

SOLICITATION, OFFER AND AWARD		1. THIS CONTRACT IS A RATED ORDER UNDER DPAS (15 CFR 700)		RATING	PAGE OF PAGES
2. CONTRACT NUMBER	3. SOLICITATION NUMBER	4. TYPE OF SOLICITATION <input type="checkbox"/> SEALED BID (IFB) <input type="checkbox"/> NEGOTIATED (RFP)	5. DATE ISSUED	6. REQUISITION/PURCHASE NUMBER	
7. ISSUED BY		CODE	8. ADDRESS OFFER TO (If other than Item 7)		

NOTE: In sealed bid solicitations "offer" and "offeror" mean "bid" and "bidder".

SOLICITATION

9. Sealed offers in original and _____ copies for furnishing the supplies or services in the Schedule will be received at the place specified in Item 8, or if handcarried, in the depository located in _____ until _____ local time _____
(Hour) (Date)

CAUTION - LATE Submissions, Modifications, and Withdrawals: See Section L, Provision No. 52.214-7 or 52.215-1. All offers are subject to all terms and conditions contained in this solicitation.

10. FOR INFORMATION CALL:	A. NAME	B. TELEPHONE (NO COLLECT CALLS)		C. E-MAIL ADDRESS
		AREA CODE	NUMBER	EXT.

11. TABLE OF CONTENTS

(X)	SEC.	DESCRIPTION	PAGE(S)	(X)	SEC.	DESCRIPTION	PAGE(S)
PART I - THE SCHEDULE				PART II - CONTRACT CLAUSES			
	A	SOLICITATION/CONTRACT FORM			I	CONTRACT CLAUSES	
	B	SUPPLIES OR SERVICES AND PRICES/COSTS		PART III - LIST OF DOCUMENTS, EXHIBITS AND OTHER ATTACH.			
	C	DESCRIPTION/SPECS./WORK STATEMENT			J	LIST OF ATTACHMENTS	
	D	PACKAGING AND MARKING		PART IV - REPRESENTATIONS AND INSTRUCTIONS			
	E	INSPECTION AND ACCEPTANCE			K	REPRESENTATIONS, CERTIFICATIONS AND OTHER STATEMENTS OF OFFERORS	
	F	DELIVERIES OR PERFORMANCE			L	INSTRS., CONDS., AND NOTICES TO OFFERORS	
	G	CONTRACT ADMINISTRATION DATA			M	EVALUATION FACTORS FOR AWARD	
	H	SPECIAL CONTRACT REQUIREMENTS					

OFFER (Must be fully completed by offeror)

NOTE: Item 12 does not apply if the solicitation includes the provisions at 52.214-16, Minimum Bid Acceptance Period.

12. In compliance with the above, the undersigned agrees, if this offer is accepted within _____ calendar days (60 calendar days unless a different period is inserted by the offeror) from the date for receipt of offers specified above, to furnish any or all items upon which prices are offered at the price set opposite each item, delivered at the designated point(s), within the time specified in the schedule.

13. DISCOUNT FOR PROMPT PAYMENT <small>(See Section I, Clause No. 52.232-8)</small>	10 CALENDAR DAYS (%)	20 CALENDAR DAYS (%)	30 CALENDAR DAYS (%)	CALENDAR DAYS (%)
--	----------------------	----------------------	----------------------	-------------------

14. ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF AMENDMENTS <small>(The offeror acknowledges receipt of amendments to the SOLICITATION for offerors and related documents numbered and dated):</small>	AMENDMENT NO.	DATE	AMENDMENT NO.	DATE

15A. NAME AND ADDRESS OF OFFEROR	CODE	FACILITY	16. NAME AND TITLE OF PERSON AUTHORIZED TO SIGN OFFER <small>(Type or print)</small>		
15B. TELEPHONE NUMBER		15C. CHECK IF REMITTANCE ADDRESS IS DIFFERENT FROM ABOVE - ENTER SUCH ADDRESS IN SCHEDULE. <input type="checkbox"/>	17. SIGNATURE		18. OFFER DATE
AREA CODE	NUMBER				

AWARD (To be completed by Government)

19. ACCEPTED AS TO ITEMS NUMBERED	20. AMOUNT	21. ACCOUNTING AND APPROPRIATION			
22. AUTHORITY FOR USING OTHER THAN FULL AND OPEN COMPETITION: <input type="checkbox"/> 10 U.S.C. 2304(c)) <input type="checkbox"/> 41 U.S.C. 253(c) ()			23. SUBMIT INVOICES TO ADDRESS SHOWN IN (4 copies unless otherwise specified)		ITEM
24. ADMINISTERED BY (If other than Item 7)		CODE	25. PAYMENT WILL BE MADE BY		CODE
26. NAME OF CONTRACTING OFFICER (Type or print)			27. UNITED STATES OF AMERICA		28. AWARD DATE
			<i>(Signature of Contracting Officer)</i>		

Section B - Supplies or Services and Prices/Costs

B.1. COST OF BASE YEAR AND OPTIONS

The services listed in Section C below of this contract are priced on the basis of a base year and four one year options. The contractor shall insert prices below for each period of performance listed.

Base Year	0001 Call Center Operations Cost	_____
	0002 Facilities - Lease Cost	_____
	0003 Facilities - Utilities Cost	_____
	0004 Facilities - Additional Costs	_____
	0005 Fee	_____
	Total Base Year Costs and Fee	_____
Option Year 1	0001 Call Center Operations Cost	_____
	0002 Facilities - Lease Cost	_____
	0003 Facilities - Utilities Cost	_____
	0004 Facilities - Additional Costs	_____
	0005 Fee	_____
	Total Option Year 1 Costs and Fee	_____
Option Year 2	0001 Call Center Operations Cost	_____
	0002 Facilities - Lease Cost	_____
	0003 Facilities - Utilities Cost	_____
	0004 Facilities - Additional Costs	_____
	0005 Fee	_____
	Total Option Year 2 Costs and Fe	_____
Option Year 3	0001 Call Center Operations Cost	_____
	0002 Facilities - Lease Cost	_____
	0003 Facilities - Utilities Cost	_____
	0004 Facilities - Additional Costs	_____
	0005 Fee	_____
	Total Option Year 3 Costs and Fee	_____
Option Year 4	0001 Call Center Operations Cost	_____
	0002 Facilities - Lease Cost	_____
	0003 Facilities - Utilities Cost	_____
	0004 Facilities - Additional Costs	_____
	0005 Fee	_____
	Total Option Year 4 Costs and Fee	_____
Total (Base Year and All Option Years including fee)		_____

B.2 TRAVEL

Estimated travel expenses shall be shown separately. Travel expenses for contractor personnel must have prior Agency approval and will be reimbursed in accordance with FAR 31.205-46, Travel Costs, and in accordance with the Federal Travel Regulations at 41 C.F.R. Part 301.

B.3. AGENCY TRAVEL

Estimated travel for Agency employees to the proposed call center site will be added to proposed costs and fees for evaluation purposes. The agency anticipates 42 trips per year to the call center site selected by the contractor. This is based on history gathered from our existing call center in Cumberland, Maryland. Travel costs to this relatively nearby call center are expected to be nearly \$13,000 per year. In order to fulfill its fiduciary duty to the participants and beneficiaries of the TSP, the agency will evaluate offers including reasonable agency travel costs. The agency will construct travel assuming the agency office in Washington, D.C. as the point of trip origination and conclusion. Airfares will be calculated using the travel costs negotiated by GSA for its "Airline City Pairs" program which can be found at <http://apps.fss.gsa.gov/citypairs/search/>. In those instances where no city pair exists, a 14 day nonrefundable fare will be used for estimating purposes. Hotel costs and meals will be calculated using the established per diem rates which can be found at <http://www.gsa.gov>. Car rental rates will be calculated using the midsize vehicle rate located at <http://www.sddc.army.mil/CONTENT/657/domestic.pdf>. For shorter distances, travel will be calculated at the established Privately Owned Vehicle Mileage Reimbursement rate found at <http://www.gsa.gov>. All travel will be assumed to occur during normal business hours, however, longer trips involving hours beyond normal business hours will have those additional hours included at the agency average hourly locality rate established as a GS-13 Step 5 for Washington D.C. located at <http://www.opm.gov/oca/05tables/indexGS.asp>.

Section C - Description/Specifications/Work Statement

A.1. INTRODUCTION The Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board (FRTIB, TIB, or Agency) administers a retirement savings and investment plan for Federal employees called the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP). The TSP was established by the Federal Employees' Retirement System Act of 1986 (FERSA), and is codified primarily at 5 U.S.C. §§ 8351 and 8401-8479. The TSP offers Federal employees the same type of savings and tax benefits that many private sector corporations offer their employees under 401(k) plans. The TSP currently has over 3.4 million participants, with assets of over \$152 billion.

A.2. In 2003, the Agency implemented an automated TSP record keeping system which moved the TSP from a monthly-valued plan to a daily-valued plan. The new system and daily valuation increased the numbers of calls and participant inquiries, which were partially offset by a change in the loan program. To ensure a full-response capability for calls from TSP participants and beneficiaries, the Agency awarded a contract in 2004 to establish a parallel call center to handle half of the call volume and provide total coverage in the event of a disaster or work interruption at its primary call center located at the Department of Agriculture's National Finance Center (NFC) in New Orleans, LA.

A.3. At the direction of the Board, the Agency has begun to conduct full and open competition for all of its support services. The next phase for call center support services is to request proposals for the

current call center operation in New Orleans to ensure the best support at the lowest cost to the participants and beneficiaries. Included with the call center functions are the closely-related functions of responding to written correspondence from participants and beneficiaries and fulfillment services related to participant inquiries.

A.4. Therefore, the Agency requires a contractor to establish a call center and to provide responses to written correspondence and limited fulfillment functions in an area of the country that would be 250 miles from the existing call center located in Cumberland, MD. This new call center would provide coverage of all calls in the event of a disaster that affects the Cumberland call center operations. Otherwise, the new call center will handle 50% of daily phone traffic and 100% of the written correspondence. A key element of the Agency's operating plan is for each of these centers have the ability to provide 100% disaster recovery and service interruption relief for the other site.

A.5. The Agency intends for this contract to provide a government-owned, contractor operated (GOCO) operation. That is, the Agency will directly provide for the facility and utilities, computer workstations, custom software applications, required servers, required telephone and data lines, etc. The contractor will provide the labor required to operate and manage the call center and written correspondence/fulfillment services. The contractor will also provide facility management and maintain the property.

A.6. The location of the facility is up to the Offeror, as long as it is 250 miles from Cumberland, MD and space is available to be leased by the Agency. An Offeror may propose space currently operated by the Offeror as a call center if the additional space required for the Agency's operations can be leased separately. An Offeror shall not propose foreign owned property.

B.1. SCOPE. The Agency is soliciting proposals from qualified firms possessing the background and expertise necessary to provide external call center support and written correspondence handling services. The Agency requires a supplier that will provide phone coverage (at least 10 hours a day, 5 days a week) while maintaining a superior service level, strong customer service, and accurate, timely reporting.

B.2. The Agency will utilize the new call center to complement the current call center in Cumberland, MD. The Agency is seeking a call center that has experienced and professional agents. The service representatives will respond to incoming calls that concern (but are not limited to):

- Account Maintenance
- Loan Issuances and Repayments
- Withdrawal Information
- Service Requests

The five most common subcategories of call types include:

- Loan status (29%)

- Loan policy questions (14%)
- Loan repayment questions (11%)
- Status/account information (10%)
- Request for forms (10%)

B.3. Routine written correspondence and fulfillment requests from Plan participants and beneficiaries are expected to be handled by the contractor in accordance with procedures provided by the Agency. Most routine correspondence can be handled through outgoing telephone calls or standard written responses. Non-routine correspondence will be forwarded to the Agency for processing.

B.4. The following is a summary of the responsibilities of the agency and the Offeror:

The Agency will be responsible for:

- Providing the facility
- Installation, maintenance, and repair of all equipment
- Connecting telephone and Internet lines
- Utilities
- Installation, maintenance, and modification of software and programs
- Office furnishings

The Offeror will be responsible for:

- Proposing a facility to be used
- Providing the labor to operate and manage a call center
- Operational maintenance of the equipment and software
- Maintaining the grounds and facilities
- Office and building supplies

C.1. DESCRIPTION OF WORK TO BE PERFORMED Interested Offerors must respond to all portions of the QUESTIONNAIRE FOR EXTERNAL CALL CENTER SERVICES, Attachment A, thereby providing a comprehensive business solution to the Board. If an Offeror believes that its capabilities are limited to specific portions of the solicitation's requirements, the Offeror should so state; however, this will adversely affect your chances for award.

C.2. Offerors are expected to handle incoming calls, written correspondence, and manual fulfillment requests generated by calls and correspondence. A small percentage of transactions will require an outbound call to complete. The time required to make these calls is included in the time estimates in the tables below. All transactions are handled Monday through Friday, with the exception of the following holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King's Birthday
- President's Day

- Memorial Day
- Independence Day (July 4)
- Labor Day
- Columbus Day
- Veteran's Day (November 11)
- Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Day

C.3 Offerors are expected to handle 30% of the TSP's total call volume for the first month of the contract, 40% for the second month, and 50% for the third month and beyond. Call volume estimates for the first twelve months of this contract are included in the table below:

Month	Estimated Total Call Volume	% of Call Volume to Offeror	Total Call Volume to Offeror	Average Handle Time (minutes)
October 2005	149,281	30	44,784	6.0
November 2005	154,289	40	61,716	5.8
December 2005	144,681	50	72,341	5.6
January 2006	148,777	50	74,389	5.4
February 2006	132,792	50	66,396	5.3
March 2006	146,380	50	73,190	5.1
April 2006	155,671	50	77,836	5.1
May 2006	161,386	50	80,693	4.9
June 2006	150,935	50	75,468	4.9
July 2006	152,595	50	76,298	4.9
August 2006	135,772	50	67,886	4.9
September 2006	129,184	50	64,592	4.9

The Offeror is expected to answer 90% of these calls within 20 seconds, and 2% or less of the phone calls should receive a busy signal.

