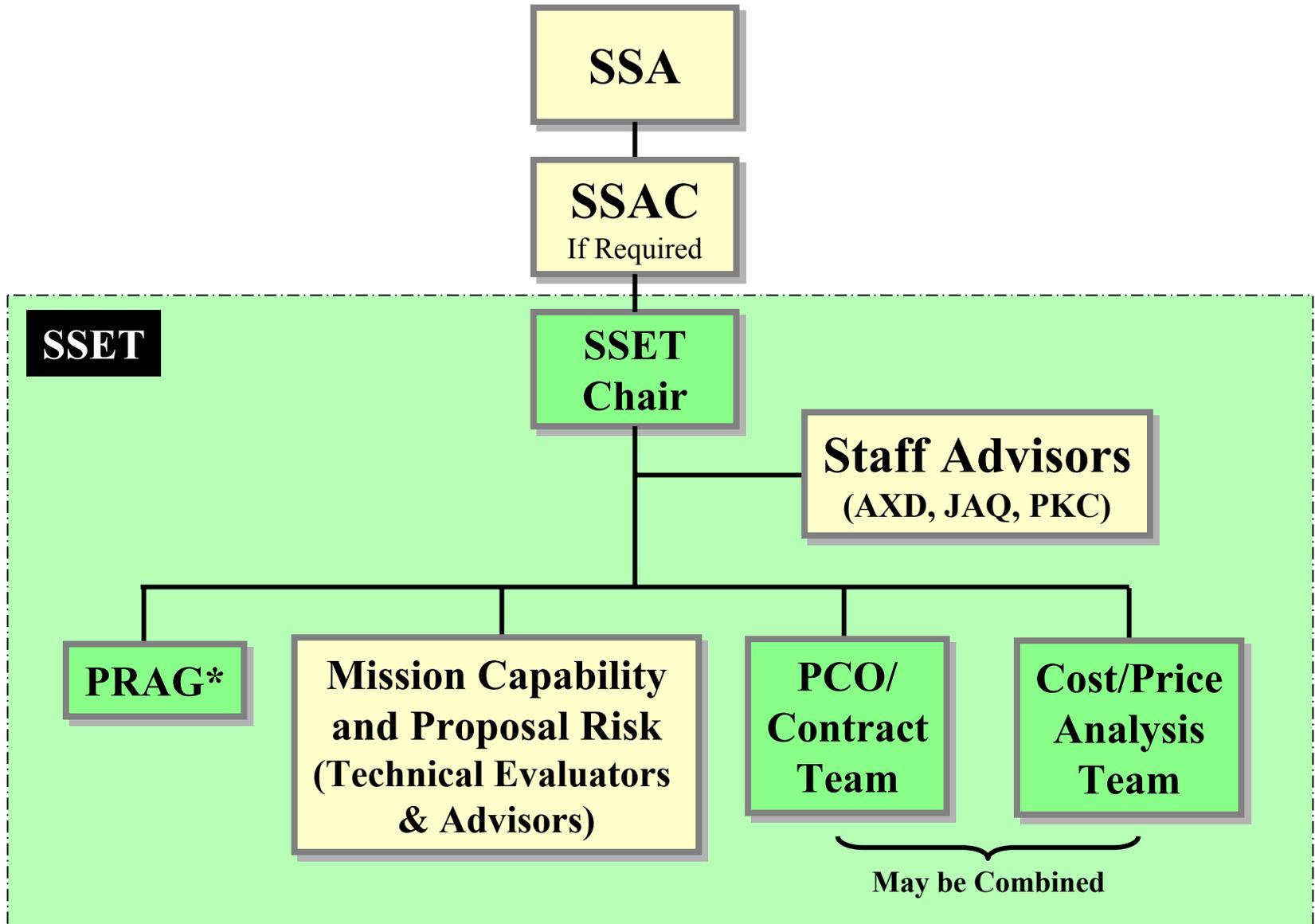
Has little potential to cause disruption of schedule, increased cost or degradation of performance Normal contractor effort and normal Government monitoring will probably be able to overcome difficulties

MC & PR: THE DIFFERENCES ^b

	MISSION CAPABILITY	PROPOSAL RISK
FOCUS	DOES THE PROMISED PERFORMANCE MEET <i>THE SOLICITATION REQUIREMENTS</i> ?	WHAT ARE <i>THE RISKS</i> OF MEETING SOLICITATION RQMTS IF PERFORMED AS PROMISED?
ISSUE	WHAT IS <i>QUALITY OF PERFORMANCE-BASED OUTCOME</i> ?	WHAT RISKS ARE INHERENT IN OFFEROR'S <i>APPROACH</i> ?
ASSESSMENT	(MEETS) STRENGTH PROPOSAL INADEQUACY <i>MC</i> DEFICIENCY	(NO WEAKNESSES) WEAKNESS SIGNIFICANT WEAKNESS <i>PR</i> DEFICIENCY
RATING	BLUE GREEN YELLOW RED	LOW MODERATE HIGH

Source Selection Organization

Median And Agency Procedures



Source Selection Evaluation Team (SSET)

- **Evaluates** proposals & revisions against solicitation requirements
- **Reports** evaluation results to SSAC & SSA
- **Prepares:**
 - Briefing charts, as applicable:
 - Competitive range briefing
 - Interim rating status briefing/s
 - Decision briefing

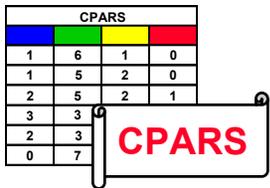
Source Selection Evaluation Team Chair

- **Assigns** duties to team members
- **Reviews** Proposals and SSET Comments
- **Analyzes** Strengths, PIs, Deficiencies & Weaknesses to form a subjective Proposal Rating and Risk Rating
- **Reviews and recommends** approval of ENs
- **Assesses** EN Responses and Disposition of ENs
- **Checks** for Consistency

***Past Performance (PRAG), and
Cost Team***

PRAG Duties

- **Past Performance Risk Assessment Group (PRAG)**
- **Duties:** (AFFARS 5315.305(a)(2))
 - Evaluate recent, current & relevant past performance of each offeror
 - Assess Performance Confidence at Subfactor level and assign rating at the Factor level for each proposal
 - Recommend overall Past Performance Confidence rating, if requested by SSA



Past Performance Ratings

AFFARS 5315.305(a)(2)(S-92)

High Confidence

Based on the offeror's performance record, essentially **no doubt** exists that the offeror will successfully perform the required effort

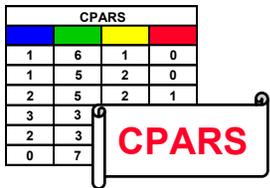
Significant Confidence

Based on the offeror's performance record, **little doubt** exists that the offeror will successfully perform the required effort

Confidence

Based on the offeror's performance record, **some doubt** exists that the offerors will successfully perform the required effort

(continued on next page)



Past Performance Ratings

AFFARS 5315.305(a)(2)(S-92)

Unknown Confidence

No performance record identifiable
(See FAR 15.305(a)(2)(iii) & (iv))

