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if considered advisable by the Division or District Engineer. When fee tracts are acquired by eminent domain procedures, where the value of the property is between $50,000 and $100,000, only one appraisal need be provided to the Department of Justice so long as it is a contract appraisal; two appraisals will be provided for values exceeding $100,000. Easement tracts acquired by eminent domain procedures, in excess of $50,000, will require two appraisals. At least one of the two appraisals must be made by a contract appraiser. Generally, in these cases, the second appraisal is procured only after negotiations indicate that agreement on price cannot be reached and that acquisition by condemnation will be required. The second appraisal will be procured in order that the Corps can take advantage of any negotiating flexibility that the second appraisal may afford in order to preclude court action. It is also necessary that the appraisals be relatively current in point of time (not to exceed six months) since dependent upon the real estate activity and degree of stability of the local economy, significant changes may take place in relatively short periods of time.

(e) *Environmental considerations.* Paragraph D3, Attachment 1 to Enclosure 1, DOD Directive 6050.1, dated March 19, 1974, subject: ''Environmental Considerations in DOD Actions,'' requires close environmental scrutiny of real estate acquisitions, disposals and outgrants to determine if said actions constitute a ''Major Action Significantly Affecting the Quality of the Human Environment (MASAQHE).'' If the action is determined to be a MASAQHE, then an environmental impact statement is required. Paragraph D3 is quoted here for ready reference:

> D. Certain types of actions require close environmental scrutiny because of the possibility that they may either affect the quality of the environment or create environmental controversy. It may be desirable in such cases to have a complete presentation of the environmental aspects of the proposed action available for any interested party. For these reasons, consideration shall be given to documenting the environmental effect of the following types of actions in writing: (The written environmental assessment need not be elaborate for actions in which it is readily determinable that the impact would not be significant; however, negative declarations must be supported by written environmental assessments which generally meet the EIS format requirements.)
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> 3. Real estate acquisition, disposal and outgrants.
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§ 644.83 Negotiations.

(a) *Acquisition objectives.* The objective of a land acquisition program is to acquire land at a price that will afford each landowner his constitutional guarantee of ''just compensation'' as that term has been defined by Federal judicial decisions. The Government must never pay less than just compensation unless a gift is intended. In eminent domain proceedings, the just compensation due a landowner is determined judicially by court award or by settlement prior to trial; in a purchase case, it is determined by negotiations leading to a satisfactory price and agreement with the landowner. While it is recognized that an appraisal is only an informed opinion and does not establish or determine just compensation, it is also recognized that, in negotiating for the purchase of land, an appraisal is the best and sometimes the only reliable opinion of the market value of the land which is supported by a thorough, acceptable analysis of market conditions at the time of purchase. Therefore, in the negotiation for the purchase of land, an approved current appraisal shall establish the minimum price to be paid for the land being acquired by the Corps of Engineers. Negotiations or offers below this price are prohibited except where the property is being acquired on a competitive basis and condemnation is not authorized.

(b) *Negotiating objectives.* In all cases, it is important that the negotiator receives adequate guidelines and explicit instructions. Promptly, after the amount of the estimated just compensation is established, the negotiator shall make an initial offer in the full amount of the fair market value, shall advise the landowner that the land was appraised for such amount, and shall furnish the landowner a written statement of, and summary of the basis for,

said amount. A concentrated effort will be made to acquire the land for that amount. This written statement will be in the form of a letter which may be delivered personally or by first class mail. Such summary will include, as a minimum, the following items:

(1) Definition of the term ''fair market value.''

(2) An accurate legal description and location identification of the real property and the interest(s) therein to be acquired (legal description and estate may be attached).

(3) The amount of the offer and a statement that such amount:

(i) Is the amount believed by the agency to be just compensation for the property;

(ii) Is not less than the approved appraisal of the fair market value of the property;

(iii) Disregards any increase or decrease in the fair market value caused by the project for which the property is to be acquired, or by the likelihood that the property would be acquired for such project, other than that due to physical deterioration within the reasonable control of the owner;

(iv) Does not reflect any consideration of or allowance for any relocation assistance and payments which the owner is entitled to receive.

