

## Procurement Readiness Overview

### An Introduction to Procurement Readiness

VA OSDBU

Strategic Outreach and Communications

Education and Training

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# Overview

- Course Objectives
- Lesson 1: Fundamentals of Procurement Readiness
- Lesson 2: Contracting Strategies and Outreach
- Course Recap



# Objectives

By the end of this course you will be able to:

- Identify the fundamentals of procurement readiness
- Identify Contracting Strategies and Outreach Support
- Locate and review the procurement readiness reference guide



# VA OSDBU Mission and Vision

Centered around our support for Veteran small business success

## Mission:

**Support Secretary's priorities by enabling Veterans to gain access to economic opportunities by translating customer feedback into policies and programs that improve market research, increase direct access, and promote the participation of Veteran-Owned Small Business in Federal Contracting.**

## Vision:

*Within the next five years, OSDBU will transform how small businesses achieve economic success by leveraging improved technology and business processes to enable procurement-ready small businesses to address relevant procurement requirements in both the federal and commercial markets.*



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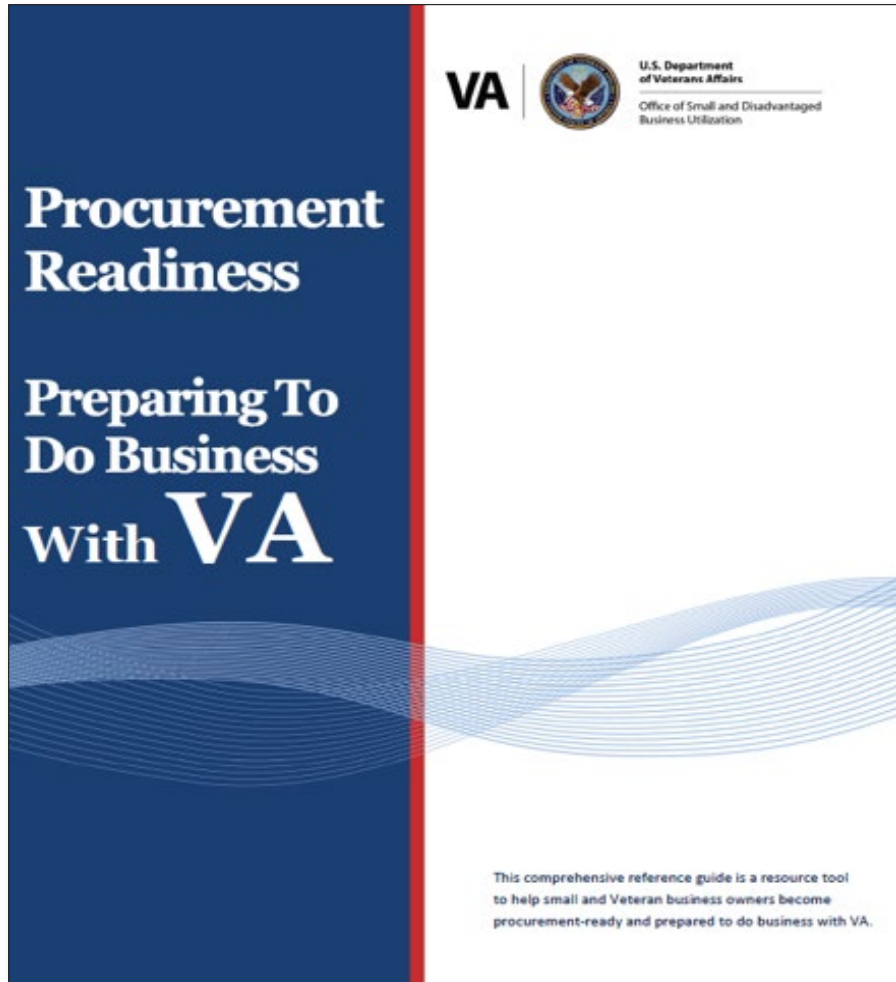
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# Lesson 1

## Fundamentals of Procurement Readiness



# Fundamentals of Procurement Readiness



**Procurement Readiness** is demonstrated ability of a small business to effectively participate in the federal government contracting marketplace and successfully perform contract work.

## Actionable Recommendations:

- Become VA Verified SDVOSB/VOSB
- Keep capabilities statement current
- Keep company website current
- Register with federal websites
- Build relationship with PTAC rep

# Compete for VA Set-Aside Opportunities

## Get Verified!

To be eligible to compete for VA set-aside contracts, you must be VA verified as a Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business (SDVOSB) or a Veteran-Owned Small Business (VOSB).