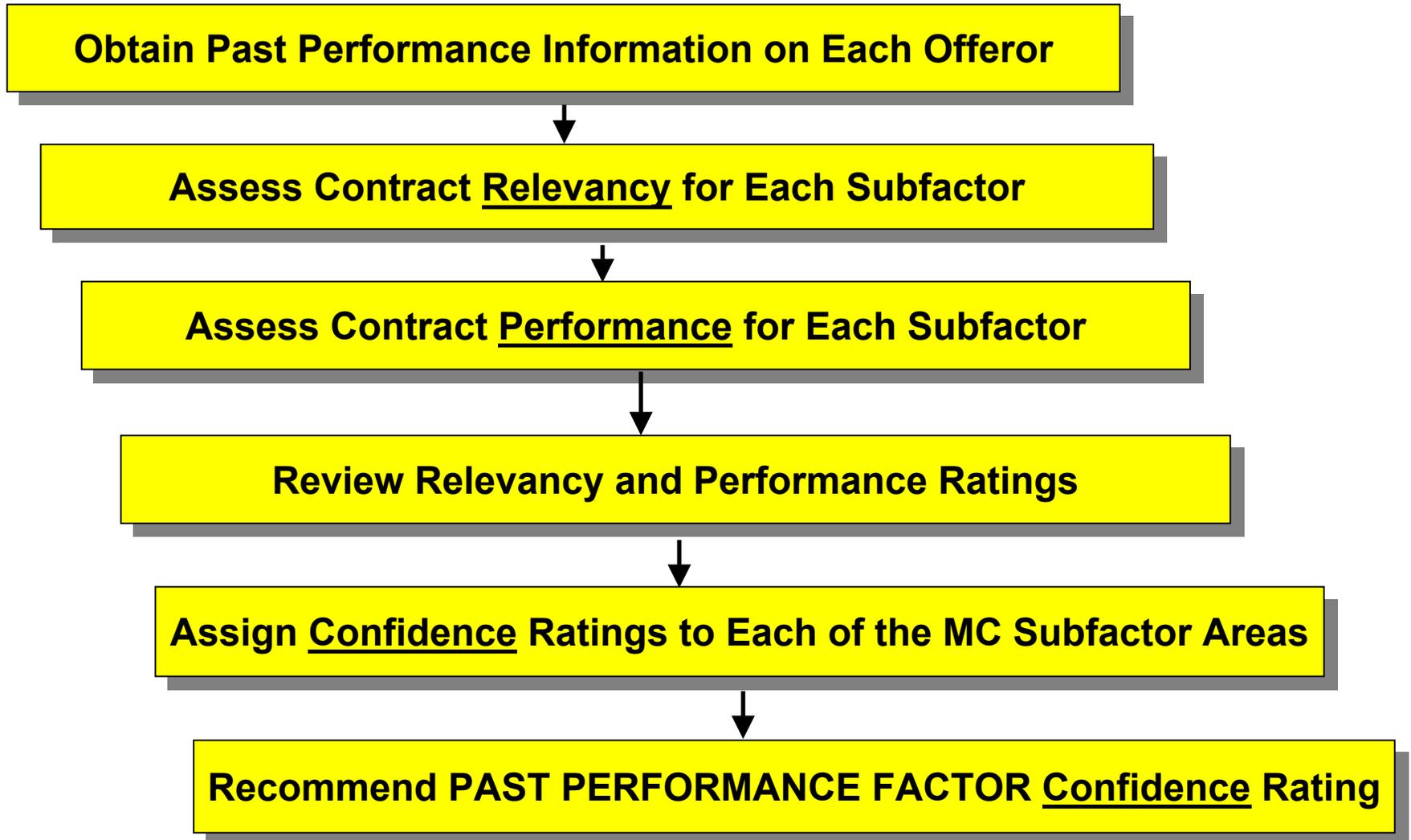
Little Confidence

Based on the offeror's performance record, **substantial doubt** exists that the offeror will successfully perform the required effort. Changes to the offeror's existing processes may be necessary in order to achieve contract requirements

No Confidence

Based on the offeror's performance record, **extreme doubt** exists that the offeror will successfully perform the required effort

Past Performance (Simplified) Process



Roles and Responsibilities

Summary Responsibilities

- **PCO/Contract Team (Factor Chief)**

- **Principal SSET advisor on conduct of Source Selection**
- **Controls all communication to/from offerors during Source Selection**
- **Evaluates Terms & Conditions**
- **Determines competitive range**
- **Conducts negotiations**
- **Assists in preparation of Source Selection Decision Document**

Roles and Responsibilities

Summary Responsibilities

- **Cost/Price Factor Chief & Analysis Team**
 - Evaluate cost/price volume to determine price reasonableness and cost realism, if applicable
 - Determines probable cost (Dollarize proposal risk and mission capability exceptions)
 - Uses separate processes, definitions and ground rules
 - Entire SSET can have access to cost information

Cost/Price Definitions

(FAR 15.305(a)(i))

- **Cost/Price Reasonableness**

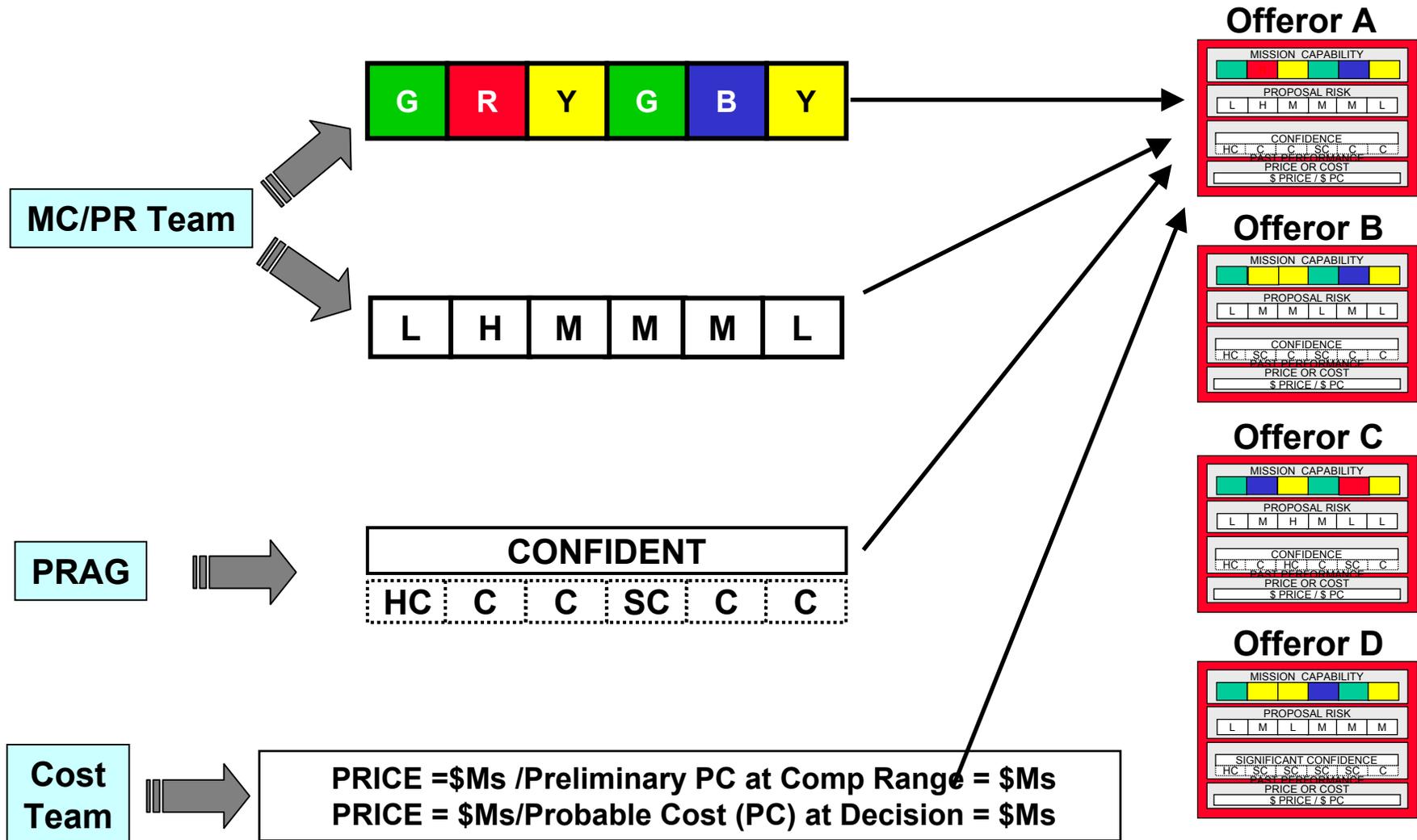
Normally evaluated and assessed under price competition; may also be determined by other price analysis techniques such as parametric analysis

- **Cost Realism**

Required for cost-reimbursement contracts, an assessment that proposed price appropriately considers scope and degree of effort. As elected by PCO, may be considered for other contract types such as FPIF

