

# Biometrics Exploitation Science and Technology (BEST) BAA Questions

#	Question	Answer	Date Posted
001	Can I get a copy of the Proposers' Day briefing?	The Proposers' Day briefings are posted on the IARPA website <a href="#">here</a> .	April 1, 2009
002	May we submit a white paper to show you a picture of what we want to propose and allow you the opportunity to guide us where you want us to go?	The IARPA BEST Program will not use white papers as a filter in the solicitation process.	April 1, 2009
003	How long will the BAA be open?	See 4.A.1 of the BAA. The BAA will remain open for one year beginning Mar 18, 2009. Funds may or may not be available after the initial proposal review cycle.	April 1, 2009
004	What will be size of each award?	See 5.A.5 (Cost Realism) of the BAA. There is no predetermined award size. The BEST Program is soliciting innovative proposals for research, technology development, and experimental demonstration of technologies to advance the biometrics state of the science. Proposals should advance compelling research ideas based on sound science that respond to the stated challenges and identify how much they will cost.	April 1, 2009
005	Will there be multiple awards?	See Part One (Overview Information) and Section 2 (Award Information) of the BAA.	April 1, 2009
006	Will you be funding seedling efforts?	No, the BEST BAA is not for funding seedling efforts. IARPA has the IARPA Wide BAA in place for seedlings.	April 1, 2009

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007	What types of contract vehicles are available?	See Part One (Overview Information) of the BAA. Procurement contract, cooperative agreement, or other transaction agreement (OTA) may be awarded. Additional information is available in the Contracting Agent Pre-solicitation Briefing.	April 1, 2009
008	Will the award be for a different vehicle than proposed?	See Section 2 (Award Information). The award vehicle is expected to be consistent with what is proposed. However, the Government reserves the right to negotiate the type of award instrument it determines appropriate under the circumstances.	April 1, 2009
009	Is there an opportunity for FFRDCs to propose?	See 3.A. (Eligible Applicants) of the BAA. Federally Funded Research and Development Centers (FFRDCs) are not eligible to submit proposals under this BAA or participate as team members under proposals submitted by eligible entities.	April 1, 2009
010	Is there a preference for big or small teams?	See 3.C (Collaborative Efforts) of the BAA. There is no preference for large or small teams, or teams led by large organizations or small organizations.	April 1, 2009
011	Can there be two diverse approaches from the same institution?	Yes. See 1.A.1 (Program Technical Approach), 4.A.1 (General), and 4.B.2.b (Volume 2, Section 2: Detailed Cost Information).	April 1, 2009
012	We would like to respond to the BAA 09-02, but we are not sure whether our technology fits into one of the two main thrusts under the BAA.	Proposers should carefully review the BAA and determine whether their idea is within the scope of the BAA and addresses the specified research thrusts and tracks. Proposers are not limited to one submission, or one thrust.	April 1, 2009
013	Can a participant partner with different teams, each submitting separate proposals? Can a participant be on	See Section 2 (Award Information) of the BAA. Yes to all. There is no exclusivity requirement, no limit to the number of sound proposals that can	April 1, 2009

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	a team submitting one or more proposals and also submit an individual proposal? Can a team submit multiple proposals addressing different approaches and different thrusts?	be submitted by a team, no restriction on partnering on a submission and also submitting individually.	
014	Should we propose under the IARPA Wide BAA or BEST BAA?	See Section 1 (Funding Opportunity Description) of the BAA to determine applicability of your idea to the BEST Program. The IARPA Wide BAA is for topics not covered by an open IARPA Program solicitation and is primarily intended for early stage research (commonly referred to as seedlings) that is limited in scope (typically no more than 12 months in duration) that may lead to larger, focused programs in the future. The BEST BAA is soliciting proposals for the first phase of an IARPA Program.	April 1, 2009
015	Is there cost / schedule management or deliverables set for this contract?	See 6.B.9 (Reporting) and 4.B.1.b.C (Cost, schedule and milestones for the proposed research) of the BAA. This BAA solicits R&D to advance the biometrics state of the science; it is not an RFP with a defined set of requirements for solution engineering. Proposers must address the milestones, schedule, and deliverables reporting in their proposals.	April 1, 2009
016	Who is on the proposal evaluation team? We want to assure the readability of the proposal we submit.	Reviewers will be experts in the field.	April 1, 2009
017	Who has Intellectual Property (IP) rights?	See 6.B.3 (Intellectual Property) of the BAA. If the Government funds the IP development, the Government generally expects that it will have unlimited rights.	April 1, 2009

