

clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology. Comments submitted in response to this notice will be summarized and/or included in the request for OMB approval of this information collection; they will also become a matter of public record.

Dated: May 7, 1998.

**Linda Engelmeier,**

*Departmental Forms Clearance Officer, Office of Management and Organization.*

[FR Doc. 98-12890 Filed 5-13-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-EC-P

## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### Office of the Secretary

#### Department of Commerce Partners in Quality Contracts (PQC) Program

**ACTION:** Proposed collection; comment request.

**SUMMARY:** The Department of Commerce, as part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, invites the general public and other Federal agencies to take this opportunity to comment on proposed and/or continuing information collections, as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, Public Law 104-13 (44 U.S.C. 3506(c)(2)(A)).

**DATES:** Written comments must be submitted on or before July 13, 1998.

**ADDRESSES:** Direct all written comments to Linda Engelmeier, Departmental Clearance Officer, Department of Commerce, Room 5327, 14th and Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20230.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Requests for additional information or copies of the information collection instrument(s) and instructions should be directed to Ms. Deborah O'Neill, Department of Commerce, 14th and Constitution Avenue, NW, Room 6422, Washington, DC, 20230. Her telephone number is (202) 482-0202.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

##### I. Abstract

The National Performance Review (NPR) conducted by Vice President Gore outlined several objectives, including improving the Federal acquisition process. Along with the NPR objectives are associated Administration initiatives, such as greater emphasis on contractor's past performance;

expanding the use of alternative disputes' resolution procedures; and improving communications overall between industry and government. The Department of Commerce (DOC) has developed a program that is philosophically consistent with NPR, known as the Partners in Quality Contracting (PQC) Program. PQC is a creative nonmonetary recognition program that showcases the importance of quality in the government acquisition process. It is intended as an effective yet inexpensive means of recognizing quality performance from both DOC contractors and acquisition personnel. The information collected is used to determine qualifications of applicants by DOC for purposes of recognizing DOC contractors and acquisition personnel who have promoted excellence in contracting through quality performance. The DOC PQC Evaluation Committee will be an independent committee, comprised of DOC employees from key functional areas. The universe of applicants includes all DOC contractors that have performed a DOC contract valued during the previous fiscal year at or above \$100,000, if a large business, \$50,000 or above, if a small one. A small business is defined as "a business, including an affiliate, that is independently owned and operated, is not dominant in producing or performing the supplies or services being purchased, and has no more than 500 employees." Eligible contractors would "self nominate" through the submission of a company profile than an application that would be independently evaluated against pre-established criteria. Finalists would be site visited, as appropriate, by a government team before the final selections are made. Award recipients will be selected by consensus of the Committee. Award recipients will be invited to send representatives to attend an award reception.

##### II. Method of Collection

*Written submission.*

##### III. Data

*OMB Number:* 0690-0012.

*Form Number:* N/A.

*Type of Review:* Regular submission for extension of a currently approved collection.

*Affected Public:* Businesses or other for-profit organizations.

*Estimated Number of Respondents:* 50.

*Estimated Time per Response:* 38.

*Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours:* 1,900.

*Estimated Total Annual Cost:* \$0 (no capital expenditures are required).

## IV. Request for Comments

Comments are invited on: (a) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information shall have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden (including hours and cost) of the proposed collection of information; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology. Comments submitted in response to this notice will be summarized and/or included in the request for OMB approval of this information collection; they will also become a matter of public record.

Dated: May 7, 1998.

**Linda Engelmeier,**

*Departmental Forms Clearance Officer, Office of Management and Organization.*

[FR Doc. 98-12891 Filed 5-13-98; 8:45 am]

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## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### Office of the Secretary

#### Women-Owned Small Business Sources

**ACTION:** Proposed collection; comment request.

**SUMMARY:** The Department of Commerce, as part of its continuing effort to reduce a paperwork and respondent burden, invites the general public and other Federal agencies to take this opportunity to comment on proposed and/or continuing information collections, as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, Public Law 104-13 (44 U.S.C. 3506 (c)(2) (A)).

