

Interagency Task Force on Veterans Small Business Development
Wednesday, September 1, 2021, | 1:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. ET
Virtual Meeting Minutes

The virtual meeting of the Interagency Task Force on Veterans Small Business Development (IATF) took place on September 1, 2021.

Call to Order

Mr. Timothy Green, Deputy Associate Administrator for SBA’s Office of Veterans Business Development, U.S. Small Business Administration, called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. ET.

Roll Call

Stan Kurtz, Director, Policy and Engagement, Office of Veterans Business Development, U.S. Small Business Administration, took roll call for committee members.

Amy Garcia, Veterans Business Analyst, Office of Veterans Business Development, U.S. Small Business Administration

Ms. Garcia gave an update on the veteran-owned surplus property program. She stated that information regarding surplus property could be found at www.sba.gov/vetsurplus. Ms. Garcia said the website has information on eligibility for the program. She emphasized that it is a state-run program that assists in facilitating federally owned property donations to veteran-owned small businesses. She says that VOSBs are now eligible to participate in this existing program. Ms. Garcia suggests that VOSBs should consider connecting with your state agency for surplus property. Ms. Garcia stated that for your state to participate in the program, a memorandum of agreement with the Federal Government needs to be in place. There is no federal mandate requiring states to participate.

Tom McGrath, Deputy Director of Program and Resource Management, Office of Government Contracting and Business Development, U.S. Small Business Administration, and Cordell Smith, Deputy Director of Acquisition Policy for the Office of Small Business and Disadvantaged Business Utilization, Department of Veterans Affairs

Mr. Smith gave an update on the verification transfer and the bill that was passed in January and signed into law on January 1st, which is the National Defense Authorization Act of FY 2021.

The verification function for verifying SDVOSB and VOSBs is currently managed by VA for VA contracts and will be transferred over to the Small Business Administration and become a government-wide program. The authority for verifying SDVOSB and VOSB status for VA contracts will remain at VA for this two-year period and will transfer on the transfer date to SBA. Also, there’s a requirement in the law that SBA stand up a certification program for the rest of the government agencies. Anyone wanting to participate in an SDVOSB set-aside, government-wide, will have to be certified by SBA for other agencies and VA up to 2023 and then by SBA afterwards.

Mr. McGrath explained how the Center for Verification and Evaluation (CVE) plays an essential role in creating opportunity for VOSBs and SDVOSBs across the country. SBA already manages several government-wide socioeconomic programs for VOSBs and SDVOSBs.

He also stated that VOSBs or SDVOSBs previously verified will not lose their status at the time of the program's transfer. Mr. McGrath said if you run out at a certain period, you'll need to reapply as you've always done. Again, self-certifies will be required to apply for their verification starting January of 2023, but there will be a one-year grace period to apply within the SBA.

Mihaela Ciorneiu Goaling Manager, Office of Planning Policy and Liaison, U.S. Small Business Administration

Ms. Ciorneiu spoke on the topic of contracting small business and the policy of the United States that the small businesses have the maximum practical opportunity to participate in providing goods and services to the Federal Government. Ms. Ciorneiu said that the SBA is in the process of establishing the goals for Fiscal Year 2022. She explains the history between SBA and contracting goals started during the second World War, that Congress found out that the existence of thousands of small business concerns was being threatened by the war- induced shortage of materials, as well as the inability to obtain defense contracts or financial assistance at that time. There was a concern that small businesses may not survive without government backing and in 1953, President Dwight Eisenhower signed the Small Business Act into law, which authorized the Small Business Administration.

Vicky Mundt, Associate Director of Office of Undersecretary of Defense Acquisition and Sustainment, Department of Defense

Ms. Mundt reported the final 2020 results for DoD contracts. DoD did \$328 billion in contracts, with \$80.3 billion going to small businesses. She said that for socioeconomic categories 9.26 percent went to small-disadvantaged businesses, which almost doubled the goal. For the woman-owned small businesses, DoD achieved 4.05 percent; for service-disabled veterans, 3.22 percent, and HUBZone at 2.20 percent.

Bill Metheny, Veterans Employment and Training Service, Department of Labor

Mr. Metheny gave an update on veteran employment. The veteran unemployment rate for last month was 3.9 percent. Mr. Metheny said that one of the goals of the Department of Labor and Veterans Employment and Training Service is to identify unemployed groups and figure out how we can better provide services to them. The next unemployment rates for veterans can be found at the Department of Labor webpage.

Cordell Smith on Behalf of Sharon Ridley

Mr. Smith spoke about the VA working on a review of their procurement practices, considering the President's Executive Order 13985 on enhancing equity for underserved communities. Mr. Smith said that the two priorities of the Department of Veterans Affairs are veterans and service-disabled veterans, within the coverage of the executive order as underserved communities.

Houston Taylor, General Services Administration

Mr. Taylor reported GSA small business goals and mentioned that GSA continues to work with SBA and OMB, and that they are part of the Federal Acquisition Council. Mr. Taylor spoke about GSA's first annual virtual small business training event that was held on September 29 with the GSA Administrator, the SBA Administrator, and keynote speakers.

Fran Perez-Wilhite, North Carolina Military Business Center

Ms. Wilhite reported that NC Military Business Center had the defense trade show in August at Fayetteville Technical Community College. In addition to trade booths, there were extensive networking experiences with the procurement decision-makers and government procurement workshops. Over 300 companies attended, most of which were veteran-owned businesses. A virtual SDVOSB seminar was held on August 19 with over 100 veteran-owned businesses and the 2021 Medical, Biomedical, and Biodefense: Support to the Warfighter Symposium was held on September 29 and 30. To learn more, visit www.ncmbc.us.

Larry Stubblefield, Associate Administrator, Office of Veterans Business Development, U.S. Small Business Administration

Mr. Stubblefield gave an update on the Veterans Business Outreach Center (VBOC) Expansion Plan. He mentioned the SBA has 22 VBOCs located around the country that cover all 50 states and territories and SBA is considering adding 12 VBOCs. National Small Business Week was held September 13-15. Mr. Stubblefield stated that OVBD got the approval for National Veterans Small Business Week. It will take place November 1-5. Mr. Stubblefield talked about the CVE transfer and the outreach portion that the Office of Veterans Business Development is responsible for, also citing that the transfer will be completed by January 1, 2023, that if anyone has questions to send them to CVETransfer@sba.gov.

There were no further questions or comments, and Mr. Stan Kurtz concluded the public forum.

Larry Stubblefield, Associate Administrator, Office of Veterans Business Development, U.S. Small Business Administration officially adjourned the meeting.