

GUIDE TO CONTRACTING OPPORTUNITIES

A Step by Step Approach to the DoD Marketplace

1. Identify your product or service.

It is helpful to know the Federal Supply Class or Service (FSC/SVC) Codes (www.dlis.dla.mil/h2) and North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) Code (www.census.gov/naics) for your product or service.

2. Obtain a DUNS Number and register in the Centralized Contractor Registration (CCR) System and the Small Business Administration (SBA) Procurement Marketing and Access Network (PRO-Net) system.

If you do not have a DUNS Number, contact Dun and Bradstreet (www.dnb.com) to obtain one. You must be registered in CCR to be awarded a contract from the DoD (www.ccr.gov). CCR is a database designed to hold information relevant to procurement and financial transactions. CCR affords you the opportunity for fast electronic payment of your invoices. The SBA (www.sba.gov) manages the PRO-Net database of small business concerns. Pro-Net is an Internet-based database for and about small businesses used by federal government buying offices as well as many large DoD prime contractors. We encourage you to determine if your firm qualifies for 8(a), SDB, or HUBZone certification while visiting the SBA website. In addition this site provides information about other SBA resources including Small Business Development Centers, Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE), and Women's Business Development Centers.

3. Identify your target market within DoD.

On the DoD website: web1.whs.osd.mil are listed the products and services purchased within a given fiscal year by the DoD. Data are sorted by FSC/SVC code and provide the name and location of the DoD activities that purchased each commodity or service. The ST28 report is located under "Procurement" and "statistics" and is the last report on web "page". These can be cross-referenced with the list of Small Business Specialists at: www.acq.osd.mil/sadbu/publications/sbs/sbs.html to identify points of contact for each target activity.

4. Identify current DoD procurement opportunities.

Identify current procurement opportunities in your product or service area by checking the DoD Business Opportunities website: www.dodbusopps.com. The electronic version of the Commerce Business Daily (CBD) (cbdnet.access.gpo.gov) and the Federal Business Opportunities website www.fedbizopps.gov can also assist you in identify DoD, as well as other Federal procurement opportunities.

5. Familiarize yourself with DoD contracting procedures.

Be familiar with Federal Acquisition Regulations (FAR) (www.arnet.gov/far) and the Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement (DFARS) (www.acq.osd.mil/dp/dars).

6. Investigate Federal Supply Schedule (FSS) contracts.

Many DoD purchases are, in fact, orders on FSS contracts. Contact the General Services Administration (GSA) for information on how to obtain a FSS contract: www.fss.gsa.gov

7. Seek additional assistance as needed in the DoD marketplace.

There are several important resources that are available to assist you in the DoD marketplace:

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- **Procurement Technical Assistance Centers** (www.dla.mil/db/pta) are located in most states and partially funded by DoD to provide small business concerns with information on how to do business with the Department of Defense. They provide training and counseling on marketing, financial, and contracting issues at minimal or no cost.
- **Electronic Business (eBusiness)** (www.defenselink.mil/acq/ebusiness) provides assistance on getting started in the electronic marketplace.
- **Small Business Specialists** (www.acq.osd.mil/sadbu/publications/sbs/sbs.html) are located at each DoD buying activity and can provide assistance on how to market to the DoD.
- The **DefenseLink website**: (www.defenselink.mil) provides links to the homepages of every DoD activity. This information can be invaluable in researching the DoD marketplace and identifying your target market.
- Links to **DoD Procurement Forecasts** and other program information are available on the DoD SADBUs website: (www.acq.osd.mil/sadbu).

8. Explore subcontracting opportunities

Regardless of your product or service it is important that you do not neglect our very large secondary market, Subcontracting Opportunities with DoD Prime Contractors (www.acq.osd.mil/sadbu/publications/subdir/index.html). This website lists all major DoD prime contractors by state and provides a point of contact (Small Business Liaison Officer) within each firm. We encourage you to investigate potential opportunities with these firms. Many also have websites that may be useful and we encourage you and them to team with each other.

The SBA's SUB-Net (<http://web.sba.gov/subnet>) is a valuable source for obtaining information on subcontracting opportunities. Solicitations or notices are posted not only by prime contractors, but the SUB-Net is also used by other government, commercial, and educational entities.

9. Investigate other DoD programs.

There are several other programs that may be of interest to you, such as the DoD Mentor-Protégé Program, the Small Business Innovation Research Program, and the Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Minority Institutions Program. Information on these and other programs is available on the DoD Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization Office website: www.acq.osd.mil/sadbu.

10. Market your firm well. Good luck!

After you have identified your customers, researched their requirements, and familiarized yourself with DoD procurement regulations and strategies, it is time to market your product or service. Present your capabilities directly to the DoD activities that buy your products or services. Realize that, like you, their time is valuable and if the match is a good one, you can provide them with a cost-effective, quality solution to their requirements. Good luck!