

Subject: Navy opens contract to small firms

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By Matthew Weigelt

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The Navy today agreed to make more contracts available to small businesses in its SeaPort-e acquisition contract.

Officials from the Navy and the Small Business Administration signed a memorandum of agreement that will give more contract opportunities to the more than 240 small and disadvantaged firms participating in SBA's 8(a) Business Development program. The agreement is effective for five years.

"This is a great example of a military department and a civilian agency working together to expand opportunities" for small businesses, said Tim Foreman, director of the Office of Small Business Programs for the Office of the Secretary of the Navy.

Under the agreement, the Naval Sea Systems Command will use SeaPort-e, its Web-based services acquisition tool containing multiple-award contracts (MACs), to award contracts directly to firms participating in the 8(a) program. The SBA's 8(a) program helps socially and economically disadvantaged business identify contracting opportunities.

The purpose of the agreement is to establish procedures for competing and awarding task orders to eligible 8(a) businesses that have been awarded a basic MAC in SeaPort-e. After an 8(a) business is awarded a MAC, it will then be eligible to compete on task orders that may, or even may not, be restricted to 8(a) companies specifically, according to the memorandum.

The agreement allows the Navy to speed up the process for competing and awarding a task order directly to 8(a) firms. The agreement also includes:

- Contract opportunities for 8(a) firms in all 50 states.
- Restrictions of task orders solely for 8(a) competition on 22 types of services, such as acquisition logistics and engineering.
- Annual admissions for small businesses to become SeaPort-e awardees.
- Provisions to allow existing prime contractors to renew their size status.