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018	What if a proposal is only for 6 or 12 months? When would the work start?	This would not be responsive to the BAA, which is requesting 2-year proposals that meet clearly defined milestones.	April 1, 2009
019	If there are several awardees, will they all start at the same time?	The BEST Program anticipates all awardees will start at roughly the same time, although there can be delays depending on the details of contract negotiations.	April 1, 2009
020	May I submit a classified proposal?	See 6.B.1 (Security) of the BAA. Please be certain of the classification and provide a classification guide.	April 1, 2009
021	Is there a bidder's list?	IARPA does not maintain a bidders list. A Proposer's Day attendee listing of those who gave permission to publish their names is posted on the Proposer's Day registration website.	April 1, 2009
022	What areas are of the most interest to the Program?	Section 1 (Funding Opportunity Description) of the BAA outlines the research thrusts and tracks. All stated research areas are of equal interest to the Program.	April 1, 2009
023	Will you consider contactless fingerprint?	No. See 1.A (Program Overview) of the BAA.	April 1, 2009
024	You want to separate sensor development from algorithm development. Can a team propose both a sensor and an algorithm together? Are you interested in a new sensor with a new algorithm, or separate algorithm and sensor?	No. See 1.A.1 (Program Technical Approach) of the BAA. A team should not propose both a new sensor and a new algorithm together. However, a team can submit a separate proposal to each thrust. It is very important that the match algorithm not be biased by an acquisition system. A sensor tends to narrow the exploitation tradespace as algorithm developers work within the limitations and capabilities of a specific sensor. Additionally, this type of	April 1, 2009

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		development often does not allow for the decoupling of the hardware and software.	
025	Is there interest in additional wavelengths or frequency bands?	See 1.A.2.b (Research Track 2: Ocular Recognition) of the BAA. There must be exploitation techniques available.	April 1, 2009
026	Are you interested in a coordinated multi-sensor approach that adapts to the subject?	Yes, See 1.A.3 (Research Thrust II: Robust Acquisition) of the BAA.	April 1, 2009
027	Are you open to a system that can acquire from multiple subjects more quickly or just a single subject?	Yes. See 1.A (Program Overview) and 1.A.1 (Program Technical Approach) of the BAA. The scope of work solicited by this BAA is bounded to the study and development of techniques / methods to address the challenges pertaining to the science of biometric recognition—the level of confidence associated with a match/non-match of biometric signatures. The overarching goals for the IARPA BEST Program are: 1) to significantly advance the Intelligence Community’s (IC) ability to achieve high-confidence match performance, even when the features are derived from non-ideal data; and 2) to significantly relax the constraints currently required to acquire high fidelity biometric signatures. While the focus is individual recognition, all proposers who have compelling ideas based on sound science to meet the Program’s goals and objectives are encouraged to submit proposals.	April 1, 2009
028	Are you open to multiple cameras (stereo approach) to collect 3D data for the corpora?	Yes. See 1.A.4 (Research Corpora) of the BAA.	April 1, 2009