Please note that under normal operating circumstances the Offeror will be expected to handle only that volume indicated in the column labeled "Total Call Volume to Offeror". The Offeror must, however, be able to handle total program traffic (as indicated in the column labeled "Estimated Total Call Volume") within 24 hours of notification of a disaster or service interruption at the Cumberland site. Further, the above volumes are based on past experience and may change due to the implementation of new programs (e.g., the introduction of life cycle funds and changes in open season rules).

For the four option years of this contract, the Offeror should assume an annual call growth rate of 5 percent and should anticipate handling 50 percent of the total program traffic.

C.4. The parallel call center will be open from Monday through Friday. The estimated percent of call volume received by day is:

Day of Week	Percent of Phone Traffic
Monday	25
Tuesday	22
Wednesday	19
Thursday	17
Friday	17

C.5. The current call center coverage is from 7:00 AM to 9:00 PM ET. The Offeror is to provide phone coverage during these hours for at least ten hours per day, with the actual hours to be determined upon issuance of contract. Current call volume percents by interval throughout the day are:

Time Interval Beginning at	Avg Percent of Phone Traffic
7:00 am	0.61
7:30	0.96
8:00	1.95
8:30	2.81
9:00	4.25
9:30	4.88
10:00	5.53
10:30	5.87
11:00	5.55
11:30	5.88
12:00 pm	5.43
12:30	5.27
1:00	5.37
1:30	5.35
2:00	5.43
2:30	5.40
3:00	5.08
3:30	5.06
4:00	4.68
4:30	3.95
5:00	2.61
5:30	2.14
6:00	1.55
6:30	1.22
7:00	1.01
7:30	0.86
8:00	0.71
8:30	0.59

C.6. The Offeror will process written inquiries received from participants and beneficiaries, as well as provide manual fulfillment services for requests received via written correspondence and the telephone. All written correspondence is imaged prior to processing, so the agents will be working from images rather than paper.

a. These written inquiries include, but are not limited to, general questions regarding the TSP program; benefits and account

activity; requests from financial institutions regarding transferring funds to and from the TSP; requests for forms, publications, replacements for participant statements or IRS Form 1099-Rs, etc. The Offeror must also forward requests for appropriate corrective action for problems identified with the various other components of the TSP System (e.g., requesting a replacement for a lost disbursement or correction of a data entry error) and track this activity (using Agency-provided e-form functionality and case management tracking system).

b. Responses can be via recorded telephone calls, using standard letters or forms, or other Agency-approved methods. The Offeror may be asked to fax or mail the responses to the participants. All inquiries must be tracked and recorded in either the participant service representative application or in the imaging system. Performance reports must be provided monthly. (Performance standards are provided in Attachment B and may be expanded.)

C.7. The Offeror will be expected to handle 100% of written correspondence from the first month of production operations through the end of the contract. The projected volume of written correspondence for the first twelve months of the contract is as follows:

Month	Estimated Total Written Correspondence Volume	Average Time to Complete (minutes)
October 2005	5,945	17
November 2005	5,400	16
December 2005	6,267	15
January 2006	6,889	13
February 2006	6,124	12
March 2006	7,379	11
April 2006	4,525	10
May 2006	5,456	10
June 2006	5,091	10
July 2006	5,698	10
August 2006	6,667	10
September 2006	3,767	10

The average time to complete these transactions includes all time required for research and resolution, including making outbound calls when necessary. The Offeror is expected to complete 90% of written correspondence within five days of receipt.

For the four option years of this contract, the Offeror should assume an annual written correspondence growth rate of 2 percent per year.

C.8. Many requests for fulfillment materials can be automatically completed via the system. However, approximately 0.85% of phone calls and 25% of written correspondence yield fulfillment requests that must

be manually completed by the Offeror. Fifty-seven percent of these are fulfilled via fax. This requires the agent to print out a document and manually feed it, along with a cover sheet, through the fax machine. Forty-three percent of fulfillment is completed via paper and the US mail. Completion of these transactions typically involves the printing of a form letter, the selection of pre-printed material to accompany the letter, stuffing the materials into an envelope, running the envelopes through metering equipment, and ensuring daily pick-up of the envelopes by the U.S. Postal Service.

C.9. The expected volume of manually generated fulfillment materials that must be completed by the Offeror is as follows:

Month	Estimated Total Volume of Manually Generated Fulfillment Requests
October 2005	1,867
November 2005	1,875
December 2005	2,182
January 2006	2,355
February 2006	2,095
March 2006	2,467
April 2006	1,793
May 2006	2,050
June 2006	1,914
July 2006	2,073
August 2006	2,244
September 2006	1,491

For the four option years of this contract, the Offeror should assume an annual growth rate of 3 percent for manually generated fulfillment requests.

C.10. The Agency has an established Quality Assurance Program (including both a call monitoring component and a call satisfaction survey component) which the Offeror must incorporate into its quality assurance activities. A copy of the Quality Assurance Program is provided as Attachment C, and includes guidelines on the number of calls that the Offeror must monitor per agent. A copy of the script for the call satisfaction survey is provided as Attachment D. The Offeror is required to complete a statistically significant sample that is generally between 100 and 200 surveys per month.

C.11. The Offeror must develop and maintain an electronic knowledge management database (preferably with key word search capabilities). The Agency will assist in the population of the database by providing program information, Questions and Answers, etc.; however, the Offeror will need to add material as necessary. (The Agency has a formal process in place for process and procedure approvals).

C.12. All phone and written inquiries will be completed using telephones and personal computer workstations supplied by the Agency

for each call center employee. The Agency will provide maintenance for the computers, but the Offeror is expected to monitor employee usage to ensure that the computers are cared for properly and are used solely for TSP purposes.

C.13. The Offeror will be provided with equipment that will record 100% of incoming and outgoing calls. The Agency will maintain the equipment, and the Offeror is expected to store one month of tapes on-site and all other tapes safely and securely off-site for the life of the contract.

C.14. The Offeror must demonstrate the capability to provide training on-site. The Board will provide "Train the Trainer" services for program and application training, after which the Offeror will be fully responsible for completing this training. The Offeror is expected to provide routine computer-related skills training for all associates assigned to the phones, along with customer service skills training. This training must be submitted to and approved by the Board.

C.15. The Offeror must demonstrate the ability to accurately forecast volume and handle time demand for calls, written correspondence, and fulfillment requests.

Section D - Packaging and Marking

Not applicable.

Section E - Inspection and Acceptance

E.1. 52.252-2 Clauses Incorporated By Reference (Feb 1998)

This contract incorporates one or more clauses by reference, with the same force and effect as if they were given in full text. Upon request, the Contracting Officer will make their full text available. Also, the full text of a clause may be accessed electronically at this address:

<http://www.acqnet.gov/far/>

52.246-3 Inspection of Supplies-Cost-Reimbursement (May 2001)

52.246-5 Inspection of Services-Cost-Reimbursement (Apr 1984)

Section F - Deliveries or Performance

F.1. 52.252-2 Clauses Incorporated By Reference (Feb 1998)

This contract incorporates one or more clauses by reference, with the same force and effect as if they were given in full text. Upon request, the Contracting Officer will make their full text available. Also, the full text of a clause may be accessed electronically at this address:

<http://www.acqnet.gov/far/>

52.242-15 Stop-Work Order (Aug 1989) *Alternate I (Apr 1984)*

F.2. DELIVERABLES The Offeror shall provide monthly progress reports that summarize significant accomplishments and statistics for each calendar month. Additional management reports (e.g., actual daily call volumes, call durations, service factors attained, hang-ups, and other statistics) that would also be provided by the Offeror are shown in Attachment E. The offeror will develop and deliver a knowledge database as described in paragraph C.11 and provide quarterly updates.

F.3. PERFORMANCE Period of performance. The term of this contract is one year, with four one-year renewable options.

F.4. Place of performance. The site (and all associates assigned to the telephones) selected to handle these calls must be within the United States, defined for this purpose as the 50 states and the District of Columbia. The site should be at least 250 miles from Cumberland, MD so as to function as a disaster recovery option if the Cumberland site is for any reason incapacitated.

F.5. Language. English is the only language to be supported for this program.

F.6. Hours of operation. Under normal conditions, the Offeror will be expected to operate at least ten hours daily between 7:00 AM Eastern Time and 9:00 PM Eastern Time from Monday through Friday. The actual start and stop time will be determined at the time of contract award. At any time when coverage for the Cumberland site is required, however, the Offeror will be expected to cover the phones from 7:00 AM Eastern Time until 9:00 PM Eastern Time, Monday through Friday.

Section G - Contract Administration Data

G.1. CONTRACTUAL INFORMATION

Contractual interpretation and assistance may be obtained by contacting:

Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board
1250 H Street, N.W., Suite 200
Washington, DC 20005-3952

Attn: Robert Battersby
Phone: (202) 942-1693
E-Mail: RBATTER@tsp.gov

G.2. CONTRACTING OFFICER'S TECHNICAL REPRESENTATIVE

a. The Contracting Officer hereby designates the below named individual as the Contracting Officer's Technical Representative (COTR).

Name: (To be completed at time of award)
Address: Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board
1250 H Street, N.W., Suite 200
Washington, DC 20005-3952
Phone: (To be completed at time of award)

- b. The COTR is responsible for administering the performance of work under this contract. In no event, however, will any understanding, agreement, modification, change order, or other matter deviating from the terms of this contract be effective or binding upon the Agency unless formalized by proper contractual documents executed by the Contracting Officer. The COTR is responsible for:
 - 1. Monitoring the Contractor's progress, including the surveillance and assessment of performance, and recommending to the Contracting Officer changes in requirements;
 - 2. Interpreting the scope of work;
 - 3. Performing inspections and acceptances required by this contract; and,
 - 4. Assisting the Contractor in the resolution of technical problems encountered during the performance of the contract.
- c. The Contracting Officer is responsible for directing any changes in the terms, conditions, or amounts cited in the contract.
- d. In order for the Contractor to rely upon guidance from the COTR, the guidance must:
 - 1. Be consistent with the description of work set forth in the contract;
 - 2. Not constitute new assignments of work or a change to the expressed terms, conditions, or specifications incorporated into the contract;
 - 3. Not constitute a basis for an extension to the period of performance or contract delivery schedule; and,
 - 4. Not constitute a basis for any increase in the contract cost.
- e. The COTR may be changed by the Agency at any time without prior notice to the Contractor. Written notice to the Contractor will be given by the Contracting Officer to effect any change in COTR.
- f. If in the opinion of the Contractor, any instruction or direction issued by the COTR is not provided for in any of the provisions of the Contract, the Contractor shall not proceed but shall notify the Contracting Officer in writing within five (5) working days after the receipt of any such instruction or direction and shall request the Contracting Officer to modify the contract accordingly. Upon receiving such notification from the Contractor, the Contracting Officer shall issue an appropriate contract modification or advise the Contractor in writing that, in his/her opinion, the technical direction is within the scope of this clause and does not constitute a change under the Changes

Clause of the contract. The Contractor shall thereupon proceed immediately with the direction given.

- g. A failure of the parties to agree upon the nature of the instruction or direction or upon the contract action to be taken with respect thereto shall be subject to the provisions of the contract clause titled "Disputes."

G.3. SUBMISSION OF INVOICES

Invoices submitted for payment shall conform to the following requirements:

- a. All invoices must contain contractor's EIN number.
- b. All invoices must contain a "remit to" address.
- c. Submit all invoices to:

Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board
1250 H Street, N.W., Suite 200
Washington, DC 20005-3952
Attn: Office of Accounting

G.4. SUBMISSION OF AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Each year of the contract the Offeror will submit audited financial statements to the FRTIB's Office of Accounting.

G.5. INCORPORATION OF CONTRACTOR'S PROPOSAL

It is understood and agreed that the Contractor shall, in meeting the requirements of this contract, perform the work in accordance with its proposal to the Board provided however, that to the extent that any provisions of the Clauses set forth herein are in conflict or inconsistent with any provisions of said proposal, the provisions of this contract shall be controlling and shall supersede the provisions of said proposal.

G.6. ORDER OF PRECEDENCE

The order of precedence for interpretation of the terms, conditions and requirements of this contract shall be as follows:

- a. Section A of the contract;
- b. Sections B, C, E, F, G, and H of the contract;
- c. Section I of the contract; and,
- d. Contractor's proposal, as clarified and amended.

Section H - Special Contract Requirements

H.1. Security. All staff must be U.S. citizens or resident aliens with current, valid green cards. All staff assigned to work on this project must undergo and pass a basic security check including a criminal and financial background check. A copy of each completed background check must be provided to the Agency before staff will be provided access to the systems and data. The information/data for this

work must be protected in accordance with the Privacy Act. Adequate physical security (i.e., restricted access) must be provided for the work area(s) and computer room(s). The Offeror must provide for shredding any and all documents containing a social security number or other Privacy Act information.

H.2. GOVERNMENT FURNISHED MATERIAL (GFM)

H.2.1. Facility. In addition to the facility itself, the Agency will provide all hardware and software required for the facility as GFM, including the network and connectivity. For details see Attachment F. Any connectivity to the dedicated network provided by the Agency from the Offeror must be fully discussed in the appropriate section(s) of the responses to the questions in Attachment A. Furniture, if required, will be provided by the Agency. Administrative support equipment (such as a fax machine, copier, and shredder) will be provided by the Agency as necessary. The Offeror will be expected to manage the network, servers, workstations, telephones, and all other provided GFM. The Offeror will be authorized to purchase from GSA schedule contracts when such purchases are advantageous to the Agency.

H.3. Train the Trainers. The Board will provide Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) program and automated TSP system operations training to the Offeror's training personnel to enable initial and follow-on training of service representatives.

H.4. BUSINESS PRACTICES AND CONTRACT REQUIREMENTS

It is expected that the practices described by the Contractor in its response to the Request for Proposals shall be employed in its performance of the requirements of Section C of the contract. Written notice must be received in advance by the Contracting Officer for approval of any changes to these practices.