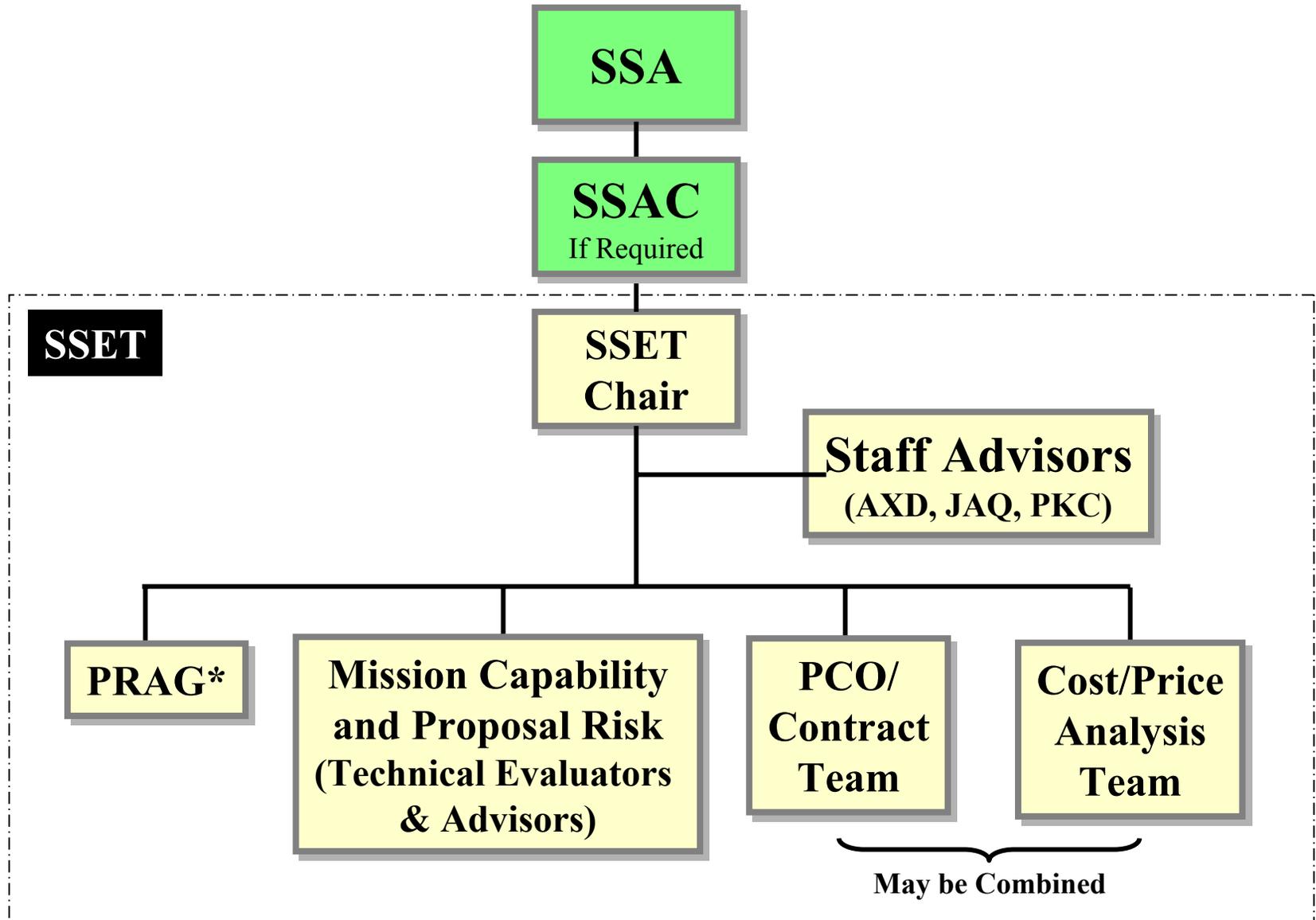
Integrating the Ratings

Core Team: SSET Chair, Factor Chiefs, Sub-Factor Chiefs, PCO, Recorder (admin)



Source Selection Organization

Median And Agency Procedures



*Use of PRAG to evaluate Performance Confidence is optional for Median acquisitions

Roles and Responsibilities

Summary Responsibilities

- SSAC

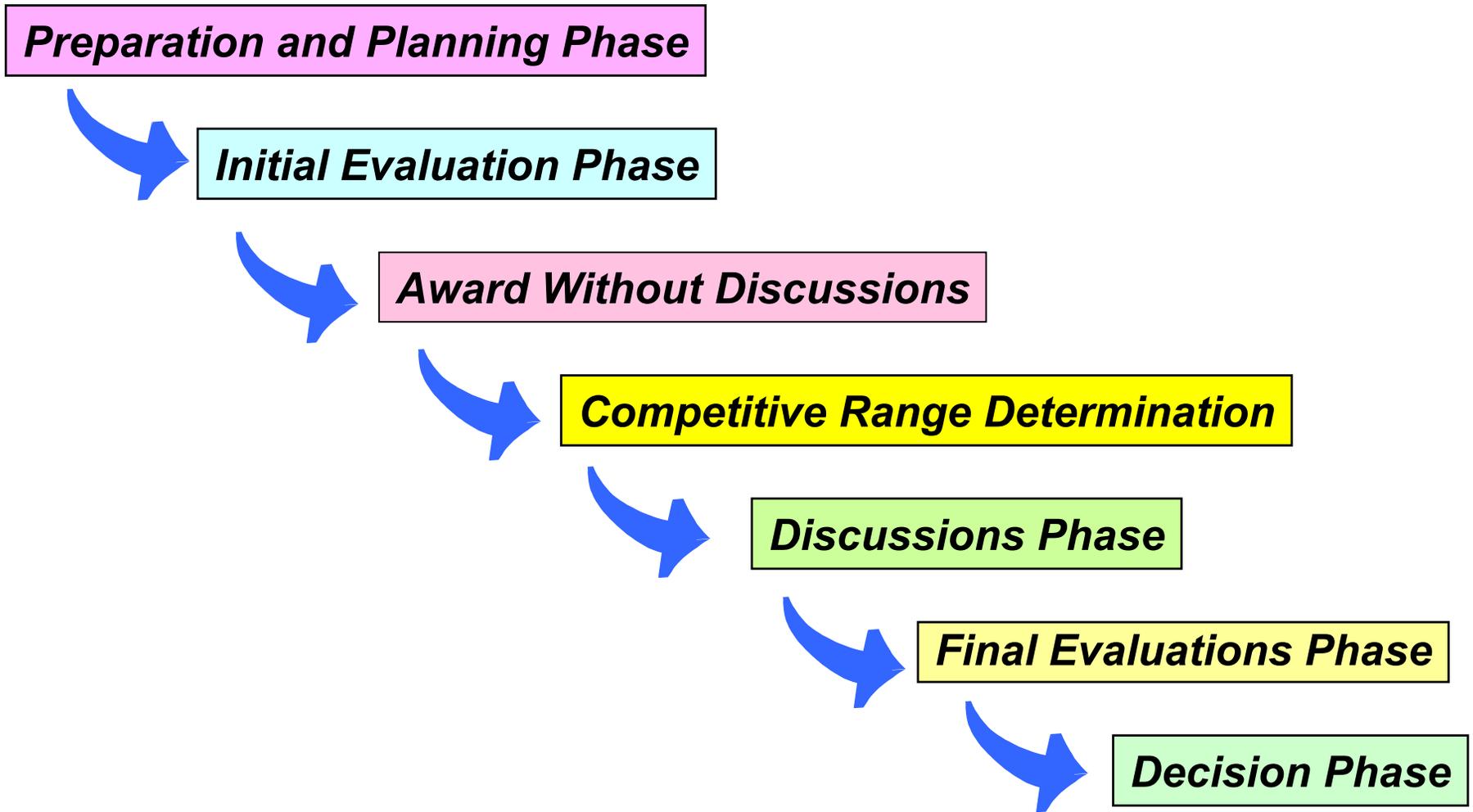
- Reviews SSP
- Reviews evaluation and findings of SSET
- Provides advice, analysis and recommendation (if requested) to SSA

- SSA

- Reviews and approves SSP
- Determines if award without discussions is appropriate
- Approves release of ENs
- Makes final decision and signs documentation

