



**DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS**  
**Deputy Assistant Secretary for Acquisition and Logistics**  
**Washington, DC 20420**

**IL 049-08-03**  
**April 11, 2008**

**OFFICE OF ACQUISITION AND LOGISTICS INFORMATION LETTER**

- TO:** Under Secretaries for Health, Benefits, and Memorial Affairs; Assistant Secretary for Management; Executive-In-Charge, Office of Construction & 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 Acquisition and Logistics 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:** Heads of Contracting Activities and VA Contracting Officers
- SUBJ:** Use of Dun and Bradstreet Reports as a Means of Assisting in Determining Contractor Responsibility

1. This Information Letter (IL) provides guidance to the VA acquisition community on the use of Dun and Bradstreet (D&B) Reports as a source in assisting with determining contractor responsibility. As per Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) Subpart 9.103(a), purchases shall be made from, and contracts shall be awarded to, responsible prospective contractors only.
2. The Center for Acquisition Innovation (CAI) has awarded a contract to D&B for unlimited access to D&B Supplier Qualifier Reports (SQR) through September 30, 2009. Utilizing the SQR will significantly enhance the ability of contracting officers to assess the financial and operational stability of prospective contractors.
3. VA contracting officers will request the D&B Supplier Qualifier Reports to assist with contractor responsibility determinations for all initial contract awards, task orders, renewals, exercise of options, and all other acquisitions in excess of \$25,000. The SQR shall be reviewed and included in the contract file prior to award. This will ensure that the award decision has taken into consideration the most current D&B information. If the contractor has a Supplier Evaluation Risk Score of "7" or higher, the contracting officer must document the additional due diligence conducted to justify an award in light of the higher risk score within the contract file. The Supplier Evaluation Risk Score is a 1 to 9 score predicting the likelihood that a company will obtain legal relief from creditors

**2.**  
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or cease operations without paying creditors in full over the next 12 months. If the company cannot be located in the D&B database or if there is information that conflicts with that in the D&B report, click on the "Order an Investigation" link and select the Supplier Evaluation Report as the deliverable. This action will prompt D&B to contact a company principal to either update the report or build a record on the company. Completed reports will be available within approximately 5 business days.

4. A D&B representative will contact the local VA point of contact for each location to establish user registration for all acquisition professionals needing access to the database. Training shall consist of an unlimited number of self guided training tutorials. On-site training may be conducted at up to ten VA contracting sites at the Government's discretion. A modification to the contract will be executed for on-site training at no additional cost other than the travel cost associated with two D&B trainers for each on-site training location. Travel costs will be reimbursed by the office requesting the on-site training in accordance with Joint Travel Regulations.

5. Before making a determination of responsibility, the contracting officer must possess and obtain information sufficient to be satisfied that a prospective contractor meets the applicable standards in FAR 9.104.

6. Please direct all questions concerning this IL to VA CAI Customer Requirements via e-mail to: [vacaicustomerrequirements@va.gov](mailto:vacaicustomerrequirements@va.gov).

/s/Maurice C. Stewart  
ADAS for Acquisition and Logistics Programs and Policy (049P)

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