H.5. ADVERTISING AND RELEASING OF INFORMATION

The contractor must not publicize, advertise, or otherwise announce its selection by the Agency without the prior written approval of the Agency. Also, the Contractor may not release information or report on its performance under the contract without the prior written approval of the Agency.

H.6. KEY PERSONNEL

a. The Contractor must include in its proposal, by name and capacity, the key personnel to be assigned to perform and carry out all phases of work under this contract. The Contractor's key personnel include the following:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Capacity</u>
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

b. The individuals named above are considered key personnel and are essential for the successful completion of all work assigned under this contract. In the event any individual on the list of key personnel is to be removed or diverted from this contract, the Contractor must (1) notify the Contracting Officer; (2) supply written justification as to why the individual(s) is being removed or diverted; and, (3) provide resume of the proposed substitute or replacement including the education, work experience, etc., of each new person for Agency approval. All notifications and other information must be submitted to the Contracting Officer at least 14 calendar days in advance of the action.

c. The Contractor must not, under any circumstances, remove or divert key personnel unless prior written authorization has been granted by the Contracting Officer. The person replacing the key person must have the same or higher qualifications and experience as the person replaced.

H.7. REIMBURSEMENT OF TRAVEL EXPENSES

Travel expenses incurred under this contract and invoiced may not exceed the applicable Federal Travel Regulations.

H.8. CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

All information provided to the Contractor is confidential and is subject to the Privacy Act. The Contractor and contractor personnel shall maintain this information in strict confidence and shall not disclose this information, or information obtained as the result of its performance of this contract, to any person or entity, other than employees of the contractor or of the Board, without the prior written approval of the Board.

Section I - Contract Clauses

52.252-2 Clauses Incorporated By Reference (Feb 1998)

This contract incorporates one or more clauses by reference, with the same force and effect as if they were given in full text. Upon request, the Contracting Officer will make their full text available. Also, the full text of a clause may be accessed electronically at this address:

<http://www.acqnet.gov/far/>

(End of clause)

- 52.202-1 Definitions. (Jul 2004)
- 52.203-3 Gratuities. (Apr 1984)
- 52.203-5 Covenant Against Contingent Fees. (Apr 1984)
- 52.203-6 Restrictions on Subcontractor Sales to the Government.
(Jul 1995)
- 52.203-7 Anti-Kickback Procedures. (Jul 1995)
- 52.203-8 Cancellation, Rescission, and Recovery of Funds for Illegal or Improper Activity. (Jan 1997)
- 52.203-10 Price or Fee Adjustment for Illegal or Improper Activity.
(Jan 1997)

52.203-12 Limitation on Payments to Influence Certain Federal Transactions. (Jun 2003)

52.204-4 Printed or Copied Double-Sided on Recycled Paper. (Aug 2000)

52.204-7 Central Contractor Registration. (Oct 2003)

52.209-6 Protecting the Government's Interest When Subcontracting with Contractors Debarred, Suspended, or Proposed for Debarment. (Jan 2005)

52.215-2 Audit and Records - Negotiation. (Jun 1999)

52.215-8 Order of Precedence - Uniform Contract Format. (Oct 1997)

52.215-14 Integrity of Unit Prices. (Oct 1997)

52.215-21 Requirement for Cost or Pricing Data or Information Other Than Cost or Pricing Data Modifications. (Oct 1997) *Alternate IV (Oct 1997)*

52.216-7 Allowable Cost and Payment. (Feb 2002)

52.216-8 Fixed Fee. (Mar 1997)

52.216-10 Incentive Fee. (Mar 1997)

52.217-8 Option to Extend Services. (Jan 1999)

52.222-2 Payment for Overtime Premiums. (Jul 1990)

52.222.3 Convict Labor. (Jun 2003)

52.222.21 Prohibition of Segregated Facilities. (Feb 1999)

52.222-26 Equal Opportunity. (Apr 2002)

52.222-35 Equal Opportunity for Special Disabled Veterans, Veterans of the Vietnam Era, and Other Eligible Veterans. (Feb 2001)

52.222-36 Affirmative Action for Workers with Disabilities. (Jun 1998)

52.222-37 Employment Reports on Special Disabled Veterans, Veterans of the Vietnam Era, and Other Eligible Veterans. (Feb 2001)

52.222-41 Service Contract Act of 1965, As Amended. (May 1989)

52.222-49 Service Contract Act-Place of Performance - Unknown. (May 1989)

52.223-6 Drug-Free Workplace. (May 2001)

52.223-10 Waste Reduction Program. (Aug 2000)

52.224-1 Privacy Act Notification. (Apr 1984)

52.224-2 Privacy Act. (Apr 1984)

52.225-13 Restrictions on Certain Foreign Purchases. (Feb 2003)

52.227-3 Patent Indemnity. (Apr 1984)

52.227-14 Rights in Data - General. (Jun 1987)

52.227-17 Rights in Data - Special Works. (Jun 1987)

52.227-18 Rights in Data - Existing Works. (Jun 1987)

52.228-7 Insurance - Liability to Third Persons. (Mar 1996)

52.230-2 Cost Accounting Standards. (Apr 1998)

52.230-3 Disclosure and Consistency of Cost Accounting Practices. (Apr 1998)

52.230-6 Administration of Cost Accounting Standards. (Jan 1999)

52.232-17 Interest (Jun 1996)

52.232-20 Limitation of Cost (Apr 1984)

52.232-22 Limitation of Funds (Apr 1984)

52.232-23 Assignment of Claims (Jan 1986)

52.232-25 Prompt Payment (Oct 2003) *Alternate I (Feb 2002)*

52.232-33 Payment by Electronic Funds Transfer-Central Contractor Registration (Oct 2003)

52.233-1 Disputes (Jul 2002) *Alternate I (Dec 1991)*

52.233-3 Protest after Award (Aug 1996) *Alternate I (Jun 1985)*

Applicable Law for Breach of Contract Claim (Oct 2004)

52.237-2 Protection of Government Buildings, Equipment, and Vegetation (Apr 1984)

52.237-3 Continuity of Services (Jan 1991)

52.239-1 Privacy or Security Safeguards (Aug 1996)

- 52.242-1 Notice of Intent to Disallow Costs (Apr 1984)
- 52.242-3 Penalties for Unallowable Costs (May 2001)
- 52.242-4 Certification of Final Indirect Costs (Jan 1997)
- 52.242-13 Bankruptcy (Jul 1995)
- 52.243-2 Changes-Cost-Reimbursement (Aug 1987) *Alternate II (Apr 1984)*
- 52.244-2 Subcontracts (Aug 1998) *Alternate II (Aug 1998)*
- 52.244-5 Competition in Subcontracting (Dec 1996)
- 52.244-6 Subcontracts for Commercial Items (Dec 2004)
- 52.245-1 Property Records (Apr 1984)
- 52.245-5 Government Property (Cost-Reimbursement, Time-and-Material, or Labor-Hour Contracts) (May 2004)
- 52.245-19 Government Property Furnished "As Is" (Apr 1984)
- 52.246-25 Limitation of Liability-Services (Feb 1997)
- 52.249-6 Termination (Cost-Reimbursement) (May 2004)
- 52.249-14 Excusable Delays (Apr 1984)
- 52.251-1 Government Supply Sources (Apr 1984)
- 52.253-1 Computer Generated Forms (Jan 1991)

- 52.222-39 Notification of Employee Rights Concerning Payment of Union Dues or Fees. (Dec 2004)

a) Definition. As used in this clause-

"United States" means the 50 States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Northern Mariana Islands, American Samoa, Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and Wake Island.

(b) Except as provided in paragraph (e) of this clause, during the term of this contract, the Contractor shall post a notice, in the form of a poster, informing employees of their rights concerning union membership and payment of union dues and fees, in conspicuous places in and about all its plants and offices, including all places where notices to employees are customarily posted. The notice shall include the following information (except that the information pertaining to National Labor Relations Board shall not be included in notices posted in the plants or offices of carriers subject to the Railway Labor Act, as amended (45 U.S.C. 151-188)).

Notice to Employees. Under Federal law, employees cannot be required to join a union or maintain membership in a union in order to retain their jobs. Under certain conditions, the law permits a union and an employer to enter into a union-security agreement requiring employees to pay uniform periodic dues and initiation fees. However, employees who are not union members can object to the use of their payments for certain purposes and can only be required to pay their share of union costs relating to collective bargaining, contract administration, and grievance adjustment.

If you do not want to pay that portion of dues or fees used to support activities not related to collective bargaining, contract administration, or grievance adjustment, you are entitled to an appropriate reduction in your payment. If you believe that you have been required to pay dues or fees used in part to support activities not related to collective bargaining, contract administration, or grievance adjustment, you may be entitled to a refund and to an appropriate reduction in future payments.

For further information concerning your rights, you may wish to contact the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) either at one of its Regional offices or at the following address or toll free number:

National Labor Relations Board
Division of Information
1099 14th Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20570
1-866-667-6572
1-866-316-6572 (TTY)

To locate the nearest NLRB office, see NLRB's website at <http://www.nlr.gov>.

(c) The Contractor shall comply with all provisions of Executive Order 13201 of February 17, 2001, and related implementing regulations at 29 CFR part 470, and orders of the Secretary of Labor.

(d) In the event that the Contractor does not comply with any of the requirements set forth in paragraphs (b), (c), or (g), the Secretary may direct that this contract be cancelled, terminated, or suspended in whole or in part, and declare the Contractor ineligible for further Government contracts in accordance with procedures at 29 CFR part 470, Subpart B-Compliance Evaluations, Complaint Investigations and Enforcement Procedures. Such other sanctions or remedies may be imposed as are provided by 29 CFR part 470, which implements Executive Order 13201, or as are otherwise provided by law.

(e) The requirement to post the employee notice in paragraph (b) does not apply to-

(1) Contractors and subcontractors that employ fewer than 15 persons;
(2) Contractor establishments or construction work sites where no union has been formally recognized by the Contractor or certified as the exclusive bargaining representative of the Contractor's employees;
(3) Contractor establishments or construction work sites located in a jurisdiction named in the definition of the United States in which the law of that jurisdiction forbids enforcement of union-security agreements;

(4) Contractor facilities where upon the written request of the Contractor, the Department of Labor Deputy Assistant Secretary for Labor-Management Programs has waived the posting requirements with respect to any of the Contractor's facilities if the Deputy Assistant Secretary finds that the Contractor has demonstrated that-

(i) The facility is in all respects separate and distinct from activities of the Contractor related to the performance of a contract; and

(ii) Such a waiver will not interfere with or impede the effectuation of the Executive order; or

(5) Work outside the United States that does not involve the recruitment or employment of workers within the United States.

(f) The Department of Labor publishes the official employee notice in two variations; one for contractors covered by the Railway Labor Act and a second for all other contractors. The Contractor shall-

(1) Obtain the required employee notice poster from the Division of Interpretations and Standards, Office of Labor-Management Standards, U.S. Department of Labor, 200 Constitution Avenue, NW, Room N-5605, Washington, DC 20210, or from any field office of the Department's Office of Labor-Management Standards or Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs;

(2) Download a copy of the poster from the Office of Labor-Management Standards website at <http://www.olms.dol.gov>; or

(3) Reproduce and use exact duplicate copies of the Department of Labor's official poster.

(g) The Contractor shall include the substance of this clause in every subcontract or purchase order that exceeds the simplified acquisition threshold, entered into in connection with this contract, unless exempted by the Department of Labor Deputy Assistant Secretary for Labor-Management Programs on account of special circumstances in the national interest under authority of 29 CFR 470.3(c). For indefinite quantity subcontracts, the Contractor shall include the substance of this clause if the value of orders in any calendar year of the subcontract is expected to exceed the simplified acquisition threshold. Pursuant to 29 CFR part 470, Subpart B-Compliance Evaluations, Complaint Investigations and Enforcement Procedures, the Secretary of Labor may direct the Contractor to take such action in the enforcement of these regulations, including the imposition of sanctions for noncompliance with respect to any such subcontract or purchase order. If the Contractor becomes involved in litigation with a subcontractor or vendor, or is threatened with such involvement, as a result of such direction, the Contractor may request the United States, through the Secretary of Labor, to enter into such litigation to protect the interests of the United States.

52.222-42 Statement of Equivalent Rates for Federal Hires. (May 1989)

In compliance with the Service Contract Act of 1965, as amended, and the regulations of the Secretary of Labor (29 CFR part 4), this clause identifies the classes of service employees expected to be employed under the contract and states the wages and fringe benefits payable to each if they were employed by the contracting agency subject to the provisions of 5 U.S.C. 5341 or 5332.

This Statement is for Information Only:
It is not a Wage Determination

Employee Class	Monetary Wage-Fringe Benefits
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Section J - List of Attachments

- ATTACHMENT A - QUESTIONNAIRE FOR EXTERNAL CALL CENTER SERVICES
- ATTACHMENT B - TSP PROGRAM PERFORMANCE STANDARDS
- ATTACHMENT C - QUALITY ASSURANCE PROGRAM DOCUMENTS
- ATTACHMENT D - CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY PROGRAM SCRIPT
- ATTACHMENT E - SAMPLE REPORTS
- ATTACHMENT F - CALL CENTER NETWORK (GFM)

Section K - Representations, Certifications, and Other Statements of Offerors

K.1. 52.204-8 Annual Representations and Certifications.

(a)(1) If the clause at 52.204-7, Central Contractor Registration, is included in this solicitation, paragraph (b) of this provision applies. (2) If the clause at 52.204-7 is not included in this solicitation, and the Offeror is currently registered in CCR, and has completed the ORCA electronically, the Offeror may choose to use paragraph (b) instead of completing the corresponding individual representations and certifications in the solicitation. The Offeror shall indicate which option applies by checking one of the following boxes:

- (i) Paragraph (b) applies.
- (ii) Paragraph (b) does not apply and the Offeror has completed the individual representations and certifications in the solicitation.