**SSA IS THE CUSTOMER OF EVERYONE
ASSOCIATED WITH SOURCE SELECTION**

Source Selection Process Overview



Preparation and Planning

RFP Released, SSP approved, SSEG signed



Establish Team Ground Rules

Receive AXD Process Training



You are here

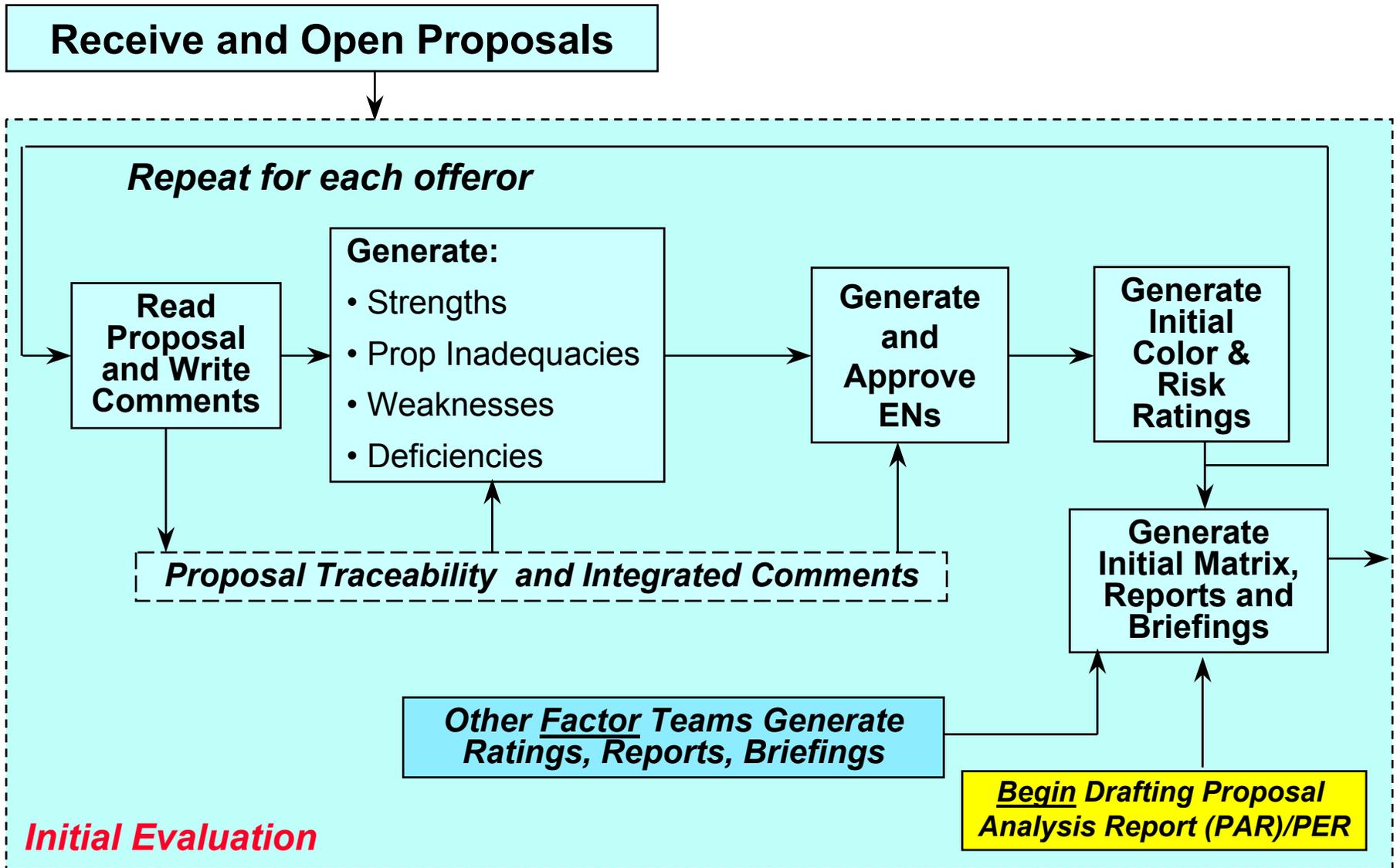
Receive AXD ESS Tool Demo & Exercise

Receive JA Procurement Ethics Training

Read RFP, TRD/Spec, SSP, SSEG

(Subfactor) Teams Discuss Section M Criteria

Initial Evaluation Phase



Award Without Discussions

Determine if Award Without Discussions (AWOD) Possible

Solicitation must state AWOD is an option

See FAR 52.215-1(f)(4)

Based on Initial Ratings:

Are x contracts/proposals acceptable as written (no changes)?

Yes

No

Are only "Clarifications" needed?

- Relevance of past performance
- Response to adverse past performance
- Resolve minor or clerical errors

No

Go to Comp. Range

Go to Decision Phase

Yes

Send "Clarification" ENs*, review responses and update ratings

No

Yes

Are x contracts/proposals acceptable as written (no changes)?

Award Without Discussions (AWOD)

* = SSA approves release of ENs

x = total # of contracts that must be awarded

Competitive Range Determination

Solicitation must notify offerors the Comp Range can be limited

FAR 15.306 (c)(2)

Does the field need to be reduced to “the most highly rated proposals”?

No

FAR 15.306 (c)(2)

Yes

Are Communication ENs needed?

- *(Not an opportunity to revise proposal)*
- **Resolve inclusion in Competitive Range**
- **Relevance of past performance**
- **Response to adverse past performance**
- **Proposal ambiguities or other concerns**

