

ReliAscent Partners with the Colorado PTAC

ReliAscent is pleased to announce the recent partnership with the Colorado PTAC (Procurement Technical Assistance Center) office. For those of you that may not be familiar with the PTAC concept, here are a few facts about the organization:

- The national PTAC program was created by the Department of Defense in 1984, with DLA providing 50% of the funding and the remainder matched by state and private contributions. The program was authorized by Congress in 1985
- There are 98 PTAC’s with over 300 local offices across the country
- PTACs are the bridge between buyer & supplier

in the government marketplace providing:

- ◇ Classes & Seminars
- ◇ Individual Counseling
- ◇ Easy Access to Bid Opportunities
- ◇ Contract Specifications
- ◇ Procurement Histories
- ◇ Other Information Necessary to Successfully Compete for Government Contracts

The PTAC’s primary mission is to increase participation in Government Contracting. ReliAscent will be offering several training sessions and classes for the Colorado PTAC in the 2014-2015 program year. These classes will focus on compliant accounting systems, the Federal Acquisition Regulations, the SBIR program, Cost & Pricing Structures, DCAA compliance

among other relevant topics presented by ReliAscent experts.

“We are excited to be a Colorado PTAC partner. We see this as a way for ReliAscent to give back to the government contracting community that we have been passionately a part of for so long”, according to ReliAscent president Brian Sperry. For those of you not in the Colorado market space, I urge you to look up your local PTAC office and see what top-level services they may be able to provide for you. Of course, their resources are limited and spread over a lot of clients so if you need more detailed help, be sure to continue to rely on ReliAscent to help you.

To learn more about the Colorado PTAC, [click here now!](#)

New Salary Limits in Government Contracting

The Government has done a lot recently to put a cap on the salaries of individuals working on contracts for the government. This is probably a result of all the focus on the budget over the last couple of years. The excessive reimbursement doesn’t come from all contractors, and there could be an argument that this control is intended mainly for large corporations where executive compensation has reached such high levels. I still think that small business should be aware of these regula-

tions so that they know how to “play the game within the rules”.

First is the regulation signed into Law on December 26, 2013 that now limits compensation on DoD, NASA and GSA contracts to \$487,000 for all employees charging to the contract. Previously, the limit was set by using a benchmark approach each year. In recent years this benchmark approached the \$1 Million mark and applied only to the top 5 executives in the company. Now the limit is a firm cap at

the \$487,000 level and applies to all employees. This doesn’t mean that the company can’t compensate these employees more than this amount, it just means that any compensation above this cap is an unallowable expense for government contracts. We have also recently noticed wording on HHS solicitations that limit executive salaries to \$201,700. Again, this doesn’t mean the company can’t have higher salaries for employees, it just —means the amount above \$201,700 is an unallowable expense.

4th Quarter Spending Spree – What it Means

A common conventional wisdom in the Government Contracting market is that a large amount of spending happens at the end of the fiscal year. The theory is that the individual departments within the government try to use up all of their budget prior to year-end so that the baseline for the next year's budget is at least the same, if not more than the current year. There, of course, is also the issue of congressionally approved funds only available through the current year and no guarantee of authorized funds following the end of the fiscal year. This conventional wisdom is proven with fact this year (and almost every year). For instance, right now the Department of State has over 47% of their allotted funds available to spend but the fiscal year is over 80% complete.

A lot of small businesses look to this pile of unspent money as a big opportunity this time of year. To many, this is a big opportunity. There are some caveats to the conventional wis-

dom, however. A lot of the unspent money may be designated to IDIQ contracts that will be awarded as task orders to that contract vehicle. This means that if the company does not already have an IDIQ contract with that particular funding source, the chances of winning money in the 4th quarter is very low (unless the business can partner or contract with an existing contract holder). Other amounts of money that is currently unspent may be designated to a source in the fourth quarter due to logistics. The bottom line here is that the excess money available this time of year, is not necessarily any easier to obtain than at any other time of year. You still must do your marketing and sales efforts to obtain work from the Federal Government. If you have done that properly, you will see new money flow your way at the end of the year, as well as the rest of the year.

ATTENTION NSF GRANTEES:

The following message was released from the National Science Foundation, for all grantees:

“The National Science Foundation (NSF) will be implementing a new financial accounting system during October 2014. The new system will deliver broad improvements. It will improve tracking and reporting of financial information and improve internal control over funds management.

In preparation for conversion to the new system, our payment processes will be temporarily suspended between **September 15 and October 15, 2014**.

To cover the cash needs for SBIR awards from September 15 through October 15, 2014, NSF is urging you to submit any reports (interim or final) that would be due within this timeframe by August 15, 2014. Please refer to your award letter to review your payment schedule. You can always access your report deadline schedule by logging in to your account at www.research.gov.

Detailed instructions on how to submit reports can be found here: <http://www.nsf.gov/eng/iip/sbir/reporting2.jsp>.

Should you need additional information or wish to discuss your organization's specific requirements, please contact your program officer.”

If your business needs assistance with this process, please feel free to contact the experts at ReliAscent.

At ReliAscent, the success of Small Business Federal Contractors is our top priority!

Salary Limits (cont'd)

The bottom line from these actions mean more work for companies that have employees compensated higher than these caps. For companies with employees under the cap limits it won't mean too much at this time. It is just an example of another regulation that is fairly obscure and difficult to trace down to the actual requirement (FAR Case 2012-017 references to FAR 31.205-6(p) refers to 41 U.S.C. 436, etc.) and can be confusing to the small business contractor. This is exactly why ReliAscent is in business.

If you have any questions about executive compensation or other contracting compliance issues, contact us today.

SBIR Solicitations

- **August 11**—DoE SBIR/STTR (R1) begins accepting Proposals
- **August 21**—DoD SBIR/STTR 2014.3/2014.B releases topics
- **September 11**—EPA SBIR closes
- **September 15**—DoT SBIR closes
- **September 22**—DoD SBIR/STTR 2014.3/2014.B begins accepting Proposals
- **October 2**—USDA SBIR Closes
- **October 14**—DoE SBIR/STTR