



THE BEACON

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A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR OF OSDBU

It's been an incredibly busy and satisfying summer and fall. We've received approval to staff a new component of the Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU). We're working closely with all offices in VA to rollout the Department's new 2001-2006 Strategic Plan. We're working with VA's Procurement Executive to write implementing language in support of the recent Executive Orders for women-owned small business and small disadvantaged businesses. The Federal Government's implemented a new size standard system, so we're all learning a lot of new codes. If you haven't visited our website lately, I strongly encourage you to log on. The address is listed at the bottom of the page. We have made a lot of improvements and additions.

Acting Secretary Gober has approved the FY 2001 socioeconomic small business program goals.

The VA Socioeconomic program goals are respectively as follows:

VA FY 2001 GOALS

Small business	40%
SDB	10%
WOB	6%
Service DVOB	3%
HUBZone	2%
VOB	7%

Remember, Small Business Builds America!

Scott Denniston
 Director - OSDBU

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Center for Veterans Enterprise Established

Recruitment is underway to staff this new organizational element within OSDBU. Probably, by the next issue, you'll be hearing from the new Team Leader. We're very excited about this new office. Here's what's been

www.va.gov/osdbu

happening since our last issue:
July 24, 2000 - Bill Elmore was Appointed Associate Administrator for the U.S. Small Business Administration's Office of Veterans Business Development. Bill is a great guy with a long time record of superior advocacy on behalf of veterans. Since his appointment in late July, he's developed a cooperative working relationship with VA.

August 1, 2000 - VA mailed 63,000+ letters to veterans in business, developed from SBA's Pro-Net database and DoD's Centralized Contractor Registry. The Director, OSDBU sent a letter to each veteran-owned firm we could identify, in compliance with the annual notification required by P.L. 106-50. Surprisingly, we received very few bad addresses back. This shows that veterans are staying in business and keeping their profiles current.

August 10, 2000 – VA's OSDBU Director initiated the development of a Prime Contractors Veterans Business Advocates Council, the private sector counterpart to the Federal Agency Veterans Business Advocates Council, developed by VA in the Spring.

August 25, 2000 – Acting Secretary Gober sends a letter to SBA Administrator Aida Alvarez expressing concern about the lack of progress in implementing P.L. 106-50, with special mention made of the FAR case.

August 25, 2000 – Acting Secretary Gober provides briefing materials to the Task Force on Veterans Entrepreneurship, a national association of advocates organization's promoting veterans and disabled veterans. This is the second briefing on the legislation to this group.

August-September, 2000 - The OSDBU Director and staff members brief attendees at the annual conferences of the American GI Forum, AMVETS, and American Legion.

September 20, 2000, The FAR Council meets on the proposed Veterans Entrepreneurship Rule. VA opposes the rule as drafted because it does not clearly establish separate categories of goals for prime and subcontracting with veterans and with service-disabled veterans as distinct goaling groups. The Council decides to issue the rule as drafted.

September 25-27, 2000 - Initial Meeting of the Board of Directors of the National Veterans Business Development Corporation. They will meet again in early December. They have developed their objectives, retained legal counsel, appointed an interim Executive Director and initiated outreach. Their principle objectives are:

Fundraising (the corporation must be fully self-sustaining by October 1, 2004)
National Clearinghouse of Resource Information
National Veterans Database
One-Stop Shops for Veterans Business Assistance.

October 2, 2000 – Senators Bond and Kerry introduce an amendment to SBA's Reauthorization Bill, HR 2392 Amendment 4286, to require separate subcontracting goal categories for veterans and service disabled veterans.

October 11, 2000 – the Interim FAR Rule on Veterans Entrepreneurship is published in the Federal Register. It is effective for all solicitations released on or after that date. You may download it from VA's

OSDBU web site.
October 23, 2000 – OSDBU initiated internal concurrence of a proposed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Association of Government Marketing Assistance Specialists, the organization that manages the Procurement Technical Assistance Centers. This will be similar to the MOU that VA already has in place with the SBA and the Association of Small Business Development Centers. However, the PTACs are DoD funded and do a lot of work with defense contractors.

On September 25th the Honorable Bob Stump the Chairman of the Committee on Veterans Affairs and the Honorable Lane Evans ranking member House Veterans Affairs request VA briefing materials on actions taken in support of this program.

As you can see, VA is fully committed to supporting veterans entrepreneurship, and to the success of this new Government-wide legislation. Stay tuned for more news in the next issue.

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New Visibility for VA's Small Business Programs

In addition to receiving inquiries from the Veterans Committees and the Small Business Committees in Congress, internal changes are underway to raise awareness of small business programs throughout our Department. Here's what's new:

VA Strategic Plan 2001-2006 was released in September. Strategic Goal #4 reads: Contribute to the Public Health,

Socioeconomic Well Being and History of the Nation. Objective 4.4 in support of this goal reads: Enhance the socioeconomic well being of the Nation through veterans benefits and business assistance programs. There are two outcome measures for this objective. Small Business Procurement Goal Performance is one of them.

Executive Order 13170 dated October 6, 2000, entitled “Increasing Opportunities and Access for Disadvantaged Businesses”

requires the Department’s Deputy Secretary to implement the terms of the order. It lists specific steps and requires the development of a comprehensive strategic plan to aggressively include SDBs and 8(a) concerns in VA’s prime and subcontract opportunities. Personnel in VA OSDBU and VA’s Office of Acquisition and Materiel Management are coordinating this effort on behalf of the Acting Deputy Secretary. The EO requires this be forwarded to the Office of Management and Budget by January 4, 2001. By April 30 of each year, the agency must report to OMB on the success of planned efforts to increase SDB utilization. Separate sections address diversity in public advertising, information technology requirements, bundling and Federal Supply Schedule contracts.

