



Weekly Report July 21, 2017

GOVERNMENT CONTRACTING

“Proposed Information Collection Request; Federal Contractor Veterans' Employment Report VETS-4212.” *Federal Register*, July 18, 2017. Retrieved from federalregister.gov.

The Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS) issued a notice soliciting public comments concerning a request to extend the currently approved VETS-4214 information collection form. Federal contractors and subcontractors track and report the number of employees in their workforces, by job category and hiring location, who belong to the specified categories of protected veterans. This information is sent annually to the Secretary of Labor. The Secretary of Labor is interested in comments as to whether the proposed collection of information is necessary, and to evaluate the agency's burden for collecting the required information on the employment of covered veterans. The document comment period ends in 60 days.

“Administrative Amendments to Environmental Protection Agency Acquisition Regulation.” *Federal Register*, July 19, 2017. Retrieved from federalregister.gov.

The Environmental Protection Agency issued a direct final rule to amend the Environmental Protection Agency Acquisition Regulation (EPAAR). This action applies to contractors who have or wish to have contracts with the EPA. EPAAR Parts 1501, 1504, 1509, 1515, 1516, 1517, 1519, 1535, 1552 and 1553 are being amended to make administrative changes including updates, corrections and minor edits. The document has a comment period that ends in 29 days.

SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

“Reassessment of Eligibility Requirements for 30 Firms in SBA's 8(a) Business Development Program.”

The U.S. Small Business Administration Office of Inspector General (“OIG”) reassessed the eligibility requirements for 30 firms in the Small Business Administration's (“SBA's”) 8(a) Business Development Program. In a prior audit of 8(a) program eligibility, the OIG determined that for 30 of the 48 applicants reviewed, the Associate Administrator for Business Development (AA/BD) approved the firms without fully documenting in the Business Development Management Information System how all areas of concern regarding eligibility raised by lower-level reviewers were resolved.

The OIG determined that SBA resolved eligibility concerns for 20 of the 30 firms that were reviewed. However, the OIG continues to question the eligibility of 10 of the 30 firms. The AA/BD, who has the final authority to determine whether an applicant is admitted into the 8(a) program, did not sufficiently establish that the 10 applicants met the eligibility requirements of the 8(a) program. The Office of Inspector General made three recommendations to the Associate Administrator for Government Contracting and Business Development to improve how SBA manages the 8(a) program. Although SBA initially agreed with all three of the recommendations, it did not concur with Recommendations 2 and 3 in its final response; SBA management's proposed actions, however, resolve all three of the recommendations. The full report can be found [here](#).

CAPITOL HILL

S.1519 - National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2018. Full text retrieved from congress.gov.

Section 821 and 822 of the NDAA for FY2018 proposes reforms to government contracting. Section 821, "Government Accountability Office Bid Protest Reforms," contains the provision that a contractor who files a protest with the Government Accountability Office on a contract with the Department of Defense shall pay to the Department of Defense costs incurred for processing denied protests. Section 822 pertains to revising the Department of Defense Supplement to the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) to require that all required post-award debriefings must provide "detailed and comprehensive statements of the agency's rating for each evaluation criteria and of the agency's overall award decision."

"House Boosts Cybercom Budget But Cuts NIST Funds." *Nextgov*, July 14, 2017. Retrieved from nextgov.com.

The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2018 passed the U.S. House of Representatives, and was chock full of tech and cyber provisions. The House bill included a 16 percent funding hike for U.S. Cyber Command and mandated a new Pentagon and State Department plan to combat and deter adversary cyberattacks.

Proposed legislation: "S.1558 - A bill to amend section 203 of Public Law 94-305 to ensure proper authority for the Office of Advocacy of the Small Business Administration, and for other purposes." Retrieved from congress.gov.

S.1558 would give the Office of Advocacy at the Small Business Administration (SBA) tools to better monitor the impact of federal regulations on small businesses and to hold the government accountable for how regulations impact small businesses. The bill was introduced July 13, 2017.

"Key Lawmakers Move to Improve HUBZone Program." *U.S. House of Representatives Small Business Committee Press Release*. July 19, 2017. Retrieved from smallbusiness.house.gov. H.R. 3294, the HUBZONE Unification and Business Stability Act (HUBS), was introduced to the Small Business Committee. The bill proposes important reforms to the HUBZone program, provisions include:

1. requiring better data collection to determine program performance;
2. requiring faster SBA response time during the application process;
3. establishing a 5-year cycle for determining the geographic boundaries of HUBZones; and
4. altering the calculations by which certain geographic areas qualify for the program, potentially adding as many as 1,000 rural and non-urban counties.

The changes would be implemented in 2020. Language of the full bill can be found [here](#).

OTHER NEWS

"Trump Adds to GSA Leadership." *Nextgov*, July 17, 2017. Retrieved from nextgov.com
The General Services Administration today announced it has filled an important policymaking position. President Donald Trump named Allison Fahrenkopf Brigati as the agency's associate administrator for the Office of Governmentwide Policy.