(4) An inventory identifying the buildings, structures, fixtures, and other improvements, including appurtenant removable building equipment, which are considered to be part of the real property for which the offer of just compensation is made. The inventory shall include a statement of the utility and condition of said buildings, structures, fixtures, and other improvements.

(5) A description of the appraisal technique used, *i.e.*, market approach, income approach, or cost approach, in sufficient detail to explain clearly to the landowner the process by which his property was valued. Thus, as an illustration, where the market approach was used, the explanation should include the number of comparable sales used, their general location and type, the factors considered in adjusting sales of subject property, and any other information which would help the landowner understand what was done to value his property. A statement that comparable sales of similar properties were examined without more explanation is not sufficient. Similar information should be given when any other appraisal technique is used. Unusual cases will require a more detailed explanation.

(6) An identification of land classification categories (do not show acreage breakdown).

(7) If only a portion of a property is to be acquired, an apportionment of the total estimated just compansation for the partial acquisition between:

(i) The amount representing the just compensation for the real property to be acquired;

(ii) The amount, if any, representing severance damages to the remainder, together with a brief narrative description of the cause thereof; and

(iii) In the event ''off-setting benefits'' are involved, these must be shown, along with a narrative explanation and the landowner shall be given a ''person-to-person'' explanation by the negotiator.

(8) If the property contain a dwelling, the value of said dwelling and homesite shall be set forth separately, with the statement that this figure will be used in calculating housing relocation benefits under title II of Pub. L. 91–646.

(9) If any building, structure, fixture, or other improvement, comprising part of the real property, has been identified as being owned by a tenant who has the right or obligation to remove it at the expiration of his term, the amount of the value of such building, structure, fixture, or other improvement, being the greater of:

(i) The amount which the tenant's improvement contributes to the fair market value of the real property to be acquired; or

(ii) The fair market value of the tenant's improvement for removal from the real property. The basis of such amount shall be included.

(c) Appraisal reports or the appraiser's analysis (complete breakdown of principal value elements) will not be revealed by the negotiator unless specifically authorized. Cases involving property for which the highest and best use cannot be definitely established, and to which the exceptions mentioned

in paragraph (a) of this section do not apply, will be reported to HQDA (DAEN-REA) WASH DC 20314 for specific instructions. If the land is being donated, initial offers are not necessary, and the appraisal will be significant in negotiations only when considering the conditions under which the donation is made as, for example, an agreed valuation for tax purposes. Negotiations will be based on current market values, which normally means that last offers will be based on appraisals not over six months old. Exceptions will be required in instances of rapid escalation of values when the appraisal is quickly outdated or in instances of a relatively static market or other condition resulting in a minimal change in property values. In such cases an explanation will be necessary.

(d) *Exceptions*—(1) *Corps Employees.* If an employee of the Corps of Engineers has a direct interest in a tract of land being acquired by the Corps for public use, the tract will be acquired by condemnation. In cases of this nature, appraisal reports should be prepared, reviewed and forwarded together with a declaration of taking, with the condemnation assembly. The negotiator's report, of course, will not be included. The Department of Justice will be requested to handle all further matters pertaining to settlement or trial of the case. The Department of Justice has agreed to accept full responsibility for negotiations and approval of settlements or awards in such cases, without contacting any Corps personnel other than the owner of the interests being acquired.

(2) *Members of Congress.* Since, under 18 U.S.C. 431 and 432, members of Congress who hold interests in land that is required for project purposes cannot contract for sale of such interests to the Government, these interests will also be acquired by condemnation. Negotiations for acquisition by purchase or for settlement without trial cannot be conducted by officers or agents of the United States. The determination of just compensation must be made by judicial proceedings. Appraisal reports and the condemnation assembly should be prepared and forwarded as set forth in paragraph (d)(1) of this section.