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029	Are you open to a robust acquisition system compliant with standards if the traditional sensor has an innovative output (innovative tracking, super resolution, etc.)?	Yes. See 1.A.3 (Research Thrust II: Robust Acquisition) of the BAA. Mitigation of motion artifacts for the Robust Acquisition thrust is a key requirement.	April 1, 2009
030	Are you ruling out spectral-based components as features for speaker recognition?	See 1.A.2.c, (Research Track 3 – Speaker Recognition). Spectral-based approaches should not be used exclusively. These features must be fused at some level with higher-order features.	April 1, 2009
031	Do you prefer individual ID classification or group classification ID for speaker recognition? For example what global features might change someone’s voice when they have a cold rather than how does this person sound.	The scope of the BAA is individual recognition.	April 1, 2009
032	Are you open to competing the corpora development centers?	No, this BAA does not solicit proposals for the exclusive purpose of corpora development.	April 1, 2009
033	Are you open to data collection for video?	See section 1.A.4 (Research Corpora) of the BAA.	April 1, 2009
034	Are you open to new biometric modalities?	No. See Section 1 (Funding Opportunity Description) and 1.A (Program Overview) of the BAA for the Program’s research thrusts and tracks.	April 1, 2009
035	Is keyboard keystroke analysis in scope of your BAA and your interests?	No. See 1.A (Program Overview) of the BAA.	April 1, 2009

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036	Does the scope of the Ocular Recognition research track described in section 1.A.2.b of IARPA-BAA-09-02 include investigation of the use of multiple ocular images from video sequences or other multi-image datasets to achieve reliable ocular recognition in conditions where existing iris recognition techniques fail due to low image resolution, occlusion, or other image quality issues?	Yes.	April 1, 2009
037	Is it required that all investigations of the limits of ocular recognition performance and methods to extend these limits involve the use of periocular features or may some such investigations focus on the innovative use of iris image data?	See 1.A.2.b (Research Track 2: Ocular Recognition) of the BAA. Proposed investigations into the challenges outlined in the BAA of either ocular (iris with periocular) features or iris features alone are within scope of this BAA.	April 1, 2009
038	We have a proposal to study what is required to make an iris ID at 50m to 100m on a non cooperative subject and design and demonstrate a system to meet these requirements. Is this the type of proposal that is desired under this solicitation?	See 1.A.3 (Research Thrust II: Robust Acquisition) of the BAA for the description of the Robust Acquisition thrust and challenges, and the Proposers' Day Technical Program Overview presentation. All proposers who have compelling ideas based on sound science to meet the Program,s goals and objectives, within the BAA scope, are encouraged to submit proposals.	April 1, 2009
039	Is the IARPA-BAA-09-02 program expected to fund only software-related activities for the processing of biometric information, a software-hardware development mix, or possibly only hardware-development activities?	See 1.A.2 (Research Thrust I: Exploitation and Analysis) and 1.A.3 (Research Thrust II: Robust Acquisition) of the BAA for the description of the research thrusts and challenges. All proposers who have compelling ideas based on sound science to meet the Program’s goals and objectives, within the BAA scope, are encouraged to submit proposals.	April 1, 2009

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040	<p>What is the expected level of government and total funding per year for the IARPA-BAA-09-02 program? In other words, should the level of effort proposed be commensurate with a funding level of \$0.5MM/yr, \$1.0MM/yr, \$5.0MM/yr etc.?</p>	<p>See #004, above, also 4.B.2.b (Volume 2, Section 2: Detailed Cost Information), and 5.A.5 (Cost Realism) of the BAA for cost proposal information.</p>	<p>April 1, 2009</p>
041	<p>The research thrust section on robust acquisition, under the CFOA subtopic, states that the system must perform well enough to resolve 2 line pairs per mm. Is there an associated signal to noise ratio (SNR) that also must be achieved in order for existing algorithms to function under ideal conditions? What is that ideal SNR value?</p>	<p>The robust acquisition thrust is algorithm independent. See the Program Overview presentation posted at: <a href="http://www.iarpa.gov/solicitations_best.html">http://www.iarpa.gov/solicitations_best.html</a> for additional information. Proposals should specify the factors and parameters in their scientific research approach to address the technical challenge.</p>	<p>April 8, 2009</p>
042	<p>Can the lead organization submitting a proposal address one or more of the three research tracks with the Exploitation &amp; Analysis Research Thrust I; i.e., one proposal does not need to address all three research tracks but can address a minimum of one research track?</p>	<p>Yes. See 1.A.2 (Research Thrust I: Exploitation and Analysis) and 4.B.2.b (Volume 2, Section 2: Detailed Cost Information) of the BAA.</p>	<p>April 8, 2009</p>
043	<p>The BAA clearly states there are two thrusts 1) Exploitation and Analysis and 2) Robust Acquisition. It is also clearly stated that separate proposals should be submitted for those desiring to conduct research in both. Under thrust 1, there are three tracks face recognition, ocular recognition, and speaker</p>	<p>Yes. See Section 2 (Award Information), 4.B.1.c. F (Cost, schedule, milestones), and 4.B.2.b. Volume 2, Section 2 (Detailed Cost Information). Where the effort consists of multiple portions which could reasonably be partitioned for purposes of funding, these should be identified as options with separate cost estimates for each. Proposers should consider submitting</p>	<p>April 8, 2009</p>



