

# In the Know with VIPR

Virtual Incident Procurement

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*The purpose of the In the Know with VIPR newsletter is to communicate VIPR news that will affect internal users.*

*The newsletter will be published periodically—as new features are released and milestones are met.*

## 2010 Solicitation Update and National Pilot Program

VIPR 2.0 was released on January 6, 2010. This release provides major functionality for 2010 I-BPAs and updated contract requirements for the 2010 solicitations. Regions will solicit for equipment in two categories: water handling equipment (engines and water tenders) and heavy equipment with water (pumper cat, skidgines, and softtracks).

Also in 2010, crew carrier buses and refrigerated trailers will be solicited nationally. These two I-BPA resource categories were selected by the AQM 2011 Team for a pilot program as national solicitations. The Incident Support Branch, WO-AQM, and Region 6 AQM will provide procurement support for this national pilot.

The [competitive solicitation plan](#) has been updated (October 28, 2009).

## Equipment Inspections

In an RFD letter (dated January 6, 2010), Fire and Aviation Management (FAM) recently determined equipment inspections will not be a condition of award for solicitations. Preseason equipment inspections are optional and will be determined by the regions. COs will rely on contractors' self-certification of equipment during the award process. A region may then inspect the equipment prior to the generation of the Dispatch Priority List (DPL). The functionality for inspections will be available in VIPR in mid-March. The recommended process for inspections of contracted equipment is

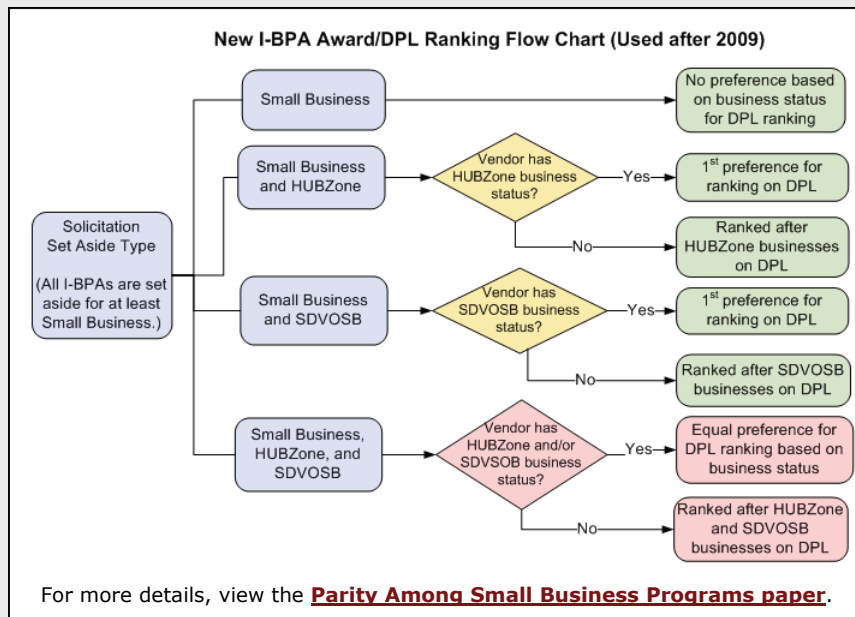
1. Regional COs award I-BPAs.
2. FAM performs any inspections it wishes.
3. Regional COs publish DPLs.

## Small Business Parity News

In July 2009, direction was issued from OMB (OMB Memorandum M-09-23) that Small Business Administration regulations provide for parity among small business programs. Based on this direction, the following policy will be implemented for the 2010 solicitations. (This policy will not be applied retroactively to previous awards.)

Orders issued against awarded I-BPAs beginning in 2010 will be made using the following order of preference as described in D.6.1 Dispatch Priority of the solicitation:

1. Any order issued under the awarded I-BPAs will be made first to a HUBZone and/or SDVOSB concern if the solicitation was set-aside for those concerns.
2. If there are no HUBZone or SDVOSB concerns available, orders will be issued to small business concerns.



## what's new

With the latest release of VIPR, COs can...

with VIPR?

- Create 2010 solicitations. (For 2010 solicitations and agreements produced after October 1, 2009, the year in the solicitation number will now be "10" (e.g., AG-A123-S-10-7000).
- Select a resource category based on its solicitation year.
- Select the Office Codes from a drop-down list. (The numbering of solicitations will be consecutive within each Office Code designation, i.e. solicitations created with the 9J61 office code will begin at 7000, solicitations created with the 04H1 office code will also begin at 7000).
- View the Contract Requirements that have been updated to standardize boilerplate clauses across solicitations.
- Use new filtering options to view and manage vendor responses based on where the responses are in the evaluation process.
- Create a Vendor Management Modification to update a vendor's company and contact information for that vendor. (Dispatch Priority Lists may need to be re-generated so that updated information is displayed. COs will need to communicate any DPL changes to the appropriate Dispatch Center.)
- View a single, PDF file for agreements and modified agreements. The PDF format will take effect on existing agreements when the CO issues the national modification incorporating the updates and vendors will now be able to print their agreements in the PDF format.