# Up-to-date Capabilities Statement

A **capabilities statement** is a business resume that provides a business' identification, abilities, and relevant corporate data.

- It is a Procurement Decision Maker's (PDM's) first impression of your small business (SB)
- It allows the PDM to differentiate the business from its competition
- It is usually no more than 2 pages
- It reflects your SBs sales pitch

<b>CAPABILITIES STATEMENT Sample Template</b>		Show your logo and contact information, with a specific person's name, phone and email.
Title this document: <b>Capabilities Statement</b>		<b>Tip:</b> This is a content document, add color and graphics
<b>Core Competencies</b>		
Short introduction statement relating the company's core competencies to the <b>agency's specific needs</b> followed by <b>key-word heavy bullet points</b>		
<b>Tips:</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No long paragraphs.</li> <li>• Use short sentences followed by keyword heavy bullet points</li> <li>• Create a new document for each agency, prime or teaming opportunity</li> <li>• Tailor each Capability Statement to the agency mission or specific opportunity</li> <li>• Call this document a Capability Statement</li> <li>• Preferably, this Capability Statement is one page, one side</li> <li>• <b>Go to two sides only if absolutely necessary</b></li> <li>• Save and distribute as a PDF, not a Word, PowerPoint or other format</li> </ul>		
<b>Past Performance</b>	<b>Differentiators</b>	
List past customers for whom you have done <i>similar</i> work. Prioritize by related agency, to all federal to other government to commercial contracts. If the past projects do not relate to the targeted agency's needs, <b>do not list it.</b>	Identify what makes you different from your competitors and how this benefits the target agency	
<b>Company Data</b>	<b>Pertinent Codes</b>	
Include one very brief company description detailing pertinent data.  <b>Tip:</b> Readers will visit your web site for additional information. Make sure your website is constantly updated and government-focused.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DUNS</li> <li>• Socio-economic certifications: 8(a), HUB Zone, SDVOB, etc.</li> <li>• NAICS (Top 3)</li> <li>• CAGE Code</li> <li>• Accept Credit and Purchase Cards</li> <li>• GSA Schedule Contract Number(s)</li> <li>• Other federal contract vehicles</li> <li>• BPAs and other federal contract numbers</li> <li>• State Contract Numbers</li> </ul>	
Your logo, address, phone numbers (voice, mobile and fax) email, web site and other related contact information		



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# Up-to-date Websites

A company website is another key component to being procurement ready. A corporate website:

- Provides opportunities to expand upon your capabilities statement
- Increases visibility
- Allows Procurement Decision Makers (PDMs) to learn more about capabilities and performance history



# Registering with Federal Websites

FedBizOpps.gov is the U.S. Government's primary website portal for federal contracting opportunities. It is recommended that you:

- Register for an account
- Respond to Requests for Information (RFIs) and Sources Sought Notices
- Create search agents
- Schedule search agents