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	recognition. Is it acceptable to submit a proposal to conduct research for face recognition and a separate proposal for speaker recognition or should these be combined into a single proposal?	multiple independent efforts if the proposed effort is inherently divisible and nothing is gained from the aggregation.	
044	Can you please provide more information on how the funding and contracting mechanism works for this BAA? I found a link that says "procurement contract, cooperative agreement, or other transaction" are possible. I'm particularly interested in getting more details about "other transaction" models.	See Part One (Overview Information) and Section 2 (Award Information) of the BAA. Proposals identified for negotiation may result in a procurement contract, cooperative agreement, or other transaction agreement (OTA). It is the responsibility of the proposer to research, identify, and propose the contract mechanism that best suits the approach proposed to address the challenges and meet the BEST objectives.	April 8, 2009
045	US companies only as the prime?	Yes. See Amendment 01, 3.A (Eligible Applicants) of the BAA. Only US organizations (e.g. universities, companies) may prime.	April 8, 2009
046	Can a US company have foreign subcontractors?	Yes. See 3.A. (Eligible Applicants) and 4.B.1.b.F (Project contributors). Foreign participants and/or individuals may work on the effort to the extent participants comply with all applicable Non-Disclosure Agreements, Security Regulations, Export Control Laws, and other governing statutes applicable under the circumstances. Proposers are expected to ensure that the efforts of foreign participants do not either directly or indirectly compromise the laws of the United States, nor its security interests. As such, proposers should carefully consider the roles and responsibilities of foreign participants as they pursue teaming arrangements to satisfy BEST objectives.	April 8, 2009
047	Are foreign universities (or companies) eligible to propose against this BAA?	See Amendment 01, 3.A (Eligible Applicants) of the BAA.	April 8, 2009

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048	What telephone number should we use for the FEDEX delivery form?	Please use (301) 226-9100.	April 8, 2009
049	We would like to meet to present our ideas, discuss our approach, obtain guidance, see if this is what you are interested in, etc.	For information contact: dni-iarpa-info@iarpa.gov	April 8, 2009
050	May we propose a modality that's not only facial or ocular recognition? Could we propose under the facial and ocular thrusts, combined? With a single proposal?	See 1.A (Program Overview) of the BAA. Proposers should carefully review the BAA and determine whether their idea is within the scope of the BAA and addresses the specified research thrusts and tracks.	April 8, 2009
051	Will the BAA program be interested in innovative signature/sign behavioral biometric verification technology, whose basis is described in the ANSI standard INCITS 395-2005?	No. See 1.A (Program Overview) and 1.A.1 (Program Technical Approach) of the BAA. E-authentication and transaction format applications are not in scope.	April 14, 2009
052	Will the BAA program be interested in innovative methodology related to multi-modal biometric techniques?	See #012, #034, other answers above, and the BAA for the research scope.	April 14, 2009
053	Is there a target or an upper limit for the cost of the prototype to be delivered in phase I? How about Phases II and III?	See #004, above, Section 1 (Funding Opportunity Description), and 1.A (Program Overview) of the BAA.	April 14, 2009
054	We have designated researchers from a non-U.S. University as one of our sub-contractors. Do we need	No. Please also see response to #046, above.	April 14, 2009

