

## 8: BUSINESS ASSISTANCE RESOURCES

### Management and Technical Assistance

#### **SCORE—Service Corps of Retired Executives**

*SCORE Association*

*409 3rd Street SW, 6th Floor*

*Washington DC 20024*

*Phone: 800-634-0245*

*<http://www.score.org>*

The SCORE Association is a resource partner with the US Small Business Administration. SCORE is dedicated to aiding in the formation, growth and success of small businesses nationwide. Find a location near you by going to the SCORE Website and clicking on “find SCORE.” There are 389 SCORE chapters located across the U.S. and in Puerto Rico.

#### **Small Business Development Centers**

*State by State Information—go to Website, or see Tab 2 in this Resource Guide.*

*<http://www.sbaonline.sba.gov/SBDC>*

There are now 63 small business development centers—one in every state (Texas has four, and California has six), the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico, Samoa and the US Virgin Islands—with a network of nearly 1,100 service locations. These Centers are a cooperative program between the US Small Business Administration (SBA) and educational institutions across the nation. The Centers offer counseling and training in management, business planning, marketing, finances, production, and organization. *Find your nearest SBDC by going to the Website above and clicking on “SBDC Locator.”*

#### **Small Business Institutes**

The Institutes are a cooperative program between the US Small Business Administration (SBA) and educational institutions across the country. They provide small business owners an opportunity to receive intensive management counseling from qualified, college-level business students working under expert faculty guidance.

#### **Business Incubators**

Many communities and educational institutions have created business incubators where new businesses can receive counseling and management assistance on site, share the overhead expenses of office personnel and equipment, and receive guidance in growing their business.

## Labor/Employment

### Department of Labor (DOL)

200 Constitution Ave NW  
Washington DC 20210  
Phone: 866-4-USA-DOL  
<http://www.dol.gov>

The DOL controls US labor activities, including administering unemployment insurance payments, enforcing laws concerning compensation, occupational health and safety, minimum wages, overtime pay, child labor, pension plans, and nondiscrimination in employment. The department can provide information to business owners on how to comply with minimum wage and other labor laws, how to write job descriptions, and how to comply with labor provisions of federal contracts. To find local DOL offices near you, go to the DOL Website and click on "State Labor Offices."

Here are some specific DOL programs or service areas:

### Employment Standards Administration (ESA)

Phone: 202-693-0200  
<http://dol.gov/esa/>

The Employment Standards Administration (ESA), the largest agency within the US Department of Labor, enforces and administers laws governing legally mandated wages and working conditions, including child labor, minimum wages, overtime and family and medical leave; equal employment opportunity in businesses with federal contracts and subcontracts; workers' compensation for certain employees injured on their jobs; internal union democracy and financial integrity, and union elections, which protect the rights of union members; and other laws and regulations governing employment standards and practices.

ESA and its four component programs

- Federal Contract Compliance Programs
- Labor Management Standards
- Workers' Compensation
- Wage and Hour Division

have closely monitored and enforced laws protecting the wage, hours, equal employment opportunity, working conditions and injury compensation of workers. While each program has an established identity of its own, all work together to support, protect and defend the rights of American workers under these labor laws.

### Employment and Training Administration (ETA)

Phone: 877-US-2JOBS  
<http://www.doleta.gov>

ETA seeks to build up the labor market through the training of the workforce, and the placement of workers in jobs through employment services. ETA offers apprenticeship training, unemployment insurance, special programs and activities for the disadvantaged, Native Americans, immigrant workers, employment and training projects. For a listing of regional, state, and local contacts, go to the ETA Website and click on "Regions and States."

### Employee Benefits Security Administration (EBSA)

Phone: 866-444-EBSA  
<http://www.dol.gov/ebsa>

EBSA protects the integrity of pensions, health plans, and other employee benefits for more than 150 million people. *(Check the Website for more specific departmental phone numbers.)*

### Women's Bureau

Phone: 202-693-6710  
<http://www.dol.gov/wb>

### Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS)

Phone: 202-219-9116  
<http://www.dol.gov/vets/>

### State Government Labor/Employment Agencies

Most federal and state matters relating to employment, including workers' compensation and unemployment insurance, are actually handled by state offices. State agency offices coordinate with federal agencies to ensure compliance with applicable labor laws. *(See Tab 2 for your specific state offices.)*

## Procurement

### Small Business Administration

The Small Business Administration (SBA) offers a wide variety of procurement programs and opportunities. Contact your nearest office to find out more details about these programs.

