

# New Plans Underway to Increase Contracts to Small Business

Posted by SBA Administrator Karen Mills on September 15, 2010 at 10:30 AM EDT

Back in April, the President asked me along with Commerce Secretary Gary Locke and the Office of Management and Budget to lead the newly created Task Force on Federal Contracting Opportunities for Small Businesses. We were charged with working on behalf of the entire Administration to create more opportunities for small businesses to compete for and win contracts. Today – as a result of extensive collaboration, focus and commitment throughout the federal government – we are offering [13 actionable recommendations \(pdf\)](#) to ensure that all federal agencies continue to make progress in getting more contracts into the hands of American’s small businesses. These recommendations fall into three categories:

- **Clearer, stronger policies at federal agencies**, including better guidance on how to do small business set-asides and implement effective mentor-protégé programs;
- **A better-trained federal workforce**, with stronger certification and training requirements, coupled with meaningful incentives to help agencies reach their goals; and,
- **More user-friendly tools and technologies**, such as improving [FedBizOpps](#) to be a one-stop resource for small businesses looking for matchmaking events, subcontracting opportunities, agency contact information, and more.

Why is small business contracting so important?

When a small business gets a federal contract, it’s a win-win. The business gets the revenue it needs to grow and create jobs, and at the same time, the government benefits from working with some of the most diligent, innovative, and responsive people in the world.

The federal government is the largest purchaser of goods and services in the world. Of those purchases, small businesses get nearly \$100 billion each year, so these programs are very powerful, particularly for small firms owned by women, veterans, minorities and economically disadvantaged individuals. Overall, our goal is to make sure that 23 percent of contracts or more go to small business. When we come up short by just one percent - as we did in Fiscal Year 2009 - about \$5 billion less goes to small businesses.

We can do better. And that is why these recommendations couldn’t come at a better time.

We’re committing ourselves more than ever to transparency and accountability and have launched a new [Small Business Contracting Dashboard](#). This Open Government tool will help spot inaccuracies in the data that agencies collect, helping to ensure that only legitimate and eligible small firms truly benefit from small business contracting programs.

Now comes the real work. Implementing these new tools and recommendations won’t be easy.

But our message today is clear: We're going to build on what works in small business contracting. We're going to implement new tools to help more small businesses compete and win. And as a result, we're going to help them do what they do best: create jobs and move our economy forward.

*Karen Mills is Administrator of the Small Business Administration*