(b) The Offeror has completed the annual representations and certifications electronically via the Online Representations and Certifications Application (ORCA) website at <http://orca.bpn.gov>. After reviewing the ORCA database information, the Offeror verifies by submission of the offer that the representations and certifications currently posted electronically have been entered or updated within the last 12 months, are current, accurate, complete, and applicable to this solicitation (including the business size standard applicable to the NAICS code referenced for this solicitation), as of the date of this offer and are incorporated in this offer by reference (see FAR 4.1201); except for the changes identified below [Offeror to insert changes, identifying change by clause number, title, date]. These amended representation(s) and/or certification(s) are also incorporated in this offer and are current, accurate, and complete as of the date of this offer.

FAR Clause #	Title	Date	Change
_____	_____	_____	_____

Any changes provided by the Offeror are applicable to this solicitation only, and do not result in an update to the representations and certifications posted on ORCA.

Section L - Instructions, Conditions, and Notices to Offerors

L.1. SUBMISSION OF PROPOSAL The Offerer must provide an original and five (5) copies of the technical proposal and an original and three (3) copies of the price proposal. Audited financial statements for the last three years must be submitted with each copy of the technical proposal. Cost/price data shall not be included in the technical proposal. The price proposal must be submitted under a separate cover. This will be a best value award.

a. Technical Proposal. The technical proposal must be limited to 50 pages (text to be single spaced, no less than 10-pitch font), 8-1/2" X 11" white paper (no less than 20 lb. copy paper). Any pages beyond the 51st will not be reviewed (resumes are excluded from the page count).

Attachment A provides all the questions you are required to answer in your technical proposal. Present your comprehensive response to the

questions based on information contained in this Statement of Work. Explain your approach to establishing all aspects of the new call center, as well as location(s). All questions should be addressed completely and concisely and in the order presented in Attachment A. If an alternative method is proposed to a requirement, provide the proposed change and the rationale. Appendices should be used prudently and only when a detailed response is impractical. Ambiguous statements such as "all reasonable efforts..." will not be acceptable.

b. Cost/Price Proposal. Must be limited to 25 pages (see further specifications in paragraph a. above).

1. Identify the schedule of fees as it relates to the services to be provided. The cost structure should indicate cost of services and include a cost breakout for any optional program components available.

2. If space is to be leased back to the Agency from the Offeror the lease costs and any additional cost (other than lease costs) associated with the space must be clearly indicated in the pricing proposal. Property Management and Maintenance costs must be clearly indicated in the pricing proposal. Clearly indicate any infrastructure of furnishings that would be included in the lease if applicable. Applicable utility rates should also be specified.

3. Provide all prices (start-up and ongoing) associated with your services. List any and all costs and provide an explanation for the basis of the cost (e.g., if the charge is "per hour", explain exactly how an hour is calculated, what is included in the charge, and where the information provided in your experience comes from). Provide the costs for years one through five of the project, along with any projected start-up costs.

4. Include a table listing your best estimate of overall costs by month for the first year of this contract. Include other direct costs associated with estimated long-distance calls to the Board and to the call center in Cumberland to conduct business and resolve issues.

5. Include travel and related charges that may be incurred during this project. All travel must be approved by the COTR in advance and will be reimbursed in accordance with Government travel regulations.

L.2. Due Date. The proposal packages should be received by the Agency no later than 4:00 PM Eastern Time, April 18, 2005. Address the package as follows:

Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board
Attn: Mr. Robert Battersby
1250 H Street, NW
Washington, DC 20005-3952

To ensure the proposal packages arrives at the proper place on time and to prevent opening by unauthorized individuals, your proposal package must be identified on the wrapper as follows:

Proposal Submitted in Response to Solicitation
No. TIB-05-R-XXX
Package No. ____ of ____
Date: _____

L.3. Bid and Proposal Costs. The Board will not reimburse Offerors for any expenses incurred in the preparation of proposals submitted in response to this RFP.

L.4. Billing. The awardee will be permitted to submit invoices monthly for incurred costs.

L.5. RFP Questions. All inquiries pertaining to this RFP must be made in writing via e-mail or letter and must be received by 4:00 PM on April 1, 2005. No other method will be accepted. The point of contact for all RFP inquiries is Robert Battersby, 202-942-1693, fax 202-942-1674, email rbatter@tsp.gov.

L.6. Other Considerations. The Board may conduct on-site visits during the evaluation process. The purpose of the on-site visits would be to:

- a. Substantiate proposal representations.
- b. Supplement information obtained through the proposal questionnaire.
- c. Increase the understanding of the services and operations of Offeror.
- d. Meet the key personnel who will have a significant role in this contract.
- e. Review systems capabilities and security.
- f. Inspect the proposed facility.
- g. Ensure that the facility is habitable, conforms with local codes, and can be ready for occupancy within one month of contract award.

NOTE: THE AGENCY WILL NOT PAY FOR MODIFICATIONS TO THE FACILITY TO PREPARE IT FOR OCCUPANCY.

L.7. THE FEDERAL RETIREMENT THRIFT INVESTMENT BOARD MAY, BY WRITTEN NOTICE TO THE OFFEROR, TERMINATE THE RIGHT OF THE OFFEROR TO PROCEED UNDER ANY CONTRACT THAT ARISES AS A RESULT OF THIS SOLICITATION IF IT IS FOUND THAT GRATUITIES, IN THE FORM OF ENTERTAINMENT, GIFTS OR OTHERWISE, WERE OFFERED OR GIVEN BY THE OFFEROR, OR ANY AGENT OR REPRESENTATIVE OF THE OFFEROR, TO ANY OFFICER OR EMPLOYEE OF THE FEDERAL RETIREMENT THRIFT INVESTMENT BOARD WITH THE INTENT TO SECURE FAVORABLE TREATMENT.

L.8. 52.252-1 Solicitation Provisions Incorporated by Reference
(Feb 1998)

This solicitation incorporates one or more solicitation provisions by reference, with the same force and effect as if they were given in full text. Upon request, the Contracting Officer will make their full text available. The Offeror is cautioned that the listed provisions may include blocks that must be completed by the Offeror and submitted with its quotation or offer. In lieu of submitting the full text of those provisions, the Offeror may identify the provision by paragraph identifier and provide the appropriate information with its quotation or offer. Also, the full text of a solicitation provision may be accessed electronically at this address:

<http://www.acqnet.gov/far/>

- 52.215-1 Instructions to Offerors-Competitive. (Jan 2004)
- 52.215-16 Facilities Capital Cost of Money. (Jun 2003)
- 52.222-46 Evaluation of Compensation for Professional Employees.
(Feb93)
- 52.237-1 Site Visit (Apr 1984)
- 52.237-10 Identification of Uncompensated Overtime (Oct 1997)

L.9. 52-215-20 Requirements for Cost or Pricing Data or Information
Other Than Cost or Pricing Data. (Oct 1997) *Alternate IV (Oct 1997)*

- (a) Submission of cost or pricing data is not required.
- (b) Provide information described below:

(1) Identify the schedule of fees as it relates to the services to be provided. The cost structure should indicate cost of services and include a cost breakout for any optional program components available.

(2) If space is to be leased back to the Agency from the Offeror, any additional cost (other than lease costs) associated with the space must be clearly indicated in the pricing proposal. Clearly indicate any infrastructure of furnishings that would be included in the lease if applicable. Applicable utility rates should also be specified.

(3) Provide all prices (start-up and ongoing) associated with your services. List any and all costs and provide an explanation for the basis of the cost (e.g., if the charge is "per hour", explain exactly how an hour is calculated, what is included in the charge, and where the information provided in your experience comes from). Provide the costs for years one through five of the project, along with any projected start-up costs.

(4) Include a table listing your best estimate of overall costs by month for the first year of this contract. Include other direct costs associated with estimated costs for long-distance calls to the Board and to the call center in Cumberland to conduct business and resolve issues.

(5) Include travel and related charges that may be incurred during this project.

L.10. 52.216-1 Type of Contract (Apr 1994)

The Government contemplates award of a cost plus fixed fee contract resulting from this solicitation.

52.233-2 Service of Protest (Aug 1996)

(a) Protests, as defined in section 33.101 of the Federal Acquisition Regulation, that are filed directly with an agency, and copies of any protests that are filed with the General Accounting Office (GAO), shall be served on the Contracting Officer (addressed as follows) by obtaining written and dated acknowledgment of receipt from Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board, 1250 H Street, N.W., Suite 200, Washington, DC 20005.

(b) The copy of any protest shall be received in the office designated above within one day of filing a protest with the GAO.

Section M - Evaluation Factors for Award

M.1. EVALUATION OF OFFERS. This section sets forth the criteria that will be used for the evaluation of each timely offer to determine the successful Offeror. The evaluation of offers will consist of a technical and cost evaluation. Only proposals deemed to be technically acceptable will receive further consideration. The Agency is committed to providing the highest level of customer service and satisfaction. Offerors should be aware of the fact that only the highest caliber of quality and service will be accepted. This commitment to customer satisfaction and service will serve as a significant evaluation factor as well as the justification for exercising the options.

M.2. Procedure. The Agency will select an Offeror for award in accordance with the guidance in FAR Part 15, the Agency's Directive No. 12A, and the terms of this solicitation.

M.3. Minimum Technical Requirements. The technical proposal must demonstrate compliance with the minimum technical factors listed below in order to be considered for award. Proposals which do not conform to the technical requirements of this section will be rejected by the Technical Evaluation Panel (TEP) before technical evaluation.

Through the answers provided to the questions in Attachment A, Offerors must demonstrate and certify compliance with the following minimum criteria:

- a. That any and all sites used to process the calls and correspondence by the Offeror are within the continental United States.
- b. That the call center site(s) is 250 miles from Cumberland, MD, in order to be considered an acceptable disaster recovery alternative in the event that call processing is suspended for any period of time in Cumberland.
- c. That the Offeror will provide a dedicated customer service unit with staff working solely on the contract with the Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board.

d. That the Offeror has prior experience in operating similar inbound call center programs and prior experience in the financial services industry (e.g., 401(k) or similar retirement plan experience or investment services). Credit card fulfillment or basic banking services do not satisfy this criterion.

e. That the Offeror has prior experience operating call centers where phone agents handle a minimum of 40,000 calls per month while utilizing typical call center technology (e.g., ACD, PC, call taping system, and workforce management system).

M.4. Technical Evaluation - 100 points.

Upon determining that an Offeror is in compliance with the minimum technical criteria identified in M.3 above, the TEP will evaluate proposals for technical merit using the evaluation criteria identified below. Evaluation criteria are listed in descending order of importance.

A. Operational Management Capability (60 points)

The successful Offeror must be able to demonstrate knowledge of call center operational best practices, including fulfillment services, and must have a track record of applying these practices in the operation of their call centers. This knowledge must include financial programs and must involve call centers of the same approximate size as the proposed center.

There are three areas of operational capability where the Offeror must display expertise: people management, process management, and technology management.

1. People Management (25 points)

Under this category, Offerors will be reviewed for their ability to select, train, and manage a team of individuals that meet or exceed expected levels of performance. Specific elements include:

a. Management expertise (10). We will review resumes of proposed key members of the management team for the Agency's call center to ensure they have the background and experience required to successfully direct the operation and meet program objectives.

b. Hiring (5). We will review the proposal to determine plans for recruiting and selecting staff for the program. We will evaluate such items as turnover rates, average tenure, and amount of supervision to determine the emphasis placed on the selection and development of front line personnel. We will also review total hiring capabilities to ensure that staffing requirements can be met on a timely basis.

c. Training (5). We will evaluate the training program Offerors are currently using for front line associates, as well as their planned training program for this

requirement. Our review will include not only new hire training, but also the commitment made to ongoing training for experienced customer service representatives. We will also evaluate training plans for first line supervisors, including initial as well as ongoing training.

d. Coaching and performance evaluation (5). These activities are crucial to effective call center management. We will review Offerors' plans for evaluating the performance of customer service representatives, coaching customer service representatives, and maximizing the performance of each individual.

2. Process Management (20 points)

The best run call centers are process intensive. It is through these processes that they ensure consistent levels of service. We will review the following.

a. Workforce management (10). Workforce management processes include forecasting, staffing, scheduling, real time management, and service level management. We will evaluate these processes to determine how proactive the organization is and how strong its emphasis is on planning as opposed to reacting. Our review will focus on the ability to effectively manage phone calls, written correspondence, and fulfillment services.

b. Quality assurance (5). No matter how good an organization is at people management, it is the quality assurance practices that determine how consistent the organization delivers services. We will assess the processes used by each Offeror to determine how effective it will be at creating a consistent responsive experience for all members, whether they utilize service via phone or through written correspondence.

c. Reporting (5). Call centers take different approaches to reporting results. Our review will include an assessment of Offerors' reporting plans to ensure that they will provide the key metrics that produce a complete picture of performance. Reporting requirements will include typical call center metrics as well as performance indicators for written correspondence.

3. Technology Management (15 points)

For this contract, the Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board will provide the application technology and facility. The Offeror, however, will be responsible for operation of the various systems and desktop tools, including a knowledge database. We will evaluate the Offerors on the following skills:

a. Disaster recovery and backup procedures (5). We will review disaster recovery procedures from two different perspectives. The first is the view of the Offerors' operations, and the systems and procedures they have in

place to keep their operation up and running as consistently as possible. Our second view will be the ability for the Offerors to act as the disaster recovery site if the Cumberland call center incurs a disaster. We will also review the backup procedures to ensure that data are not lost.

b. System security (5). We will review control and audit procedures to ensure quality and system security. Security controls will be reviewed to ensure that the Agency's call center network will be positively isolated from any other operations at the Offeror's proposed facility.

c. Knowledge management (3). We will review the proposed system solution(s) for tracking, documenting, and accessing procedures and technical information required to accurately address caller inquiries.

d. Telephony capabilities and expertise (2). We will review information on the type of telephony equipment in use at the recommended facility or in other operating sites to determine expertise levels with the systems best suited to process our call volume.

B. Account Management Capability (40 points)

In a call center outsourcing arrangement, the Offeror names an account manager or account management team to act as the interface with the client. This represents a vital communication link, and we will review the following items to gauge the level of account management expertise offered by Offerors.

1. Program implementation (20). The start-up of a program is critical to its long-term success. We will assess Offerors' capabilities and implementation plans in terms of not only the timeliness of their tasks but in the amount of communication/interaction they expect to provide throughout the process. We will also evaluate proposed site locations to ensure they provide adequate disaster recovery to Cumberland and ease of access for FRTIB staff in Washington DC.

