

PART 2—DEFINITIONS OF WORDS AND TERMS

■ 2. Amend section 2.101 in paragraph (b)(2), by revising the definition “Simplified acquisition threshold” to read as follows:

2.101 Definitions.

* * * * *

(b) * * *
(2) * * *

Simplified acquisition threshold means \$150,000, except for—

(1) Acquisitions of supplies or services that, as determined by the head of the agency, are to be used to support a contingency operation or to facilitate defense against or recovery from nuclear, biological, chemical, or radiological attack (41 U.S.C. 1903), the term means—

(i) \$300,000 for any contract to be awarded and performed, or purchase to be made, inside the United States; and

(ii) \$1 million for any contract to be awarded and performed, or purchase to be made, outside the United States.

(2) Acquisitions of supplies or services that, as determined by the head of the agency, are to be used to support a humanitarian or peacekeeping operation (41 U.S.C. 153 and 10 U.S.C. 2302), the term means \$300,000 for any contract to be awarded and performed, or purchase to be made, outside the United States.

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PART 4—ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS**4.1102 [Amended]**

■ 3. Amend section 4.1102 by removing from paragraph (a)(3)(i) “10 U.S.C. 2302(7)” and adding “10 U.S.C. 2302(8)” in its place.

PART 13—SIMPLIFIED ACQUISITION PROCEDURES**13.003 [Amended]**

■ 4. Amend section 13.003 by removing from paragraph (b)(1) “described in paragraph (1)” and adding “described in paragraph (1)(i)” in its place.

PART 18—EMERGENCY ACQUISITIONS

■ 5. Amend subpart 18.2 by redesignating section 18.204 as section 18.205; and adding a new section 18.204 to read as follows:

18.204 Humanitarian or peacekeeping operation.

(a) A humanitarian or peacekeeping operation is defined in 2.101.

(b) *Simplified acquisition threshold.* The threshold increases when the head

of the agency determines the supplies or services are to be used to support a humanitarian or peacekeeping operation. (See 2.101.)

PART 19—SMALL BUSINESS PROGRAMS**19.203 [Amended]**

■ 6. Amend section 19.203 by removing from paragraph (b) “described in paragraph (1)” and adding “described in paragraph (1)(i)” in its place.

19.502–2 [Amended]

■ 7. Amend section 19.502–2 by removing from paragraph (a) “described in paragraph (1) of the Simplified Acquisition Threshold” and adding “described in paragraph (1)(i) of the simplified acquisition threshold” in its place.

[FR Doc. 2015–25614 Filed 10–7–15; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE**GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION****NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION****48 CFR Part 36**

[FAR Case 2015–018; Docket No. 2015–0018; Sequence No. 1]

RIN 9000–AN10**Federal Acquisition Regulation; Improvement in Design-Build Construction Process**

AGENCIES: Department of Defense (DoD), General Services Administration (GSA), and National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).

ACTION: Proposed rule.

SUMMARY: DoD, GSA, and NASA are proposing to amend the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) to implement section 814 of the Carl Levin and Howard P. ‘Buck’ McKeon National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2015 that requires the head of the contracting activity to approve any determinations to select more than five offerors to submit phase-two proposals for a two-phase design-build construction acquisition that is valued at greater than \$4 million.

DATES: Interested parties should submit written comments to the Regulatory Secretariat at one of the addresses shown below on or before December 7, 2015 to be considered in the formulation of a final rule.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments in response to FAR Case 2015–018 by any of the following methods:

- **Regulations.gov:** <http://www.regulations.gov>. Submit comments via the Federal eRulemaking portal by searching for “FAR Case 2015–018.” Select the link “Comment Now” that corresponds with FAR Case 2015–018. Follow the instructions provided at the “Comment Now” screen. Please include your name, company name (if any), and “FAR Case 2015–018” on your attached document.

- **Mail:** General Services Administration, Regulatory Secretariat (MVCB), ATTN: Ms. Flowers, 1800 F Street NW., 2nd Floor, Washington, DC 20405.

Instructions: Please submit comments only and cite FAR Case 2015–018, in all correspondence related to this case. Comments received generally will be posted without change to <http://www.regulations.gov>, including any personal and/or business confidential information provided. To confirm receipt of your comment(s), please check www.regulations.gov, approximately two to three days after submission to verify posting (except allow 30 days for posting of comments submitted by mail).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Curtis E. Glover, Sr., Procurement Analyst, at 202–501–1448, for clarification of content. For information pertaining to status or publication schedules, contact the Regulatory Secretariat at 202–501–4755. Please cite FAR case 2015–018.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**I. Background**

DoD, GSA, and NASA are proposing to amend the FAR to implement section 814 of the Carl Levin and Howard P. ‘Buck’ McKeon National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2015. Section 814 is entitled Improvement in Defense Design-Build Construction Process. Section 814 requires the head of the contracting activity, delegable to a level no lower than the senior contracting official, to approve any determinations to select more than five offerors to submit phase-two proposals for a two-phase design build construction acquisition that is valued at greater than \$4 million.

II. Discussion and Analysis

This proposed rule does not change the maximum number of offerors, currently five, that may be selected to submit phase-two proposals without a contracting officer determination. However, for acquisitions valued above

\$4 million, the determination must now have a higher level of approval for the contracting officer to select more than five offerors. A potential offeror may be more inclined to invest their pre-award efforts on solicitations where they have an increased chance of award.

