



American Subcontractors Association, Inc.

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR RELEASE

April 5, 2006

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Subcontractors See Positives in Projects Involving Commissioning

ALEXANDRIA, Va. — Delivering the best construction services possible is the goal of all professional construction subcontractors, and the American Subcontractors Association (ASA) has some ideas on how subcontractors can meet that goal on projects involving “commissioning.” On March 12, 2006, ASA adopted a policy on commissioning that describes subcontractors’ role in providing construction owners with the information they need to operate and maintain installed systems, appropriate warranty programs, and perspectives on how well system performance compares to expectations.

Commissioning is a process for ensuring that the owner’s desire for a construction project is reflected in the ultimate performance of the completed building.

“Commissioning is a way for owners to get maximum value for their construction dollar, and subcontractors play a central role in delivering that value on almost every project,” said 2005-06 ASA President Vincent Terraferma, PE, executive vice president/chief operating officer, KSW Mechanical Services Inc., Long Island City, N.Y. “Subcontractors can increase owner satisfaction and reduce the risks of potential warranty and construction defect claims at the same time.”

The main points of ASA’s policy state that subcontractors should:

- Ensure that appropriate training and documentation on proper operation and maintenance are delivered to the owner’s personnel, whether or not they are contractually specified.
- Consider creating incentives for proper operation and maintenance of their finished work, such as offering only limited warranties of their work unless extended inspection and maintenance programs are included in their contractual work scope.
- Help manage the owner’s performance expectations to ensure that they are realistic and not mismatched to the actual project specifications.

View ASA’s policy online at www.asaonline.com.

Founded in 1966, ASA amplifies the voice of and leads trade contractors to improve the business environment for the construction industry and to serve as a steward for the community. ASA’s vision is to be the united voice dedicated to improving the business environment in the construction industry. The ideals and beliefs of ASA are ethical and equitable business practices, quality construction, a safe and healthy work environment, integrity and membership diversity.

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**AMERICAN SUBCONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION, INC.
POLICY ON COMMISSIONING**

adopted March 12, 2006

“Commissioning” is a process for ensuring that the owner’s desire for a construction project is reflected in the ultimate performance of the completed building. An owner who is lacking in information and training to properly operate and maintain the completed project can be a source of otherwise avoidable warranty and construction defect claims.

Although design professionals are responsible for translating the owner’s performance needs into plans and specifications that subcontractors are contractually bound to follow, subcontractors also have a role to ensure that performance of installed systems is not impaired by operation and maintenance errors on the part of the owner’s building management team. Therefore, subcontractors should not only take special notice of any commissioning requirements in the project documents, but should also, at a minimum, ensure that appropriate training and documentation on proper operation and maintenance are delivered to the owner’s personnel, whether or not such training and documentation is contractually specified. Subcontractors should also consider adoption of business practices that will create incentives for proper operation and maintenance of their finished work, such as offering only limited warranties on their work unless extended inspection and maintenance programs are included in their contractual work scope. Subcontractors should also seek to use opportunities, when they present themselves, to help manage the owner’s performance expectations to ensure that they are realistic and not mismatched to the actual project specifications. It is the project owner’s responsibility to be actively engaged in design and construction, in order to ensure that design specifications, substitutions and submittals are all appropriate to its expectations for ultimate performance. Project communications like submittals, change proposals, start-up interactions, and delivery of close-out documentation, can all present subcontractors with opportunities to facilitate owner understanding and involvement, and thereby ensure that the performance of building systems have been installed and perform in accordance with contract documents.

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