

**Air Force**

**Office of the General Counsel**

**Dispute Resolution Division**

Performance Work Statement for

Conflict Coaching

5/2012

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## Introduction

The mission of the Air Force (AF) Office of General Counsel (OGC), administered by its Dispute Resolution Division (GCD), is to match individual ADR needs with AF ADR resources, training, and experts, and to continue to serve as the flagship ADR Program of the federal government. The Air Force has an integrated conflict management system. It emphasizes early conflict management or prevention, but the Air Force also offers formal processes along the entire conflict spectrum. As a flagship program, GCD needs to enhance its cadre of professionals who are qualified to provide a broad range of conflict management services. While there are many outside entities that provide such services, GCD views development of greater in-house capabilities in addition to mediators as crucial to meeting future Air Force needs and doing so in a cost-effective manner. At this time, the Air Force only has a cadre of mediators and lacks internal capability for any other conflict management professionals to address the broader range of the conflict management spectrum.

Conflict coaching is a natural capacity to build given the Air Force’s emphasis on early conflict resolution and preventative work to avoid disruptive conflict. Conflict coaching is useful for any Air Force employee, regardless of rank or profession. The Air Force can offer three types of conflict coaching (anticipation, intervention [when an issue in controversy exists], and reflection).

This conflict coaching work has proven successful at other federal agencies. The Transportation Security Administration, Veterans Administration, and the Department of Interior are implementing such programs with great success. GCD current training lacks a capacity to train individuals in such skills. This initial development and training would build an internal capacity and provide dividends in the long-term. Development of internal collateral-duty Air Force coaches will save the need for outside coaches, who charge up to $4000 per day. Even if the coaches are only able to better resolve their own conflicts or conflicts within their immediate offices, the investment is well worth it.

GCD views the conflict coaching proposal as occurring in at least two stages, with additional options thereafter. First, it would require system design consultation for the training with an expert who understands the factors to consider when developing a conflict coaching model, and who has experience in providing such training in the context of federal government entities. This would occur over a 30-60 day period. Second, GCD would like to carry out a minimum of two pilot trainings with twenty attendees in each class within the two months following the designed model to evaluate its effectiveness and gauge from the participants’ points of view the ease in application. The pilot trainings would be followed by a Train-the-Trainer for selected attendees. This approach (experienced person involved in designing and then testing training) would minimize additional corrections or modifications and build upon other agencies’ experience. GCD has done some ground-truthing of this type of approach with the Veterans Administration and Transportation Security Administration, with fruitful discussions but also these agencies’ acknowledgement that they are new entrants to the conflict coaching field. The approach proposed here aligns with the successful way training, such as mediation training, has been provided in the past.

GCD also desires to enhance its robust integrated conflict management system (ICMS) throughout the Air Force by consulting with an expert contractor with systems design experience. Developing conflict management capability through conflict coaching will support Air Force Instruction (AFI) 51-1201 Section 4.3 requiring the Air Force “encourage, develop, and implement…training programs related to ADR and associated skills, including…ADR awareness, negotiation skills and other collaborative conflict management and dispute resolution processes, throughout the Air Force.” AFI 51-1201 Section 4.4 states the requirement to “identify and eliminate unnecessary barriers to the use of ADR.” Conflict coaching and general conflict management training affords potential parties with not only the opportunity to identify the causes of the conflict from the other parties’ perspective in order to lessen the degree of hostility, but also to visualize the actions and negotiations that need to take place to achieve participants’ goals and reach a lasting resolution.

## Background

Three GCD staff members attended the Cinergy Coaching course in 2011. In 2012, one GCD staff member attended the Conflict Coaching Matters course and met with the Transportation Security Administration to better understand its conflict coaching model.

GCD would like to combine aspects of the various models and find the model development flexibility, scheduling flexibility, and price that work best for the Air Force. GCD anticipates using this contract instrument, potentially in concert with our existing blanket purchase agreement for conflict management, to compete the work described herein.

GCD has had a robust ICMS for several years.

## Summary of Requirements

To accomplish the goals of developing an in-house cadre of personnel trained in conflict coaching, developing an in-house cadre of personnel with the ability to train others in conflict coaching, and a curriculum of blended learning to educate AF personnel in how to apply conflict coaching, negotiation, and communication principles to more effectively manage conflict, the tasks and activities listed below further detail the requirements. Attachment A contains specific characteristics unique to this training.