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	an Academic Institution Acknowledgement Letter from them?		
055	The BAA references man portable and transportable acquisition systems as an objective for Research Thrust II. Does IARPA consider man portable systems to include handheld devices and, if so, what is the objective for capture distance?	See 1.A.3 (Research Thrust II: Robust Acquisition) of the BAA. Handheld devices are included as man portable. The performance objective of acquiring a high fidelity signature from distances in excess of 3x greater than currently available today <u>while permitting non-radial motion</u> at a rate of up to approximately 1.5 meters/second (a brisk walk). <u>Proposal submissions should specify the minimum and maximum achievable ranges for their proposed approach.</u>	April 24, 2009
056	Do the IP tables (6.B.3.a.2 and 3) count as part of the Technical Approach page count?	Yes, the tables do count as part of the 30 page count.	April 24, 2009
057	Do you have a preferred proposal format style for the BEST?	Please see Section 4 (APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION) of the BAA.	April 24, 2009
058	Please clarify what is meant by the BAA not involving the association of a person's identity with a biometric attribute since face recognition and other biometric recognition techniques are about how to associate a person's identity with a biometric attribute?	Please see See 1.A (Program Overview) of the BAA. The scope of work solicited by this BAA is bounded to the study and development of techniques/methods to address the challenges pertaining to the science of biometric recognition-the level of confidence associated with a match/non-match score of biometric signatures. For the purposes of this solicitation, personally identifiable information will not be associated with the biometric signatures being scored.	April 24, 2009

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059	We understand FFRDCs may not participate as members on BEST Proposal Teams. However, we would like to access technology developed at an FFRDC. Does IARPA have a method/process in place to do so, e.g., MIPRing money directly to an FFRDC in support of a given proposal, or acquiring or providing the technology as GFE?	The IARPA BEST Program Manager is currently evaluating capabilities of various FFRDCs that may provide significant value to the BEST Program <u>and that are not otherwise available from the private sector</u> . If such a capability is identified, the PM will make arrangements with that FFRDC to ensure that the capability is available to all program participants.	April 24, 2009
060	We request either a face to face or a telecon meeting to discuss our proposed response to the above-referenced BAA. Can you please confirm if a meeting (either telecon or in person) would be acceptable to IARPA?	The IARPA BEST PM will not meet with organizations to discuss proposed responses to this open solicitation.	April 24, 2009
061	In the proposal it states that "The Robust Acquisition research thrust emphasizes concurrent face/iris acquisition and 3D face acquisition." Section 1.A.3.a addresses "Combined Face and Ocular Acquisition (CFOA)". There is a bullet point for "3D Face shape acquisition" but is it a requirement to also obtain ocular data from the same sensor or is a 3D face only acquisition acceptable?	In Section 1.A.3.a, you are free to "propose a technical approach for one or more of the following research areas: active illumination, advanced optics, advanced sensors, outdoor signature acquisition, and 3D shape data." Proposing only for the "3D face only acquisition" is acceptable. Keep in mind the research objectives for point spacing, spatial resolution, and motion.	April 24, 2009
062	Are the "Cover Letters" for each Volume, shown in Appendices 2 and 3, supposed to be used as the actual Cover page for the proposal? May the main proposal disclosure statement be the first page of the proposal?	Yes. Appendix 2 and 3 are cover sheets for Volumes 1 and 2 respectively. The first page over both volumes may be an offeror's proposal disclosure statement.	April 24, 2009

