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EDITOR'S PERSPECTIVE

While there are differences over the exact amount, the economic stimulus program being developed by the Obama administration and Congress is expected to include substantial assistance for small businesses, which seems reasonable given the key role played by smaller companies in job creation.

In that context, it is worth taking a look at a recent Air Force initiative called the Small Business Solution Center, located at Brooks City-Base, Texas. The slogan there calls for reaching "beyond goals" to grow and strengthen the ability to deliver small business solutions as the solutions of choice in meeting the Air Force mission.

Small business specialists around the Air Force are aggressively working with customers and contracting officers to create strategies that ensure that the innovation, agility and efficiency of small businesses are not forgotten and are available to the warfighter.

But what is especially interesting is the attitude that doing business with small business is not just about meeting percentage goals for contract participation—which, in any case, are rarely met. Instead, the focus is about delivering value to the customer after the contract is awarded.

The "beyond goals" strategy creates an environment that promotes small business as solutions of choice, not just to meet a goal. It creates small business options and solutions in the face of increased demand for short-term efficiencies through strategic sourcing and consolidated requirements. It also increases the awareness of the important contributions small businesses make for the mission every day.

As Ronald A. Poussard, director of the Office of Small Business Programs in the Office of the Secretary of the Air Force, has written, "Air Force small business specialists are not small business advocates. We are advocates for the Air Force mission ... met with small business solutions."

Visit www.selltoairforce.org to learn more.

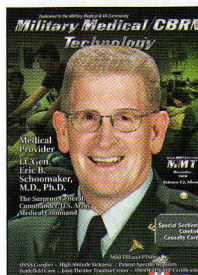


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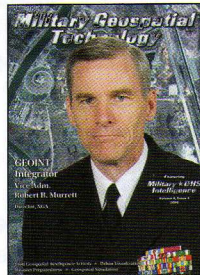
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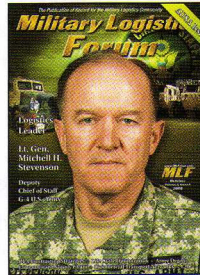
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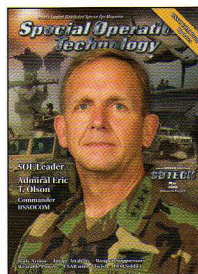
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