

- (4) Contractor.
 - (5) Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Number of the contractor.
 - (6) North American Industrial Classification (NAICS) code (searchable).
 - (7) Principal Product or Service Code (searchable).
 - (8) Brief description of supplies and services (searchable).
 - (9) Applicable socio-economic information (searchable) with drop down box to identify from the following status categories those that apply to the contractor: Small Business, Emerging Small Business, Small Disadvantaged Business, 8(a), Very Small Business, Woman-Owned Business, HUBZone, Veteran-Owned Small Business, Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business, Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Minority Institution, Javits-Wagner-O'Day Participating Nonprofit Agency, Large Business, Other.
 - (10) Government Web site address where contract or program information is located, if available.
- Information about placing orders.*
- (11) Agencies that may place orders (searchable).
 - (12) Date through which agencies may place orders.
 - (13) Statutory authority for placing orders with a drop down box to include—
 - (a) Clinger-Cohen GWAC authority (40 U.S.C. 11302(e));
 - (b) Economy Act (31 U.S.C. 1535), including Clinger Cohen multi-agency contract authority (40 U.S.C. 11314(a)(2));
 - (c) The Federal Property and Administrative Services Act authority for the Multiple Award Schedules Program (41 U.S.C. 259(b)(3)); and
 - (d) Other statutory authority not subject to the Economy Act (to be specified).
 - (14) Ordering procedures, unless addressed at the Web site identified in data field (10), above.
 - (15) List of administrative fees, unless addressed at the Web site identified in data field (10), above.

Information about the servicing agency.

- (16) Agency or activity that awarded the procurement instrument (searchable).
- (17) Activity point of contact/telephone number/e-mail address.

The fields described above include the following changes from the fields that were described in the preamble to the proposed rule:

- *Increased search capabilities.* More fields will be searchable. For example, agencies will be able to search the field that identifies who may place orders. This will make it easier for agencies to identify vehicles that are available for their own use. The “type of procurement instrument” field (*i.e.*, field no. 3) is also being made searchable so that agencies may view offerings available through a particular type of procurement vehicle.

To improve the visibility of the small business community, data captured in the socio-economic information field will be made searchable. This field will

be further refined so that directory users can identify products offered by a Javits-Wagner-O'Day participating nonprofit agency.

The contract directory will not allow users to search for product and service offerings by contractor. The FAR Council seeks for the directory to be used, in general, to consider a range of sources. Broader searching will help agencies get a better sense of marketplace capabilities as they consider whether their needs are best met through an interagency contract or an open market new procurement action.

- *New field.* A field will be added to identify the contractor's Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number. DUNS numbers serve as a common link among Government databases. For example, DUNS numbers are required for contractors that register to do business with the Government in the Central Contractor Registration (CCR) database. Although DUNS numbers function as a useful business identifier, the directory will not provide for searches by DUNS number for the same reason that searches by contractor will not be enabled.

- *Easier entry and maintenance of data.* Data entry of the socio-economic field of the directory has been modified so that population of this information for woman-owned businesses matches the formats for forms DD 350 and SF 279. To aid agencies in maintaining the currency of their data, the directory will identify the last date information on a given entry was submitted or edited. In addition, at the point where agencies may no longer place orders, as identified by the agency, the directory will move the information to an inactive file.

The contract directory project is linked to a broader e-Government initiative to create an “integrated acquisition environment” (IAE). The goal of the IAE is to facilitate the migration and leveraging of information technology investments to modernized infrastructures. Once this transformation occurs, agencies will be able to effectively integrate the many functions critical to the successful operation of the acquisition process. Among other things, this effort will help to eliminate redundant processes. As efforts progress to modernize and integrate contract-writing systems, agencies will be able to populate fields in the contract directory without re-keying of information. In the meantime, electronic data submission is an option.

Like other IAE initiatives, the contract directory will be subject to a governance structure and its operations will be

overseen by a configuration management board. Currently, a Federal interagency users group, the “E-Catalogs Group,” under the aegis of GSA in its capacity as managing partner of the IAE, meets periodically to discuss how the contract directory will operate. The group has sought to minimize burden while ensuring the site supports acquisition planning and market research efforts.

3. Public Comments

Twelve respondents submitted public comments on the proposed rule and the planned fields for the contract directory (as described in the preamble to the proposed rule). The comments primarily focused on: (1) The purpose of FAR coverage, (2) the burden associated with populating and maintaining the contract directory, (3) the functionality of the directory, and (4) impact on small business. All comments were considered in developing the final rule and first generation of data elements. A summary of the more significant comments and their disposition is provided below.

- a. *Purpose of FAR coverage.* One commenter recommended that the coverage proposed for FAR Subpart 5.6 establishing the requirement to enter interagency contracts into the database be moved to FAR Part 4, where administrative matters, including contract reporting, are covered. Another commenter supported finalizing the coverage in its proposed location in FAR Part 5.

The FAR Council recognizes that other data reporting requirements, such as that for the Federal Procurement Data System (FPDS), are addressed in FAR Part 4. However, the Council believes that the primary purpose of the contract directory, *i.e.*, to advertise existing contracts available for multiple agency use, is better aligned with the policies of FAR Part 5, which focus on publicizing contract actions.

One commenter suggested that FAR Parts 7 and 10 be revised to identify the database's usefulness in acquisition planning and market research. The FAR Council agrees with this suggestion and, as described above, has amended Parts 7 and 10 to ensure contracting officers and program managers consider information in the contract directory during these important early stages of the acquisition cycle.

- b. *Burden.* A number of comments focused on the potential burden the rule and associated Web site instructions would place on agencies required to input information about their interagency contracts into the contract directory. The comments focused on