(e) *Negotiating guidelines.* (1) The negotiator should be thoroughly familiar with the Division and District negotiating guidelines and should study the background data of the project, consisting of the authorizing act, survey report, project document, design memoranda, etc.; the applicable appraisal reports; tract ownership data; preliminary title certificates; and other related material. He should be entirely familiar with the project and the owner's individual property before initiating negotiations.

(2) The owner shall be provided with available brochures which explain the project and the Pub. L. 91–646 benefits, together with the written statement and summary required by §644.83(b). The negotiator should explain to the landowner the Government's requirement for the land, the amount of land required, the estate(s) to be acquired, the terms and conditions of the Government's contract form, and the fact that relocation assistance benefits may be available. He should furnish the landowner a copy of a map indicating the boundaries of that portion of his land to be acquired, where the entire ownership is not being acquired or where different estates are being acquired in the same ownership, specifying the estate in each area.

(3) Negotiations will be continued in an effort to obtain acceptance of the Government's offer or a reasonable counteroffer from the landowner, or until it is definitely determined that such a counteroffer will not be forthcoming. It is not intended that negotiations be continued until an unacceptable counteroffer is finally obtained. However, in an effort to obtain a reasonable counteroffer above the Government's estimate, the negotiator will, if necessary, take the initiative in suggesting a series of prices within a range which, in accord with the guidelines discussed in §644.84, has been predetermined to be reasonable.

(4) The interest of both owners and tenants must be considered and protected. The tenant is a proper party to the transaction, and every effort must be made to obtain the consent of the landowner and tenant as to the price to be paid to the tenant for his leasehold interest. This can be accomplished by

the tenant's execution of ENG Form 1564, Consent to Offer to Sell Real Property, which shall then accompany the owner's offer to sell. In cases where the tenant executes this form, payment for the tenant's interest can be made to him in the closing of the purchase transaction. This procedure will be followed whenever possible. An exception is permitted in those cases where the landowner and tenant prefer to handle the matter as a private transaction between themselves. In such cases, it should be determined that a satisfactory agreement has been made by the landowner and tenant. Consideration should be given to any interest which the tenant may have in growing crops. This procedure is also applicable to any third party having an interest in the property, except through severance of a subsurface estate.

(5) Negotiations with landowners will be conducted in a fair and courteous manner. The negotiator must not, under any circumstances, resort to coercion or threats of condemnation.

(6) The negotiator has no authority to obligate the Government in any manner beyond the contract form. He must refrain from oral promises or understandings and include all terms and conditions in the contract form.

(7) Although appraisal reports cannot be made available for inspection by a landowner, the various elements of value considered by the appraisers may, and should, be discussed with the landowner to satisfy him that all elements of compensable values and damages have been considered in arriving at an overall value for the property being acquired. Care will be exercised during any discussion not to reveal specific amounts related to any elements considered in the appraisal, except the acquisition cost assigned to the dwelling for purpose of calculating replacement housing payment under section 203, Pub. L. 91–646.

(8) Any interest in a tract of land sought to be acquired, or any type of relationship with the owner, disqualifies the negotiator from participating in negotiations for the acquisition of that particular tract.

(9) An appraiser is not, under any circumstances, permitted to negotiate for the acquisition of a tract of land for which he has prepared the appraisal or reviewed it as reviewing appraiser.

(f) *Discussions With Landowners.* In order to avoid the creation of negotiating patterns, and keeping in mind that counteroffers must be justified as being just and reasonable, discussions with landowners should be conducted without disclosing the extent of the delegations and redelegations of authority to accept counteroffers. However, during negotiations on individual tracts, the landowners must be advised that, in the event of condemnation, the deposit will be in an amount no less than the approved appraised value, since the question of value cannot be resolved by negotiations. It must further be made clear that this advice is not in the nature of a threat, but is an explanation of the statement of policy directed by the Congress and the law. The negotiator will also inform each owner that offers and counteroffers made during negotiations are made without prejudice in the event of condemnation. The negotiator will make a notation on the Negotiator's Report to the effect that he has so informed the owner.