Task 1 – Conflict Coaching Design

Task 2 – Conflict Coaching Training

Task 3 – Conflict Coaching Train-the-Trainer

Task 4 – Integrated Conflict Management System Design Enhancements

Task 5 – Conflict Management Blended Learning Training for Air Force Personnel

### Task 1 – Conflict Coaching Design

* A conflict coaching model for the Air Force is being created by SAF/GCD. This contractor would provide consultation on materials and ideas already formulated by SAF/GCD.
* Consultation must be on the model itself as well as the fundamental educational and marketing components required to launch and support the model.
* Contractor must fill in any gaps of model components, for example, marketing, or needed client documentation (such as client evaluations), not created by SAF/GCD to ensure the highest quality model is developed that caters to the unique needs of the Air Force.
* The coaching model should be flexible with adaptable elements for appropriate use if applied in anticipation of conflict, as an intervention [typically when an issue in controversy exists to prepare the two disputants to more effectively participate in a negotiation or ADR proceeding], and as reflection on ways that clients handled previous conflict(s).
* The conflict coaching model should cater to a client’s determination of how to appropriately engage in prospective dialogue rather than rely on a coach’s personal opinions or intuition about the effectiveness of the prospective dialogue.
* The conflict coaching model must be flexible in terms of the length of time required to complete the various stages.
* Contractor must provide recommendations on identifying the appropriate client base for coaching (including applicable limitations). Who should be offered the coaching service? Who cannot be offered the service (if anyone)? How should rank or military/civilian status affect coaching pairing?
* Consultation on marketing strategies for potential clients must include recommendations at the installation and Forward Operating Unit level to educate AF personnel about the coaching service.
* Contractor must assist GCD in the design of the components and timelines of the Conflict Coaching Pilot Program
* Contractor should consider interviewing and considering recommendations from MAJCOM and Installation ADR Managers identified for the Pilot Program to ensure model appears to be clear and meets the needs of AF personnel.
* Contractor must establish a plan for metrics to assess the success of the Pilot Program, comparing a baseline of quantitative data to new data after the Pilot Program as well as examining qualitative feedback, both immediately following the coaching and at future intervals

### Task 2 – Conflict Coaching Training

To comply with section 4.3 of AFI 51-1201, GCD desires to enhance mediating parties’ ability to participate effectively in a scheduled mediation session. The Veterans Administration found that conflict coaching improved the quality and quantity of mediated settlement agreement, which ultimately saves the agency money in terms of man hours, litigation expenses, and settlement breach costs. The AF had 3700+ disputes last year (which does not include all of the informal conflicts that did not go through a dispute system). We can infer that there could be as many as 7000 parties. With over 500 mediations (the intervention part of the coaching spectrum) a year, the Air Force likely has about 1000 disputants going through ADR. There is currently no structured process offered to prepare any of these individuals to engage in any conflict management conversation. Given the level of potential activity and our desire for our coaches to maintain their skills (perhaps by coaching at least once a quarter as we recommend with our mediators) 250 coaches would likely be able to have enough business to coach once a quarter at a minimum within the workplace context. Task 2 would provide such coaching instruction for this identified target group.

* Contractor must launch two or three actual conflict coaching courses, of up to 20 students in each course, at Air Force installations, such as Joint Base San Antonio. Such training should be no longer than two days of in-person basic conflict coaching training.
* Contractor must identify materials that would be useful for such training, or develop such materials if none currently exist.
* Contractor must provide interactive instruction with practical exercises.
* Contractor must use blend various mediums such as, but not limited to, videos, webinars, blogs, computer-based training, lectures, role-plays, simulations, fishbowls, and games.
* In support of the proposed Pilot Program, Contractor will demonstrate deliberation over electronic and/or virtual means of training both before, during, and after an in-person training course. Consideration of the costs and benefits as well as the rationale for the type of blended training provided should be justified and reviewed for appropriateness after the first conflict coaching courses.
* Contractor must develop curriculum and written materials that are blended into the teaching with the goal of equipping attendees with the ability to apply conflict management knowledge and skills to conflict generally.
* Contractor must provide feedback on skill levels of students and send the feedback to GCD and respective Program Managers.
* Contractor may consider provide a coaching simulation by video or webinar to simulate conflict coaching.