Executive Order 13157 dated May 23, 2000, entitled “Increasing Opportunities for Women-Owned Small Businesses.”

This is similar to the SDB EO. The EO requires that a VA designate a “senior acquisition official” to represent the Department on requirements under this order. VA’s Associate Deputy Assistant Secretary for Acquisitions (David S. Derr) will be the VA official responsible for ensuring VA compliance. It too requires that VA develop a

comprehensive strategy to expand opportunities for WOSBs. On October 4, VA was asked to address the joint meeting of the Interagency Committee on Women’s Business Enterprise and the National Business Women’s Council. VA is the largest agency that has succeeded in meeting the 5% goal. At this meeting, SBA’s Office of Women’s Business Ownership distributed a sample implementation guide for the EO.

Advisory Committee on Minority Veterans submitted their Sixth Annual Report to Congress and to the Acting Secretary in late July.

The Report was submitted to the Veterans Affairs committees. Contained in this report, and the subject of a follow-up meeting by the Committee Chairman with VA’s Acting Secretary, are recommendations that VA needs to increase awards to small and small disadvantaged businesses.

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Update on P. L. 106-50 “The Veterans Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development Act of 1999”

On October 11, 2000, an Interim rule was issued amending the FAR sections 501(c), 502(a)(2), Veterans Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development Act of 1999 (Public Law 106-50). The interim rule established:

?? A definition for the terms veteran-owned and service

disabled veteran-owned small business.

?? Affords maximum practical opportunity for veteran and service disabled veteran-owned small businesses HUB Zone small business, or woman-owned small business to participate in performance of contracts awarded by Federal agencies.

?? Established is a requirement to include a goal for veteran-owned small businesses in subcontracting plans.

?? The SF 294 and 295 forms were amended to add data collection requirements for subcontract awards to veteran-owned small businesses and service-disabled veteran-owned small business concerns.

A contractor acting in good faith may rely on the written representation of its subcontractor regarding the subcontractor’s status as a small business. Service-disabled veteran-owned small business concerns as subcontractors meet the definition of veteran-owned small business concerns, and offerors may include them within the subcontracting plan goal for veteran-owned small business concerns. A separate goal for service-disabled veteran-owned small business concerns is not required.

Comments are due to the FAR Secretariat on or before December 11, 2000.

Determining Small Business Status

To be eligible as a subcontractor under the program, a concern must represent itself as a service-disabled veteran or veteran-owned small business.

Service-disabled veteran-owned small business concerns meet

the definition of veteran-owned small business concerns, and offerors may include them within the subcontracting plan goal for veteran-owned small business concerns. A separate goal for service-disabled veteran-owned small business concerns is not required at this time.

Definitions –

Veteran – A person who served in the active military, naval, or air service, for at least 24 months and who was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable
38 CFR 3.12a(i).

Service-disabled veteran-owned small business

A small business concern, which is not less than 51 percent owned and managed by a service-connected disabled veteran(s) or any publicly owned small business, not less than 51

Service-disabled veteran as defined in 38 USC 101(2), The term “service-connected” means, with respect to disability that such disability was incurred or aggravated in the line of duty in the active military, naval, or air service.

Veteran-owned small business concern means a small business concern, not less than 51 percent of which is owned by and managed by a veteran who served in the active military, naval, or air service, and who was discharged or released there from under conditions other than dishonorable, or in the case of any publicly owned business, not less than 51 percent of the stock of which is owned and managed on a daily basis by one or more veterans.

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The History of Veterans Day

We have just finished celebrating Veterans Day and recognizing the contributions that veterans have made to our country and to our freedoms. But why do we recognized veterans each year on November 11th?

Congress passed a law in 1938, officially making November 11th Armistice Day, the 11th day of the 11th month, a national day. And in 1954, another law changed the name to Veterans Day formally recognizing it as the time to honor all who have served and making Veterans Day a national holiday. But the tradition we honor goes back much further.

As we look back through memory’s eye, to momentous times in our nation’s past, the images they we see are not of people old or gray, but, of people forever young, forever full of life, forever frozen in time.

The photo of a World War I “Doughboy,” posing with his squad, the week before he heard the final whistle blow at Belleau Wood.

The picture of a smiling sailor, standing with his buddies aboard ship, before steering a landing craft ashore at Omaha Beach in World War II.

The snapshot of a tough Marine sergeant, bundled in heavy clothing and joking about the cold, before the fighting at the Chosin Reservoir in Korea.

The picture of a serious looking Air Force crew chief, standing in front of his C-130 aircraft before flying a last mission to re-supply a jungle firebase in Vietnam.

Some 40 million Americans

have served in wartime, with more than a million of them giving up their lives in the process.

Tens of thousands have lost their lives, during the wars, leaving their loved ones with only memories, parents who would never again see the pride of their lives; wives who would never again embrace their husbands; children whose fathers would never again take them swimming or see them graduate or know the adults they would become.

For all the high-tech weapons systems, things like “stealth airplanes, smart-bombs and patriot missiles” and all the rest of the modern arsenal, the tide of battle has always turned and likely always will turn on the ability and the willingness of a young American, tired, hungry, scared and homesick, to get up under fire, in a strange place, to go forward to get the job done.

Our nation is what it is because young people kept faith with their country.

It was a Veteran, Not a Reporter Who Guaranteed Freedom of the Press.

It was a Veteran, Not a Poet, Who Guaranteed Freedom of Speech.

It was a Veteran, not a Campus Organizer, Who Guaranteed the Freedom to Demonstrate.

It is a Veteran who Salutes the Flag Risks it all for the Flag and Who is Buried Beneath a Flag.

