

**DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE****GENERAL SERVICES  
ADMINISTRATION****NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND  
SPACE ADMINISTRATION**

[FAR Case 97-603]

**Proposed Collection; Comment  
Request Entitled Empowerment  
Contracting**

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

**ACTION:** Notice of request for public comments regarding a new OMB clearance.

**SUMMARY:** Under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. Chapter 35), the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) Secretariat will be submitting to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) a request to review and approve a new information collection requirement concerning Empowerment Contracting (FAR Case 97-603).

**DATES:** *Comment Due Date:* June 17, 1997.

**ADDRESSES:** Comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, should be submitted to: FAR Desk Officer, OMB, Room 10102, NEOB, Washington, DC 20503, and a copy to the General Services Administration, FAR Secretariat, 1800 F Street, NW,

Room 4037, Washington, DC 20405. Please cite FAR case 97-603, Empowerment Contracting, in all correspondence.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Victoria Moss, Office of Federal Acquisition Policy, GSA (202) 501-4764.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:****A. Purpose**

In order to promote economy and efficiency in Federal procurement, it is necessary to secure broad-based competition for Federal contracts. This broad competition is best achieved where there is an expansive pool of potential contractors capable of producing quality goods and services at competitive prices. A great and largely untapped opportunity for expanding the pool of such contractors can be found in economically distressed communities. Fostering growth of Federal contractors in economically distressed communities and ensuring that those contractors become viable businesses for the long term will promote economy and efficiency in Federal procurement and help to empower those communities.

This proposed rule implements Executive Order 13005, "Empowerment Contracting," dated May 21, 1996. The Order establishes the Empowerment Contracting Program, which seeks to promote economy and efficiency in Federal procurement by expanding the pool of potential contractors from the Nation's economically distressed areas that are capable of providing supplies and services at competitive prices.

This proposed rule establishes in the FAR Phase I of an Empowerment Contracting Program to assist businesses located in areas of general and severe economic distress by providing for price and non-price evaluation adjustments for qualified firms. Phase I is limited to specified standard industrial classification major groups.

**B. Annual Reporting Burden**

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average *0.96* hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information.

The annual reporting burden is estimated as follows: Respondents *6,648*; responses per respondent, *1*; total annual responses, *6,648*; preparation hours per response, *1.93*; and total response burden hours, *12,852*.

**Obtaining Copies of Justifications**

Requester may obtain a copy of the justification from the General Services Administration, FAR Secretariat (MVRs), Room 4037, 1800 F Street, NW, Washington, DC 20405, telephone (202) 501-4755. Please cite FAR case 97-603, Empowerment Contracting, in all correspondence.

Dated: April 14, 1997.

**Sharon A. Kiser,**  
*FAR Secretariat.*

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