The screenshot displays the FedBizOpps.gov homepage. At the top, it features the site logo and navigation tabs for Home, Getting Started, General Info, Opportunities, Agencies, and Privacy. A search bar at the top right indicates over 21,800 active federal opportunities. Below this, there are several search filters: Posted Date (set to 'Last 90 Days'), Set-Aside Code (set to 'Any'), Place of Performance (set to 'Any State or Territory'), and Type (set to 'Any'). There are also input fields for Keyword / Solicitation # and Agency. A 'Search' button is located below these filters. A warning icon and text state: 'SAM.gov REGISTRATION IS FREE: There is NO FEE to register, or maintain your registration, in the System for Award Management (SAM.gov). If you receive an e-mail from a company claiming to represent SAM.gov, be cautious. If you get an e-mail from a company offering to help you register in SAM.gov asking you to contact them and pay them money, be cautious. These messages are not from the Federal Government. It is FREE TO REGISTER in SAM.gov for any entity.' Another warning icon and text state: 'ATTENTION: Agency users are responsible for properly uploading controlled, unclassified materials to FBO using the access control procedures for document packages and attachments detailed in the FBO Buyers Guide. Do not upload ANY classified materials to FBO.' A third warning icon and text state: 'Important Password Update - Users and Interfacing Systems must reset their passwords as required every 90 days or the account will be disabled IAW GSA IT Security Policy, (CIO P 2100.1). Registered users will receive an email notification to remind them of this requirement. If your account has been disabled, contact the Federal Service Desk at 866-806-8220 (Monday - Friday 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. ET). NOTE: If your account was re-enabled after contacting the FSD, you must reset your password before midnight on the day of the call to prevent it from being disabled once again.' The page is divided into two main sections: 'Buyers / Engineers' and 'Vendors / Citizens'. The 'Buyers / Engineers' section includes a 'View Opportunities' link, a 'Register Now' link, a 'Password Reminder' link, and a 'Recovery FAQs' link. The 'Vendors / Citizens' section includes a 'Find Opportunities' link, a 'Register Now' link, a 'Password Reminder' link, and a 'Recovery FAQs' link. On the right side of the page, there are several sections: 'RECOVERY' with links for 'SEARCH RECOVERY OPPORTUNITIES' and 'SEARCH RECOVERY AWARDS'; 'FBO RECOVERY HELPDESK' with links for 'Click here for Opportunities' and 'Click here for Awards'; 'SMALL BUSINESS EVENTS' with a link for 'Learn more about the Small Business Central Event Listing or search now for events.'; 'VENDOR COLLABORATION' with a link for 'Learn more or search.'; 'USER GUIDE' with links for 'Buyer', 'Vendor', 'Notifier', and 'Location / Agency Admin'; and 'DEMONSTRATION VIDEO' with a link for 'Watch the Videos'.

# Procurement Technical Assistance Center (PTAC)

All PTACs are:

- Staffed with experienced counselors in federal contracting
- Host classes and seminars
- Provide individual counseling and easy access to bid opportunities, contract specs, and historical data

The screenshot shows the APTAC website interface. At the top left is the APTAC logo (Association of Procurement Technical Assistance Centers). To the right, it says 'Welcome, Guest | Member Login' and has a 'Find a PTAC' button. Below this is a dark navigation bar with links: Home, About Us, Government Contracting Assistance, APTAC Partners, PTAC Login, and Contact Us. The main content area has a 'Find a PTAC' search box with a state selection dropdown. Below the search box is a map of the United States with state abbreviations. To the right of the map is a 'Help for Government Contracting' section with a red header. It contains text about 'Procurement Technical Assistance Centers (PTACs)', 'Free Help with SAM Registration', and 'System for Award Management (SAM) registration is FREE'. There are also links for 'Learn More' and 'Find your PTAC now!'. At the bottom left of the main content area are three red buttons: 'Assistance for Small Businesses', 'Get the Training You Need to', and 'PTAC Client Successes'. At the bottom right, there is a 'Recent News' section with a link to 'Offeror is Responsible that an Electronically Submitted'.



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# Lesson 2

## Contracting Strategies and Outreach Support



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# Procurement Readiness Contracting Strategies



Take advantage of small contracting opportunities:

- Micro-Purchases:
  - Opportunities (Ops) below \$10,000 (Not Advertised)
- Simplified Acquisition Acquisitions:
  - Ops between \$10,000 & \$24,999 (Not Adv.)
  - Ops between \$25,000 & \$250,000 (Adv.)
- VA Forecast of Contracting Opportunities (VA FCO):
  - Prepare for potential opportunities

Position your small business to compete for more complex opportunities in the future.

# Micro-Purchases

A **micro-purchase** is a purchase of supplies or services at or below \$10,000

- Micro-purchases are not advertised
- These types of acquisitions use simplified acquisition procedures
- **Acquisitions are made by authorized federal staff with purchase credit cards**
- Authorized staff are known as Purchase Card Holders (PCHs)
- Micro purchases are managed through GSA SmartPay program

The screenshot shows the GSA SmartPay website homepage. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the GSA SmartPay logo (tagline: Supporting your mission), social media icons, and links for TRAINING LOGIN, INTERACT COMMUNITY, and SEARCH Q. Below the navigation bar are links for About GSA SmartPay, Payment Solutions, Training, Resources, and Contact. A secondary navigation bar includes GSA SmartPay Saves!, Master Contract, Statistics, Policies, and SmartTax. The main content area features a large image of two professionals in business attire standing in a grand building. To the right of the image is a text box titled "About GSA SmartPay" which states: "The GSA SmartPay Program is the world's largest commercial payment solution program, providing services to more than 560 Federal agencies, organizations and Native American tribal governments." Below the image is a section titled "GSA SmartPay Saves!" with a paragraph of text: "The GSA Center for Charge Card Management (CCCM) and GSA SmartPay contractor banks are dedicated to identifying opportunities to provide customers with GSA SmartPay solutions to help address agency payment challenges. CCCM seeks to increase awareness of available payment solutions under the GSA SmartPay master contract and help agencies continue to find ways to increase payment efficiencies and earn refunds. In the current budgetary environment, CCCM is committed to providing information to agency executives and card managers to identify innovative ways to help realize cost savings." To the right of this text are four icons representing "REFUND CALCULATOR", "SMART CONTRACTOR", "GUIDES & PUBLICATIONS", and "INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS".