### Task 3 – Conflict Coaching Train-the-Trainer

* Contractor must provide GCD with recommendations of selection factors for appropriate candidates for a Train-the-Trainer class
* Contractor must launch two or three Train-the-Trainer classes, following each of the Conflict Coaching Courses.
* Train-the-Trainer instruction should be interactive allowing the students to practice segments of the training in front of fellow students or instructors for feedback.
* The Contractor is encouraged to blend various mediums such as, but not limited to, videos, webinars, computer-based training, lectures, role-plays, simulations, fishbowls, and games
* Contractor must develop curriculum, talking points, teaching objectives, and written materials that are blended into the teaching with the goal of equipping attendees with the ability to teach future AF conflict coaches how to coach.
* Contractor must provide GCD with feedback on the skill levels of prospective trainers

### Task 4 – Integrated Conflict Management System Design Enhancements

### Evaluate where conflict management needs exist across the Air Force (whether addressed by current programs or not); if needed, design an instrument to identify such needs in Air Force sectors where conflict management resources and tools may be less known.

* Propose enhancements to the existing integrated conflict management system (ICMS) within the Air Force based on identified or suspected needs, capabilities, resources (personnel and resources), and anticipated effectiveness from knowledge gained from the pilot programs, other Air Force experience, or comparison with other federal agency programs.
* Identify and assist in implementing expanded conflict management/dispute resolution processes, assisting GCD in moving beyond its heavy reliance on facilitative workplace mediation.
* Provide ideas for system design that transcend training and address leadership, processes, structures, people, and policies and ways to better utilize such components in the system.
* Identify opportunities for providing training to Air Force personnel that does not rely on large-group classroom instruction (could be individual computer-based or small group)
* Propose revisions to the current Integrated Conflict Management System (ICMS) training as needed, recognizing that changes may not be limited to training nor require the Air Force to rely solely on outside contractors to sustain the ICMS.
* Offer any other recommendations or suggestions for making the Air Force management of conflict across the spectrum more efficient and effective, e.g., changing the ICMS, proposing new ways in which conflict management could be integrated into broader Air Force operations, etc.

### Task 5 – Conflict Management Blended Learning Training for Air Force Personnel

* Develop no less than 16 hours of distance-learning conflict management instruction.
* Instruction must include, but is not limited to, elements of conflict coaching, difficult conversations, and negotiation in order to better equip students in handling conflict on their own and resolving conflict at the lowest level.
* Provide an evaluation instrument to determine the effectiveness of the instruction beyond a qualitative survey immediately following the instruction.
* Coordinate with GCD and the Air Education and Training Command to create instruction capable of being accessed and presented on an Air Force internal website.

Materials should blend various mediums such as videos, webinars, computer-based training, role-plays, simulations, and games

## Deliverables & Ownership

### Task 1 – Conflict Coaching Design

The contractor will meet with SAF/GCD to modify and enhance the proposed Air Force Conflict Coaching Model. The coaching model created shall be owned by the Air Force, with the Air Force having the ability to modify as appropriate.

### Task 2 – Conflict Coaching Training

Two to three trainings must occur within six months of the contract award date to ensure the Pilot Project can begin in FY2013, so that control data from FY2012 can be compared to the FY2013 during the pilot.

The contractor will provide appropriate AF-tailored materials, which the Air Force will own, with the full authority to modify the contents to meet AF needs. This includes, but is not limited to all conflict coaching documentation and training material.

Contractor must provide at least one 60-minute video simulation for the Air Force, and other blended learning medium as needed, which the Air Force will own and will not need to license.

### Task 3 – Conflict Coaching Train-the-Trainer

Two to three trainings must occur within six months of the contract award date.

The contractor will provide appropriate AF-tailored talking points, teaching objectives, and training materials, which the Air Force will own, with the full authority to modify the contents to meet AF needs. This includes, but is not limited to all conflict coaching documentation and training material.

Contractor must provide videos and other blended learning medium as needed, which the Air Force will own and will not need to license.

### Task 4 -- Integrated Conflict Management System Design Enhancements

The contractor must provide an analysis from its research and perspective of the Air Force’s current ICMS as well as a proposal for revisions to the current ICMS within the Air Force.

### Task 5 – Conflict Management Blended Learning Training for Air Force Personnel

The 16 hour training must be provided within twelve months of the contract award date.