No

Competitive Range Determination Briefing

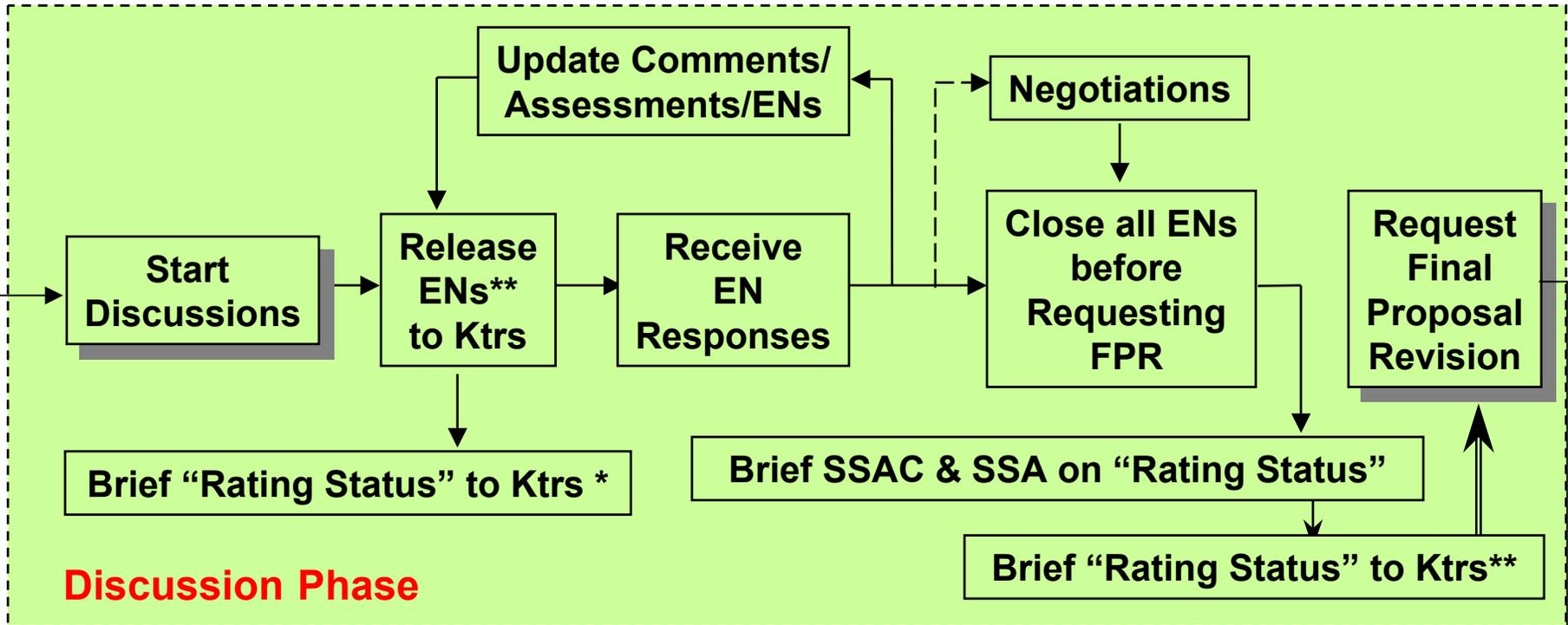
Yes

Send “Communication” ENs*, receive answers and update ratings

Competitive Range

* = SSA approves release of ENs

Discussion Phase



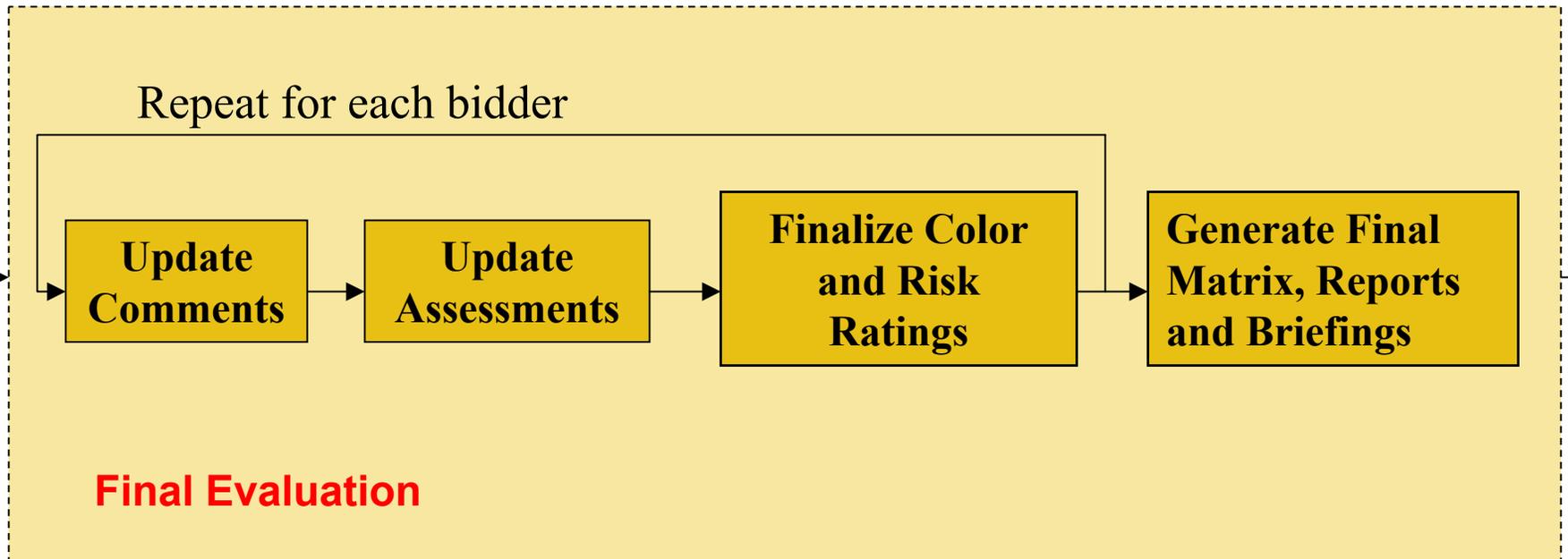
Discussion Phase

If The FPR Causes any New ENs, You May Decide to Reopen Discussions

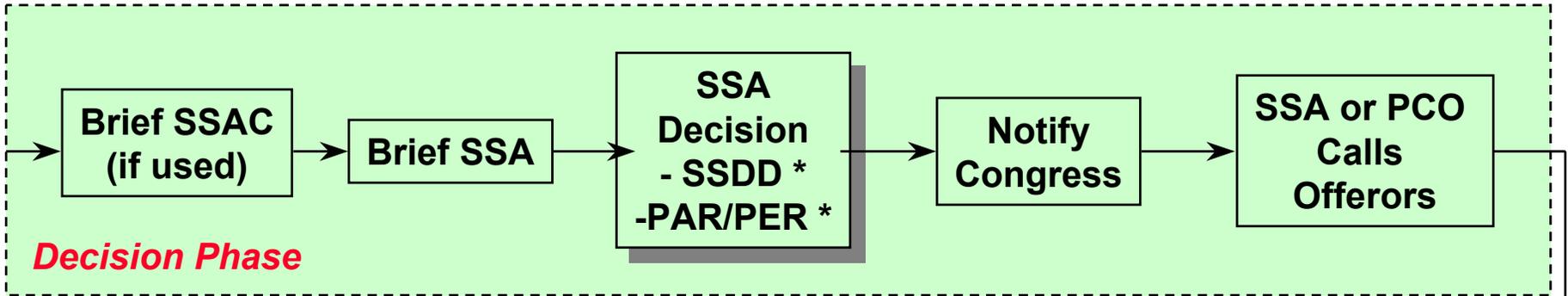
- **Best Practice to brief Ktrs' status after CRD*
- ***Mandatory to brief Ktrs' prior to FPR*

*** = SSA approves release of ENs*

Final Evaluation



Decision Phase



Decision Phase



* SSDD = Source Selection Decision Document,
PAR = Proposal Analysis Report, PER = Proposal Evaluation Report

And now , The “How to” based on

**Ground Rules, Best Practices,
Lessons Learned, Optional
Techniques for Each Phase**

Planning and Preparation

Planning and Preparation

- Establish and Communicate Team Ground Rules:
 - Members are assigned to the SSET--no other duties
 - Leave and TDYs may be denied by SSET Chair
 - Members are assigned to the SSET until documentation is complete
 - **Source Selection Recorder(s)**(aka “ESS Administrators”) shall be identified, and trained early and shall be available at all times
 - SSET Chair should define the Uniform of the Day
 - Casual dress for civilians recommended
 - Factor Chiefs or Sub-Factor Chiefs should set the daily schedule and determine duty hours
 - **Cross-Talk Meetings** at all levels are encouraged, especially during the first few days/weeks of the evaluation:
 - Sub-Factor Teams, Sub-Factor Chiefs, Factor Chiefs, SSET/SSAC Chairs
 - Uniform baseline against which each offeror is compared
 - Rules for bringing electronic devices into facility

Planning and Preparation (2)

- ESS Facility Conduct:

- Keep voices low
- Clean up your area
- File and secure records in accordance with your Source Selection Evaluation Guide (SSEG)
- Documents brought into the ESS Facility, stay in the ESS Facility until source selection is complete
- Do not discuss Source Selection Information in the hallways
- Take needed breaks, manage your time
- Use ESS Tool “Q & A” function only for Source Selection business!
- Capture Lessons Learned in the Electronic Source Selection Tool

Planning and Preparation (3)

1. Read key RFP documents

- Government Executive Summary
- SOO
- RFP Sections A-K, especially:
 - SRD/TRD (Section C, if used)
 - Delivery schedule (Section F)
 - Special Contract Requirements (Section H)
- WBS and WBS Dictionary (if used)
- SOW (if used)
- CDRLs

2. Read the Source Selection Plan (SSP) and Source Selection Evaluation Guide (SSEG)

Planning and Preparation (4)

3. Read *Section L* - Instructions, Conditions, and Notices to Offerors or Quoters
 - Review proposal structure table
 - Specifications and TRD/SRD (if used)
 - SOW Instructions (if used)
 - IMP/IMS Instructions
 - Cost/Price Instructions
4. Study *Section M* - Evaluation Factors/Criteria for Award
 - Understand RFP threshold/objectives (if used)
 - Understand how criteria relate to TRD/SRD Trade Space
 - Understand the uniform baseline against which each offeror is compared
5. Understand RFP/Proposal/Contract Document Linkage

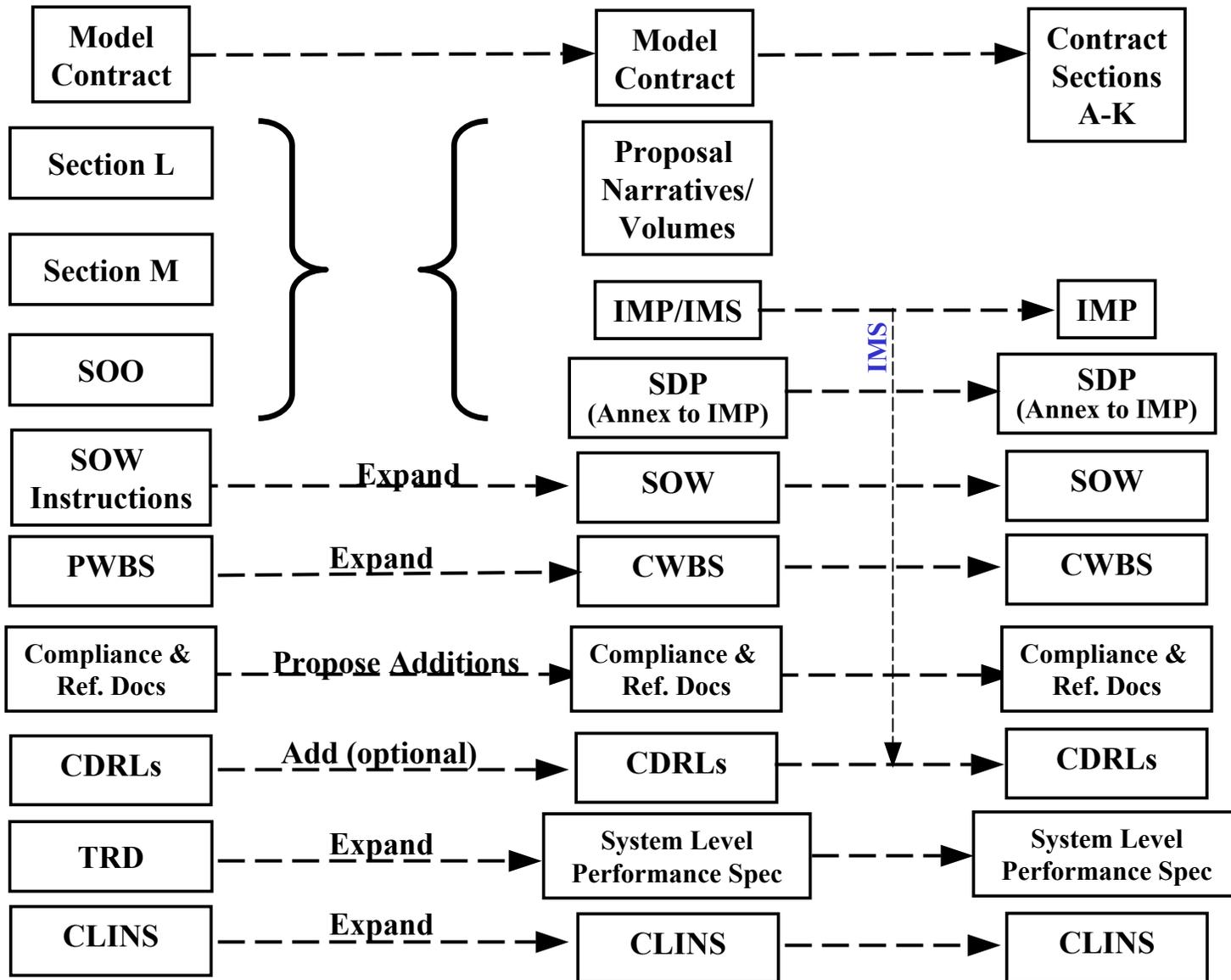
(See next slide)

Document Linkage

Provided in RFP

Provided in Proposal

On Contract at Award

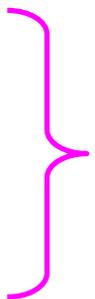


Planning and Preparation (6)

- **Before** each Sub-Factor or Factor Team opens proposals, we strongly recommend:
 - Team discussion of Section M criteria and parts of the proposal that will be reviewed for each criteria
 - Proposal parts: narrative, IMP, IMS, spec, CDRL, etc.