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# Simplified Acquisition Micro-Purchases (FAR 13.2)

Simplified acquisition at the micro-purchase level:

- **Not Advertised Opportunities:**
  - Opportunities between \$10,000.01 and \$24,999.99
  - GSA SmartPay Program

Review **FAR Subpart 13.2** to learn more.

## Subpart 13.2—Actions At or Below the Micro-Purchase Threshold

### 13.201 General.

- (a) Agency heads are encouraged to delegate micro-purchase authority (see 1.603-3).
- (b) The Governmentwide commercial purchase card shall be the preferred method to purchase and to pay for micro-purchases (see 2.101).
- (c) Purchases at or below the micro-purchase threshold may be conducted using any of the methods described in Subpart 13.3, provided the purchaser is authorized and trained, pursuant to agency procedures, to use those methods.
- (d) Micro-purchases do not require provisions or clauses, except as provided at 13.202 and 13.210. This paragraph takes precedence over any other FAR requirement to the contrary, but does not prohibit the use of any clause.
- (e) The requirements in Part 8 apply to purchases at or below the micro-purchase threshold.
- (f) The procurement requirements in subparts 21.1, 21.2, 21.5, and 21.7 apply to purchases at or below the micro-purchase threshold.
- (g)(1) For acquisitions of supplies or services that, as determined by the head of the agency, are to be used to support a contingency operation or to facilitate defense against or recovery from nuclear, biological, chemical, or radiological attack, the micro-purchase threshold is—
- \$20,000 in the case of any contract to be awarded and performed, or purchase to be made, inside the United States; and
  - \$50,000 in the case of any contract to be awarded and performed, or purchase to be made, outside the United States.
- (2) Purchases using this authority must have a clear and direct relationship to the support of a contingency operation or the defense against or recovery from nuclear, biological, chemical, or radiological attack.
- (h) When using the Governmentwide commercial purchase card as a method of payment, purchases at or below the micro-purchase threshold are exempt from verification in the System for Award Management database as to whether the contractor has a delinquent debt subject to collection under the Treasury Offset Program (TOP).

### 13.202 Unenforceability of unauthorized obligations in micro-purchases.

Many supplies or services are acquired subject to supplier license agreements. These are particularly common in information technology acquisitions, but they may apply to any supply or service. For example, computer software and services delivered through the internet (web services) are often subject to license agreements, referred to as End User License Agreements (EULA), Terms of Service (TOS), or other similar legal instruments or agreements. Many of these agreements contain indemnification clauses that are inconsistent with Federal law and unenforceable, but which could create a violation of the Anti-Deficiency Act (31 U.S.C. 1341) if agreed to by the Government. The clause at 32.232-39, Unenforceability of Unauthorized Obligations, automatically applies to any micro-purchase, including those made with the Governmentwide purchase card. This clause prevents such violations of the Anti-Deficiency Act (31 U.S.C. 1341).

### 13.203 Purchase guidelines.

- (a) Solicitation, evaluation of quotations, and award.
- To the extent practicable, micro-purchases shall be distributed equitably among qualified suppliers.
  - Micro-purchases may be awarded without soliciting competitive quotations if the contracting officer or individual appointed in accordance with 1.603-3(b) considers the price to be reasonable.
  - The administrative cost of verifying the reasonableness of the price for purchases may more than offset potential savings from detecting instances of overpricing. Therefore, action to verify price reasonableness need only be taken if—
- (1) The contracting officer or individual appointed in accordance with 1.603-3(b) suspects or has information to indicate that the price may not be reasonable (e.g., comparison to the previous price paid or personal knowledge of the supply or service); or
- (2) Purchasing a supply or service for which no comparable pricing information is readily available (e.g., a supply or service that is not the same as, or is not similar to, other supplies or services that have recently been purchased on a competitive basis).
- (b) Documentation. If competitive quotations were solicited and award was made to other than the low quote, documentation to support the purchase may be limited to identification of the solicited concerns and an explanation for the award decision.