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063	<p>In section 4.B, the BAA uses both Roman Numbering with Arabic numbering for the sections and paragraphs. In section 4.B.1, the BAA uses Arabic numbering for the paragraph designators.</p> <p>Do we use Letter designators (A., B., etc.) or numbers (.1, .2) for the subparagraphs?</p>	<p>The Offeror should follow the stated format in sections 4.B.1 and 4.B.2. For proposal material subordinate to that defined in sections 4.B.1 and 4.B.2, you may number your paragraphs as you desire.</p>	<p>April 24, 2009</p>
064	<p>If information required in Volume 1, Section 2: Summary of Proposal is required again in Section 3: Detailed Proposal Information, can we refer the reader from Section 3 back to the same information stated in Section 2?</p>	<p>Offerors are encouraged to place the appropriate content per the stated proposal format in sections 4.B.1 and 4.B.2.</p>	<p>April 28, 2009</p>
065	<p>Is IARPA seeking proposals for biometrics that fall outside the 3 main thrust areas in BAA-09-02? Do you have more than one BAA?</p>	<p>Not at this time. IARPA has multiple BAAs that are currently open. You will find these solicitations posted at: <a href="http://www.iarpa.gov">www.iarpa.gov</a> .</p>	<p>April 28, 2009</p>
066	<p>Will submissions that do not fall within the thrust areas be rejected immediately?</p>	<p>Each submission will be evaluated per the stated criteria in section 5.A. Offerors should also consider the stated research objectives for each research thrust and research track. Proposal submissions that don't fall within one of the thrusts will be considered nonresponsive.</p>	<p>April 28, 2009</p>
067	<p>Cost sharing is encouraged where there is a potential commercial application related to the proposed research effort (3.A.2). Is the government willing to</p>	<p>Yes. The Government may consider/negotiate approaches where the proposer asserts Intellectual Property (IP) rights at some level. Proposers should review BAA section 6.B.3 entitled "Intellectual Property" to gain insight on</p>	<p>April 28, 2009</p>

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	allow offerers to retain some or all IP rights in order to make commercialization feasible? Would such rights be limited only to development funded by the offerer?	how this may apply to approaches implemented through a Cost Sharing model as described under BAA Section 3.B. Proposers are reminded that Cost Sharing and Intellectual Property issues will be assessed during the evaluation process as reflected in BAA Sections 5.A.5 and 5.A.2 respectively.	
068	Must an offerer identify in their proposal previously developed technology to be used in the proposed effort?	Yes. Please reference all of section 6.B.3. Section 6.B.3.c states "All Offerors shall provide a good faith representation that they either own or possess appropriate licensing rights to all other intellectual property that will be utilized under their proposal for the IARPA BEST Program."	April 28, 2009
069	Sections 4.B.1, and 4.B.1.d state that a SF328 is required for this BAA. However, we are planning to submit an UNCLASSIFIED proposal and are not seeking any Government clearance in regard to its performance if an award is received. Would you please explain why the SF328 is required for an unclassified program?	Although highly recommended, proposers are not required to submit a SF328 at the time of proposal submission. Given Export Control implications, a SF328 must be submitted prior to the commencement of negotiations with those proposers selected for award.	April 28, 2009
070	Contractor's Reference Number. What would that be and how can I get one? Is it needed for this solicitation?	The Contractor's Reference Number is not required. Those proposers choosing to issue their own reference/tracking number with the proposal shall identify the number as indicated within BAA Section 4.B.1.	April 28, 2009
071	Has there been any thought to, or possibility of, including vascular recognition (such as finger vein or palm vein recognition) in this solicitation, or would	See #034 and #065 above.	April 30, 2009

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	that be considered for a separate or new solicitation in the future?		
072	The BAA solicitation says that "The performance objective for the robust acquisition thrust is to acquire a high fidelity signature from distances in excess of 3x greater than currently available today while permitting non-radial motion at a rate of up to approximately 1.5 meters/second (a brisk walk)". Does this mean that the range of up to one meter would be an acceptable range for capturing iris images?	No. See sections 1.A (Program Overview), 1.A.3 (Research Thrust II: Robust Acquisition), and response to #055, above.	April 30, 2009
073	The document says "Current efforts have resulted in recognition of fairly cooperative and conditioned individuals at distances ranging up to approximately 7 meters". Is this is related only to face image acquisition?	No. See section 1.A.3.a (Combined Face and Ocular Acquisition).	April 30, 2009
074	What criteria might be used to discriminate between "revolutionary advances" and "incremental, evolutionary improvements" relative to existing state of practice.	See section 5.A (Evaluation Criteria) of the BAA.	April 30, 2009
075	For facial and ocular recognition for the Exploitation and Analysis Thrust, what Government-provided data sets are expected to be made available to the performers?	See section 1.A.4 (Research Corpora) of the BAA.	April 30, 2009

