



DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

OFFICE OF SMALL AND DISADVANTAGED BUSINESS UTILIZATION



## NOTES FROM SCOTT

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It is with great pleasure in this issue that I introduce the newest professional staff member of OSDBU, Mr. James C. (Jim) Jackson. A Virginia Tech graduate, Jim joined our staff as a Senior Procurement Analyst on June 4, 2001, and is assigned to our Outreach Team. Jim comes to OSDBU from the National Cemetery Administration's Operations Support Center in Quantico, VA, where he served as a Senior Contract Specialist with the Centralized Contracting Division. During his tour with the National Cemetery Administration, Jim was instrumental in developing many small and small disadvantaged business sources for a variety of acquisitions. His contributions in this area are evidenced by the accomplishments of the National Cemetery Administration in contracting with small business. Prior to being appointed to the position of contract specialist, Jim served in a variety of administrative positions with the National Cemetery Administration's Office of Memorial Programs. Since reporting for duty, Jim has taken the lead on the largest outreach initiative ever undertaken by OSDBU, alerting small businesses to their potential eligibility for HUBZone certification. Please join me in welcoming Jim to the OSDBU team.



JACKSON

Recently, the department responded to an inquiry from the Senate Small Business Committee that reinforces the importance of timely and accurate reporting of contract awards to the Federal Procurement Data System (FPDS). VA was required, on short notice and with a quick turnaround time, to provide to the Committee its HUBZone accomplishments for FY 2000 and FY 2001, through April 30, 2001. Regrettably, our response to the Committee provided an incomplete and unimpressive picture of VA's socioeconomic accomplishments for FY 2001, as over 40 stations had no data reported for FY 2001 in FPDS by April 30th. It was also necessary to contact seventeen VISNs to ask they verify the accuracy of data reported. Serious reporting errors were found that required adjustment and explanation to the Committee. With the end of the third quarter upon us, we will be reporting to senior

# OSDBU UPDATE

## NOTES FROM SCOTT

management by mid-July, VA's socioeconomic accomplishments through the third quarter. We never know from whom or when we will receive requests for this data. Please make sure that your FPDS reporting is current and accurate through the end of the third quarter, by July 6th, to ensure VA receives credit for all of your accomplishments and we can report the most up-to-date information to the department's leadership.

Many of you have asked about the status of the Secretary's Small Business Program Awards for FY 2000. We are in the process of notifying the award recipients and arranging for their presentation. We had hoped to have the awards announced and presented some time ago. I apologize for the delay and hope to have this information out to everyone in the very near future.

Have a great summer and remember, if your vacation or travel plans bring you to Washington, please stop in and pay us a visit. ✍

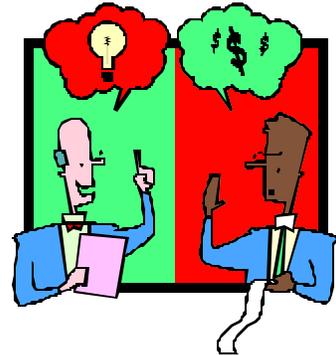


**Scott Denniston**  
*Director*

## UNSOLICITED PROPOSALS

*By Deborah Van Dover*

On May 17, 2001, Howard Swartzman, Senior Procurement Analyst (95E) dispatched a very timely and informative document regarding unsolicited proposals. This article reinforces that important information.



As FAR 15 states, each agency is to develop procedures and points of contact to assist in the proper, and timely processing of unsolicited proposals. VAAR 815.5 provides detailed procedures for processing unsolicited proposals.

As stipulated in VAAR 815.5, any inquiries from a potential offeror of an unsolicited proposal are to be referred to the appropriate VA point of contact. These points of contact are: The Chief, Acquisition and Materiel Management Service for all VA field activities, the Executive Director and Chief Operating Officer of the VA National Acquisition Center (NAC) for unsolicited proposals submitted to that facility, and the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Acquisition and Materiel Management (OA&MM) for all unsolicited proposals received at VA Central Office. These points of contact will discuss issues with the potential offeror to determine the need for the item or services and then consult with technical personnel. The point of contact will also inform the potential offeror of all information required when submitting an unsolicited proposal. Each unsolicited proposal is to be forwarded to the appropriate contact point. The VA point of contact will review all unsolicited proposals to ensure it is complete in accordance with FAR 15.505. After review, if the determination is made that the proposal meets all requirements, and is related to the mission of the VA, the offeror will be contacted to ensure all restricted data has been marked as such. Each VA point of contact will maintain a log of unsolicited proposals that are to be evaluated.

This log will include such information as the date of receipt, a description of the proposal, and the offices that have been requested to evaluate the proposals. Each level of review will be provided with a due date as to when the evaluations are to be returned to the point of contact.