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# Compete for Simplified Acquisition Contracts (SATCs)

Compete for Simplified Acquisition Threshold Contracts (SATCs):

- **Advertised Opportunities:**
  - \$25,000 & \$250,000
  - Opportunities advertised on FedBizOpps
- **Set-aside Eligibility**
  - Procurement Ready Small Business



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# VA Forecast of Contracting Opportunities

VA's estimate of procurement opportunities:

- Published for planning purposes only
- Not a commitment by VA to purchase products or services
- Based on the best information available at the time of publication
- May be revised or canceled



The screenshot shows the VA Forecast of Contracting Opportunities website. At the top, it features the text "UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS" and the VA seal. Below this is a navigation menu with links for "Home", "Veteran Services", "Business", "About VA", "Media Room", "Locations", and "Contact Us". The main content area is titled "VA FORECAST OF CONTRACTING OPPORTUNITIES" and contains the following text:

This forecast represents VAs best estimate of procurement opportunities during fiscal year 2014. It is published for planning purposes only and is not an invitation for bids, a request for proposal, or a contract. Each acquisition is based on the best information available at the time of publication. It may be revised or canceled.

Please choose an appropriate search from the choices on the left.

The left sidebar contains the following links:

- OSDBU Home
- FCO Home
- Entire VA FCO Query
- Centralized Facilities FCO Query
- State FCO Query (Map Version)
- State FCO Query (Text Version)
- NCO FCO Query (Map Version)
- NCO FCO Query (Text Version)
- Business Resources
- Contact Helpdesk
- VA Vendor Portal

# Strategic Outreach and Communications (SOC)

## VA OSDBU's Strategic Outreach and Communications (SOC) Program:

- Provides access to support resources and tools
- Bridges the gap between Veteran small businesses and VA Procurement Decision Makers (PDMs)

## SOC focuses on:

- Strategic Outreach (Networking)
- Communications (Informational Tools)
- Education and Training (Preparedness)



# Wrap-Up

## You are now able to:

- Identify the fundamentals of procurement readiness
- Recognize procurement readiness recommendations
- Identify Contracting Strategies and Outreach Support
- Locate and review the procurement readiness reference guide



# Useful Links

- Learn more about VA OSDBU: <http://www.va.gov/osdbu>
- Education and Training Reference Guides: <http://www.va.gov/osdbu/library/dbwva.asp>
- VA Vendor Information Pages (VIP): <https://www.vip.vetbiz.va.gov/>
- VA Kingdomware Information: <https://go.usa.gov/xKsp5>
- How to Get Verified: <http://www.va.gov/osdbu/verification/index.asp>
- Doing Business with VA Reference Guide: [https://www.va.gov/osdbu/docs/doingBusinessWithVA\\_ReferenceGuideFULL.pdf](https://www.va.gov/osdbu/docs/doingBusinessWithVA_ReferenceGuideFULL.pdf)
- Procurement Readiness Reference Guide: [http://www.va.gov/osdbu/docs/procurementReadiness\\_FULL.pdf](http://www.va.gov/osdbu/docs/procurementReadiness_FULL.pdf)
- National Veterans Small Business Engagement: <http://www.nvsbe.com>
- Procurement Technical Assistance Center (PTAC): <https://www.aptac-us.org>



# On-Demand Training

- **Building an Effective Capabilities Statement Training**
  - <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/recording/6431184633580824579>
- **Procurement Readiness Part 1:**
  - <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/rt/8442508058978943234>
- **Procurement Readiness Part 2:**
  - <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/rt/9035570337350321922>
- **Procurement Readiness Part 3:**
  - <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/rt/549272412849655810>
- **Navigating FedBizOpps**
  - <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/recording/2174344003382782472>
- **Navigating VA Forecast of Contracting Opportunities (VA FCO)**
  - <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/rt/6359860412645722114>



# STAY CONNECTED WITH OSDBU

## OSDBU Help Desk:

Phone: 1-866-584-2344

Email: [osdbustratcomm@va.gov](mailto:osdbustratcomm@va.gov)

Website: <https://www.va.gov/osdbu/>

## Social Media:



Twitter: <https://twitter.com/VAVetBiz>



Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/VAVetBiz/>



YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/c/VAOSDBU>



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# Questions

