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VIPR Vendor Survey Results

VIPR Vendor Survey Summary

THANK YOU FOR YOUR FEEDBACK

We asked you to give us your opinion on what is working; what you like; what you don't like; what can be improved; and any other comments and suggestions for future functionality.

Responses were sorted and evaluated. Then from your responses, trends and concerns (and affirmation of good things) were identified.



From the feedback we received from YOU we have been working to make changes to **IMPROVE** your VIPR experience. Check out what's been done since January 2012—

Changes Have Been Made to **IMPROVE VIPR Functionality!**

- ▶ Parity was introduced and the small business flag was removed to allow for full and open competition.
- ▶ Formatta was phased out and replaced by “The Vendor Application.”
- ▶ Generic templates were developed and implemented.
- ▶ The SOI was modified to include Vendor Resources
- ▶ Capability for COs to suspend/resume an agreement with a modification was implemented.
- ▶ Novation mods were changed so they would NOT pick up resource attributes made prior to or during a novation.
- ▶ Blank solicitation PDF files for each resource category were made available via the VIPR website.
- ▶ The capability for COs to include attachments was added.
- ▶ Administrative modifications were added as a new unilateral modification type.
- ▶ Finance Copies of agreements were made available via the VIPR website.

We Have Also Made Changes to **IMPROVE Customer Service & Support...**

- ▶ Emails to Vendors now include CO contact info.
- ▶ A flag was added to let vendors know when their resource is unqualified.
- ▶ Inspection Forms are automatically emailed to vendors with their quote confirmation.
- ▶ A message board was implemented on the VIPR website to update vendors when there are changes or outages.

VIPR System **Functionality & Availability**

Survey Statistics

In 2011 — 533 out of 2584 vendors completed the survey (20.6%)

In 2012 — 813 out of 2883 vendors completed the survey (28.%)

What's Good?

The migration to move from Formatta to the Vendor App received a lot of positive feedback and confirms that the switch was a good thing to do.

In addition, vendors in general are becoming more familiar with VIPR processes and are satisfied with the tools available to them when they need assistance.

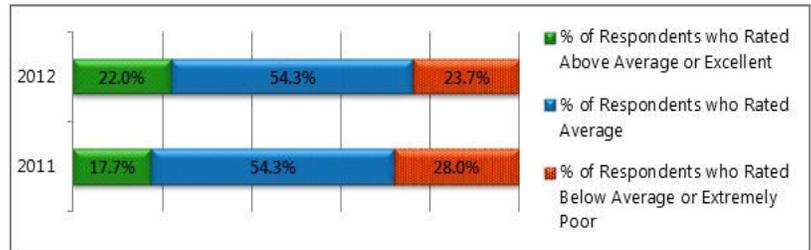
Tools Include:

- * User Guides
- * Web Notes
- * Help Desk
- * C.O.s
- * PTACs



Is the VIPR System Reliable, Responsive and Available?

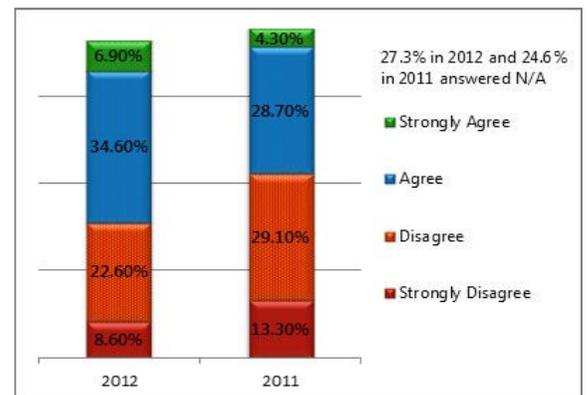
Overall the current system is viewed favorably and is accepted by the majority of vendors. Data indicated a positive trend in 2012 from 2011, and over 75% of respondents felt that VIPR was reliable, responsive and available.



