

Administrator for Government Contracting, or another interested party may protest the small business representation of an offeror in a specific offer.

\* \* \* \* \*

(h) \* \* \*

(4) \* \* \* The contracting officer shall forward the protest to the SBA (see paragraph (c)(1) of this section) with a notation that the concern is not being considered for award, and shall notify the protester of this action.

(i) An appeal from an SBA size determination may be filed by: any concern or other interested party whose protest of the small business representation of another concern has been denied by an SBA Government Contracting Area Director; any concern or other interested party that has been adversely affected by a Government Contracting Area Director's decision; or the SBA Associate Administrator for the SBA program involved. The appeal must be filed with the—

Office of Hearings and Appeals, Small Business Administration, Suite 5900, 409 3rd Street, SW., Washington, DC 20416

within the time limits and in strict accordance with the procedures contained in subpart C of 13 CFR Part 134. It is within the discretion of the SBA Judge whether to accept an appeal from a size determination. If the Judge decides not to consider such an appeal, the Judge will issue an order denying review and specifying the reasons for the decision. The SBA will inform the contracting officer of its ruling on the appeal. The SBA decision, if received before award, will apply to the pending acquisition. SBA rulings received after award shall not apply to that acquisition.

(j) A protest that is not timely, even though received before award, shall be forwarded to the SBA Government Contracting Area Office (see paragraph (c)(1) of this section), with a notation on it that the protest is not timely. The protester shall be notified that the protest cannot be considered on the instant acquisition but has been referred to SBA for its consideration in any future actions. A protest received by a contracting officer after award of a contract shall be forwarded to the SBA Government Contracting Area Office with a notation that award has been made. The protester shall be notified that the award has been made and that the protest has been forwarded to SBA for its consideration in future actions.

3. Section 19.303 is amended by revising the section heading and paragraph (c) to read as follows:

### 19.303 Determining standard industrial classification codes and size standards.

\* \* \* \* \*

(c) The contracting officer's determination is final unless appealed as follows:

(1) An appeal from a contracting officer's SIC code designation and the applicable size standard must be served and filed within 10 calendar days after the issuance of the initial solicitation. SBA's Office of Hearings and Appeals (OHA) will dismiss summarily an untimely SIC code appeal.

(2)(i) The appeal petition must be in writing and must be addressed to the—  
Office of Hearings and Appeals, Small Business Administration, Suite 5900, 409 3rd Street, SW., Washington, DC 20416

(ii) There is no required format for the appeal; however, the appeal must include—

(A) The solicitation or contract number and the name, address, and telephone number of the contracting officer;

(B) A full and specific statement as to why the size determination or SIC code designation is allegedly erroneous and argument supporting the allegation; and

(C) The name, address, telephone number, and signature of the appellant or its attorney.

(3) The appellant must serve the appeal petition upon—

(i) The SBA official who issued the size determination;

(ii) The contracting officer who assigned the SIC code to the acquisition;

(iii) The business concern whose size status is at issue;

(iv) All persons who filed protests; and

(v) SBA's Office of General Counsel.

(4) Upon receipt of a SIC code appeal, OHA will notify the contracting officer by a notice and order of the date OHA received the appeal, the docket number, and Judge assigned to the case. The contracting officer's response to the appeal, if any, must include argument and evidence (see 13 CFR Part 134), and must be received by OHA within 10 calendar days from the date of the docketing notice and order, unless otherwise specified by the Administrative Judge. Upon receipt of OHA's docketing notice and order, the contracting officer must immediately send to OHA a copy of the solicitation relating to the SIC code appeal.

(5) After close of record, OHA will issue a decision and inform the contracting officer. If OHA's decision is received by the contracting officer before the date the offers are due, the decision shall be final and the

solicitation must be amended to reflect the decision, if appropriate. OHA's decision received after the due date of the initial offers shall not apply to the pending solicitation but shall apply to future solicitations of the same products or services.

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## DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

### GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION

### NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION

#### 48 CFR Part 19

[FAC 97-04; FAR Case 97-305; Item VIII]

RIN 9000-AH91

### Federal Acquisition Regulation; Small Business Competitiveness Demonstration Program

**AGENCIES:** Department of Defense (DoD), General Services Administration (GSA), and National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).

**ACTION:** Final rule.

**SUMMARY:** The Civilian Agency Acquisition Council and the Defense Acquisition Regulations Council have agreed on a final rule amending the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) to implement Section 401 of the Small Business Reauthorization Act of 1997. Section 401 eliminates the termination date of the Small Business Competitiveness Demonstration Program. This regulatory action was not subject to Office of Management and Budget review under Executive Order 12866, dated September 30, 1993, and is not a major rule under 5 U.S.C. 804.

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** February 23, 1998.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** The FAR Secretariat, Room 4035, GS Building, Washington, DC 20405 (202) 501-4755 for information pertaining to status or publication schedules. For clarification of content, contact Ms. Victoria Moss, Procurement Analyst, at (202) 501-4764. Please cite FAC 97-04, FAR case 97-305.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

##### A. Background

This final rule amends FAR Subpart 19.10 to eliminate the termination date of the Small Business Competitiveness Demonstration Program. Section 401 of the Small Business Reauthorization Act of 1997 (Pub. L. 105-135) amended Section 711(c) of the Small Business

Competitiveness Demonstration Program Act of 1988 (15 U.S.C. 644 note) to remove the program termination date of September 30, 1997.