2. Communication (10). We are interested in locating an Offeror that takes a proactive approach in providing relevant and accurate information. We will assess this through Offerors' meeting and communication plans the processes they have in place for responding to client requests, and the accessibility of key staff members. The clarity, neatness, completeness, presentation, lack of errors, etc. of the proposal will also reflect on the effectiveness of the Offeror's communication abilities.

3. Past performance (10). We assess Offerors' past and current contracts for the ability to provide similar services as sought in this statement of work. We will contact past customers for

input on Offerors' performance, communications, responsiveness, billings, and ability to meet deadlines/schedules.

M.5. Cost/Price Evaluation. The Agency will make its award to the responsible Offeror whose offer conforms to the solicitation and is most advantageous to the Board, cost/price and other factors considered. For this solicitation, technical quality is more important than price. As proposals become more equal in their technical merit, cost/price becomes more important.

M.6. Award.

a. The Agency may reject any or all offers, accept other than the lowest cost/price offer, and waive informalities and minor irregularities in offers received.

b. The Agency may award a contract on the basis of initial offers received, without discussions. Therefore, each initial offer should contain the Offeror's best terms from a cost/price and technical standpoint.

M.7. 52.252-1 Solicitation Provisions Incorporated by Reference
(Feb 1998)

This solicitation incorporates one or more solicitation provisions by reference, with the same force and effect as if they were given in full text. Upon request, the Contracting Officer will make their full text available. The Offeror is cautioned that the listed provisions may include blocks that must be completed by the Offeror and submitted with its quotation or offer. In lieu of submitting the full text of those provisions, the Offeror may identify the provision by paragraph identifier and provide the appropriate information with its quotation or offer. Also, the full text of a solicitation provision may be accessed electronically at this address:

<http://www.acqnet.gov/far/>

52.217-5 Evaluation of Options. (July, 1990)

ATTACHMENT A.

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR EXTERNAL CALL CENTER SERVICES

1. Confirm that you are prepared to work within all the parameters outlined in the Statement of Work. If any parameters present a problem, please explain.
2. Please confirm that you will be able to comply with the following customer service levels and provide the calculation you use to derive the following metrics:
 - 90% or more of calls answered within 20 seconds
 - Blocked call percent (includes all internal and external busies) of 2% or less
 - 90% of written correspondence completed within 5 days of receipt

Further metrics such as quality rates, customer satisfaction rates, first call resolution, and others may be added to the requirements later in the project.

3. The site for the call center will be leased by the FRTIB. Please provide the address of the site you propose for this call center. Indicate if you currently own or lease this space, and if so, verify that the Agency can lease separate from this contract the space required for this contract. Also, please provide detailed information on the facility, including total square footage, the size of training rooms, a description of telecom/server rooms, the availability of a UPS/Generator, etc.
4. Confirm that you will provide a dedicated customer services unit for the Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board account (i.e., a unit servicing only the Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board account). If you do not propose a dedicated customer service unit, please explain the organization to be provided and how it will provide the levels of service described herein; or, if applicable, provide the minimum number of representatives required for you to provide a dedicated customer services unit.
5. Please fill out the table below providing information for at least two, but not more than three, current or past clients. You should choose those clients that most clearly exemplify past experience similar to those outlined in the statement of work in the inbound financial services industry (investment services/401k).

	Client #1	Client #2	Client #3
Name of Organization			
Industry			
Contact Name, Phone Number, and e-mail address			
Main call types			
Average # of inbound calls per month			

	Client #1	Client #2	Client #3
Average handle time (AHT) of inbound calls			
Average # of pieces of written correspondence completed per month			
Site(s) where calls are/were handled			
Brand of ACD utilized			
Brand of call recording equipment used (if any)			
Brand of workforce management system used (if any)			

6. Provide resumes of the key personnel you expect to use for this project. Also, certify your understanding that if replacements to this team are made, the resumes of the incoming staff must be approved in advance by the Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board.
7. Provide information on any training, leadership, and/or certification programs you will utilize for your frontline supervisory/management team.
8. Provide the following information on your call center operations:
 - A. Total number of customer service representatives answering inbound calls as their main job activity.
 - B. Average length of experience with your firm for your customer service representatives.
 - C. Average annual external (leaving your company) turnover rate of your customer service representatives.
 - D. Average annual internal (going to another job within your company) turnover rate of your customer service representatives.
 - E. Average number of representatives per supervisor.
9. For this contract, please provide the following:
 - A. Proposed number of representatives per supervisor for this program.
 - B. Proposed number of representatives per assistant supervisor/lead technicians for this program (if you plan to utilize this type of position).
 - C. An organizational chart for the call center.

10. Please describe your hiring criteria and hiring process. Include information on the timeframe required to hire representatives for a program like the Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board's, the typical "drop out rate" at the two month mark, and the maximum number of representatives you will be able to hire and train at one time for this program. If you utilize different procedures for staff handling written inquiries or fulfillment activities, please provide the same information for this staff separately.
11. Briefly describe your new hire and ongoing agent customer service skills training programs. What processes do you have in place to maximize a new representative's performance as quickly as possible?
12. Describe your performance evaluation and coaching programs for customer service representatives.
13. Please describe your processes for managing service level, efficiency, and cost. How do you propose creating a structure that generates accurate workload forecasts and effective schedules that meet future workload demand on a monthly, daily, and moment-to-moment basis?
14. Given the phone traffic estimates provided in Section C.3 of the statement of work, please fill in the table indicating how many Full Time Equivalent (FTE - 40 hours per week) representatives you plan to have on staff by month for the first year of this contract, and how many additional FTEs you plan to staff up to in the event of a disaster in the Cumberland office. Please note that this table is for call processing only.

Month	# of FTE reps on staff for call handling - normal operations	Additional # of FTE required to handle a disaster at the Cumberland Office
October 2005		
November 2005		
December 2005		
January 2006		
February 2006		
March 2006		
April 2006		
May 2006		
June 2006		
July 2006		
August 2006		
September 2006		

Given the correspondence estimates provided in section C.7 of the Statement of Work, please fill in the following table indicating the number of FTE representatives required to handle the processing of written correspondence.

Month	# of FTE reps on staff for written correspondence processing
October 2005	
November 2005	
December 2005	
January 2006	
February 2006	
March 2006	
April 2006	
May 2006	
June 2006	
July 2006	
August 2006	
September 2006	

15. How long will it take you to go from your planned staff size to the amount of trained phone representatives needed in the event of a prolonged disaster (i.e., more than 48 hours) in Cumberland? How do you propose meeting the additional needs in a cost efficient way?
16. What processes will you utilize to provide support to customer service representatives faced with a caller inquiry they are unable to handle? How will the agents quickly get the support they need to handle the call, and how will the percent of calls requiring extra support be reduced in the future?
17. Attachments C, D, and E contain information on the quality assurance program required by the Agency, including forms and reports. Please confirm that you understand the monitoring and reporting requirements and will staff appropriately for them. Given these requirements, describe your quality assurance processes, including how you use quality data to improve performance.
18. Given the nature of the Thrift Savings Plan, 100% of calls must be recorded. While the FRTIB will provide the call recording equipment, the Offeror must learn the system and maintain it. What processes will you use to ensure that all calls are recorded and that the records will be safe, secure, and easily accessible?
19. Describe how you will verify that call tracking procedures (i.e., documenting the content of each call within the member database record) will be followed for all calls.
20. Describe your procedures for handling customer complaints about service, and other general customer complaints about the program.
21. Attachment E contains samples of reports that must be provided as part of this contract. The FRTIB will provide the systems and templates required to fill in these reports, but the Offeror must learn and maintain the systems. Please verify that you understand

the reports and will provide the staff required to input the data and generate the reports in a timely fashion.

22. Describe how you plan to use operational performance reports to help manage this contract. What other reports will you utilize internally (other than ones listed in the attachments) to maximize performance results? Who typically looks at performance reports in your organization, and how are results communicated to customer service representatives?
23. What are your system and network back-up procedures?
24. Please describe your disaster avoidance procedures for both telephone and computer systems. How would you handle a long-term disaster (i.e., 48 hours or more) at your site? How would you handle a long-term disaster at the parallel site in Cumberland?
25. What policies, procedures, and controls are in place to ensure high quality & security in your systems and data management? How will you provide physical and data/system security?
26. Describe your audit trails, your reconciliation procedures, data protection, security, etc. How do you maintain data integrity and quality overall?
27. How do you plan to isolate FRTIB representatives and data from any other operations at the proposed facility (if applicable)?
28. The Offeror will be required to develop and maintain a knowledge management system that participant service representatives can access for call handling procedures. Do you have experience developing and maintaining these systems, and if so, which ones? What knowledge management system do you propose for this program, and what are the benefits of this proposed solution?
29. Describe the different ACD, workforce management, and call recording systems that your organization currently utilizes.
30. Describe the implementation process and timelines for call center account plans for a project similar in size and complexity to this one. Please provide a timetable for implementation for this project including all major milestones from point of contract award until the first call is handled.
31. How do you propose to communicate progress during program implementation? What processes do you follow to identify key issues and to notify clients when a problem occurs that could jeopardize timelines or other aspects of the start-up? What communication will take place during the first few days of start-up?
32. Describe how you handle communication with your customers. Will there be dedicated account management (meaning that the contact works exclusively on the FRTIB contract)? Will the Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board have access to operational contacts? Will we have access to our contact person during all hours that the operation is open? Will there be a different contact

person assigned according to a particular work shift? Please identify the individuals by name, title, and phone number.

33. How flexible are you in accommodating impromptu changes to the services you are providing? For example, if the Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board decides to add new products or delete existing ones what kind of turnaround time is involved in getting the word out to the service representatives and incorporating into the training sessions?

34. Please fill out the following table concerning monthly performance for up to three clients in 2004. If you are not able to use the client's name for confidentiality reasons, leave this line blank and so state. If one or more of the objectives or performance results was not tracked, enter "N/A". If the project was not active from July to December of 2004, provide the most recent six months of data.

Client #1

Name of client:						
Industry:						
	Jul-04	Aug-04	Sep-04	Oct-04	Nov-04	Dec-04
# of calls answered						
Service level objective						
Service level result						
ASA objective						
ASA result						
Blocked call % objective						
Blocked call % result						
Call quality objective						
Call quality result						

Client #2

Name of client:						
Industry:						
	Jul-04	Aug-04	Sep-04	Oct-04	Nov-04	Dec-04
# of calls answered						
Service level objective						
Service level result						
ASA objective						
ASA result						
Blocked call % objective						
Blocked call % result						
Call quality objective						
Call quality result						

Client #3

Name of client:						
Industry:						
	Jul-04	Aug-04	Sep-04	Oct-04	Nov-04	Dec-04
# of calls answered						
Service level objective						
Service level result						
ASA objective						
ASA result						
Blocked call %						

objective						
Blocked call % result						
Call quality objective						
Call quality result						

35. Provide references for three (3) clients recently obtained and two recently lost. References should preferably be companies with call centers of 50 to 300 agents in the financial industry. Include a company name, contact phone number, and email address.
36. What experience have you had with dual call center operations such as the one described in the Statement of Work? Please provide input regarding your plans to effectively communicate and coordinate activities with the Cumberland call center.
37. What distinguishes you from other call center Offerors and how will that translate to exceptional performance for the proposed center?

Pricing

38. Please provide all prices (start-up and ongoing) associated with your services. List any and all costs, and provide an explanation for the basis of the cost. (Example, if the charge is "per hour", explain exactly how an hour is calculated, what is included in the cost, and where the information comes from.) Provide the costs for years one through five of the contract, along with any projected start-up costs.
39. If space is to be leased to the Agency from the Offeror, clearly indicate any separate costs and amenities associated with this arrangement.
40. Include a table listing your best estimate of overall costs by month for the first year of this contract.
41. Please indicate whether or not the prices in question 38 include travel and related charges that may be incurred during this project. If not, please provide estimates for those charges as well as an outline of your expense reimbursement policies.
42. How do you review your service costs? Do you typically have annual increases? How do you determine/justify the increases?

Contractual

43. Identify any subcontractors that you intend to use to perform any functions under the services of the agreement. Describe their roles and responsibilities. Explain the management processes and workload management processes to be employed. Verify your understanding that any subcontractors used for this contract are subject to any and all terms of the contract.

CALL CENTER PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Calls		
Task	Standard	Explanation
Abandonment Rate	Less than 2% daily	The number of calls that are abandoned before they are answered by a PSR must not exceed 2% of daily calls.
Adherence	Internal standard set by each call center	Internal metric only. Generally, PSRs must be available to receive calls for at least 90% of their work schedule.
After-Call Work	60 – 120 seconds (less than 2 minutes)	The amount of time that a PSR is unavailable to receive calls due to work necessitated by an inbound call, e.g., entering data, filing out forms, must not exceed 2 minutes.
Average Talk Time	180 – 210 seconds	The average amount of time that a PSR spends with a caller during a transaction should not exceed 210 seconds.
Blocked Calls	Less than or equal to 2% daily	The number of calls that cannot be connected immediately because no circuit is available or because the ACD is programmed to block calls from the queue (the queue is backed up beyond a certain threshold) must not exceed 2% of daily calls.
Occupancy	Internal standard set by each call center	The standard for the percentage time that a PSR handles calls versus waits for calls will set by each call center.
Telephone Service Factor	90% within 20 seconds	90% of all calls must be answered within 20 seconds of receipt.
Other Inquiries		
Task	Standard	Explanation
Allegation of Fraud or Forgery	Within 24 hours	The allegation must be forwarded to Legal Review and Evaluation Section (LRES) within 24 hours of receipt of the written allegation.
Congressional Inquiries	Within 24 hours (Notify TIB) Within 5 business days (TIB transmittal)	TIB must be notified within 24 hours of receipt of a Congressional Inquiry. The inquiry and supporting information must be forwarded to TIB within 5 business days after receipt.

