APTAC Body of Knowledge Competency Guide
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APTAC

Association of
Procurement Technical Assistance Centers

Description
Helping businesses navigate the world of government procurement is a primary mission of PTACs, including helping businesses to locate federal, state and local government contracting business opportunities. An area of opportunity that is rapidly expanding is disaster relief. Many opportunities arise out of disasters. Disasters such as droughts, earthquakes, floods, hurricanes, landslides, tornadoes, tsunamis, volcanoes, wildfires, and extreme weather are happening more often and businesses need to prepare to function during these situations.

PTACs can help their clients understand how things really work during emergencies. Emergency Planning Departments in local communities are a great resource for PTACs to find out about local laws that govern procurement processes during emergencies. Usually, local procurement offices have a vendor list of proven responsive and responsible companies. Guiding clients to establish a positive relationship with the right buyers before a disaster occurs is vital.

The following are some suggested action guidelines to facilitate disaster relief contracting.

- Develop an emergency plan – PTAC offices need to ensure continuity of service during emergencies and need to have their computers backed up off-site with the ability to recover lost data and a reliable communication system. It is wise to use a local computer consultant to assess Information Technology continuity needs.

- Train clients – Help clients understand what it takes to be considered as a vendor for emergency situations. Counsel clients on what they need to do to be reachable, functional and ready for action.

- Health & Safety Plan – Ensure that clients working in a disaster area have a health and safety plan (See OSHA link below.)

- Develop a "hot list" – Clients should have a list of those entities most likely to be purchasing supplies and services during a crisis.

- Establish Relationships – Have established relationships with federal, state and local emergency planners/offices and directors of procurement for local counties/cities/towns/villages. FEMA works with state and local offices as well.

- Create a Database of Capable Clients - Establish which PTAC clients are capable and interested in providing emergency services and create a database of these companies with a means to contact them in all situations such as loss of electricity, loss of cell tower functions and so on. Note: Satellite phones are an option in case cell service is unavailable.

- Registrations – Advise clients to make sure they are current with their Registrations (eg, SAM) and that they have registered with their state and local departments of emergency management.

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- 24/7 Contact Information – Have contact information in an accessible database so that contact can be made as soon as possible when an emergency arises.

- Be a Resource – Make PTAC resources available to help advertise opportunities on short notice.

- Provide Resources – Open PTAC office to businesses that have lost computers, etc., if possible.

- Mobility Plan – Create a plan of action that can be implemented for various types of situations. One example of what can be done: "Traveling show" where representatives from various assistance organizations such as SBA, FEMA and PTAC can meet with small businesses about how they can sell their products/services to the appropriate agencies. Locations will vary depending on physical conditions and where the needs are located.

- Educate – Inform agency officials now about the ways in which your PTAC can help when the need arises.

References
- FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) www.ready.gov/business
- Sample Business Emergency Plan
  http://www.ready.gov/sites/default/files/documents/files/sampleplan.pdf
- National Emergency Management Association http://www.nemaweb.org/
- Department of Homeland Security http://www.dhs.gov/how-do-i-prepare-my-business-emergency
- APTAC http://www.aptac-us.org/new/
- Army Corps of Engineers locations http://www.usace.army.mil/Locations.aspx
- Army Corps of Engineers Emergency Operations
  http://www.usace.army.mil/Missions/EmergencyOperations.aspx
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration: National Weather Service
  http://www.weather.gov/
- Dept. of Labor: Occupational Safety and Health Administration
  http://www.osha.gov/dte/index.html