### B. Regulatory Flexibility Act

The final rule does not constitute a significant FAR revision within the meaning of FAR 1.501 and Public Law 98-577, and publication for public comments is not required. However, comments from small entities concerning the affected FAR subpart will be considered in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 610. Such comments must be submitted separately and should cite 5 U.S.C. 601, *et seq.* (FAC 97-04, FAR case 97-305), in correspondence.

### C. Paperwork Reduction Act

The Paperwork Reduction Act does not apply because the changes to the FAR do not impose recordkeeping or information collection requirements, or collections of information from offerors, contractors, or members of the public which require the approval of the Office of Management and Budget under 44 U.S.C. 3501, *et seq.*

### List of Subjects in 48 CFR Part 19

Government procurement.

Dated: February 13, 1998.

**Edward C. Loeb,**

*Director, Federal Acquisition Policy Division.*

Therefore, 48 CFR Part 19 is amended as set forth below:

### PART 19—SMALL BUSINESS PROGRAMS

1. The authority citation for 48 CFR Part 19 continues to read as follows:

**Authority:** 40 U.S.C. 486(c); 10 U.S.C. chapter 137; and 42 U.S.C. 2473(c).

2. Section 19.1001 is revised to read as follows:

#### 19.1001 General.

The Small Business Competitiveness Demonstration Program was established by the Small Business Competitiveness Demonstration Program Act of 1988, Public Law 100-656 (15 U.S.C. 644 note). Pursuant to the Small Business Reauthorization Act (Pub. L. 105-135), the Small Business Competitiveness Demonstration Program has been extended indefinitely. The program is implemented by an OFPP Policy Directive and Test Plan, dated August 31, 1989, as amended on April 16, 1993, which remains in effect until supplemented or revised to reflect the statutory changes in Public Law 105-135. Pursuant to Section 713(a) of Public Law 100-656, the requirements of the FAR that are inconsistent with the

program procedures are waived. The program consists of two major components—

(a) Unrestricted competition in four designated industry groups; and

(b) Enhanced small business participation in 10 agency targeted industry categories.

3. Section 19.1003 is amended by revising the introductory text and the first sentence of paragraph (a) to read as follows:

#### 19.1003 Purpose.

The purpose of the Program is to—

(a) Assess the ability of small businesses to compete successfully in certain industry categories without competition being restricted by the use of small business set-asides. \* \* \*

\* \* \* \* \*

4. Section 19.1006 is amended by revising the first sentence of paragraph (b)(1) to read as follows:

#### 19.1006 Procedures.

\* \* \* \* \*

(b) *Designated industry groups.* (1) Solicitations for acquisitions in any of the four designated industry groups that have an anticipated dollar value greater than \$25,000 shall not be considered for small business set-asides under Subpart 19.5 (however, see paragraphs (b)(2) and (c)(1) of this section). \* \* \*

\* \* \* \* \*

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### DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

#### GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION

#### NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION

#### 48 CFR Parts 22 and 52

[FAC 97-04; FAR Case 95-602; Item IX]

RIN 9000-AH86

#### Federal Acquisition Regulation; Special Disabled and Vietnam Era Veterans

**AGENCIES:** Department of Defense (DoD), General Services Administration (GSA), and National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).

**ACTION:** Final rule.

**SUMMARY:** The Civilian Agency Acquisition Council and the Defense Acquisition Regulations Council have agreed on a final rule amending the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) to implement revised Department of Labor

(DoL) regulations regarding affirmative action for employment of disabled veterans and veterans of the Vietnam era. This regulatory action was not subject to Office of Management and Budget review under Executive Order 12866, dated September 30, 1993, and is not a major rule under 5 U.S.C. 804.

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** April 24, 1998.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** The FAR Secretariat, Room 4035, GS Building, Washington, DC 20405 (202) 501-4755 for information pertaining to status or publication schedules. For clarification of content, contact Mr. Jack O'Neill, Procurement Analyst, at (202) 501-3856. Please cite FAC 97-04, FAR case 95-602.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

##### A. Background

As a result of 1994 amendments to the Vietnam Veteran Readjustment Act, DoL published revisions to its regulations at 41 CFR 60-250 on January 5, 1995 (60 FR 1985), and corrections to these revisions on February 16, 1996 (61 FR 6116). This final rule amends the FAR to conform to the DoL revisions.

##### B. Regulatory Flexibility Act

This final rule does not constitute a significant FAR revision within the meaning of FAR 1.501 and Public Law 98-577, and publication for public comments is not required. However, comments from small entities concerning the affected FAR subpart will be considered in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 610. Such comments must be submitted separately and should cite 5 U.S.C. 601, *et seq.* (FAC 97-04, FAR case 95-602), in correspondence.

##### C. Paperwork Reduction Act

The Paperwork Reduction Act does not apply because the changes to the FAR do not impose recordkeeping or information collection requirements, or collections of information from offerors, contractors, or members of the public which require the approval of the Office of Management and Budget under 44 U.S.C. 3501, *et seq.*

### List of Subjects in 48 CFR Parts 22 and 52

Government procurement.

Dated: February 13, 1998.

**Edward C. Loeb,**

*Director, Federal Acquisition Policy Division.*

Therefore, 48 CFR Parts 22 and 52 are amended as set forth below:

1. The authority citation for 48 CFR Parts 22 and 52 continues to read as follows:

**Authority:** 40 U.S.C. 486(c); 10 U.S.C. chapter 137; and 42 U.S.C. 2473(c).