Submitting Electronics Responses

41.5% of Respondents in 2012 answered positively (vendors who either agreed or strongly agreed) compared to only 33% in 2011—a 25.8% increase.

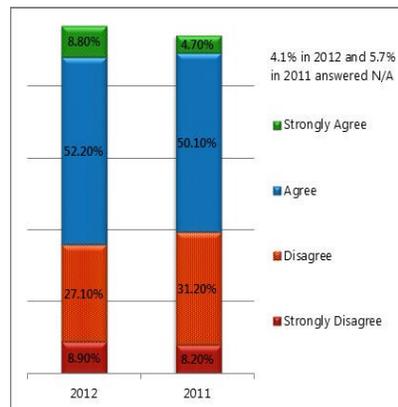
Additionally, the data shows that there was a commensurate decrease in negative responses, which dropped to 31.2% of respondents in 2012 who either disagreed or strongly disagreed, compared to 42.4% in 2011.



VIPR Customer Service & Support

Are You Satisfied with the VIPR Website & User Guides?

The data indicates a majority of vendors are satisfied with the VIPR website and user guides. An average of 69% of vendors responded that the VIPR website and user guides are easy to use and understand, as compared to 46% in 2011. Additionally, the data shows that there was a significant decrease of more than 62% in negative responses!

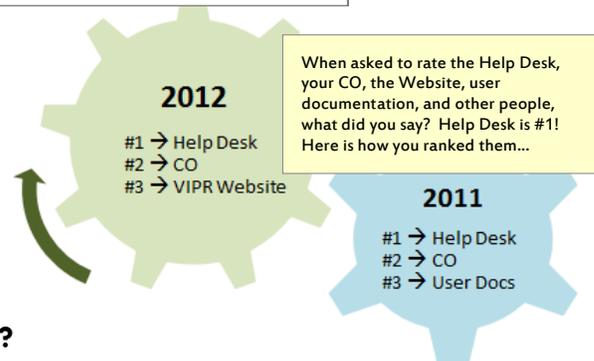


REDUCING VIPR Down Time

Vendors were asked if they felt if the Forest Service adequately provides information about the VIPR system, including outages and other system news. Things have gotten better—6.3% of vendors in 2012, down from 8.8% of vendors in 2011, identified VIPR downtime as being an issue.

How Good is the Help from your CO, COA, PTAC or Other Procurement Official?

Pretty darn good, actually, for over half of the respondents who answered! 58.3% of vendors in 2012, up from 56.3% of vendors in 2011, agree or strongly agree that training received is helpful.



Do You Know Where to go for Help?

Yes, you do! 82.8% of vendors in 2012, up from 77.9% in 2011, agree or strongly agree that training received is helpful.

What Has Been Identified as Action Items for the Future...

- Evaluate Pre-Incident Inspection clauses and forms.
- Implement additional tools to provide vendors with confirmation that they've entered their information correctly and completely.
- Reinstate a hands-on tutorial.
- Continue to improve communications regarding system outages.
- Provide VIPR education for Fire Management Teams (IMTs) and Dispatch

VIPR concerns and trends have been identified. If a solution has not already been implemented, a remedy is proposed —

