Proposal for BEP improvement

Presented by PFST coordinator.

May 03, 2023

This proposal for improvement of BEP will be presented to PFST for discussion at their meeting on May 03,2023. If accepted, it will be executed in four steps. The recommended time for execution and completion of this proposed project is anticipated to be at least 12 months after approval.

Step 1: Review and discussion of preliminary proposal by PFST.

Step 2: review and approval of final proposal with actual data and numbers by PFST.

Step3: review and approval of final proposal by CVPC and DOR.

Step 4: implementation of proposal.

Step 1: Review and discussion of preliminary proposal by PFST:

What are the issues and what needs to be improved? The question is why despite all the hard work and efforts of management, staff, and vendors, after all these years, certain issues remain unresolved for vendors and why this program is on such a drastic decline?

As we know the BEP was officially established in 1943 by the Congress of United States. Unfortunately, despite of the substantial changes and differences in vendor’s business operations, the same structure and system of administering and control of this program which was designed and implemented in 1943 has remained the same and has not changed. Therefore, it is easy to understand why despite everyone’s hard work and unconditional devotion the program continues to decline, and the same issues are still hanging around and do not go away. Simply put, this system may have been sufficient for this program 80 years ago, but it is not sufficient for today.

The current system is designed based on area location and not on the kind of service which must be provided. It requires that all districts be fully staffed and perform the same identical functions and service; therefore, it requires too much workforce. A review of the number of BEP staff versus vendors in 2018 showed that for each three vendors there was one staff member, and I am sure that number by now has been reduced to 2.5 vendors, which is a clear indication that the BEP is very much overstaffed. Unfortunately, the work force situation does not allow the BEP to engage in many other issues which are vital and important for survival and advancement of this program.

What are the solutions?

There are three areas which can be improved to resolve these problems:

1-BEP organization structure and management control system.

2-DOR’s approach and priorities in administering BEP.

3-Permanent Taskforce to review and recommend for long term future advancements of Program.

1-BEP organization structure and management control system proposal for improvement:

Designate each one of BEP 3 districts as a separate independent (Unit) to be responsible for a specific part of BEP’s overall operation. This proposal will require no changes in regulations or policies as well as no changes in the staff’s location or duty statements.

Following please find the preliminary draft of districts with their functions and services:

District one, BEP Operation Department:

Will perform all operation control functions such as:

Reviewing the MORs, performing the Quarterly review, handling issues with building managements, following up on financials, Announcements and selection process, VMU, and other operation related matters.

District Two, BEP New Opportunities Department:

Will be responsible for the Recruitment, training class, finding new facilities and opportunities for program, Opening new locations and other related functions.

District Three, BEP Purchasing and Maintenance Department:

Will be responsible for the standard purchases, annual equipment replacement of equipment, inventory control of all equipment, modernizing equipment, updating the quality equipment file, standardization and equipment quality taskforce, repair of equipment, contracts, and other purchasing and maintenance and repair related issues.

2-DOR’s approach and priorities in administering BEP:

As we know, the BEP as an organization consists of two parts.

DOR, “government part” of BEP and,

Vendors Operation, the “business part” of BEP.

It is no secret that the priority in this program has always been with the DOR, government part of BEP. Therefore, the main concern of DOR has always been to make sure that the Program is financially solvent, proper policies, procedures and regulations are being followed, proper forms and documents are being used, proper reports are being provided and several other responsibilities which DOR is obligated by law to perform. For this purpose, DOR always and very carefully and meticulously monitors and controls the process of conducting the established rules and policies required for the “government part” of BEP. Unfortunately, the same approach is not being applied for the “business part” of this Program. Sometimes the rules are enforced partially. Often policies which are the result of years of challenging work by DOR management and staff and CVPC are enforced for a brief time and then are lost or forgotten.

Proposal for improvement:

DOR should apply the same strict approach of monitoring and control of rules and policies for the “business part” of the Program, as it conducts for the “government part” of BEP. ALL rules, laws and policies need to be enforced completely. All policies which are approved by DOR and CVPC be recorded and secured properly and be provided for management and staff, especially for inexperienced staff or management upon their arrival.

3-Permanent taskforce to review and recommend for future:

Due to constant challenges of day-to-day operations of BEP, DOR and CVPC for many years have ignored the importance of planning for the future of this program. It is no secret that Government by nature is amazingly comfortable with the status quo and seldom executes any changes unless it is necessary. On the contrary, changes to upgrade and keep up with modern business environment is the lifeline for existence and survival of any business. Unfortunately, the lack of recognizing the importance of this matter may have been a major factor for the drastic decline of this program.

Proposal for improvement:

It is vital that a permanent taskforce, consisting of experts and decision makers of DOR and CVPC, meet quarterly to review and discuss the overall performance of the Program and present their recommendations for improvement to DOR and CVPC for their consideration. This task force will also be responsible for preparation for the 3- or 5-year future plan. This plan will provide the goals and direction of BEP in the next 3 or 5 years. Every decision approved by this taskforce must be presented to CVPC and DOR for final approval. It is also especially important to understand that this taskforce has no authority and should not discuss the day-to-day BEP operation related issues.

Conclusion:

There are certain segments of this program which are being underestimated or ignored. Unfortunately, almost all of these segments of BEP operation play an important role in vendor’s success and more importantly in advancement of this Program. In order to revive these segments BEP will be required to hire additional staff. Unfortunately, as a result of the current incompatible structure and system of operation BEP is very much overstaffed and is unable to hire additional work force.

The proposed plan described above will streamline the day-to-day operation process and will reduce and balance the workforce for that purpose. This will allow the remaining available staff to engage and perform the duties related to important but ignored aspects of this Program, without any changes to the rules, policies or number of staff or their location or job description.