

Federal Acquisition Regulation

19.602-1

business and the contract amount is expected to exceed \$100,000.

[48 FR 42240, June 9, 1987, as amended at 52 FR 21902, June 9, 1987; 52 FR 38189, Oct. 14, 1987; 53 FR 27464, July 20, 1988; 53 FR 43390, Oct. 26, 1988; 54 FR 25063, June 12, 1989; 55 FR 25529, June 21, 1990; 55 FR 38516, Sept. 18, 1990; 60 FR 34757, July 3, 1995; 60 FR 48262, Sept. 18, 1995; 61 FR 39209, July 26, 1996; 61 FR 67430, Dec. 20, 1996; 62 FR 236, Jan. 2, 1997; 62 FR 44820, Aug. 22, 1997]

Subpart 19.6—Certificates of Competency and Determinations of Responsibility

19.601 General.

(a) A Certificate of Competency (COC) is the certificate issued by the Small Business Administration (SBA) stating that the holder is responsible (with respect to all elements of responsibility, including, but not limited to, capability, competency, capacity, credit, integrity, perseverance, tenacity, and limitations on subcontracting) for the purpose of receiving and performing a specific Government contract.

(b) The COC program empowers the Small Business Administration (SBA) to certify to Government contracting officers as to all elements of responsibility of any small business concern to receive and perform a specific Government contract. The COC program does not extend to questions concerning regulatory requirements imposed and enforced by other Federal agencies.

(c) The COC program is applicable to all Government acquisitions. A contracting officer shall, upon determining an apparent successful small business offeror to be nonresponsible, refer that small business to the SBA for a possible COC, even if the next acceptable offer is also from a small business.

(d) When a solicitation requires a small business to adhere to the limitations on subcontracting, a contracting officer's finding that a small business cannot comply with the limitation shall be treated as an element of responsibility and shall be subject to the COC process. When a solicitation requires a small business to adhere to the definition of a nonmanufacturer, a contracting officer's determination that

the small business does not comply shall be processed in accordance with subpart 19.3.

(e) Contracting officers, including those located overseas, are required to comply with this subpart for U.S. small business concerns.

[48 FR 42240, Sept. 19, 1983, as amended at 51 FR 2664, Jan. 17, 1986; 54 FR 34754, Aug. 21, 1989; 59 FR 67036, Dec. 28, 1994; 61 FR 67410, Dec. 20, 1996; 62 FR 44820, Aug. 22, 1997]

19.602 Procedures.

19.602-1 Referral.

(a) Upon determining and documenting that an apparent successful small business offeror lacks certain elements of responsibility (including, but not limited to, capability, competency, capacity, credit, integrity, perseverance, tenacity, and limitations on subcontracting), the contracting officer shall—

(1) Withhold contract award (see 19.602-3); and

(2) Refer the matter to the cognizant SBA Government Contracting Area Office (Area Office) serving the area in which the headquarters of the offeror is located, in accordance with agency procedures, except that referral is not necessary if the small business concern—

(i) Is determined to be unqualified and ineligible because it does not meet the standard in 9.104-1(g); *provided*, that the determination is approved by the chief of the contracting office; or

(ii) Is suspended or debarred under Executive Order 11246 or subpart 9.4.

(b) If a partial set-aside is involved, the contracting officer shall refer to the SBA the entire quantity to which the concern may be entitled, if responsible.

(c) The referral shall include—

(1) A notice that a small business concern has been determined to be nonresponsible, specifying the elements of responsibility the contracting officer found lacking; and

(2) If applicable, a copy of the following:

(i) Solicitation.

(ii) Final offer submitted by the concern whose responsibility is at issue for the procurement.