

involve appearances before groups representing small-business interests.

Other sources of information include full texts of FTC-administered statutes and rules, advisory opinions issued by the Commission or its staff, texts of speeches and testimony, and information on enforcement actions. The FTC also produces and disseminates numerous print and broadcast materials that, while directed to consumers, can benefit small businesses by identifying the practices that generate consumer protection issues between businesses and their customers and explaining how they should be handled.

These materials and information are readily available to small businesses through a variety of sources, including:

Through the FTC's Web site www.ftc.gov, and from links at www.business.gov, www.firstgov.gov, and www.sba.gov/yourgovt/federal.html.

Directly from the FTC, Room H-130, 600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW., Washington, DC 20580, or call (toll-free) 877-FTC-HELP.

Additional FTC Guides:

- How to Comply With The Children's Online Privacy Protection Rule, <http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/online/pubs/buspubs/coppa.pdf>, <http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/online/pubs/buspubs/coppa.htm>.

- Frequently Asked Advertising Questions: A Guide for Small Business <http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/online/pubs/buspubs/ad-faqs.htm>.

Where the sources of general information are insufficient to provide the needed guidance or assistance, an FTC staff member may provide specific, informal advice or arrange for a more formal response. Small businesses may make inquiries of the Commission by various means. Inquiries can be informal and the business need not even identify itself. The FTC also has procedures for providing, where appropriate, either a staff advisory opinion or, in specified circumstances, a Commission advisory opinion. It is generally most effective to discuss the issue with a staff person before deciding whether to seek a formal advisory opinion.

Federal Trade Commission Points of Contact: Inquiries regarding consumer protection issues may be made to the FTC, Room H-130, 600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW., Washington, DC 20580; telephone (toll-free) 1-877-FTC-HELP (1-877-382-4357).

Inquiries regarding competition issues may be made to the Office of Policy and Evaluation, Bureau of Competition, Federal Trade Commission,

Washington, DC 20580; telephone (202) 326-3300; fax (202) 326-2884.

Inquiries may also be directed to The Office of the Secretary, Federal Trade Commission, Washington, DC 20580, Telephone: 202-326-2515, Fax: 202-326-2496; Businesses may also contact any of the FTC's regional offices.

Merit Systems Protection Board

Merit Systems Protection Board
Single Point of Contact: Richard A. Dorr, Merit Systems Protection Board, 1615 M Street NW., Suite 500, Washington, DC 20036, Telephone: 202-653-6772 ext. 1113, Fax: 202-653-7821. E-mail: richard.dorr@mspb.gov.

National Aeronautics and Space Administration

Compliance Assistance Resources

The Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU) promotes the utilization of small, disadvantaged and women-owned businesses in compliance with Federal laws, regulations, and policies. We assist such firms in obtaining contracts and subcontracts with NASA and its prime contractors. The OSDBU also facilitates the participation of small businesses in NASA's technology transfer and commercialization activities. Our objective is not only to ensure that small businesses are integrated seamlessly into the aerospace industrial base of the country, but that they can contribute to the performance of NASA missions. NASA supports a non-retaliation policy against small businesses as stated in NASA Policy Directive 5101.32 for the Ombudsman program.

Small businesses seeking work with NASA are directed to our Web site <http://osdbu.nasa.gov>. Activities in support of small businesses are listed with information on how to get involved in obtaining contracts and subcontracts. Request for Proposals open for bid can be reviewed on the Internet at <http://procurement.nasa.gov>.

Description of Program

To get the highest return on investment, the NASA OSDBU has designed, implemented, and facilitated user-friendly programs and initiatives. This ensures the full integration of capable and high-quality small businesses into the competitive base of contractors from which NASA regularly purchases products and services. In addition, the OSDBU has an outreach effort to communicate with its target small business constituents, as well as an in-reach program to educate NASA technical, procurement, and

administrative personnel about programs and policies. The OSDBU also disseminates information about its programs through conferences, forums, training and development programs, counseling, promotional materials, and the Internet. A free three-day course called Training and Development for Small Businesses in Advanced Technologies (TADSBAT) acquaints companies with the NASA culture. This course is held four times a year at different locations nationally. In addition, two forums were developed to seek high-technology firms capable of participating in the Agency's most complex programs. The Aerospace Technology Small Disadvantaged Forum is conducted twice a year at two of the aeronautics Field Centers where three to five high-tech SDBs are selected to give presentations to senior level technical managers. From the forum's inception in 1993 through FY 2001, more than \$85 million have been awarded to some of the presenters. A similar format is used for the Semi-annual Science Forums for Small Businesses. The Science Forums create a "high-level marketing opportunity" for selected small businesses to present their capabilities to earth science personnel at the Goddard Space Flight Center and to space science personnel at The Jet Propulsion Laboratory. Since the inception of this program in 1997, over \$47 million in contracts and subcontracts have been awarded to participants.

As NASA's premier initiative, the Mentor-Protégé Program is designed to encourage prime contractors to assist disadvantaged companies in expanding their technical capabilities where such firms are underrepresented in the market. Prime contractors receive a variety of incentives during the source selection process, plus award fee increments during the period of the contract, if performed successfully. To spur small businesses to actively pursue opportunities for commercializing NASA technology, the OSDBU, in conjunction with the Minority Owned Business Technology Transfer Consortium (MBTTC) puts on seminars throughout the year. Companies learn about the NASA Commercialization Technology Network, how to identify technologies and work with researchers and scientists, how to apply for licensing agreements, and how to find financing sources.

"Socioeconomic Procurement as a Business Imperative" is a one-day course given four times a year at different NASA Centers to a cross-section of the Agency's technical, procurement, and administrative