

8/9/84

MEMORANDUM FOR: File

FROM: Teresa McLearen, Contract Administrator
Administrative Contracts Branch
Division of Contracts

SUBJECT: SUMMARY OF MEETING WITH FREE STATE REPORTING, INC.,
(FSRI) ON AUGUST 6, 1984

Attendees: David Becker, FSRI
Barbara Becker, FSRI
Shirley Carpenter, FSRI
Kim Schroeder, FSRI
John Hoyle, SECY
A. Newsom, ACRS
Charles Fitti, ASLBP
Elva Leins, ASLBP
Patricia Sullivan, Project Officer
Timothy Hagan, Contracting Officer
Teresa McLearen, Contract Administrator

After introductions, the Contracting Officer (CO) stated that the NRC was considering termination for default and that the purpose of the meeting was to review with the contractor their unsatisfactory performance and violations of the terms of the contract, and the plans initiated or to be initiated by the contractor to improve performance.

The CO had outlined the contractor's deficiencies in a July 20, 1984 letter to which the contractor had responded on July 31, 1984.

The first item discussed was the numerous errors and omissions in ten transcripts which had been rejected. Mr. Becker stated that FSRI had been awarded the contract on May 15, 1984 with a start date of May 16, 1984. In order to obtain timely transcripts, several transcribers were given work before they were screened. As a result, it was later discovered, many could not handle the highly technical proceedings and the daily turn-around requirements. Mr. Becker went on to say that he had instituted a screening process for transcribers whereby a transcriber starts out on easier, non-pressure jobs, and when they have proven themselves to be accurate and dependable, they are then assigned to NRC work which is by far the most technical and demanding work they have. He stated that 12 to 15 transcribers had advanced through the screening, and 3-4 more were in the screening process.

In addition, a transcript audit procedure has been established whereby transcripts are checked, before delivery to NRC, for correct titles, format, identification of speakers, minimum number of "inaudibles," etc. FSRI has hired a Production Manager, Ms. Shirley Carpenter, to conduct this cursory audit, schedule the transcribers, prepare transcripts for delivery, review transcripts (to tape after delivery to NRC), screen, audit, and hire new transcribers. Ms. Leins asked if a greater portion of the transcription of NRC's work was done off the contractor's premises. The answer was yes, at this time.

Mr. Becker stated that late deliveries were caused by transcribers turning in incomplete work, power failure (2 nights), computer malfunctions in the middle of the night, slow copying machine, meetings running longer than had been anticipated. To improve delivery, FSRI had screen out transcribers who turned in incomplete transcripts. FSRI had also purchued a new, high-speed Kodak copier and planned to use their old machine as back-up.

Mr. Hoyle commented that the reporters were not using the steno mask 100% of the time at the Commission and ACRS meetings. Ms. Becker stated that, with the exception of one reporter who was ill when he took three days of proceedings and did not use the mask, their reporters used the mask between 90-99% of the time, while also taking notes. Mr. Newsom and Mr. Hoyle agreed that, in their observations of the reporters during these meetings, the mask was being used considerably less than 90-99% of the time. Mr. Newsom acknowledged that some improvement in the quality of the transcripts had been noticed, but he felt improvement would be greater if the reporters used the mask to a greater degree.

The C.O. requested the Contractor to specifically instruct their reporters to use the mask at Commission and ACRS meetings.

Ms. Becker advised that Steno Mask Company offers a training course in mask use and the FSRI was using this training course for their reporters.

Mr. Hoyle stated that transcripts he had reviewed within the last two weeks were not up to NRC's minimum standards. Mr. Newsom said he had accepted some marginal transcripts because of the pressing need for them. The C.O. advised the users that even if NRC does not reject the transcript, the Contractor should be made aware of these marginal transcripts.

Ms. Becker commented that in Commission and ACRS meetings the reporter cannot interrupt to clarify a statement or confirm the identification of a speaker and that this is a major problem in producing complete and accurate transcripts. Mr. Hoyle responded that for on-the-record proceedings (ASLBP) the reporter can and should interrupt, however, during Commission and ACRS meetings where NRC is not creating an on-the-record session interruptions are not allowed.

The C.O. confirmed that in the future when transcripts are rejected, the Project Officer will request that the Work Order be redone. This will assure NRC receives corrected deliverables of all items ordered on a Work Order.

Pat Sullivan furnished Mr. Becker with a supply of disclaimer pages to be inserted into transcripts, where appropriate.

Mr. Becker raised the question of payment for pages with less than the required 25 lines. FSRI had been submitting pages with as few as three lines and a notation "end of tape." These pages were sequentially numbered and included in the total page count for billing purposes. Mr. Becker felt that in those instances where a transcript was being typed by several transcribers, the short pages should be allowed. After a short discussion, the C.O. informed Mr. Becker that he would look into the matter and let him know later.

Mr. Becker confirmed that the official reporter is now signing the certificate page; the official transcriber will also sign.

Mr. Newsom mentioned that the ACRS Conference Room was being renovated. Previously the reporters had been taping the wires to their equipment to the conference table and floor. However, with the installation of new carpet and conference table this will not be allowed. The Contractor will have to use some other method to cover the wires. A plastic cover was suggested; the Contractor will explore this possibility.

Mr. Becker had prepared a Transcribers Guideline package for his employees. He gave a copy to Mr. Hoyle for his comments. Mr. Becker also requested that FSRI be given feedback to problems right away so that corrective action could be taken.

The C.O. commented that the problems encountered seemed to be source related. To assist the Contractor, NRC would furnish FSRI a list of experienced free lance and subcontractor reporters/transcribers for consideration.

It was agreed that performance would be monitored to assure that the Contractor's corrective actions are implemented and result in accurate and complete transcripts delivered on time.

8/13/84
Date

Teresa McLearn
Contract Administrator

Reviewed and approved:

8/13/84
Date

Timothy F. Hagan
Contracting Officer

* However he cautioned that the Contractor should not consider that the furnishing of this list constituted a blanket approval of these reporters/transcribers. Written C.O. approval is required before any subcontractor is used by FSRI.