Receive and Open Proposals

Initial Evaluation -- MC/PR

- Read **Offeror's** Executive Summary: Grasp overarching messages or themes, and general organization of proposal (if requested)
- Read the MC proposal (Volume) text
- **Review proposal** against evaluation criteria in RFP Section M to assess whether proposal:
 - **EXCEEDS**
 - **MEETS**
 - **DOES NOT CLEARLY MEET**
 - **DOES NOT MEETS**

... Section M Requirement
- Enter notes and comments into the ESS Tool
 - Each Comment must be linked to a specific *Section M Criteria*
- **Review all relevant portions** of proposal to evaluate all five aspects of Proposal Risk (PR) with respect to a specific criteria
- Enter PR notes and comments into ESS Tool

Initial Evaluation -- MC/PR (pg 2)

- **Comments are the Foundation!**
 - Form basis for Assessments, Ratings, and Decision
 - Include rationale how MEETS, DOES NOT MEET, or EXCEEDS
- **You must evaluate proposal vs Section M -- and only Section M**
 - May not evaluate what you think requirement should be
 - Some Section M criteria may be Pass/Fail
- **Don't compare proposal with one another**
- **Use ESS Tool to fully document audit trail**
 - All Ratings must be traceable to comments
 - Teams have avoided protest by referencing comments

Initial Evaluation -- MC/PR (pg 3)

Recommended Format for Comments Narrative Box:

- **Requirement States:**

- Paraphrase RFP Requirement

- **Offeror Stated:**

- Paraphrase offeror's proposal; add reference location

- **Comment:**

- **For MC:** Offeror **MEETS, DOES NOT MEET, or EXCEEDS** the requirements or **CANNOT DETERMINE (DOES NOT CLEARLY MEET)**

- **For PR:** Approach may cause disruption of schedule, increased cost, degraded performance, or increased Gov't oversight and offeror has **not** mitigated risks

- Then, include your own narrative comments and notes

- **Effect/Benefit:**

- Not applicable if offeror met the requirements

- What are benefits if offeror exceeded requirements?

- What is effect/detriment if offeror failed to meet requirements?

- What is impact of Proposal Risk? Ex: Degree of added Govt oversight

Initial Evaluation -- MC/PR (pg 4)

- **Comment Format (continued):**
 - **Suggested EN language:**
 - Advisors insert EN language in Comment Form
 - Be specific in what you are requesting (See examples)

Examples--Comments (1)

- **Inadequate** Comments:
 - a. Current teaming arrangements exceed min. req'ts.
 - b. Proposed comprehensive risk management toolset is a one star strength. (*nothing else in comment*)
- **Better** Comments:
 - a. Offeror has signed MOUs and pre-negotiated subcontracts with key players which enables a quick start-up after contract award
 - b. All team members (including subs) agree to use same risk tool making integrated risk assessments easier and quicker

Examples--Bullets (2)

- **Inadequate** Bullets:
 - a. Lack of understanding how *xyz* subsystem drives risks
 - b. Proposal risk for trade study optimization process due to potential cost of doing adequate trades
 - c. Depth and breadth of offeror's team exceeds requirements necessary to accomplish SOO (strength, but no benefit)
- **Better** Bullets:
 - a. No *xyz* subsystem risks identified or listed in trade studies
 - b. No time or activity identified to optimize trade studies among five mission areas mentioned by offeror
 - c. All risk areas are represented on IPTs with members or subcontractors that have experience in new mission areas

Examples--ENs (3)

- **Inadequate** ENs:
 - a. Offeror needs to clarify how the proposed system security implementation addresses SOO objectives
 - b. Need clarification on where the risk mgmt process was demonstrated
- **Better** ENs:
 - a. It is not clear how, when and by whom system security requirements will be developed. It is also not clear how these requirements will be integrated into the trade studies.
 - b. Describe where risk mgmt process was used previously and why that program is analogous to this effort

Initial Evaluation -- MC/PR (pg 5)

Additional Guidelines for Comments:

- Must be direct and concise “For the record”
- Ensure comment is for the correct Section M requirement/criteria
- Each comment should contain one complete thought
- Do not bundle several comments about different criteria into one Comment Form
- Be sure to identify *references* (RFP & proposal paragraph numbers)
- Suggest type of comment (Strength, Proposal Inadequacy (PI), etc.)
- Use descriptive bullet for title
- Carefully record disposition of all comments, notes, and ENs

Reviewing and Integrating Comments

- Check for traceability between Proposal, IMP, Contractor SOW, schedule (IMS), WBS, and requirement(s)
- Cross check proposal features in MC Volume with details in IMP, IMS, Basis of Estimates (BOE) and Cost/Price Volume
- Check all Specs and requirements documents in SOW, Section C, or Bidder's Library to ensure that all requirements are addressed in the Offeror's "Proposed" Specification (if requested in RFP)
- MC/PR team members should interact closely with cost team members (*no longer prohibited*)
- **Note: If you are looking for a specific aspect and don't see it, check the Section L to make sure we asked for it**

Generate Initial Ratings (1)

- Avoid bias for/against any Offeror
- Everything must be traceable to the RFP (Sects. L &M)
- **Evaluate only the proposal information, not extraneous or supplemental information**
- Be objective -- evaluate proposal on the basis of what we asked for, not what we would like to see
- Be thorough -- a proposal must directly reflect fulfillment of all solicitation requirements
- Document, document -- all observations and perceptions you see relating to the proposal
- SSET must ensure comprehensive audit trail
- Ensure consistency across Offerors

Generate Initial Ratings (2)

General Notes:

- If requirement is not met, it is likely a Deficiency
- If approach to meet a requirement is too unclear to evaluate for impact to cost, schedule, or performance, it is likely a Proposal Inadequacy (PI)
- If the Offeror does not exhibit clear understanding of a requirement, it may be a proposal inadequacy.
- If any Proposal Inadequacy (PI) is un-resolvable, it may become a deficiency

Evaluation Notices

- **Evaluation Notices (ENs)**
 - Ensure each is necessary
 - **Good question:** Will it affect rating(s) if answered properly?
- In addition to hardcopy, ask for softcopy of EN Responses (CD-ROM or Diskette) so text of response can be copied into ESS Tool easily
- *(see format on next page)*

Evaluation Notice Form

☰ Evaluation Notice _ □ ×

Member	essadmin	Offeror	Alpha Beta	Proposal	Primary
Factor	Subfactor	Element	Criteria		
Mission Capability	Technical	Space Vehicle	1.1.1		

ENs | Related Comments | Related Assessments

EN Type	Category	Author	D/T created	EN ID	EC	SFC	FC	PCD	SSET	SSA
Communication	Deficiency	ESSAdmin	23-Feb-00 15:45	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
RFP Ref		sec m, page 1								
Prop Ref		tech vol, page 6, par 3.1								
Topic				Status	Open					
propulsion lacking										
Narrative										
Requirement States: propulsion at xxx or greater Offeror Stated: at most vehicle has xxx-2.5 Comment: offeror proposes a value of 2.5 less than the desired propulsion Effect/Benefit: not enough propulsion to reach desired orbit Suggested EN language:										
Record: ⏪ ⏩ 1 ⏴ ⏵ ⏶ ⏷ of 2										
Dis position										

