



DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR ACQUISITION AND MATERIEL MANAGEMENT
WASHINGTON, DC 20420

IL 049-03-9
March 28, 2003

OFFICE OF ACQUISITION AND MATERIEL MANAGEMENT INFORMATION LETTER

TO: Under Secretaries for Health, Benefits, and Memorial Affairs; Assistant Secretary for Management; Chief Facilities Management Officer, Office of Facilities Management; Veterans Integrated Service Network Directors; Directors, VA Medical Center Activities, Domiciliary, Outpatient Clinics, Medical and Regional Office Centers, and Regional Offices; Directors, Denver Distribution Center, Austin Automation Center, Records Management Center, VBA Benefits Delivery Centers, and the VA Health Administration Center; and the Executive Director and Chief Operating Officer, VA National Acquisition Center

ATTN: Head of the Contracting Activity
All VA Contracting Officers

SUBJECT: Evaluating the Contractor's Past Performance

1. The purpose of this information letter is to provide information on two systems established for evaluating a contractor's past performance. Specific information about the Past Performance Information Retrieval System (PPIRS) and the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Contractor Performance System (CPS) is contained in attachments to this letter.
2. Heads of Contracting Activities (HCAs) are responsible for limiting authorized access to these systems to users with a need for data. HCAs should determine who should have access to each database and provide the following information for each person to the System Administrator:
 - a. Full Name
 - b. Title
 - c. Telephone Number
 - d. VISN
 - e. Facility Name
 - f. E-mail Address
 - g. Which System (PPIRS, CPS or both)

The System Administrator will not authorize access to personnel who are not on the list.

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3. The HCA is also responsible for notifying the System Administrator when individuals no longer have a need to use either system.

System Administrator:

Ms. Helen Lee
Centralized Acquisition Analysis Division (049A5S)
Dept. of Veterans Affairs
P. O. Box 27, Bldg 37
Hines, IL 60141
Telephone: 708-786-7806
E-mail: helen.lee@med.va.gov

4. When issuing solicitations, contracting officers should inform prospective offerors that past performance evaluations will be conducted using information obtained from the CPS or PPIRS and any other sources deemed appropriate.

5. Direct all registration and technical questions for both PPIRS and CPS to Ms. Lee. All policy questions regarding this information letter may be directed to Ms. Patricia Ellis, Acquisition Policy Division (049A5A), at (202) 273-6058.

/s/C. Ford Heard
Acting Associate Deputy Assistant Secretary
for Acquisitions

Attachments

Distribution: RPC 7029

Past Performance Information Retrieval System (PPIRS)

On July 3, 2002, the Administrator of the Office of Federal Procurement Policy issued a memorandum mandating all Federal agency contracting officials to use the Past Performance Information Retrieval System (PPIRS) to obtain contractors' past performance data.

The PPIRS is a central retrieval and review system (read only) that incorporates all Government past performance information (PPI) currently captured in existing tools. Information in PPIRS is to be used for source selection purposes only and for no other purpose. Contracting officers should use the PPIRS to evaluate all past performance information in source selections for negotiated competitive acquisitions expected to exceed \$100,000 pursuant to Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) 15.304(c)(3)(ii).

To obtain access to PPIRS:

1. The Head of Contracting Activity (HCA) submits the information contained in paragraph 2 of this IL to the System Administrator.
2. Once the HCA has forwarded user names to the System Administrator, the individual users on the list must access PPIRS and complete the registration form.
 - a. <http://www.ppirs.gov/>
 - b. Click on "System Logon"
 - c. Click on "Government Logon"
 - d. Click on "Request Account"
 - e. Complete the Registration Form. (Note: For the Organization block, please use "Department of Veterans Affairs." Click Submit
 - f. On the next screen "Request Group Membership," next to Other Government Agencies, click "View Subgroups."

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- g. Next to Department of Veterans Affairs, click "View Subgroups."
 - h. Click Request Membership.
 - i. Include the following statement in the "Justify Group Membership Request" text box: "My HCA has approved my access to this system." Include the name and telephone number of a point of contact and click Submit.
 - j. The final screen will read "Your request for membership in the Department of Veterans Affairs user group has been submitted."
3. The PPIRS system will prompt the System Administrator, Helen Lee, that a new user has registered.
4. The System Administrator will access the system and grant permission to that individual if the name is on the HCA list.
5. The PPIRS system will generate an e-mail to the individual notifying them they have access to the system.

National Institutes of Health (NIH) Contractor Performance System (CPS)

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) subscribes to the National Institutes of Health Contractor Performance System (CPS), one of the existing tools of PPIRS. CPS is used to record information for future source selection purposes. It is an Internet-based system for capturing, maintaining, and disseminating contractor performance, evaluations on quality of product/service, cost control, timeliness, business practices, and customer satisfaction throughout the Federal Government's acquisition offices worldwide. CPS is to be considered a tool only and is not the sole source for obtaining contractor performance information. FAR 42.1502(a) requires the contracting officer to prepare an evaluation of contractor performance for each contract exceeding \$100,000 at the time work is completed under the contract. The CPS should be used for this purpose.

The CPS evaluation process of contractor performance is completely automated. This includes providing contractors the ability to access, review, and comment on their own evaluations electronically. Contractors are provided access to each evaluation as it is in process and again when the evaluation is finalized for comment. Once the contractor has the opportunity to review and comment on a specific evaluation, the Federal contracting officer finalizes the evaluation. The evaluation is flagged as such, and all Federal acquisition personnel authorized to use CPS have access to that evaluation for use in the contract award process.

Project officers/contracting officer's technical representatives (COTRs), agency reviewers, and Federal acquisition personnel all may interact electronically during the performance evaluation.

Since the information contained in the CPS is highly confidential and some of the information is protected under the Privacy Act, security is of utmost concern. Only authorized Federal acquisition personnel have unlimited access to the CPS.

To obtain access to CPS:

1. The Head of Contracting Activity (HCA) submits the information contained in paragraph 2 of this IL to the System Administrator.
2. The System Administrator, Helen Lee, will access the system and grant access to individuals on the list.

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3. The CPS system will generate the following two e-mails to the user.

a. Notice of Registration to CPS will contain notice that the user is registered and provide the user's CPS Login ID.

b. Registration to CPS will contain the user's temporary password. The password must be changed during the first log in.