This issue of the eBusiness Newsletter provides brief information on a variety of topics relating to government procurement. If you would like to find out more about the topics listed, access the provided websites or contact any GACO/GCAC office.

**New Year's Action Item**

The start of the year is the perfect time to review your business plan and capabilities statement. A business plan provides a roadmap for your company. The plan can provide a set of priorities, establish goals, measure performance and take an objective look at what you are doing and why. At the very least a business plan is needed to raise capital and secure bank loans. More information can be found at [https://www.sba.gov/writing-business-plan](https://www.sba.gov/writing-business-plan).

The capabilities statement is a living document detailing your company's skills, experiences and differentiators. It is a marketing statement about your business that advertises who you are and what you do. Capabilities statements are used for a number of purposes. They are required in many government registration processes, can be a door-opener to new agencies, provide proof of qualification and past performance and establish what sets you apart from your competitors. Your capabilities statement should be modified per audience. Additional information about crafting your capabilities statement can be found at [https://www.targetgov.com/services/capability-statement-resources/](https://www.targetgov.com/services/capability-statement-resources/).

**PennDOT Small Business Enterprise (SBE) Registration**

Becoming SBE certified increases business visibility, allows for partnering with other SBE firms on PennDOT projects and maximizes potential for contracting opportunities. PennDOT defines an SBE as the following: a for-profit firm owned by a United States citizen or lawfully admitted permanent resident of the United States, a business which does not exceed the SBA's size standards and the firm's average annual gross receipts for the three previous fiscal years do not exceed $22.41 million. Firms that meet these criteria can apply for SBE certification at [https://www.dotsbe.pa.gov](https://www.dotsbe.pa.gov).

**PAUCP Application Changes**

As of November 3, 2014 the Pennsylvania Unified Certification Program's (PAUCP-MBE/WBE/DBE) application has been revised. Previous versions of the application should be discarded and will no longer be accepted. A link to the new application and personal net worth statement can be found at [http://www.alleghenycounty.us/mwdbe/index.aspx](http://www.alleghenycounty.us/mwdbe/index.aspx).
Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) First Destination Transportation and Packaging Initiative (FDTPI)

In 2013, DLA suppliers may have noticed a major change to shipping and packaging requirements. DLA is shifting from FOB destination to FOB origin. The government will now utilize government personnel or contracted services to provide freight and/or MIL-STD packaging. This change will remove transportation and packaging costs from contractor's bids. The goal of this change is to reduce procurement costs, reveal the true costs of products, reduce contractor lead time and expand competition to small businesses who found transportation and packaging requirements cumbersome. Details concerning FDTPI can be found at http://www.dla.mil/FDTPI/Pages/default.aspx.

Limitations on Subcontracting

Limitations on Subcontracting restrict small businesses from subcontracting large portions of work on federal government contracts. Federal Acquisition Regulations (FAR) identify the percentage of work to be performed by small business concerns on contract awards set aside for small business. The appropriate FAR clause is included in solicitations and contracts for supplies, services and construction, if any portion of the requirement is to be set aside or reserved for small business and the contract amount is expected to exceed $150,000. The limitations for Small Business, 8(a) and Woman Owned Small Business set-asides fall under FAR 52.219-14. Contracts that are set-aside for Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Businesses (SDVOSB's) fall under the provisions of FAR 52.219-27. Please click on the links provided to view the limitations.

Women's Federal Contracting Program Gains Sole Source Authority

In December, Congress passed the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). This legislation includes the ability for contracting officers to sole source federal contracts to certified women-owned small businesses (WOSB). This contracting change brings contracting parity to WOSB's. Currently contracting officers (CO) can award sole source contracts to minorities, veterans and HUBZone firms. Like other socio-economic programs this change will allow contracts up to $4 million ($6.5 million for manufacturing contracts) to be directly awarded to certified WOSB's if the CO does not have a reasonable expectation that two or more women-owned businesses will submit offers and the contract can be awarded at a fair and reasonable price. There are several administrative and legal changes that will need to be completed once the President signs the NDAA. These include: the SBA crafting rules to implement the law, the Federal Acquisition Regulations (FAR) Council must approve the changes and then contracting officers will need to be trained on using the new regulation.

Federal Government Vendor Registrations

A number of commercial enterprises target small business owners unfamiliar with the various government registration and certification processes. They market their services aggressively, sending official-sounding emails directing business owners to sign-up for their services to be registered/certified with the federal government for a fee. Federal agencies do not charge any money to register as a vendor. Many business owners can navigate these websites on their own. For those who’d like help with registrations, certification applications or any other government contracting issue please contact any GACO/GCAC office.

Upcoming GACO/GCAC Sponsored Events

10/13/15 – GACO/GCAC’s 28th Annual Procurement Opportunities Fair, DoubleTree by Hilton-Cranberry, Mars, PA