These are a few of the highlights relative to VA procedures for processing unsolicited proposals. For complete procedures, please refer to VAAR 815.5. ✍

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## YOUR **OSDBU** TEAM

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Deputy Director

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**ILENE WAGGONER**  
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**JIM JACKSON**  
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Program Support Team

**CARLTON KNIGHT**  
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✍  
202 – 565 – 8124 PH  
202 – 565 – 8156 FAX

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## IMPORTANT REMINDERS **ABOUT THE VA AND SBA PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT**

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*By Lynette Simmons*

VA and SBA entered into a Partnership Agreement (PA) last December in order to streamline and expedite contracting through the 8(a) Small Business



Development Program, hopefully making the jobs of VA acquisition professionals somewhat easier. Many facilities have successfully contracted directly with 8(a) firms using the authority granted in the PA. A couple of important reminders should be noted here. When contracting directly with an 8(a) firm under the PA, please be sure to identify these contract awards by adding “8(a)” as the suffix to VA’s Contract Number. SBA no longer assigns an SBA contract number to these contracts. An important requirement of the agreement is that OSDBU receive a copy of the contract’s signature/cover page only, and that a signed copy of the contract be forwarded to the respective SBA District Office within 15 days of contract award. SBA reserves the right to rescind the PA should it not receive copies of the contracts. Also, please be sure to immediately report these awards using the Federal Procurement Data System. We note that less than a quarter of the contracts for which we have received signed copies of the cover page were reported in the Federal Procurement Data System. Under reporting adversely affects VA’s accomplishments in these important areas. ✍

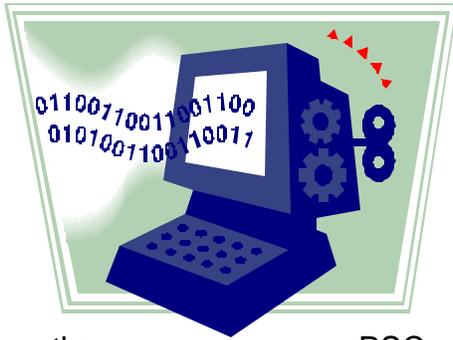
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## USING **PRODUCT/SERVICE** CODE 9999

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*By Lisa Russell*

There are times when the codes in the Product/Service Code manual for submission of information in Item 12 in the FPDS ICAR format just do not fit the product or service acquired under the contract. Sometimes, the product or service does not even have a general category in



the PSC manual. When no general category exists in the PSC manual, it is appropriate to use the miscellaneous PSCs that begin with 99. There are even ones listed in the miscellaneous category for specific products, such as signs, jewelry, collectors and historical items, smokers articles, ecclesiastical supplies, and memorials. There is also the general catchall 9999 with the description of “miscellaneous”.

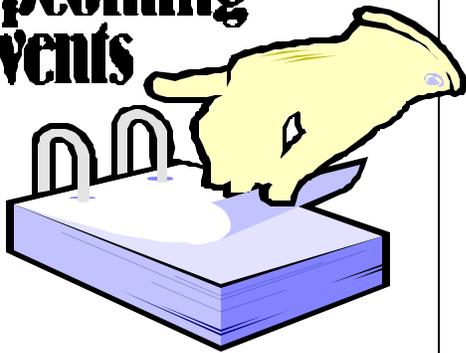
PSC 9999 should be used only when no other code is appropriate. If there is a general PSC category that fits the product or service acquired, the general category sometimes contains a code for miscellaneous items in that category. For example, the general category of 63 is for alarm, signal, and security detection systems. It contains specific codes for traffic and transit signal systems (6310), shipboard alarm and signal systems (6320), railroad signal and warning devices (6330), and aircraft alarm and signal systems (6340). It

also contains PSC 6350 for miscellaneous alarm, signal and security detection systems. If your contract is for a burglar alarm system, it is more appropriate to use 6350 rather than 9999.

A review of the FPDS reports submitted in FY 2001 showed that contractor names such as American Red Cross, Alliant Food Service, Respacare, COMPHEALTH, Potomac Hudson Engineering, Staff Care, St. Alexius Home Health Care, Federal Express, Ethicon Endo Surgery, Herman Miller, Sweep Optical, Homestead Village, and NDC Healthcare Financial Services all used PSC 9999 when other codes were probably more appropriate. Generally, American Red Cross provides blood and blood products, which should be reported using PSC 6505. Alliant Food Service provides subsistence items, which can be found under PSC 89. Homestead Village has a NAICS code for hotels and motels, which should have PSC V231, Lodging – hotel/motel. St. Alexius Home Health Care and CMOPHEALTH have NAICS codes for medical services and should have PSCs that begin with Q. Potomac Hudson Engineering had a NAICS code for environmental consulting services and may have been more appropriately reported under PSC F1, Environmental Systems Protection, or PSC R4, professional, administrative, and management support services. Sweep Optical had a NAICS code for surgical appliance and supplies manufacturing, which corresponds to PSC 65, Medical, Dental, and Veterinary Equipment and Supplies. Herman Miller manufactures furniture and related items, which is covered under PSC 71, Furniture, or if hospital furniture, PSC 6530.

