




DEFENSE SECURITY SERVICE
1340 BRADDOCK PLACE
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MAY 13 2011

MEMORANDUM FOR DIRECTOR, DEFENSE PROCUREMENT AND ACQUISITION
POLICY, OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
FOR ACQUISITION, TECHNOLOGY, AND LOGISTICS
(ATTN: MR. WARREN ARNESON)

SUBJECT: "Myth-Busting": Addressing Misconceptions to Improve Communication with Industry
during the Acquisition Process

In response to your April 4, 2011, memorandum, the Defense Security Service provides
the attached input. My point of contact is Mr. John Baumert at (703) 325-8793 or
john.baumert@dss.mil.


Kevin E. McGinn
Chief, Office of Acquisitions

Attachment:
As stated

Defense Security Service Vendor Communication Plan

I. Statement of Commitment

Since the Defense Security Service (DSS) received contracting authority in 2008, it has been committed to conducting constructive communications with industry from the beginning of acquisition planning through issuance of solicitations, negotiations, contract award and contract administration. In so doing, DSS has paid particular attention to the small business community as demonstrated by its record of awards to small businesses. In fiscal year (FY) 2009, DSS awarded 31.7% of its obligated dollars to small businesses; in FY 2010 it awarded 48.7%; and, in FY 2011 it has awarded over 85% through March 2011. DSS has also paid attention to the need to obtain competition. In FY 2008, DSS awarded over 96% of its obligated dollars after competition; in FY 2010 it awarded over 98%; and, in FY 2011, it has awarded over 99% through March 2011.

Beginning in FY 2012, DSS will publish an annual procurement forecast for all procurements anticipated to be awarded during the year with a value exceeding \$1 million. The forecast will identify those procurements for which DSS will communicate with industry during the acquisition planning stage and at pre-proposal conferences. DSS will take steps to assure the protection of all non-public information, including contractors' confidential information.

In those instances where DSS conducts negotiations during a competition, DSS will take steps to protect contractor confidential information as well as source selection information.

II. DSS Official Responsible for Promoting Vendor Engagement

The Chief, Office of Acquisitions shall be responsible for promoting communications with contractors throughout the procurement process.

III. Efforts Planned to Reduce Barriers and Promote Engagement with Contractors

DSS will take the following steps to prevent the creation of barriers to engagement with contractors and to promote engagement with them. First, all acquisition plans will address how and when contractors will be invited to communicate with DSS personnel concerning the upcoming procurement. Second, the DSS Small Business Specialist will have an open-door policy to talk to industry. Third, DSS will develop a procurement forecast for FY 2012 and will post it on its website. Finally, during competitions, DSS contracting officers will continue to hold comprehensive and substantive exchanges with contractors concerning DSS' assessment of their quotations or proposals.

IV. Criteria for Identifying Which Acquisitions Must Include Vendor Input in the Pre-Award Phase and the Extent of the Required Engagement

The acquisition plans for all procurements with a total expected value greater than \$5 million for the Office of the Chief Information Officer and \$10 million for any other DSS unit, will not be approved unless they:

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- include at least one industry day or a pre-solicitation or pre-proposal conference; and
- allow for a reasonable amount of one-on-one engagement; and
- allow time for discussions, as needed and in accordance with FAR Part 15, as appropriate, during the proposal evaluation process.

If the acquisition plan does not address one or more of these issues; it will include a written justification as to why those steps are unnecessary.

V. Publication of Engagement Events to Include Industry Days, Small Business Outreach Sessions, Pre-solicitation Conferences, RFP question and answer sessions, etc.

DSS will post all such events on the internet at Federal Business Opportunities located at www.fbo.gov and on the DSS Office of Acquisitions webpage which will eventually be linked at www.dss.mil.

VI. Brief Description of Roles and Responsibilities Involved in DSS Procurements

Chief, Office of Acquisitions: the person responsible for 1) assuring that the DSS Office of Acquisitions meets its customers need while complying with law, regulation, and DoD policies and procedures; 2) overseeing the Acquisition Planning process; and 3) assuring implementation of this Plan.

Contracting Officer: a person with the authority to enter into, administer, and/or terminate contracts and make related determinations and findings. This person will be responsible for 1) leading the market research communications with industry; and 2) communicating exclusively with industry once a solicitation is issued.

Program Manager: the designated individual with responsibility for and authority to accomplish program objectives for development, production, and sustainment to meet the user's operational needs. The PM shall be accountable for credible cost, schedule, and performance reporting to the MDA. This person will be responsible for 1) defining the requirement; 2) assisting with market research; and 3) serving on the technical evaluation team.

Contracting Officer's Representative: an individual designated and authorized in writing by the contracting officer to perform specific technical or administrative functions. This person will be responsible for 1) assisting with the definition of the requirement; 2) assisting in conducting market research; and 3) overseeing the day to day operations of the contract.

General Counsel: the attorney who represents the Defense Security Service in all legal processes. The general counsel will be responsible for legal review of acquisition plans, solicitations and contracts issued by the Office of Acquisitions.

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Ethics Officers: individuals in the Office of General Counsel responsible for making sure that all employees are trained to be ethically aware, that ethical considerations enter the decision-making process, and that employees follow the Government's code of ethics.

Small Business Specialist: an individual designated to review all acquisitions over \$10 thousand to make sure they correctly implement Small Business Programs. This person is responsible for:

- assisting in market research;
- assisting the Office of Acquisitions in identifying requirements and opportunities for small business set asides;
- serving as the liaison to the Small Business Administration; and
- serving as the primary point of contact with industry.

VII. Training and Awareness Efforts for Employees and Contractors

As procurements arise, DSS will train DSS employees who will be involved in the process. After the DSS, Office of Acquisitions' webpage is launched, industry will be able to review the agency's procurement forecast and any future scheduled industry days.

VIII. Plans to Follow up with Employees and Industry Representatives within 6 Months of Posting the Vendor Engagement Plan

As DSS employees are trained and the Office of Acquisitions webpage is launched, questionnaires will be sent within six months for employees and industry to critique the DSS Vendor Communication Plan and webpage. Their suggestions will be reviewed and incorporated into the following year's plan.

The DSS Office of Acquisitions' point of contact is:

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