ENs

Selector	Defs	Criteria
Cmt	Asmt	

New Move

View: <ALL>

Apply Filter

Filter is OFF

Buffer

Copy	Paste	View
------	-------	------

Comments:
▶ 2

Asmts:
▶ 2

Link
Del

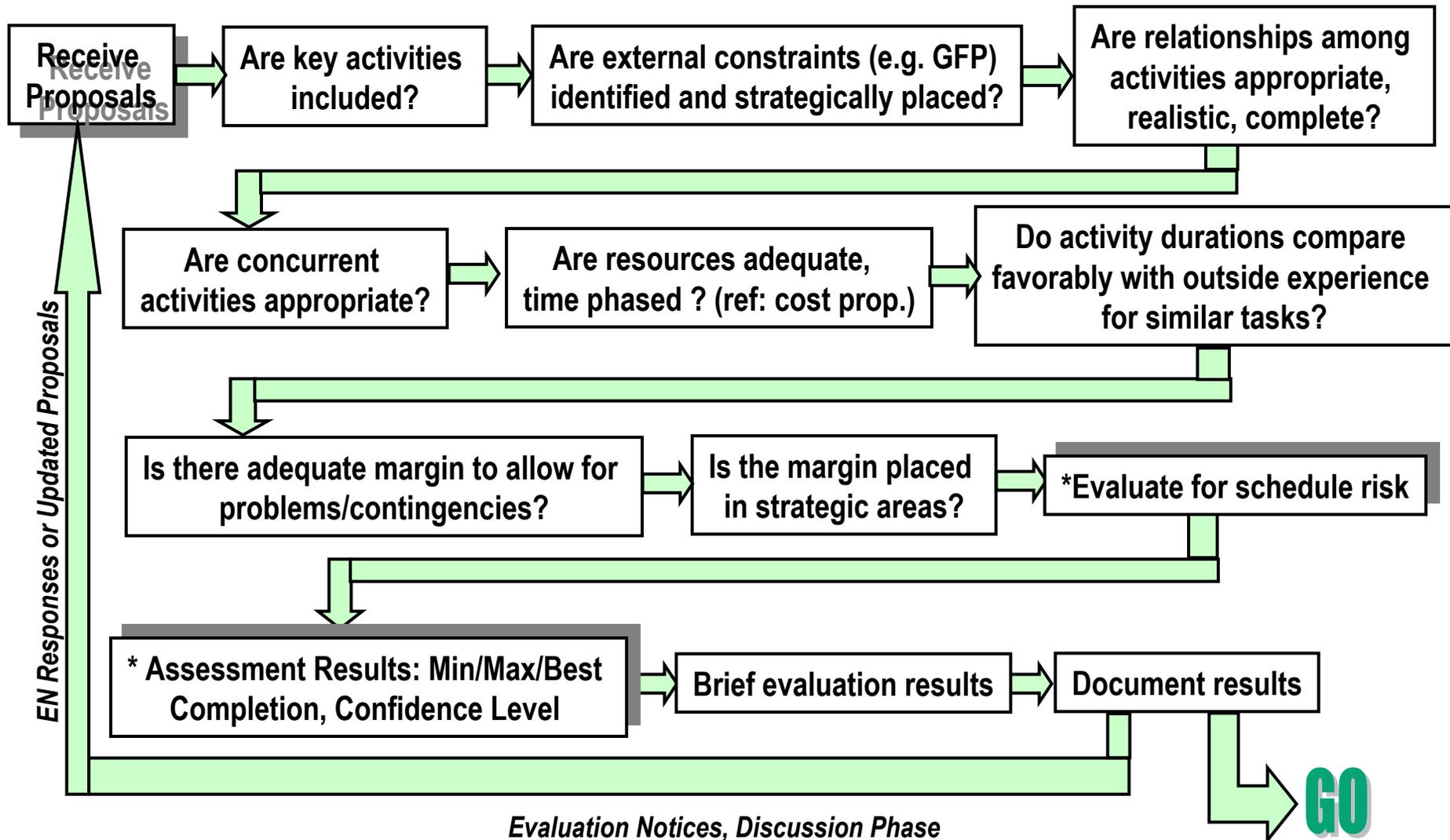
Link
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Initial Evaluation -- IMP/IMS

INTEGRATED MASTER PLAN/INTEGRATED MASTER SCHEDULE

- Are key aspects of proposal in IMP/IMS ?
 - Try to map “strengths” and “weaknesses” from MC Volume into IMP/IMS (and Spec) including processes (e.g., risk management)
 - “If it’s in the ‘tech proposal’ but not in the IMP/IMS, it’s a hollow promise” (IMP becomes contract attachment)
- Are risk mitigation plans in IMP/IMS ?
 - Risk mitigation plans may be at too low a level for page constrained IMPs
- Are key aspects of Cost Proposal in IMP/IMS ?
 - (Evaluation teams can look at MC and cost volumes!)
 - Depth & breadth of costs compare to tech prop, IMP, IMS
 - Sufficient resources/costs for parallel activities in IMS
 - Sufficient \$\$ for test assets and risk mitigation plans

Initial Evaluation -- IMS



* If RFP model for statistical risk assessment was used

Initial Evaluation -- IMS

Helpful hints for evaluating the schedule (IMS):

- Print the network schedule on “oversize” paper using plotter
 - Plotter available for use in ASOC (Bldg 120)
- Hang on wall of ESS Facility
- Mark off areas of the schedule that correspond to MC Sub-Factors
- Sub-Factor Teams evaluate “their” portion of the schedule using process defined on previous slide
- Integrate results from assessment of other parts of the proposal:
 - GFP annex
 - Cost volume
 - IMP

Initial Evaluation--Proposal Risk

- **Proposal Risk includes key five aspects:**
 - **Schedule**
 - **Cost**
 - **Performance**
 - **Offeror's Risk Mitigation Plans**
 - **Gov't oversight --> result or impact of risky approach**
- **Therefore, the proposal evaluation should integrate these five multi-faceted aspects:**
 - **Schedule (IMS)**
 - **Cost (Cost Volume)**
 - **Performance (MC Volume)**
 - **Offeror's "Risk Mitigation"/Handling plans (MC Volume?)**
 - **Gov't oversight probability (result of evaluation)**

Initial Evaluation--Proposal Risk (2)

MC versus PR

- **Mission Capability color rating is comparison of proposed approach against Section M criteria for MC**
 - “Does their approach meet/exceed our requirement?”
- **Proposal risk is an assessment of the risk of implementing the proposed approach**
 - “Will their approach work?”
 - Integrated evaluation of approach, risk mitigation, schedule, and cost
 - “Will their approach result in the need for increased gov’t oversight?”

Sources of Proposal Risk:

- Under-manning the effort, Incorrect skill mix
- Poor integration of tasks or processes as reflected in the IMP
- Poor integration within IMS (i.e., activity relationships aren’t logical)

Initial Evaluation--Proposal Risk (3)

Causes of Proposal Risk:

- Under-manning the effort
- Incorrect skill mix
- Training and personnel certification
- IMP has poor integration
- Poor integration within IMS (i.e., activity relationships aren't logical)

Briefings

(Mostly for Chiefs)

- **SSAC:**
 - Charter is to review and “challenge” logic in SSET briefing
 - Can suggest changes to briefing, SSET has option to accept/reject
 - May offer alternative briefing/recommendation(s)
- **“Dry-Run”** briefings with “whole team”
- **Discuss/review** any changes with entire SSET
- **SSET** should review and discuss pre-FPR “Interim Rating Status” briefing to offerors with SSAC & SSA before presenting it to offerors
- **SSA** should review all briefings to offerors
- **Build** the PowerPoint briefing slides from the data in the ESS Tool (copy & paste)
- **Optional: Brief** with the ESS Tool available

Discussions Phase

- **Best Practice:** Presenting offeror their portion of competitive range brief has greatly aided Discussions
 - “For all ACAT program source selections, the SSET, through the contracting officer, **may** provide to all offerors in the competitive range their rating status at the time of competitive range determination, and **shall** provide to all offerors in the competitive range their rating status at the end of discussions” (AFFARS 5315.306(d)(3)). *[emphasis added]*
- Requesting FPR with “YELLOW” (not sure requirement met) proposal ratings should be rare
- Ensure offeror fully understands Yellow/Red rationale

Discussions Phase (2)

- **Negotiations** are exchanges, that are undertaken with the intent of allowing the offeror to revise its proposal. These negotiations may include bargaining.
- **Bargaining** includes persuasion, alteration of assumptions and positions, give-and-take, and may apply to price, schedule, technical requirements, type of contract, or other terms of a proposed contract (FAR 15.306(d)).

Discussions Phase (3)

Lessons Learned from Negotiations:

- When developing “Comp Range” brief, capture what may be traded later in negotiations
- Document the negotiation strategy/plan
 - What we want changed, what we are flexible on & can trade
 - Our plan on how to get where we want to go
 - Helps the team focus and prevents getting mixed up during face-to-face negotiations
- Consider: improvements that benefit gov’t and trade-offs that significantly reduce costs
- Resolve all T&C differences and Ktr’s ground rules and assumptions before requesting Final Proposal Revision
- Someone must take notes and track changes to contract including “terms and conditions,” billing, GFP, etc.

Technical Leveling vs. Technical Transfusion

- **Technical Leveling is ok, Transfusion is not.**
- AFFAR 15.306(e)(2), “Limits on Exchanges” with offerors: cannot reveal an offeror’s technical solution, unique technology, unique use of commercial items or intellectual property.
- May negotiate with offerors for increased performance beyond any mandatory minimums (thresholds)
- May suggest to offerors that have exceeded minimums (thresholds), that proposals would be more competitive if excesses were removed and price was decreased
 - Be careful not to penalize for lower performance

Decision Phase

- **Complete Draft PAR**
 - Coordinate based on SSET/SSAC recommendations
 - Present at end of briefing if SSA agrees with recommendations in decision briefing
 - If SSA does not agree, take action to update PAR and provide to SSA
- **Draft SSDD and coordinate**
 - Present at end of briefing if SSA agrees with recommendations in decision briefing
 - If SSA does not agree, take action to update SSDD and provide to SSA
 - Complete Price Competition Memorandum (PCM) or Price Negotiation Memorandum (PNM), as appropriate
- **Normal notifications:**
 - Congress notified of successful offerors(s)
 - SSA calls offerors soon after decision/Congressional notification
 - PCO confirms decision in writing

Debriefings

- SSA or SSAC Chair should lead debriefing delegation
- Use the Charts From the SSA Decision Briefing
 - Show each Offeror his Strengths/Deficiencies/Weaknesses
 - If show strengths/deficiencies/weaknesses of successful offeror, get concurrence from winner to ensure no transfer of proprietary information
- Offerors have appreciated debrief at their facility
- Do not allow extensive discussion (arguments)
- Taking ESS data base along has avoided protests
 - Detailed audit trail can be used to show offeror specific comments
- Some contractors will be emotional about losing--be prepared!
- Don't mention Winner's attributes if not on charts
- Avoid comparing proposals!