Other Inquiries cont'd		
Task	Standard	Explanation
Referrals to TIB	Within 3 business days	Exception processing cases, which are referred to TIB, must be completed within 3 business days of receipt.
Requests to Restore Abandoned Account	Within 5 business days	Requests must be forwarded to the TIB within 5 business days after receipt.
Verifications of Deposit (VOD)	Within 5 business days	VODs must be responded to within 5 business days of receipt.
Written Inquiries	Within 5 business days	90% of all written inquiries must be answered within 5 business days of receipt. If the inquiry cannot be answered by the TSPD or if it requires action by TIB, the inquiry must be sent to TIB within 5 business days of receipt.

**Thrift Savings Plan Telephone Service
Quality Assurance Program**

Table of Contents

Purpose.....	3
Ethical Monitoring Practices.....	4
Definitions.....	5
Frequency.....	6
Methodology.....	7
Calibration.....	9
Coaching.....	10
Monitoring Form and Rating Guidelines.....	11

Purpose

There are many factors that impact the satisfaction that a customer has with an organization. At the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP), one of those ways is through the many phone interactions that take place during the week with participants. It is our goal to ensure that these contacts are handled in a way that maximizes both the participant's experience and the value of the call to our agency. To determine our success at meeting this goal, we are instituting a Quality Assurance (QA) program that will measure our call handling performance.

The specific objectives behind the Quality Assurance (QA) program are to:

- Generate high levels of customer satisfaction from our callers, thereby increasing satisfaction with our service
- Ensure consistent service delivery regardless of where the call is handled
- Educate ourselves on participant needs and how to best fulfill those needs
- Identify ways to continuously improve the service being provided by our agency

We will achieve these goals through a call monitoring program. This program will allow us the ability to listen to both sides of the recorded call and score the call against previously developed standards. To ensure that the monitoring program meets the needs not only of our participants, but also of our agency and the individual employees that answer our calls, we will adhere to the ethical practices listed in the next section.

Ethical Monitoring Practices

It is our intention to institute a monitoring program that meets our organizational objectives while also respecting the needs of our Participant Service Representatives (PSRs). To ensure the program does this, we will adhere to the following ethical practices:

1. Job candidates will be informed early on in the screening process about the call monitoring program.
2. We will inform PSRs that all calls are being recorded, and that any call can then be scored and used as a monitored call.
3. PSRs will be informed about what lines are recorded and monitored, and what lines are not recorded.
4. If a personal call comes in on a business line and is subsequently chosen for monitoring, we will stop listening to the call as soon as it is determined that it is of a personal nature and the PSR will be asked to let personal callers know which phone they should be using for these calls.
5. We will follow all applicable laws regarding notification to the callers about the recording of calls.
6. Our monitoring equipment will record only telephone calls, not what is said by PSRs between calls at their workstations.
7. The only people that will listen to recorded calls are those with a specific business need to hear the interactions. The only people that can grade the calls and give feedback on them are those specifically trained and qualified to do so.
8. Our PSRs will be notified about the purpose of the monitoring, how it is conducted, and how we will use the results.
9. We will not, under any circumstances, publicly post individual monitoring results by name or post any other monitoring related data that could identify an individual PSR's results.
10. We will not single out PSRs for unsatisfactory performance that is common to a group of PSRs.
11. We will use a standardized form to evaluate calls.
12. As more than one person will be monitoring and supplying feedback, we will institute a calibration program to ensure that those doing the monitoring are grading results as consistently as possible.
13. To the best extent possible, we will use objective criteria in evaluation forms and monitoring techniques.
14. We will summarize PSR results at a group level to determine where the performance of the group is centered.
15. New hires and PSRs struggling to meet call quality performance standards will be monitored more frequently.
16. PSRs will be encouraged to listen to calls that are monitored. If they disagree with an evaluation, a third party (selected internally by each call center) can be brought in to consult on the call.

Definitions

Coaching – The act of providing feedback to a PSR regarding performance. For the purposes of the QA program, coaching is provided on the quality of call handling as determined by an evaluator when monitoring a call. Coaching is not limited to quality of service though, as PSRs can also be coached on performance as it relates to productivity, attendance, adherence to schedule, and other factors deemed important to the TSP.

Evaluator – A member of the call center team that has been trained in call monitoring and has demonstrated through calibration sessions the ability to rate calls in a fashion similar to the rest of the evaluators, and in accordance with established procedures.

Fully Experienced PSR - Also known as a veteran. This is a PSR who does not have any performance problems in regards to call handling. This individual demonstrates extensive TSP knowledge and consistently employs proper telephone technique and skills. Only regular monitoring is necessary. The determination to view a PSR as fully experienced is a decision made at the call center level.

Monitoring – The process of listening to a call and evaluating the performance of the PSR on that call. There are three different methods that can be used to monitor:

Side-by-side (SBS) – SBS occurs when the evaluator plugs into the PSR's phone, listens to both sides of a live conversation and observes the PSRs use of the system.

Silent – Silent monitoring occurs when the evaluator listens in on a live call away from the PSR workstation and without informing the PSR of the observation.

Record and review – Record and review is done when a previously recorded call is listened to and scored by an evaluator. This most often happens in a silent mode, but can also be done in a SBS fashion with the PSR. **Record and review is the only method to be used for the purposes of calibration.**

Extended Monitoring Program – The observing and evaluating of a predetermined number of calls for each newly hired PSR that is independently answering TSP calls and for PSRs with performance problems. The number of evaluated calls for individuals in this group is significantly higher than for those PSRs in the regular monitoring program. Call observations that take place throughout the month.

Regular Monitoring Program - The observing and evaluating of a predetermined number of calls for each PSR that is independently answering TSP calls. Monitoring is performed by evaluators selected by each call center, using the attached monitoring form approved by the Agency.

Frequency

All of the calls coming in to the TSP customer service lines will be recorded. We will then select a random representative sample of these calls to evaluate.

The total sample size of calls to be evaluated is comprised of two elements:

a.) **Calls representing the “regular” monitoring program**, the data from which is used not only for individual feedback but also for the development of group reports and trending analysis.

For program start-up, regular monitoring will consist of five calls per PSR per month. The intention is to eventually lower this to three per PSR per month as the PSR becomes more experienced and demonstrates consistent service delivery.

The results from this sample will be used to generate the “official” organizational results and develop the summary reports. It will also comprise the full sample of individual results for those PSRs that are fully experienced and do not have any performance problems concerning call handling.

b.) **Calls representing the “extended” monitoring program** that will be done for new hires and PSRs with performance problems. The amount of calls done for this sample **will vary based on PSR need**. Some months, when all staff are fully trained and there are no performance issues, there will be no extended monitoring. Other months, when a number of new staff members are on board, the extended sample will be greater than the regular sample.

For new hires taking calls independently, the following guidelines are to be used for frequency of monitoring:

- 1st week – 4-8 calls per week monitored
- 2nd week – 3-6 calls per week monitored
- 3rd week – 2-4 calls per week monitored
- 4th week – release to regular monitoring program

These frequencies should be viewed as minimum guidelines. If progress is not being made, a reduction in sample size should not occur. In fact, there are times when an increase will be most appropriate.

In generating individual quality performance results, data from both the regular and extended sample will be used. The higher number of calls used will increase the validity of the individual results and will provide those PSRs more in need of improvement with additional feedback to help increase performance levels more quickly. As noted above, the extended sample will not be used in generating organizational results.

Experienced staff members that are generating low quality scores will follow the same extended monitoring program. Here again, the number of calls monitored should be viewed as a minimum guideline, and should be adjusted upward if performance dictates. If performance does not improve, alternative measures taken at the call center level, need to be considered.

Methodology

For the purposes of calibration between the TSPSO and the parallel call center, all regular monitoring will be done via recorded calls. An evaluator will either listen to the calls in a closed office, or will listen with headphones at a cubicle.

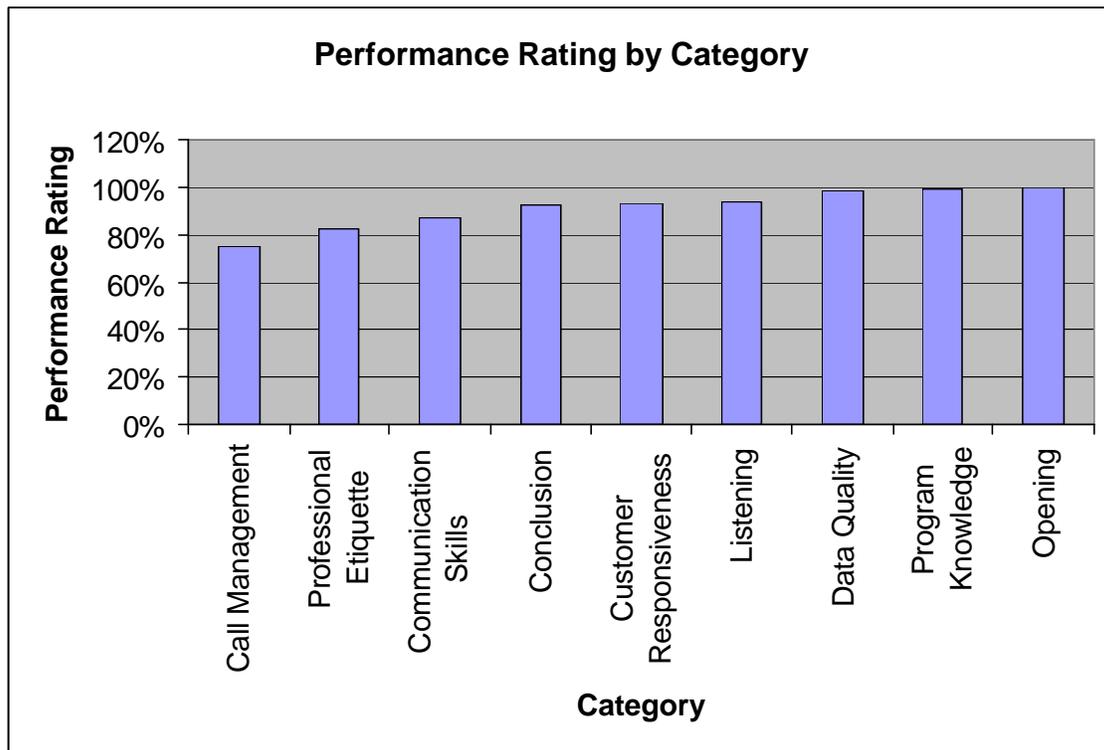
To ensure a valid sample, the evaluator will choose calls from a schedule determined in advance at the call center level. This schedule will spread out the calls throughout the day and month, and will be kept private so that no one knows when calls will be monitored. This helps to ensure the validity of the program.

On a day where it is indicated that a call should be monitored, the evaluator (or the automated system) should choose a call from that day at random. While listening to the call, the evaluator will score it on the approved monitoring form. The form will then be given to the PSR within three business days except in cases where the call receives a severely low rating. In those cases action will be taken immediately.

When the evaluator is done listening to the call and completing the monitoring sheet, the PSR will be given the opportunity to listen to the call and then the evaluator and the PSR will sit down for a review and coaching session. In many cases, that may just be a quick review of what was written, especially when the call is satisfactory and the PSR is in agreement with the evaluation. Calls that are exceptionally good, or those that are unsatisfactory, will require additional discussion and/or coaching. Additional discussion is also required when a PSR's view of the call is substantially different from that of the evaluator.

At the end of the month, results will be rolled up into reports. Individual reports will be created for each PSR that provide the following type of information (though the format may differ):

Monthly QA Report - Mary Jones	
Month of July 2004	
<u>Category</u>	<u>Performance Rating</u>
-	-
-	-
<u>Foundational Skills</u>	
Opening	100%
Data Quality	98%
Professional Etiquette	82%
Conclusion	92%
<u>Finesse Skills</u>	
Customer Responsiveness	93%
Call Management	75%
Listening	94%
Program Knowledge	99%
Communication Skills	87%



This reporting provides the PSR with scores for the different categories of call quality, along with a graph to help illustrate where the best opportunities for improvement exist. The chart above is referred to as a Pareto chart. The categories are not listed in the same order as the table (which is the same order as the monitoring form). They are instead listed in a “worst to best” order, to make it easier to determine where the greatest improvement opportunities exist.

In time, standards will be developed by the Board to help define performance expectations. To do so requires some experience with the system, and data from at least five hundred calls to help develop the standards. Until this experience is gained, no worthwhile, meaningful objectives can be established.

Calibration

In order to generate the most valid results possible, evaluators will participate in a monthly calibration program. The purpose of this program is to ensure that evaluations are done correctly and consistently by everyone involved.

Formal calibration will be done on two levels – site and organization. Within each call center site, it is expected that at least ten calls per month will be simultaneously scored by all those doing the evaluating. (The scoring of all ten calls does not have to take place during one session.) The process for this is as follows:

- 1) Monitor without discussing - everyone in the room listens to the same call and evaluates it against the monitoring criteria.
- 2) Share ratings – everyone offers their scores to each criteria without reasons for each and without specific examples.
- 3) Agree to interpretation of the consistent items and those that are more objective – once everyone has shared results, “calibrate” the variances. Go around the room and agree on the items that apply in most every situation and how to rate the more “objective” items.
- 4) Monitor again and share ratings – use a new form and listen to the call again and evaluate it against the agreed rating structure.
- 5) Report on the findings – After the second round of ratings for a call, gather the forms from each evaluator and report the individual scores on an excel spreadsheet. Trend the variances over time.

It is reasonable to expect that an average call may take 20 to 30 minutes to calibrate. Consistent problems with an individual evaluator whose scores are significantly different from the norm must be addressed. If the differences cannot be eliminated, the site should consider reassignment and replacement.

Since calls for the TSP are handled at two different call center sites, it is equally important to calibrate across the sites. To do this, three calls from each site will be randomly selected for review. The calls will be selected in accordance with a schedule determined in advance at FRTIB level. Representatives from each evaluating team at each site will teleconference in once each month to listen to the calls and perform steps one through four above. Step five will be performed at the organizational level by an FRTIB associate.

It is important that the calibration at the organizational level reveal only minor variances, since significant variances between sites will result in inconsistent service delivery to participants. Should the organizational calibration indicate inconsistent ratings, additional monitoring will take place beyond the three calls per month.

