

M-03-11, Participation of Veterans in Federal Contracting

April 29, 2003

MEMORANDUM FOR THE HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

M-03-11

FROM:

Angela B. Styles
Administrator



SUBJECT:

Participation of Veterans in Federal Contracting

[Attachment](#) (338k) 

The purpose of this memorandum is to encourage agencies to focus contracting efforts on small businesses owned and operated by veterans, including service-disabled veterans. This Administration is committed to ensuring that veterans are provided every opportunity to fully integrate themselves in their communities upon return from service. We must demonstrate to our service personnel that we support them in all that they do, and that we fully appreciate the sacrifices they have made on our behalf. This will be an especially urgent tasking within the next couple of months.

Section 502 of Public Law 106-50, the Veterans Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development Act of 1999, sets a 3 percent government-wide goal for participation by small businesses owned and controlled by service-disabled veterans in federal contracting and subcontracting. The law is implemented through goaling letters issued to agencies by the Small Business Administration (SBA). Individual agency goals are calculated as the result of a negotiation between SBA and a procuring agency based on what is intended to realistically reflect the potential of small businesses to perform contracts and subcontracts of the agency.

A recent review of agency progress in meeting these negotiated goals reflects that we are not doing a very good job. A summary of each agency's progress for fiscal year 2001 and the first three quarters of fiscal year 2002 is attached. While low numbers are not surprising for the first year after a statutory goal is established, decreasing numbers indicate that we have issues that must be resolved. Although these goals may not be easy to accomplish, we must do better. To assist agencies in locating veteran-owned small businesses, the Department of Veterans Affairs is creating the VETBIZ Vendor Information Pages at www.vetbiz.gov.

This Administration is committed to providing small business opportunities in our federal procurement system, particularly opportunities for the very people that have fought and suffered for the principles behind our competitive enterprise system. We appreciate the work of agencies that have met their goals. We are asking each agency to take another look at ways to provide opportunities for small businesses owned and operated by veterans who are able and willing to supply quality goods and services at competitive prices. We must strive to meet the needs of our veterans today and tomorrow.