Summary

- **THINK!**
- **Comments are the Foundation!**
- **Section M is the only criteria**
- **Document the Audit Trail in the ESS Tool**
- **Follow the Process!**
 - **GAO supports teams that follow their documented process**
 - **So read and understand the SSP & SSEG**

*Please fill out you feedback
forms, and
Call AXD if you have questions!*

Backup Slides
(Detail Quotes, etc.)

Roles and Responsibilities

Source Selection Authority (SSA)

- Approves release of Evaluation Notices (EN)
- Approves exclusion of any offeror from competitive range
- Makes selection decision
- Documents the supporting rationale in the Source Selection Decision Document (SSDD)

SSA IS THE CUSTOMER OF **EVERYONE
ASSOCIATED WITH SOURCE SELECTION**

Roles and Responsibilities

Past Performance Risk Assessment Group (PRAG)

- **Membership:** (AFFARS 5315.303-90(e))
 - Experienced Government-only personnel
 - Appointed by PRAG chairperson
- **Duties:** (AFFARS 5315.305(a)(2))
 - Evaluate recent, current & relevant past performance of each offeror
 - Assess Performance Confidence at Subfactor level and assign rating at the Factor level for each proposal
 - Recommend overall Past Performance Confidence rating, if requested by SSA

Roles and Responsibilities

Contracting Officer

- **Conducts:**
 - Exchanges
 - Negotiations
 - Interim rating status
 - Debriefings
- **Evaluates:**
 - Small & small disadvantaged business evaluation criteria
 - Cost or price factor
 - Terms & conditions
- **Manages:**
 - Disclosure of source selection information
 - All business aspects of acquisition

Roles and Responsibilities

Contracting Officer

- **Determines:**
 - Competitive range
 - Scope & extent of negotiations
 - Common cut-off date for final proposal revisions
- **Ensures:**
 - Team membership remains consistent during discussions
 - Record of oral presentations properly maintained & documented
 - Timely clearance obtained
- **Assists preparation of:**
 - Source Selection Decision Document
- **Awards contract**

Exchanges

- **“Exchanges”** is a term describing the transfer of information between the Gov’t and Contractor
 - Before receipt of proposals - info gathering
 - After receipt of proposals: Clarifications, Communications, and Discussions/negotiations

Limitations on Exchanges

- Govt personnel shall **NOT** engage in conduct that:
 - favors one offeror over another
 - reveals one offeror’s sensitive info to another offeror
 - reveals an offeror’s price w/o offeror permission
 - reveals names of persons providing past performance info
 - knowingly discloses source selection info

Clarifications

- **Limited exchanges, between the govt and offerors, that may occur when award without discussions is contemplated.**
- **If award without discussions is possible, offerors may clarify**
 - **Relevance of past performance info**
 - **Adverse past performance not previously rebutted**
 - **Resolve minor or clerical errors**
- **RFP must provide for award award w/o discussion**

Communications

- **Exchanges between the govt and offerors after receipt of proposals that leads to establishment of the competitive range**
- **Occurs before establishment of competitive range**
- **Resolves question of whether the offeror is IN or OUT of the competitive range**

Discussions / Negotiations

- **Exchanges between the govt and offerors with intent of allowing offeror to revise its proposal.**
- **Take place after establishment of the competitive range**
- **Tailored to each offeror's proposal**
- **Conducted by the PCO with each offeror in the competitive range**

Debriefing

- **Before award**
 - **Offerors excluded from competition**
- **Post-award**
 - **Both successful and unsuccessful offerors**

Sub-factor Rollup

Mission Capability					
	Sys Perf	Sys Eng/Int	Sys Act/Ops/Sustain	Mgmt	S/W Devel
Comp Range	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Initial Rating	B	G	G	G	G
Proposal Risk					
Comp Range					Low
Initial Rating					Low

1 Major Strength (★★★)
1 Moderate Strength (★★)
2 Minor Strengths (★)
0 MC Deficiencies
0 Proposal Inadequacies

System Performance and Design

- Mission Capability Strengths:
 - *** Proposes to satisfy all objective requirements in the FRD (26)
 - ** Proposes to meet all threshold DVP requirements plus additional requirements for Demo (23)
 - * Proposes flexible, sound approaches for evolving ops concept (146)
 - * Proposes to use well-established hardware platforms and vendors (47)
- Mission Capability Deficiencies:
 - None
- Proposal Inadequacies:

System Performance and Design

- Proposal Inadequacies:
 - Insufficient justification for proposed operations and sustainment reductions (150)
 - Ability to meet certain planning requirements (high risk requirements) is unclear (169)
 - Separation of simulation and real operations in Ops Concept and in design ambiguous (149)
 - Inappropriate use of COTS product name in system architecture (114)
 - Unclear whether offeror is proposing one or multiple database products (39)
 - Lack of design detail for Milstar unique requirements (167)
 - Manual Scripting shown as being optional in three figures is unclear (125)
 - System architecture figure appears to have an omission and a

Sub-factor Rollup

Mission Capability					
	Sys Perf	En	Sys	Sys	SW
Comp Range	Y				
Initial Rating	B				
Proposed Risk					
Comp Range	Mod	mod	Low	Low	Low
Initial Rating	Low	Low	Mod	Low	Low

2 Weaknesses
0 Significant Weaknesses
0 PR Deficiencies

Low Risk due to two minor weaknesses related to system design and ops personnel reductions.

System Performance and Design

- Weaknesses:
 - System design does not justify reduction of Government assessed risk level reductions
 - Differences between CCS-C and EMOS not accounted for in ops personnel reductions
- Significant Weaknesses:
 - None
- Proposal Risk Deficiencies:
 - None

System Performance and Design

- Weaknesses:
 - System design does not justify reduction of Government assessed risk level reductions
 - Differences between CCS-C and EMOS not accounted for in ops personnel reductions
- Significant Weaknesses:
 - None
- Proposal Risk Deficiencies:
 - None

Sub-factor Rollup

Mission Capability					
	Sys Perf	Sys Eng/Int	Sys Act/Ops/Sustain	Mgmt	S/W Devel
Comp Range	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Initial Rating	B	C	G	G	G
Proposed					
Comp Range	Mod				
Initial Rating	Low				

0 Major Strengths (★★★)
0 Moderate Strengths (★★)
2 Minor Strength (★)
0 MC Deficiencies
0 Proposal Inadequacies

System Engineering and Integration

- Mission Capability Strength:
 - * Lessons learned database utilized in performance analysis (100)
 - * Offeror's has extensive experience using requirements tool (911)
- Mission Capability Deficiencies:
 - None
- Proposal Inadequacies:
 - None

System Engineering and Integration

- Proposal Inadequacies:
 - Approach and cost to implement Milstar MUS functions and database unclear (232)
 - Error prone step in translation of legacy telemetry and command databases (38)
 - Unclear if prime considers enhancements to COTS products by COTS vendor (110)
 - Component selection criteria and COTS management processes not sufficiently defined in IMP (95)

System Engineering and Integration

- **Proposal Inadequacies:**
 - Architecture-related processes are inadequately described in IMP (103)
 - Performance analysis process is focused on network performance rather than system performance (104)
 - Proposes potentially conflicting System Engineering methodologies (98)
 - Offeror's experience with proposed requirements tool unknown (129)
 - CAIV process and amount of reliance on government participation unclear (131)
 - Offeror refers to a Figure 2.1-1 which is missing (161)
 - No CDRL referenced in CSOW 00150 "Proposal, ECP & ROM Estimate Development" (163)
 - IMP addressed FCA however CSOW does not (164)

Sub-factor Rollup

Mission Capability					
	Sys Perf	En	S		
Comp Range	Y				
Initial Rating	B	G			
Propos Risk					
Comp Range	Mod	Mod	Low	Low	Low
Initial Rating	Low	Low	Mod	Low	Low

0 Weaknesses
0 Significant Weaknesses
0 PR Deficiencies

Low Risk due to lack of identified risks in this area.

System Engineering and Integration

- Weaknesses:
 - None
- Significant Weaknesses:
 - None
- Proposal Risk Deficiencies:
 - None

System Engineering and Integration

- Weaknesses:
 - Performance analysis process only limited to one "worst case" scenario (109)
 - Effort to declassify DCCS software is undefined (187)
 - Relies on legacy operators/factory engineers to build Command Sequences (193)
 - Development process used for test support software not adequately addressed (134)
 - Factory Acceptance Test (FAT) test environment is undefined (135)
 - Inspection is the only method presented to verify component interfaces (137)
 - Does not justify reliance on COTS supplier to make USB changes (97)