(g) *Obtaining the written counteroffer; preparation of negotiator's report.* If the negotiator considers that a counteroffer in excess of the approved appraised value is in the amount which should be considered for acceptance, the counteroffer will be reduced to writing on ENG Form 42, Offer to Sell Real Property, or on ENG Form 2970, Offer to Sell Easement, and be properly executed by the landowner. In such cases, a complete written record of negotiations with respect to each tract or ownership, as appropriate, will be maintained by means of ENG Form 3423, Negotiator's Report, Part I. This record will state the chronological history of negotiations, all elements considered in evaluating the landowner's final counteroffer, and the justification for such recommendation in accordance with § 644.84. The justification will be fully recorded in ENG Form 3423A, Negotiator's Report, Part II, which is a separate page of this report, and which will be removed in the Office of the Chief of Engineers prior to submitting the counteroffer assembly to higher authority for approval. Final action on

the counteroffer, either by the Secretary of the Army, the Chief of Engineers or under the delegated authority to Division and District Engineers, will be entered on this record as soon as that information is available.

§ 644.84 Counteroffers.

(a) *Consideration of counteroffers.* In negotiations with landowners, if agreement cannot be reached with a landowner as to the purchase price established by the appraisal, the lowest price demanded by the landowner may be considered by the Division and District Engineer, and the Chief of the Real Estate Division, on the basis of the following factors:

(1) *Variations in appraisals.* In the usual case, the Corps will have the opinion of only one appraiser with respect to the market value of the particular tract of land. It must be recognized that the opinion of a second equally competent appraiser might be higher or lower than that of the appraiser who appraised the property. Hence in considering counteroffers of landowners, Division and District Engineers should keep in mind that two equally competent appraisals may reflect reasonably divergent opinions of value as to the same property. Instances requiring two appraisals are covered in § 644.82(d).

(2) *Built-in costs, prior counteroffers, settlements and liability risks of proceeding to trial.* It is recognized that there are certain Government administrative costs and liability risks involved when property is condemned by the United States and the land value is judicially determined. These items are definite in character but the attendant costs will vary. ''Built-in'' costs of proceeding to trial include, but are not limited to, the following items: Salaries of all Government personnel participating in trial preparation, pretrial hearings, and the actual trial; cost of an additional appraisal(s); witness fees of contract appraisers employed by the Corps of Engineers or the Department of Justice; travel costs of all Government personnel and consultants participating in trial preparation, pre-trial hearings, and the actual trial; and cost of preparing trial documents and exhibits. Consideration should also be given to prior counteroffers which have been accepted and settlements approved prior to trial. ''Liability risks'' of proceeding to trial are the amount of the anticipated award over and above the appraised value, taking into consideration probable testimony on behalf of the Government and the landowners, as well as the history of condemnation awards in the Federal court jurisdiction in which the lands are located, and the amount of interest on a deficiency judgment which would result from the anticipated award. Serious consideration of the above factors may justify a recommendation for authority to accept a counteroffer which otherwise would appear to liberal.

(3) *Non-compensable elements of value.* Elements of value based on consequential damages or speculative values, as defined by the Federal courts, may not be recognized in considering a landowner's counteroffer. However, even though a landowner's counteroffer might include non-compensable items of value, favorable consideration of the counteroffer may be given if it can be justified on the basis of variances in appraisals, built-in costs, and liability risks of proceeding to trial.

(4) *Value of reserved items.* The salvage value of improvements and the value of crops and/or timber reserved by the landowners, as provided in § 644.86 (g), (h), and (i), will not be included in the amount of the counteroffer in determining the excess of counteroffers over appraised values when applying the dollar and percentage limitations in the delegations of authority to Division and District Engineers for acceptance of counteroffers. The determination of the excess will be made on the basis of the appraised value of the interests being acquired (including the value of the reserved items) compared to the cash payment which will be made to the landowner if the Government accepts his counteroffer. However, this method of analyzing the counteroffer is intended for use only in determining the limitations of authority. The overall transaction must be in the interest of the United States and not afford an unwarranted windfall to the vendor.

(b) *Application and Limits of Delegated Authority.* The negotiating procedures