The contractor will provide appropriate AF-tailored teaching objectives and training materials, which the Air Force will own, with the full authority to modify the contents to meet AF needs. This includes, but is not limited to all conflict management documentation.

Contractor must provide videos and other blended learning medium as needed, which the Air Force will own and will not need to license.

## Progress Reporting

The contractor shall submit monthly progress reports. Progress reports should keep GCD staff abreast of program developments and status changes.

## Travel

The contractor may be required to perform periodic travel within the Continental United States. Prior to travel the contractor shall coordinate with and receive Government authorization from the office they support for all travel. The contractor shall be responsible for obtaining all passenger transportation, lodging, and subsistence. Reimbursement of CONUS travel costs will be in accordance with the Federal Travel Regulations per FAR 31.205-46. The contractor shall travel using the lower cost mode transportation commensurate with the mission requirements. When necessary to use air travel, the contractor shall use the tourist class, economy class, or similar lodging accommodations to the extent they are available and commensurate with the mission requirements. The government will reimburse travel on a cost reimbursable basis without additional profit or fee.

## Points of Contact

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Conclusion

SAF/GCD would like an expert in federal government conflict management with an interest and ability to take the lead in enhancing the Air Force ICMS and developing a conflict coaching model applicable across the Air Force, to offer flexibility of approach and sensitivity to tailor recommended approaches to Air Force needs for maximum effectiveness, and to provide blended learning opportunities both inside and outside formal classroom settings. The expert shall incorporate the requests of SAF/GCD in designing the Air Force conflict coaching model, providing conflict coaching training courses and Train-the-Trainer classes, enhancing the ICMS, and designing distance learning conflict management training for Air Force personnel.

# Attachment A – Service Requirements

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Req. #** |  | **Area** | **Priority** |
| 1 | Creation of a flexible Conflict Coaching model that is catered to Air Force needs and accounts for the differences necessary when applying the model in the various stages of conflict (anticipation, intervention, reflection) | Technical | Mandatory |
| 2 | Feedback on or creation of suitability determination criteria, guidelines for appropriate coach pairing, Air Force Voluntary Coaching Certification system, co-coaching mentoring process, documentation to support coaching sessions (i.e. evaluation sheets and intake agreements) and Coaching Compendium | Technical | Mandatory |
| 3 | Establish a plan for utilizing metrics to assess the success of the Conflict Coaching Pilot Program | Technical | Mandatory |
| 4 | Propose marketing strategies for potential clients of coaching | Technical | Mandatory |
| 5 | Creation of training curriculum, talking points, training objectives, and course materials for a course, of no more than two in-person days, designed for prospective conflict coaches (potential for two segments: one basic segment for individuals who have not yet had sufficient communication & negotiation skills and second segment with conflict coaching basics). If training is segmented, provide “test” or list of criteria on how to assess which attendees can waive the first segment | Technical | Mandatory |
| 6 | Training course materials, talking points, and objectives for a course, of no more than one in-person day, designed for prospective trainers of conflict coaching | Technical | Mandatory |
| 7 | Coaching Simulation video/webinar of no more than 5-10 minutes to market to potential clients | Functional | Optional |
| 8 | Coaching Simulation video/webinar of at least 60 minutes to teach students of coaching course | Functional | Mandatory |
| 9 | Teach at least two conflict coaching training courses followed by a Train-the-Trainer class | Functional | Mandatory |
| 10 | Provide ideas for enhancing the Air Force Integrated Conflict Management System through a design that transcends training and address increased use of additional dispute resolution processes, structures, people, and policies | Technical | Mandatory |
| 11 | Provide 16 hours of distance-learning conflict management instruction using blended learning formats | Functional | Mandatory |

# Attachment B – Rough Order of Magnitude (ROM) Pricing

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Task** | **Amount** |
| **Task 1:** Conflict CoachingDesign | **$28,000.00** |
| **Task 2:** Conflict Coaching Training | **$26,500.00** |
| **Task 3:** Conflict Coaching Train-the-Trainer | **$26,500.00** |
| **Task 4:** Integrated Conflict Management System Design Enhancements | **$28,000.00** |
| **Task 5:** Conflict Management Blended Learning Training for Air Force Personnel | **$40,000.00** |
|  |  |
| **TOTAL** | **$149,000.00** |