Before selecting PSC 9999, please take an extra few seconds to determine if there is another PSC code that more closely describes the product or service acquired. Our office is frequently asked to provide information on what the VA buys, and we use the PSC codes submitted in your FPDS reports to do this. PSC 9999 is never included in any of the data provided, as that PSC provides no information whatsoever on what was acquired. It should be used only when there is no other PSC code that provides a better fit. ✍

# Upcoming Events



It seems that lately OSDBU has been inundated with invitations to participate in small business conferences and trade shows both in the Washington, DC area and in the field. It is very difficult for our staff to cover all of the conferences therefore it is very much appreciated when the procurement staff in the field is willing to attend many of these functions. ✍



**Ms. Kathy Allen** of VAMC Togus, Maine attended the *"Putting the Pieces Together"* conference & resource fair held in Augusta, Maine on April 25, 2001. This conference is one of the largest conferences held in Maine for the benefit of small business.



**Mr. Michael G. Miller**, Chief Logistics Officer VISN 4 and **Mr. Duane Trotter**, Chief A&MM, Coatesville

attended the *"Teaming to Win"* conference held in Morgantown, West Virginia on May 30<sup>th</sup> thru June 1<sup>st</sup>. This is a yearly conference supported by Congressman Alan B. Mollohan, 1<sup>st</sup> District, West Virginia.



**Mr. Rufino Villaluz**, Contracting Officer, VAMC Bronx, New York attended the *"Procurement Fair 2001"* sponsored by the Minority Enterprise Development Division of the U.S. Small Business Administration. The conference was attended by approximately 250 small businesses, which included HUBZone, 8(a) and women-owned small businesses.



**Ms. Linda Windham**, Contracting Officer at VAMC Anchorage, Alaska attended the *"Alliance North 2001 Small Business Conference and Trade Show"* held at the Egan Convention Center in Anchorage, which was sponsored by the Small Business Administration and the Procurement Technical Assistance Center.



**Mr. Jeff Bagford** of VAMC Phoenix, along with several from his staff attended the Small Business Administration's 8(a) Annual Meeting in Tempe, Arizona presenting and counseling with 8(a) small businesses.

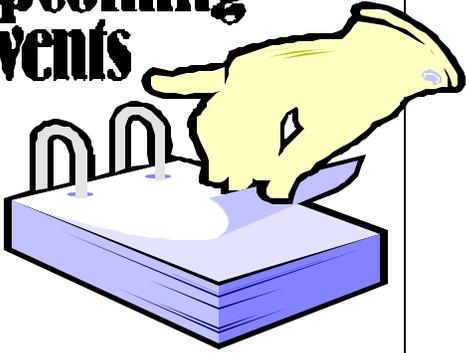


**Ms. Jan Woerner**, Chief, A&MM, Jackson, Mississippi and members of her staff attended the Sonny Montgomery Minority Business Alliance *"Economic Destination"* trade show.



Thank you to all of those who take time away from their busy schedules to represent the VA at small business conferences throughout the country.

## Upcoming Events



# SMALL BUSINESS BUILDS AMERICA

WEBSITE ADDRESS

[www.va.gov/osdbu](http://www.va.gov/osdbu)

TOLL-FREE NUMBER

800 - 949 - 8387

### **JULY 11 - 14, 2001**

18<sup>th</sup> Annual National Minority Supplier Development Council of Florida Trade Fair  
Disney's Contemporary Resort, Walt Disney World, Orlando, Florida  
For More Information Call (407) 859-3901

### **JULY 12 - 14, 2001**

21<sup>st</sup> Century Leaders... Women of Color Conference  
Renaissance Hotel, Baltimore Inner Harbor, Baltimore, Maryland  
For More Information: [www.wocinfo@tca-events.com](mailto:www.wocinfo@tca-events.com)

### **JULY 16 - 18, 2001**

Eastern Reservation Economic Summit  
Mississippi Band of Choctaws Indian Reservation, Silver Star Casino  
Philadelphia, Mississippi / For More Information Call (408) 545-1298 EXT 228

### **AUGUST 14, 2001**

2001 Government Procurement Conference  
Indianapolis Marriott Hotel, 7202 E. 21<sup>st</sup> Street, Indianapolis, Indiana  
For More Information Call (317) 616-2413

### **SEPTEMBER 5, 2001**

15<sup>th</sup> Annual Entrepreneurial Woman's Conference  
Chicago Navy Pier  
Chicago, Illinois

### **SEPTEMBER 10, 2001**

Women's Business Institute 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Procurement Fair  
Holiday Inn (Route 40 W), Frederick, Maryland  
For More Information Call (410) 756-2334

### **SEPTEMBER 24, 2001**

National MED Week 2001 Conference  
OMNI Shoreham Hotel, 2500 Calvert Street NW, Washington, DC  
For More Information Call (202) 501-4693