**DATES:** Written comments must be submitted on or before July 13, 1998.

**ADDRESSES:** Direct all written comments to Linda Engelmeier, Departmental Clearance Officer, Department of Commerce, Room 5327, 14th and Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20230.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Requests for additional information or copies of the information collection instrument(s) and instructions should be directed to Ms. Deborah O'Neill, Department of Commerce, 14th and Constitution Avenue, NW, Room 6422,

Washington, DC 20230. Her telephone number is (202) 482-0202.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

##### I. Abstract

This information is collected in order to respond to the Executive Order 12138 to promote women-owned business enterprises. Additionally, it is the intent of Congress to promote federal contracting opportunities for women-owned businesses as expressed in the proposed legislation in H.R. 3517, "The Women's Business Procurement Assistance Act." The Department of Commerce through its use of the clause entitled "Women-Owned Small Business Sources" in certain Commerce contracts, implements this policy and encourages the use of women-owned small businesses in its acquisition programs. The Department currently provides opportunities to women-owned businesses on their mailing lists to receive solicitations for contracts. By allowing these firms to compete for, and receive, a fair proportion of the Department's contracts, it reduces a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities. This clause is used by the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) Clause 52.219-9, entitled "Small, Small Disadvantaged and Women-Owned Small Business Subcontracting Plan" for all negotiated contracts with large businesses which exceed \$500,000. The FAR clause requires the successful offeror to negotiate a small business and small disadvantaged subcontracting plan which provides subcontracting goals for utilization of both small businesses and small disadvantaged concerns. The Department of Commerce clause adds the requirement to include subcontracting goals for women-owned businesses in these subcontracting plans. The clause also requires the contractors to maintain lists of qualified potential women-owned firms. The Commerce Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU) provides assistance to the contractors in complying with the required list of potential subcontractors. They also submit the Department's proposal goals for award of contracts and subcontracts for women-owned businesses to the Small Business Administration (SBA).

##### II. Method of Collection

Written submission.

##### III. Data

OMB Number: 0605-0019.

Form Number: N/A.

*Type of Review:* Regular submission for extension of a currently approved collection.

*Affected Public:* Businesses or other for-profit and not-for-profit institutions.

*Estimated Number of Respondents:* 20.

*Estimated Time per Response:* 12.

*Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours:* 240.

*Estimated Total Annual Cost:* \$0 (no capital expenditures are required).

#### IV. Request for Comments

Comments are invited on: (a) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information shall have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden (including hours and cost) of the proposed collection of information; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology. Comments submitted in response to this notice will be summarized and/or included in the request for OMB approval of this information collection; they will also become a matter of public record.

Dated: May 7, 1998.

**Linda Engelmeier,**

*Departmental Forms Clearance Officer, Office of Management and Organization.*

[FR Doc. 98-12892 Filed 5-13-98; 8:45 am]

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#### DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

##### Office of the Secretary

##### Department of Commerce Solicitations: Requests for Proposals (RFPs) or Invitations for Bids (IFBs)

**ACTION:** Proposed collection; comment request.

**SUMMARY:** The Department of Commerce, as part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, invites the general public and other Federal agencies to take this opportunity to comment on proposed and/or continuing information collections, as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, Public Law 104-13 (44 U.S.C. 3506 (c)(2)(A)).

**DATES:** Written comments must be submitted on or before July 13, 1998.

**ADDRESSES:** Direct all written comments to Linda Engelmeier, Departmental Clearance Officer, Department of Commerce, Room 5327, 14th and Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20230.

#### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Requests for additional information or copies of the information collection instrument(s) and instructions should be directed to Ms. Deborah O'Neill, Department of Commerce, 14th and Constitution Avenue, NW, Room 6422, Washington, DC, 20230. Her telephone number is (202) 482-0202.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

##### I. Abstract

The Department of Commerce (DOC) is required by the Competition in Contracting Act (Pub. L. 98-369) to seek maximum competition when issuing contracts for supplies and services. The Federal Acquisition Regulations (FAR) require each Federal agency to obtain needed supplies and services by soliciting proposals from prospective contractors prior to entering into contracts necessary to accomplish the missions of the agency. The Department is required to issue solicitations which require prospective contractors to prepare and submit technical and cost proposals as part of the Federal acquisition process for awarding these contracts. In soliciting proposals, the agency collects, from each competing contractor, the information necessary to evaluate the proposals and make a decision as to which proposal offers the most benefit to the Government. In its solicitations, the Commerce Department uses Standard Forms and uniform solicitation format which are prescribed by the FAR. Each competing contractor is required to submit a proposal comprising various parts (technical, business, and cost). Instructions for the preparation of the proposal is tailored to the statement of work, the amount of information to be submitted in the proposal will vary with the complexity and size of the work. The proposal will be evaluated by the Government using criteria which must be stated in the solicitation. The results of the evaluation are used to make a decision as to which firm shall be selected for the contract. Commerce collects no information other than that needed to evaluate and select contractors to meet the unique requirements of the Department, and to meet the requirement of the Federal procurement system.

##### II. Method of Collection

Written submission.