New updates streamline the Air Force's Utility Energy Service Contract program

TYNDALL AIR FORCE BASE, FLA. – The new Utility Energy Service Contract (UESC) Playbook has been published with updates to streamline the Air Force's process and requirements for installations that seek to obtain energy conservation and resiliency through a UESC. The new 2020 UESC Playbook, is published on the Air Force Civil Engineer's (AFCEC's) website at https://www.afcec.af.mil/Home/Energy/.

UESCs allow for leveraging of third-party financing through local utilities to provide energy and water efficiency improvements, as well as demand-reduction services to their government customers. UESCs are typically considered for reducing energy and water consumption through improvements to installation infrastructure, buildings and building systems. UESC projects entail installation and/or repair of control systems, lighting, EMCS, electrical distribution, HVAC, retro-commission, power generation, renewable energy and general improvements to energy and mission resiliency. The utility conducts the energy assessment of the installation, obtains the funding to implement and provides all materials, equipment and labor necessary execute the project. The utility is paid back over time through the funding generated annually by the reduction in the installation's utility bill.

"The playbook improvements enable installations to more easily acquire upgrades through their local utility companies, while still ensuring the Air Force receives the risk mitigation and protection it needs," said Mark Dent, AFCEC Energy Directorate project manager.

The updated UESC playbook provides for processes and policies that now align more closely to the goals and directives of Air Force leadership. The Air Force now requires that UESCs include guaranteed savings, unless restricted by local regulations or statutes. The playbook also requires at least one Energy Conservation Measure (ECM) to improve energy resiliency at the installation, generally consisting of generation, storage or distribution be included in the UESC project.

"The updated UESC playbook provides for guidance and requirements that align with the current Air Force and OSD policies," said Mike Ringenberg, program manager for the Air Force UESC/ESPC program.

"One of the best elements of the new UESC Playbook is that it removed a lot of the ambiguity of the old playbook to give users a better understanding of the process, roles, responsibilities and actions of the program," said Thomas W. Laney, AFCEC Energy project manager.

Installations interested in energy projects and resiliency need to submit the proposed opportunity to the Office of Energy Assurance (OEA) storefront platform at https://www.safie.hq.af.mil/Programs/Energy/OEA/WorkWithOEA/. OEA and AFCEC will utilize the submitted opportunity information to determine the proper acquisition mechanism. If the UESC is determined to be the proper mechanism for execution of the project, then AFCEC/CND will be engaged to assist the installation in the execution. AFCEC/CND will reach out to the Base Champion (BC) or Base Civil Engineer (BCE) to begin developing the project in partnership with the installation.

AFCEC's Energy Directorate has collaborated with contracting groups and installations, awarding $76 million in UESC projects across the Air Force since 2015. For assistance or questions about pursuing energy upgrades and improvements through a UESC, contact AFCEC through the Reach-back Center at (888) 232-3721 or AFCEC.RBC@us.af.mil.