In addition to the formal calibration program described above, we strongly encourage informal calibration take place. Exceptionally challenging calls that are discovered during the regular monitoring program should be flagged for calibration and discussed among evaluators at both the site and organizational level. These discussions can often yield a substantial amount of learning and understanding.

Coaching

Once calls are properly evaluated, the results are shared with the PSR during a review of the call. Coaching at the TSP focuses not just on problems, but also on successes. Our coaching program will be:

- Specific – When providing feedback, we'll speak directly to what happened (e.g., “the way you responded to that participant’s complaint about the application process really put him at ease and helped clarify the situation for him”) and not make vague references (e.g., “you handled that complaint well”).
- Professional – Feedback will be based strictly on the calls at hand, and will be approached from the perspective of how to improve results over the long term.
- Positive and constructive – Even when discussing problems, we will assume that improvements can and will be made. We'll also make sure that successes are noted and celebrated.
- Gentle but straightforward – We recognize that when constructive feedback is given the situation can become emotionally charged and we will recognize that by employing a gentle yet honest approach.
- Ongoing – This is not a temporary program.
- From the heart – Those doing the evaluating should be chosen to do so in part because they truly care about the work and the people doing it every day.
- Timely – All effort will be made to provide feedback within 24 hours of monitoring, with the understanding that there are times that call volumes may not allow it. Even during the busiest times, though, the time between the monitoring and the delivery of feedback will never exceed three business days.

The decision whether or not to integrate the review and coaching program into the site’s performance evaluation and progressive discipline program, will be made at the call center level.

Monitoring Form and Rating Guidelines

Please see the attached monitoring form that will be used and the rating guidelines for the form. Over time, the form may be changed to improve the quality of the feedback given and to reflect changes in the working environment (including changes in expectations). Despite any changes that are made, we will always provide rating guidelines to help PSRs and evaluators understand what is expected. Over time, changes may also be made to these guidelines in response to recommendations by both call center sites as time and experience helps to clarify any points of confusion.

Monitoring Form Supporting Guidelines

FOUNDATION SKILLS

Rating: Yes=achieves foundation skill No=does not meet foundation skill N/A= no opportunity to demonstrate skill

OPENING

Skill	Purpose	Guidelines
<p>Thanks customer for calling.</p> <p>(All callers now contact the TSP through the ThriftLine. As a result, the caller is already aware that he/she has contacted the TSP when they begin speaking with a PSR. Therefore, it is no longer a requirement that the PSR verify that the TSP was called.)</p>	<p>Expresses gratitude for the contact.</p>	<p>In order to achieve a YES rating, PSRs must state, "Thank you for calling."</p> <p>This greeting may be prefaced by a statement or greeting such as, "good morning" or "good afternoon", but cannot be modified in any other way (e.g., "Thanks" instead of "Thank you").</p> <p>N/A: This skill may be rated <i>Not Applicable</i> if the caller interrupts the PSR with their question/issue and the PSR cannot continue.</p>
<p>States First and Last Name</p>	<p>Identifies the PSR to the caller and demonstrates willingness to take responsibility for the answer/resolution offered.</p>	<p>The PSR is required to state his or her first and last name as part of the greeting. The specific verbiage used may be modified (e.g., "This is Greg Smith ", "Lisa Jones speaking ") to allow for individual style, but must be stated after thanking the customer for calling and before offering assistance.</p> <p>N/A: This skill may not be rated Not Applicable. The PSR is responsible for offering his or her first and last name during every contact.</p>
<p>Offers Assistance</p>	<p>To express willingness to assist the customer and signal the progression of the call.</p>	<p>In order to achieve a YES rating, the PSR <u>must offer to assist the caller</u>. The verbiage used may be modified (e.g., "How may I help you?", "How may I assist you?", "What can I do for you today?") to allow for individual style, but must be stated immediately after the PSR states his/her name.</p> <p>N/A: This skill may be rated Not Applicable <u>only</u> if the caller interrupts the PSR with the question/issue and it would be illogical for the PSR to offer assistance.</p>
<p>Gathers & verifies account number if not provided through ThriftLine (VRS), verifies daytime telephone number & customer's identity</p>	<p>Determines the relationship to the policyholder and the information that can be provided.</p>	<p>When the record is retrieved, the customer's identity should be verified.</p> <p>Example: "May I ask whom I'm speaking with?"</p> <p>If the caller cannot identify him or herself as an authorized account holder, he or she should be informed that while you may answer general questions regarding TSP products and services, you may not offer</p>

		information or comment on the specifics of the account.
--	--	---

<p><i>A final overall rating of zero may be given if the PSR releases account information without verifying the identity of the participant or obtaining the participant's verbal permission to release information to a third party. (This does not apply when speaking to the representative of the participant's new financial institution.)</i></p>	<p>Ensures that correct customer information is retrieved.</p> <p>Resolves outstanding service issues.</p>	<p>If not provided through the VRS, a social security number must be requested from each participant before the participant's issue/question is addressed.</p> <p>Example: <i>"I'd be happy to help you with that. May I have your social security number so I can access your account?"</i></p> <p>N/A: This skill may be rated Not Applicable in the event the caller is not the account holder and is only requesting general information.</p>
--	--	--

DATA QUALITY

<i>Skill</i>	<i>Purpose</i>	<i>Guidelines</i>
<p>Provides accurate information</p> <p><i>A final overall rating of zero may be given if the participant is provided with inaccurate information that would severely impact the participant's account.</i></p>	<p>Ensures that the caller receives the correct information.</p>	<p>The PSR needs to interpret information on the system correctly and relay it accurately to the caller. A rating of "no" is given when the information supplied to the caller is incorrect.</p> <p>Example of incorrect response: <i>"Your address can only be changed through your employing agency" - while the record indicates that the participant is separated from Federal service.</i></p> <p>N/A: This skill may not be rated Not Applicable. All calls involve the relay of certain pieces of information and that information must be accurate.</p>

PROFESSIONAL ETIQUETTE

<i>Skill</i>	<i>Purpose</i>	<i>Guidelines</i>
<p>Uses appropriate hold and transfer steps</p>	<p>Notifies the caller when placing him/her on hold and makes the wait as pleasant as possible.</p> <p>Prepares the caller in advance if a transfer is going to take place and lets him/her know where and why the call is being transferred.</p>	<p>Whenever the hold is used, the PSR should state what needs to be done and how long the hold period will last. The PSR must also ask the participant for permission to place him/her on hold.</p> <p>Example: <i>"I need to research that before giving you an answer. This will take no longer than one or two minutes. May I place you on hold?"</i></p> <p>A stated hold time should never exceed two minutes, and the PSR must check back before the time estimate is up, even if the research is not completed. If more time is required, a new time estimate should be given and permission from the caller must again be obtained.</p> <p>If the call must be transferred, the participant should be told why the transfer is taking place and who (full name and title if appropriate) will be receiving the call. The PSR must also ask for permission to transfer.</p> <p>Example: <i>"The information you are requesting is not available to me; however, my supervisor, Mary Jones, can help you with this. May I place you on hold to transfer the call to her?"</i></p> <p>N/A: This skill may be rated Not Applicable if the PSR does not need to use the hold button or make a transfer during the call.</p>
<p>Uses please, thank you, and caller's name when appropriate</p>	<p>Projects an image of courtesy and caring.</p> <p>Helps personalize the caller's experience.</p>	<p>Use of "please" and "thank you" typically works best when asking the caller for information.</p> <p>Example: <i>"Would you please provide me with your current address? (Participant states address). Thank you."</i></p>

		Occasional use of the caller's name (using Mr., Ms., or Mrs. with the last name) especially during a long, complex call, helps to personalize the service experience. N/A: This skill may not be rated N/A, as every call will provide the opportunity to extend these forms of courtesy.
Does not interrupt caller	Ensures complete understanding of facts and caller's perspective. Allows the caller to complete each sentence and provides the opportunity to fully express concern or frustration.	Even in those cases where a customer goes off "on a tangent," the PSR should allow the caller to finish speaking before pulling the conversation back in line. Interrupting a caller can only occur when the caller is using profane language and needs to understand that continuing to do so will result in the PSR terminating the call. N/A: This skill may not be rated N/A, except in a situation of profane language.

CONCLUSION

<i>Skill</i>	<i>Purpose</i>	<i>Guidelines</i>
Summarizes the next steps and agreements	Ensures understanding of any follow-up work that was discussed. Reminds the caller of any action items for which he/she may be responsible.	Any action items that are agreed upon during the call need to be summarized prior to conclusion. Along with the summarization, the PSR should get agreement to the steps from the caller. Example: <i>"O/K Mrs. Jones, you'll fax us a completed Form TSP-3, Designation of Beneficiary, at 999-999-9999, and upon our receipt, we'll submit the form for processing. Then you'll contact us in approx. ten business days to be certain that the form was received and entered. Is that correct?"</i> N/A: This skill may be rated N/A for those calls that do not generate any follow-up tasks.
Asks to be of further assistance	Communicates to the caller that he/she is our first priority. Reduces the amount of follow-up calls that are required, as these frustrate callers and reduce organizational efficiency.	Prior to completing the call, the PSR should ask if he/she can be of further assistance to the caller. A typical wording would be "Is there anything else that I can help you with today?" Variations on this are acceptable as long as they convey the willingness to fully answer all inquiries. N/A: This skill may be rated Not Applicable if the caller ends the call abruptly and without warning.
Brands the call TSP participants have the option of investing in private industry plans instead of contributing to the TSP. One way to encourage continued participation is for "quality service" and	Communicates to the customer that the call is ending. Over time, provides a consistent image of the high quality service supplied by TSP.	A consistent closing should be applied to all calls, with the exception of those mentioned below. The wording options are "Thank you for contacting the Thrift Savings Plan and have a nice day" or "Have a nice day, and thank you for calling the Thrift Savings Plan." Other substitutions are acceptable only if they convey gratitude for the call and specifically use "Thrift Savings Plan" in the closing. Closings that don't include this would result in a "no" rating in this category. N/A: This skill may be rated N/A, in the event of a

<p>"Thrift Savings Plan" to become synonymous in the mind of the participant. Branding the call is one way of doing this.</p>		<p>complaint or an emotional caller. For these calls, the PSR should choose a closing that best fits the situation.</p>
---	--	---

FINESSE SKILLS

Rating: 0= unsatisfactory 1= needs improvement 2= satisfactory 3= outstanding, N/A=not applicable for this call

CALL MANAGEMENT/LISTENING

<i>Skill</i>	<i>Purpose</i>	<i>Guidelines</i>
<p>Checks for understanding and restates for understanding</p>	<p>Verifies that what the PSR heard is what the caller said, and vice versa.</p>	<p>To receive a 0 rating, the PSR fails to verify understanding of messages going to or coming from the caller.</p> <p>To receive a 1 rating the PSR only partially verifies messages and instructions.</p> <p>To receive a 2 rating, the PSR fully verifies messages and instructions.</p> <p>To receive a 3 rating, the PSR checks for understanding based on the needs of the caller, recognizing that some may need verification even for simple requests and messages.</p> <p>N/A: This skill may be rated Not Applicable if the call is short and simple and the caller displays a complete understanding of the communication.</p>
<p>Manages silence well</p>	<p>Puts the caller at ease.</p> <p>Delivers a smoother call flow.</p>	<p>Silence can be generated internally, when a PSR is not sure of an answer, or externally, when the system response is slow or a computer needs to be re-booted during a call.</p> <p>To receive a 0 rating, the PSR allows the silence to occur without acknowledging it or filling it with brief comments or using hold.</p> <p>To receive a 1 rating the PSR intermittently acknowledges the period(s) of silence and/or only partially fills the silence with brief comments or by using hold.</p> <p>To receive a 2 rating, the PSR "prepares" the customer for moments of silence.</p> <p>Example: <i>"I'm getting that information for you now, just a moment please."</i></p> <p>To receive a 3 rating, the PSR fills times of potential silence with useful conversation.</p> <p>Example: <i>"My computer is a bit slow today. While I'm waiting for it to access that information, may I</i></p>

		<p><i>verify your address please?</i></p> <p>N/A: This skill may be rated N/A when there is no possibility for silence encountered during the call.</p>
<p>Captures information the first time</p>	<p>Ensures that the caller does not have to repeat information or requests</p> <p>Generates a feeling of confidence in the PSR's abilities</p>	<p>To receive a 0 rating, the PSR is distracted and asks the caller to repeat information.</p> <p>To receive a 1 rating the PSR only partially captures the information without asking the caller to repeat themselves.</p> <p>To receive a 2 rating, the PSR captures all information provided the first time.</p> <p>To receive a 3 rating, the PSR not only captures all information the first time, but also picks up on cues that help to avoid unnecessary requests.</p> <p>Example: <i>The caller states that she is traveling for the next few weeks. Later in the call, as the PSR is indicating the a letter will go out requiring a signature, the PSR asks for a fax or alternate address to send the form so the case can be handled without delay.</i></p> <p>N/A: This skill may be rated N/A if the PSR is having difficulties due to a bad telephone connection, if the caller has an accent that is clearly difficult to understand or any other circumstance outside the PSR's control.</p>
<p>Attempts to build relationship</p>	<p>Puts the caller at ease.</p> <p>Generates value in the mind of the participant over and above what is expected from the inquiry.</p> <p>Increases participant satisfaction regarding TSP service.</p>	<p>By listening to verbal cues, the PSR should be able to determine when and with whom it is appropriate to attempt to build a relationship. This is done most effectively when the PSR goes out of his/her way to show concern for and interest in the caller, beyond the issue at hand. This can also be accomplished when the PSR makes a special consideration for a caller.</p> <p>Some examples include: (While waiting for the system to refresh): <i>"I notice that you live right near the path of that tropical storm that hit land yesterday. I hope you haven't had any damage in your town."</i></p> <p><i>(Upon an elderly caller stating that she can't read the notice well because of her eyes) "I can discuss this with you now, and if you'd like, you can download the form from the TSP website with larger printing so that it will be easier for you to read".</i></p> <p>A PSR may receive a 0 rating if he or she does not attempt to build a relationship, even though the opportunity presents itself and the PSR is not taking "back-to-back" calls (which would demonstrate a high call load and would discourage the additional time this takes).</p>