CONCERNS / TRENDS	PROPOSED REMEDY (OR SOLUTION IMPLEMENTED)
Lack of confirmation when entering information in VIPR	Prompts in the Vendor Application provide instant feedback to vendors when data is missing and they receive validation when a resource has been entered and quotes have been submitted. Checks to assist in accuracy have been implemented for things such as VIN, which will can tell a vendor if it has been entered improperly, but does not yet have the logic to determine if a VIN is correct (DOT validation). A similar validation has been implemented to cross-check DUNS numbers in SAM.
Too many notifications and constant changes	This issue regarding constant changes was recognized by the Policy Board in 2012 & discussions resulted in a decision to limit global changes unless there are fatal flaws. With respect to too many notifications – the concern was a lack of confirmation when entering information in VIPR— There is a work in process to identify which vendor emails can be eliminated to find a happy medium.
Unfamiliar FS acronyms	Acronyms and definitions are the very 1st item in the FAQs!
Difficulties with passwords, logging in, and updating information	The VIPR website contains links for vendors with detailed instructions to assist with getting started. The Vendor App automatically asks the vendor when they log in whether they need to update their information and the information is easily accessible with a easy to locate tab in their menu.
Better training & step-by-step guides for processes	Steps have been taken to enhance VIPR help with step-by-step instructions. Additionally, the VIPR website contains many new links.
Agreements are too big with too many pages	Electronic capabilities are intended to eliminate the need for full hard copies and Finance Copies, which are condensed products of agreements, are now a tool available from the VIPR website.

What is VIPR?

VIPR is an acquisition system designed to solicit, award, and manage preseason incident agreements and contracts for equipment & services used by the Forest Service.

What was the Purpose of the Survey?

Opinions and comments from existing VIPR vendor users are vital to help evaluate the acquisition system and to identify program improvements and potential system functionality upgrades as well as garner ideas to improve overall customer service and other support tools.

For this reason the Forest Service surveyed vendors in late 2011 and then a second time in 2012.

The Forest Service wants to share the results of the online surveys with you, to include concerns, changes that have been implemented as a result of the feedback received, and actions for the future.

How Was the Survey Conducted?

The survey was by email invitation only and utilized an online, electronic survey. Responses to the survey requests were voluntary and ANONYMOUS. About 28% of vendor invited to participate responded and it is concluded that the sample obtained was representative of the community at large.

What Did the Results Show?

Overall, it was concluded that the current process is viewed favorably by a majority of the vendor community. The data confirms vendors feel positive about the system and recent changes have improved responses from the previous year. However there is room for improvement.

Incident Procurement

Vendors

Find information about working with the Forest Service at www.fs.fed.us/business/incident/vendors.php. If you're already a current Forest Service vendor you can also get information about the tools you need to manage your contract.

Resources

[Communications, Contacts & Preseason Incident BPAs](#)

Find the latest news and happenings as well as the 'Who's Who' of Incident Procurement programs and agreements for preseason Incident Procurement at www.fs.fed.us/business/incident/

[Regulations & References](#)

Every game has rules. These are ours... at www.fs.fed.us/business/incident/ref_reg.php

Systems

[VIPR](#)

Incident Procurement Systems for preseason agreements and contracts at www.fs.fed.us/business/incident/vipr.php

[ABS](#)

Aviation Business Systems vendors can use this to authenticate aviation invoices at www.fs.fed.us/business/abs/

Do You Have Questions or Comments?

Email your questions or comments regarding the VIPR Vendor Survey to:

bojiron@fs.fed.us

To learn more about VIPR use the links below or contact the VIPR Helpdesk

 **Phone** 866-224-7677

 **Email** helpdesk@dms.nwcg.gov

USEFUL LINKS:

- ▶ VIPR Home Page
www.fs.fed.us/business/incident/vipr.php
- ▶ VIPR Vendor Application
www.fs.fed.us/business/incident/vendorapp.php
- ▶ Vendor Support
www.fs.fed.us/business/incident/vendorsupport.php
- ▶ FAQs for Vendor Application
www.fs.fed.us/business/incident/faq.php
- ▶ Overview of VIPR & the Vendor App
www.fs.fed.us/business/incident/faq.php#overview
- ▶ Getting Started with the Vendor App
www.fs.fed.us/business/incident/faq.php#getstarted
- ▶ For Information about eAuth, go to
www.fs.fed.us/business/incident/eauth.php
- ▶ Forest Service Incident Procurement VIPR Web Site
www.fs.fed.us/business/incident/

We continue to explore new technology and other system enhancements to ensure VIPR is an efficient, effective tool.