



# SMALL BUSINESS PROGRAM NEWSLETTER

## LOWER COLORADO REGIONAL OFFICE, BOULDER CITY

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The Small Business Program Newsletter is prepared and distributed quarterly by the Business Utilization Development Specialist (BUDS). The purpose of this newsletter is to broaden and refresh contracting and functional personnel knowledge of the Small Business Program, and to recognize the importance of small businesses to the nation and the economy.

### SMALL BUSINESS PROGRAM NEWSLETTER

Welcome to our Small Business Program Newsletter. I am Eather Stewart, your BUDS for the Bureau of Reclamation. My goal is to make this newsletter as informational as possible for the contracting and functional personnel. The reader is encouraged to share this information with other functional personnel in the acquisition process. It is my responsibility to assist small, disadvantaged, women-owned, HUBZone, and service disabled veteran-owned businesses seeking opportunities with government.

### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE HUBZONE CONTRACTING PROGRAM

**Q. *What are the three elements that the HUBZone program is comprised of?***

**A.** The HUBZone program is comprised of set-asides: (1) set-asides for qualified HUBZone small business concerns (SBC); (2) sole source awards to HUBZone SBC; and (3) a price evaluation preference for HUBZone SBC.

**Q. *What is a price evaluation preference for HUBZone SBC?***

**A.** A price evaluation preference for HUBZone SBC must be used in acquisitions conducted using full and open competition. The preference must not be used in acquisitions expected to be less than or equal to the simplified acquisition threshold; where price is not a selection factor so that a price evaluation preference would not be considered (e.g., architect/engineer acquisitions); or where all fair and reasonable offers are accepted (e.g., the award of multiple award schedule contracts)

**Q. *What is the definition of a HUBZone?***

**A.** A HUBZone is a historically underutilized business zone, which is an area located within one or more qualified census tracts, qualified nonmetropolitan counties, or lands within the external boundaries of an Indian reservation.

**Q. *What is a qualified nonmetropolitan county?***

**A.** A nonqualified nonmetropolitan county is any county that either is not located in a metropolitan statistical area; and in which the median household income is less than 80% of the nonmetropolitan state median household income; or based on the

most recent data available from the secretary of labor that has an unemployment rate that is not less than 140% of the statewide average unemployment rate for the state in which the county is located.

**Q. *What should happen if the contracting officer receives only one acceptable offer from a qualified HUBZone SBC in response to a set-aside?***

A. The contracting officer should make an award to that concern.

**Q. *What should happen if the contracting officer receives no acceptable offers from HUBZone SBC?***

A. The HUBZone set-aside must be withdrawn and the requirement, if still valid, set aside for small business concerns, as appropriate.

**Q. *Should HUBZone set-asides be considered before HUBZone sole source awards and small business set-asides?***

A. Yes.

## **REMINDERS**

Advanced Acquisition Planning for FY 2004 letters will be going out soon. As you know, the purpose of this advance acquisition planning is to provide management and our customers with information to identify and schedule acquisition requirements in advance to ensure adequate lead time to accomplish these needs. In doing this upfront planning, we can ensure that we provide you, our customer, with the best possible service in satisfying your requirement needs.

Last year we had some difficulty with a few of our contractors not providing us their subcontracting reports timely, even though we sent letters out timely reminding them to submit the reports. I strongly recommend we remind our contractors that submitting these reports timely, along with their compliance with the subcontracting plan is a requirement of their contract. When a contractor fails to make a good faith effort to comply with the subcontracting plan and these objectives are not achieved we can pursue liquidated damages. This year we recommend that you assess whether or not

liquidated damages are warranted based on contractor's good faith efforts to comply with the subcontracting plan. A subcontracting report for individual contracts is required for each contract containing a subcontracting plan and must be submitted semi-annually during contract performance for the periods ended March 31st and September 30th.

If you have submitted SF-281 reports no action is required, please pull them back into your cabinets. If you have not, you should begin submitting SF-281 reports immediately. All of the previously submitted SF-279 report prior to our system being upgraded I will have to desubmitted and change block 7 to an A and the current date in Block 49 and resubmit the document. If you have not submitted SF-279s please begin to do so as soon as possible. We have to be caught up with our FY-2003 reports by March 15, 2003.

## **SUGGESTIONS?**

Please call Eather Stewart at extension (702) 293-8149 if you have suggestions, comments, or ideas for articles to enrich this publication.

Thank you for your support.