III. Executive Orders 12866 and 13563

Executive Orders (E.O.s) 12866 and 13563 direct agencies to assess all costs and benefits of available regulatory alternatives and, if regulation is necessary, to select regulatory approaches that maximize net benefits (including potential economic, environmental, public health and safety effects, distributive impacts, and equity). E.O. 13563 emphasizes the importance of quantifying both costs and benefits, of reducing costs, of harmonizing rules, and of promoting flexibility. This is not a significant regulatory action and, therefore, was not subject to review under section 6(b) of E.O. 12866, Regulatory Planning and Review, dated September 30, 1993. This rule is not a major rule under 5 U.S.C. 804.

IV. Regulatory Flexibility Act

This change is not expected to have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities within the meaning of the Regulatory Flexibility Act, 5 U.S.C. 601, *et seq.* Nevertheless, an Initial Regulatory Flexibility Analysis (IRFA) has been prepared, and is summarized as follows:

This rule implements section 814 of the Carl Levin and Howard P. 'Buck' McKeon National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2015. Section 814 is entitled Improvement in Defense Design-Build Construction Process. Section 814 requires the head of the contracting activity, delegable to a level no lower than the senior contracting official, to approve any determinations to select more than five offerors to submit phase-two proposals for a two-phase design build construction acquisition that is valued at greater than \$4 million.

The number of design-build construction awards is not currently tracked by the Federal government's business systems. In Fiscal Year 2014, the Federal government awarded 3,666 construction awards to 2,239 unique small business vendors. It is unknown what percentage of these contracts involved design-build construction services.

This rule does not impose new recordkeeping or reporting requirements. The new approval requirement for advancing more than five contractors to phase two of a two-phase design-build selection procedure only affects the internal procedures of the Government. For acquisitions valued over \$4M, the head of the contracting activity (HCA) is required to now make a determination that it is in the best interest of the Government to select more than five

offerors to proceed to phase two. Any burden caused by this rule is expected to be minimal and will not be any greater on small businesses than it is on large businesses.

The rule does not duplicate, overlap, or conflict with any other Federal rules. No alternative approaches were considered. It is not anticipated that the proposed rule will have a significant economic impact on small entities.

The Regulatory Secretariat has submitted a copy of the IRFA to the Chief Counsel for Advocacy of the Small Business Administration. A copy of the IRFA may be obtained from the Regulatory Secretariat. DoD, GSA, and NASA invite comments from small business concerns and other interested parties on the expected impact of this rule on small entities.

DoD, GSA, and NASA will also consider comments from small entities concerning the existing regulations in subparts affected by the rule in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 610. Interested parties must submit such comments separately and should cite 5 U.S.C. 610 (FAR Case 2015-018), in correspondence.

V. Paperwork Reduction Act

The rule does not contain any information collection requirements that require the approval of the Office of Management and Budget under the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. chapter 35).

List of Subject in 48 CFR Part 36

Government procurement.

William Clark,

Director, Office of Government-wide Acquisition Policy, Office of Acquisition Policy, Office of Government-wide Policy.

Therefore, DoD, GSA, and NASA propose amending 48 CFR part 36 as set forth below:

PART 36—CONSTRUCTION AND ARCHITECT-ENGINEER CONTRACTS

■ 1. The authority citation for 48 CFR part 36 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 40 U.S.C. 121(c); 10 U.S.C. chapter 137; and 51 U.S.C. 20113.

■ 2. Amend section 36.303-1 by revising paragraph (a)(4) to read as follows:

36.303-1 Phase One.

(a) * * *

(4) A statement of the maximum number of offerors that will be selected to submit phase-two proposals. The maximum number specified in the solicitation shall not exceed five unless the contracting officer determines, for that particular solicitation, that a number greater than five is in the

Government's interest and is consistent with the purposes and objectives of the two-phase design-build selection procedures. The contracting officer shall document this determination in the contract file. For acquisitions greater than \$4 million, the determination shall be approved by the head of the contracting activity, delegable to a level no lower than the senior contracting official within the contracting activity.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

50 CFR Part 17

[Docket No. FWS-HQ-ES-2015-0143; 4500030113]

Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; 12-Month Findings on Petitions To List 19 Species as Endangered or Threatened Species

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of 12-month petition findings.

SUMMARY: We, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service, FWS, or USFWS), announce 12-month findings on petitions to list 19 species as endangered species or threatened species under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (Act). After review of the best available scientific and commercial information, we find that listing the American eel, Cumberland arrow darter, the Great Basin distinct population segment (DPS) of the Columbia spotted frog, Goose Creek milkvetch, Nevares spring bug, Page springsnail, Ramshaw meadows sand-verbena, Sequatchie caddisfly, Shawnee darter, Siskiyou mariposa lily, Sleeping ute milkvetch, Southern Idaho ground squirrel, Tahoe yellow cress, and six Tennessee cave beetles (Baker Station, Coleman, Fowler's, Indian Grave Point, inquirer, and Noblett's cave beetles) is not warranted at this time. However, we ask the public to submit to us any new information that becomes available concerning the threats to any of the 19 species listed above or their habitat at any time.

DATES: The findings announced in this document were made on October 8, 2015.

ADDRESSES: These findings are available on the Internet at <http://www.regulations.gov> at Docket Number