## Highlights, Events, and Training

- ▶ **VIPR 2.0 is here!**  
This release contains major functionality for I-BPA solicitations for 2010.
- ▶ **VIPR 2.0 Training Information for COs & COAs**  
Four virtual training sessions will be held in 2010. Details about the training sessions and videos of the sessions are located at <http://fsweb.wo.fs.fed.us/aqm/incident/vipr/training.php>
- ▶ **VIPR FAQs & CO Tips** have been updated to reflect recent policy changes and VIPR updates.

## Help with VIPR

Do you need help with VIPR? Helpful tools and updated information are available to assist you with the I-BPA process using VIPR.

- ▶ **VIPR Web site:** <http://fsweb.wo.fs.fed.us/aqm/incident/vipr/>
- ▶ **Getting Started with VIPR** key information: <http://fsweb.wo.fs.fed.us/aqm/incident/vipr/>
- ▶ **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs):** <http://fsweb.wo.fs.fed.us/aqm/incident/vipr/faq.php>
- ▶ **VIPR CO Tips:** <http://fsweb.wo.fs.fed.us/aqm/incident/vipr/>
- ▶ **Forest Service Incident Procurement Web site:** <http://fsweb.wo.fs.fed.us/aqm/incident/>
- ▶ **VIPR Help Desk:** [helpdesk@dms.nwcc.gov](mailto:helpdesk@dms.nwcc.gov) or call 1-866-224-7677

## Tied Prices/CBA Scores

Tied prices and CBA scores that occur when determining the ranking on the DPL will be resolved by providing first preference to small businesses that are also Labor Surplus Area (LSA) concerns, with any remaining ties resolved using programmatically driven random ranking within the VIPR system. A new clause (D.6.2.1 Tied Prices/CBA Scores) has been incorporated into all agreements with the release of VIPR 1.5.

More information on this decision and process is posted to the Incident Procurement Web site at <http://www.fs.fed.us/business/incident/eera.php>.

## Competing I-BPAs: Formal vs. Informal Agreements

Preseason I-BPAs will be subject to competition, either formal or informal. Formal competition would include posting the solicitation to FedBizOpps (FBO) and providing for competition from vendors nationwide. Informal competition (formerly known as non-competitive) will be smaller in scope, focused on local vendor communities, and the solicitation will not be posted to FBO. National templates required to be used for I-BPAs subject to informal competition are vehicle w/driver, chippers, and modular offices. These templates are available at <http://www.fs.fed.us/business/incident/solicitations.php>. Development of the model for informal solicitations in VIPR is scheduled for release in 2011.

## Booz Allen Hamilton Phase 1 Evaluation of VIPR

With the first year of VIPR implementation behind us, the Washington Office issued a task order to Booz Allen Hamilton, an independent contracting firm, to evaluate the entire VIPR program from an industry and government perspective. In December and January, Booz Allen Hamilton is gathering feedback from internal stakeholders by using an online survey and conducting personal interviews. Internal stakeholders identified in the survey are Contracting Officers (COs) and Contracting Officer Assistants (COAs), fire managers, acquisition managers, dispatchers, and the VIPR Core team. (A survey for external stakeholders will be conducted at a later date pending approval from OMB.)

## Agreements on the Web

Preseason agreements are posted to the Incident Procurement Web site at <http://www.fs.fed.us/business/incident/vipragreements.php> to enable the Albuquerque Service Center (ASC) to be self-sufficient in processing invoices against agreements. By finding the agreements on the Web, ASC can determine the agreement status (valid, canceled, or terminated) and determine if the payment invoice should be paid based on the status of the agreement. Canceled and terminated agreements will remain posted to the Web for one year after the canceled or terminated date.

## Preseason I-BPA & VIPR Presentation

The "Preseason Incident Blanket Purchase Agreements (I-BPA) and Virtual Incident Procurement (VIPR)" presentation is available for use at meetings. The presentation includes these discussion items:

- 2009 VIPR Season in Review
- Policy Changes
- National Solicitation Plan
- Dispatch Operations
- Upcoming VIPR Releases
- VIPR System Outlook

You can request a copy of the presentation and/or request that a FESSAA member deliver the presentation to your audience either virtually or in person, if available. To request the presentation or assistance with delivering the presentation, send an e-mail to [VIPR@fs.fed.us](mailto:VIPR@fs.fed.us).

## Questions, Comments, and Suggestions?

Send us an e-mail to ["Ask VIPR"](mailto:VIPR@fs.fed.us)