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**The Manufacturing Advancement Center**  
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## Supply Chain

### Contracting: Back to Basics, Part I

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With the start of a new year, it might be helpful to review some of the fundamentals involved in becoming a trading partner of the Department of Defense (DOD). We will discuss the registrations and some of the forms and strategies that are prerequisites for success with the DOD.

#### DUNS Number

The first registration requirement is for a business to have a D-U-N-S® number. This number is obtained from Dun and Bradstreet. Created in 1962, the Data Universal Numbering System or D-U-N-S Number is D&B's copyrighted, proprietary means of identifying business entities on a location-specific basis. Assigned and maintained solely by D&B, this unique nine-digit identification code has been assigned to over 84 million businesses worldwide. A D-U-N-S Number remains with the company location to which it has been assigned even if it closes or goes out-of-business. The D-U-N-S Number also "unlocks" a wealth of value-added data associated with that entity, including the business name, physical and mailing addresses, tradestyles ("doing business as"), principal names, financial, payment experiences, industry classifications (SICs and NAICS), socio-economic status, government data, and more.

The D-U-N-S Number also links members of corporate family trees worldwide. The D-U-N-S Number is widely used by both commercial and federal entities and was adopted as the standard business identifier for federal electronic commerce in October 1994. The D-U-N-S Number was also incorporated into the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) in April 1998 as the Federal Government's contractor identification code for all procurement-related activities.

To get a D-U-N-S® number, you can use the web (<http://www.dnb.com/ccr/register.html>) or the phone (866.705.5711). There is also a link on the Central Contractor Registration web site. There is no cost for a D-U-N-S® number.

## **Central Contractor Registration**

By far, the most important required registration is the Central Contractor Registration (CCR). This form creates the mechanism for the DOD, and many other agencies, to pay you. The Central Contractor Registration (CCR) is the primary vendor database for the U.S. Federal Government. The CCR collects, validates, stores, and disseminates data in support of agency acquisition missions.

Both current and potential government vendors are required to register in CCR in order to be awarded contracts by the government. Registrants are required to complete a one-time registration to provide basic information relevant to procurement and financial transactions. Registrations must be updated or renewed annually to maintain an active status.

CCR validates the vendor's information and electronically shares the secure and encrypted data with the federal agencies' finance offices to facilitate paperless payments through electronic funds transfer (EFT). Additionally, CCR shares the data with government procurement and electronic business systems.

Please note that any information provided in your registration may be shared with authorized government offices. Registration does not, however, guarantee business with the government. To register, you begin on the web, at <http://www.ccr.gov>. As with the D-U-N-S® number, there is no cost for CCR. A hint while registering: save after each section of the form. Many folks get frustrated by completing all the data, saving at the end, and losing the first few forms.

## **Corporate and Government Entity Code**

If your company is a first time registrant, you will receive, as a result of completing CCR, a Corporate and Government Entity (CAGE) Code. This code is used to identify your firm in the logistics end of the government. The CAGE code is a public code that is used to identify sources of parts. It is hoped that yours will show up often on DOD web sites.

## **PRO-NET**

Not long ago, a small business had to register in PRO-NET also. PRO-NET is the SBA's Procurement Network Database. The PRO-NET database has been integrated with CCR since Jan 1, 2004, so manually registering in PRONET is no longer required.

## **Military Technical Data Agreement**

Another form that is helpful to complete, is the DD2345, Military Technical Data Agreement. Completing and submitting this form will expedite receipt of prints during the bidding process if dissemination of technical data is restricted. The form is available on line at <https://dbi.dscc.dla.mil/Docs/>. The form is available on that page, along with other useful information regarding availability of technical data.

## Demographics

Finally, it is important to address any demographic or economic incentives that might give you an advantage in contracting with the Department of Defense, or their larger suppliers. Demographics include Women-Owned, Small Disadvantaged Business, Service Connected Disabled Veteran Owned, and 8A eligible businesses. The economic incentives revolve around businesses located in historically under-utilized business (HUB) Zones. HUB Zones are defined by county or census tract. You can determine if your business is located in a HUB Zone at <http://www.sba.gov/hubzone>. If your firm is in a HUB Zone, there are additional requirements for SBA certification explained in the SBA web site.

Next month, we will explore the certifications necessary to take advantage of the demographic and economic, as well as the goals for each type. If you think you may be entitled to take advantage of one or more of the incentives, you don't have to wait. You can contact your local MEP, VMEC, at 802-728-1432.