		<p>A 1 rating may be received if the PSR goes overboard and spends too much time trying to build a relationship with a caller that is clearly not interested.</p> <p>A PSR may receive a 2 rating if he or she makes attempts that make the call more personable and friendly without degrading the service received.</p> <p>A PSR may receive a 3 rating when relationship building attempts are clearly successful based on the caller's reactions and the attempts are not overly time consuming.</p> <p><i>N/A:</i> This skill may be rated N/A when caller reactions and/or workload demands (back-to-back calls) dictate that an attempt to build a relationship should not be undertaken. This will quite often be the case on simple calls where getting the information quickly is typically the caller's priority.</p>
--	--	---

PROGRAM KNOWLEDGE

<i>Skill</i>	<i>Purpose</i>	<i>Guidelines</i>
<p>Educates customer, demonstrates industry and product expertise</p>	<p>Enhances caller confidence.</p> <p>Provides thorough and accurate answers.</p> <p>Increases the caller's understanding about the TSP and the options and/or processes pertinent to the call.</p>	<p>To receive a 0 rating, the PSR avoids providing information, provides incorrect information and/or exhibits uncertainty.</p> <p>Example:</p> <p><i>"You'll need to check with your payroll office on that. I don't know who that would be, check with your personnel office."</i></p> <p>To receive a 1 rating the PSR only partially answers the caller's inquiries, and/or provides some information that is incorrect and exhibits a lack of self confidence.</p> <p>To receive a 2 rating, the PSR answers all inquiries accurately in a confident manner.</p> <p>Example:</p> <p><i>"I'm sorry, Mrs. Smith, but as an active employee, you cannot close your account."</i></p> <p>To receive a 3 rating, the PSR provides industry or product information in a confident manner and follows on the education provided with additional information, based on the caller's cues that this is helpful.</p> <p>Example 1:</p> <p><i>"I'm sorry Mrs. Smith, but as an active employee you cannot close your account. There are some loan options however, that may meet your needs. Would you like me to</i></p>

<p>Asks appropriate questions & attempts call objectives</p>	<p>Ensures all customer needs are uncovered and the root of the customer's issue/problem is identified.</p> <p>Moves the call forward productively and directs the caller toward a positive resolution.</p>	<p><i>describe these options for you?"</i></p> <p>Example 2:</p> <p><i>"When you complete the Form TSP-21 Loan Agreement/Promissory Note you can elect to have the funds electronically transferred directly to your bank account by entering your bank routing number and account number on the form. This will eliminate the time necessary for a check to reach you through the mail and the possibility of a lost check."</i></p> <p>N/A: This skill may be rated N/A in the rare cases when a call does not require system use or product knowledge.</p> <p>Appropriate questions are strategic inquiries into the caller's specific situation, often in response to participant cues. By asking appropriate questions or open-ended questions (e.g., "tell me what happened") the PSR is able to uncover additional needs or concerns, clarify the participant's position and expand the opportunities to satisfy the participant's objectives during the call.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <p><i>"Mr. Quincy, you said you sent your payment in two weeks ago. May I ask what address you mailed it to please?"</i></p> <p><i>"When you tried to enter your Social Security number on the TSP web site, what happened?"</i></p> <p>A PSR may receive a 0 rating if he or she does not ask appropriate questions even though the opportunity existed.</p> <p>A PSR may receive a 1 rating if he or she asks some questions that would help the participant clarify their problem but does not take advantage of every opportunity that existed.</p> <p>A PSR may receive a 2 rating if he or she asks questions which help the participant clarify their problem and moves the call forward toward resolution.</p> <p>A PSR may receive a 3 rating if he or she asks skillful or perceptive questions, uncovers a previously hidden need or issue, and/or applies this line of questioning during a particularly challenging call.</p>
<p>Promotes TSP web site/ThriftLine</p>	<p>Encourages the use of the TSP web site/ThriftLine for transactions, information</p>	<p>To receive a 0 rating the PSR misses all opportunities during the conversation to encourage the use of the web site/ThriftLine.</p> <p>To receive a 1 rating only partially takes advantage of all opportunities (e.g., part is calling to inquire about the loan process and the PSR explains how obtain information from the web site but not how to apply via the web).</p>

		<p>To receive a 2 rating the PSR takes advantage of all opportunities.</p> <p>To receive a 3 rating the PSR takes advantage of every opportunity presented in the conversation to promote use of the web site/ThriftLine and creatively takes the additional steps of briefly informing the participant of other appropriate information/processes that are available through these mediums and that may be of use to the participant.</p> <p><i>N/A:</i> This skill may be rated N/A in the rare cases that there are no opportunities to promote either the web site or the ThriftLine or it is not appropriate.</p>
--	--	--

COMMUNICATION SKILLS/CUSTOMER RESPONSIVENESS

<i>Skill</i>	<i>Purpose</i>	<i>Guidelines</i>
<p>Uses polite manner, effective pace, volume, tone</p>	<p>Makes communication as clear as possible</p> <p>Increases the caller's comfort level</p>	<p>To receive a 0 rating, the PSR is difficult for the caller to understand (e.g. speaking too fast), uses business jargon, slang vocabulary or poor grammar.</p> <p>To receive a 1 rating the PSR appears disinterested, uses slang vocabulary or poor grammar, or projects a negative image through voice tone and inflection.</p> <p>To receive a 2 rating, the PSR practices clear speaking at a pace and volume that is easy for a typical caller to follow.</p> <p>To receive a 3 rating, the PSR changes pace, volume, and tone to meet the caller's perceived needs. This could include such examples as lowering tone for callers that are hard of hearing, or slowly spelling out words or numbers for a caller that is writing down information and is having a difficult time. In this situation, the PSR must not only adjust the communication but also show patience with the caller.</p> <p><i>N/A:</i> This skill may not be rated N/A.</p>
<p>Acknowledges customer's issue/problem, handles objections/gains customer's commitment</p>	<p>Lets caller know that there is understanding.</p> <p>Verifies that the message was received.</p> <p>Increases the customer's positive perception of their experience by sensitively addressing their objections and concerns about past issues and/or proposed solutions and persuasively gaining the caller's commitment.</p>	<p>This step is necessary whenever a caller presents an issue or problem. In these cases, the PSR should express an understanding of the issue or problem before moving toward resolution.</p> <p>Example: <i>"Mr. Sanford, I can understand the frustration that this incorrect payment amount is causing you.."</i></p> <p>A PSR may receive a 0 rating if the PSR elects to ignore the issue or problem being raised, ineffectively responds to the customer's objections or argues with the participant.</p> <p>Example of 0 rating:</p>

		<p><i>The participant complains about a new fee that has been added. The PSR counters "Well, that's the rule."</i></p> <p>A PSR may receive a 1 rating if he or she acknowledges the problem but doesn't provide information that specifically answers the problem or makes no attempt to address the problem at all and does not reassure the customer regarding his concerns.</p> <p><i>The participant expresses doubts about the effectiveness of a solution offered. The PSR encourages him or her to try the solution, but does not provide adequate explanation or address the customer's concerns.</i></p> <p>A PSR may receive a 2 rating if he or she provides an acknowledgement that verifies understanding of the issue and provides information that specifically answers the question.</p> <p>A PSR may receive a 3 rating if he or she: not only verifies understanding of the issue but also creatively and persuasively addresses the customer's objections, going beyond typical responses, effectively displays empathy for caller through wording and/or voice tone, tailors his or her responses to speak to the customer's specific situation and needs, and gains a strong customer commitment to the proposed solution.</p> <p>This skill may be rated Not Applicable if there are no customer objections and/or there is no solution for which the customer's commitment is required.</p>
--	--	--

<p>Provides accurate and pertinent inquiry/response codes and comments when necessary</p>	<p>Maintains a history of the inquiry so that future communication is enhanced.</p>	<p>A call note must be entered for each call received. The inquiry and response codes entered should accurately reflect the nature of the call, and any comments entered should provide pertinent details that could be useful in handling future contacts. Comments should be clearly understandable to someone reviewing the note at a future date who is not familiar with the situation. Failure to enter a comment when critical information is needed, entering cryptic abbreviations or entering unnecessary comments in the case of a simple inquiry, will result in a lower rating.</p> <p>To receive a 0 rating the PSR enters an inaccurate response/inquiry code and or fails to enter a comment for a complex call.</p> <p>To receive a 1 rating the PSR fails to fully enter critical information when needed including contact information, comments are confusing or missing pertinent details. A 1 rating can also be received if the PSR enters unnecessary comments in the case of a simple inquiry.</p> <p>To receive a 2 rating the PSR enters accurate inquiry and response codes which reflect the nature of the call, and adequate comments are entered.</p> <p>To receive a 3 rating the PSR enters accurate inquiry and response codes which reflect the nature of the call, and comments that clearly provide pertinent details that could be useful in future research or in handling future contacts.</p> <p><i>N/A:</i> This skill may be rated N/A if the caller asks for general information and does not inquire about a specific account.</p>
--	---	---

- How satisfied were you with the length of time it took to complete your inquiry?
- How satisfied were you the professionalism and responsiveness of the representative?
- How satisfied were you the knowledge level of the representative?
- How satisfied were you with the call overall?

Thank you for your answers. One final question:

- How satisfied are you with our Customer Service Center hours of operation?

That concludes the survey. I want to thank you for your time and your input. We'll add your comments to those received from other participants and use this information to evaluate opportunities to improve our program.

Participant comments:

**ATTACHMENT E
SAMPLE REPORTS**

Date	Day	Thriftline Ans	Opt Out to PSR	PSR Answd	Calls Abnd	ATT	ACW	AHT	Abnd%	SVCLVL
	Mon									
	Tue									
1-Dec	Wed	6213	3073	3053	20	242	77	319	1%	100%
2-Dec	Thur	6041	3245	3185	60	245	78	323	2%	97%
3-Dec	Fri	5542	2967	2934	33	246	76	322	1%	93%
		17796	9285	9172	113	244	77	321	1%	97%
6-Dec	Mon	7921	3549	3486	63	240	74	314	2%	97%
7-Dec	Tue	6383	3301	3268	33	246	77	323	1%	99%
8-Dec	Wed	5467	3201	3167	34	239	80	319	1%	100%
9-Dec	Thur	5853	3075	3043	32	255	78	333	1%	98%
10-Dec	Fri	5591	2979	2947	32	237	75	312	1%	93%
		31215	16105	15911	194	243	77	320	1%	97%
13-Dec	Mon	6840	3153	3050	103	234	73	307	3%	60%
14-Dec	Tue	3309	2004	1987	17	243	80	323	1%	87%
15-Dec	Wed	4488	2493	2476	17	240	85	325	1%	100%
16-Dec	Thur	5458	2823	2808	15	249	84	333	1%	99%
17-Dec	Fri	5934	2926	2898	28	250	79	329	1%	93%
		26029	13399	13219	180	243	80	323	1%	88%

**ATTACHMENT E
SAMPLE REPORTS**

Agent	Call Date	Call Time	Quality Score										CSAT Score						
			Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q5	Q 6	Q 7	Foundation Summary	Finesse Summary	Overall Score	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Overall Score	
Agent 1	1/25/2005	11:41	2	0	2	N/A	2	2	2		86%	94%	91%	5	5	4	5	5	4.8
Agent 1	2/7/2005	3:20	2	0	2	N/A	2	2	2		86%	100%	93%	5	5	5	5	5	5
Agent 2	1/31/2005	11:58	2	2	2	N/A	2	2	2		86%	100%	93%	5	5	5	5	5	5
Agent 2	2/14/2005	11:20	2	2	2	N/A	2	2	2		100%	117%	109%	5	5	5	5	5	5
Agent 3	1/26/2005	11:29	2	2	2	N/A	2	2	2		100%	100%	100%	5	5	5	5	5	5
Agent 3	1/31/2005	11:43	2	2	2	2	2	2	2		89%	100%	94%	5	4	3	3	4	3.8

FRTIB Operations Center Technical Assistance Request Log

DATE/TIME REPORTED:	REPORTING REP:	ISSUE/COMMENTS:	RESOLVING REP:	DATE/TIME RESOLVED:
12/1/2004 7:45pm	A. Jones	PSR Ap down-all PSR's affected	A. Clark	
12/2/04 11:10 AM	B. Smith	Website went down for account access	B. Miller	
12/2/04 11:15 AM	C. Griffin	PSR Application would randomly go down	C. David	
12/2/04 2:29 PM	D. Hill	IVR went down for around 15 mins	D. Palmer	12/2/04 2:41 PM
12/6/04 3:50pm	E. James	No screen pops when participant enters SSN	E. Lyle	12/6/04 4:10 AM

Monthly Quality Summary

Foundation Categories			
	Total	Max	Percent
Opening	442	546	81%
Thanks Customer	266	276	96%
Verify participant #	176	270	65%
Data Quality	248	274	91%
Accurate Info	248	274	91%
Professional Etiquette	566	596	95%
Hold and transfer	46	58	79%
"Please", "Thank you"	264	272	97%
Does not interrupt	256	266	96%
Conclusion	548	750	73%
Further assistance	154	272	57%
Summarizes	188	206	91%
Brands	206	272	76%
Foundation Totals			
Total Score	1804	2166	83%
Finesse Categories			
	Total	Max	Percent
Customer Responsiveness	810	876	92%
Checks for understanding	257	274	94%
Manages silence well	35	56	63%
Captures info first time	253	274	92%
Atmpts to build relationship	265	272	97%
Program Knowledge	585	652	90%
Educates Customer	244	272	90%
Asks appropriate questions	261	272	96%
Promotes web site/Thriftline	80	108	74%
Communication Skills	768	810	95%
Manner, pace, volume, tone	263	274	96%
Acknowledge issue, etc.	263	270	97%
Accurate notes	242	266	91%

<i>Finesse Totals</i>			
Total Score	2163	2338	93%
<i>Summary</i>			
Total Score	3967	4504	88%

Call Center Network (GFM)