*Find your local SBA online by going to:*  
<http://www.sba.gov/regions/states.html>

The 8(a) program of the Small Business Act works with procurement officials in other federal agencies and serves as the prime contractor for the purchase of goods and services for the federal government. The agency then subcontracts this work to small firms owned by minority and disadvantaged persons.

### Small Disadvantaged Business Program (SDB)

*Office of Small Disadvantaged Business  
 Certification and Eligibility  
 409 Third Street SW, 8th Floor  
 Washington DC 20416  
 Phone: 202-619-1850  
 E-mail: [sdb@sba.gov](mailto:sdb@sba.gov)  
<http://www.sba.gov/sdb>*

SBA certifies SDBs to make them eligible for special bidding benefits. Evaluation credits available to prime contractors boost sub-contracting opportunities for SDB. This program has become, in effect, the gateway to opportunity for small contractors and sub-contractors who meet the eligibility criteria.

### HUBZone Empowerment Contracting Program

*US Small Business Administration  
 409 3rd Street SW, 8th Floor  
 Washington DC 20416  
 Phone: 202-205-8885  
 E-mail: [hubzone@sba.gov](mailto:hubzone@sba.gov)  
<http://www.sba.gov/hubzone>*

This SBA Program allows small firms located in many urban or rural areas to qualify for sole-source and other types of federal contract benefits.

HUBZone stands for “historically underutilized business zone.” The SBA’s task is to teach 8(a) and other small companies how to compete in the federal contracting arena and how to take advantage of greater subcontracting opportunities available from large firms as the result of public-private partnerships.

The SBA works closely with federal agencies to increase the dollars and percent of total federal procurement going to small business by identifying items which small firms could supply.

The SBA also monitors prime contractors to ensure that small businesses receive a fair share of subcontracting opportunities.

#### **Central Contractor Registration (CCR)**

*Phone: 888-227-2423*

*<http://www.ccr.gov>*

All government contractors must register in the CCR.

Certificates of Competency may be issued by the SBA on behalf of a small business to help them qualify for government contracts they might not otherwise receive.

Small firms may also receive assistance with property sales/leases for timber, royalty oil, minerals and real and personal property.

Surety bond guarantees may be available to assist small businesses in insuring losses incurred under bid, payment or performance bonds. The contracts may be used for construction, supplies or services provided for government or non-government work.

#### **CAPLines**

*<http://www.sba.gov/financing/loanprog/caplines.html>*

CAPLines is the umbrella program under which the SBA helps small businesses meet their short-term and cyclical working-capital needs. One of these programs is called, "Contract CAPLines" which used to guarantee the financing required to cover the estimated direct short-term working capital needs in order to perform on assignable contract(s).

## **State Procurement Offices**

### **Defense Logistics Agency (DLA)**

*For a current listing of procurement technical assistance centers:*

*<http://www.dla.mil/db>*

Many states have their own procurement offices, such as PTACs, which encourage contract development for small businesses. You can also contact the state economic development office, department of administration or department of commerce to identify where this function is housed in your state.

### **AGMAS—Association of Government Marketing Assistance Specialists**

*AGMAS*

*P.O. Box 1607*

*500 N. 4th Street*

*Orange TX 77631*

*Phone: 409-886-0125*

*E-mail: [agmashqs@pnx.com](mailto:agmashqs@pnx.com)*

*<http://www.sellingtothegovernment.net>*

AGMAS enjoys a cooperative agreement with Programs for Human Services, Inc. (PHS), which provides administrative services and houses AGMAS information. The principle objective of the Association is to establish and maintain a national forum to conduct training and provide for the exchange of information and ideas among all operators of government marketing assistance programs and other related programs for the purpose of interstate and intrastate communication, program development and professional enhancement. The Website above will refer you to the closest Procurement Technical Assistance Center (PTAC).

**Institute for Supply Management™**

ISM

PO Box 22160

Tempe AZ 85285-2160

Phone: 480-752-6276 or 800-888-6276

<http://www.ism.ws>

Founded in 1915, the Institute for Supply Management™ (ISM) is one of the most respected educational associations in the United States. ISM is a communication link with more than 48,000 purchasing and supply management professionals. ISM is a progressive association with a mission to provide national and international leadership in purchasing and materials management, particularly in the areas of education, research and standards of excellence. Through various resources and a network of 180 affiliated organizations, ISM provides opportunities for expansion of professional skills and knowledge. A not-for-profit association, ISM offers a wide range of educational products and programs.

**Patents/Copyrights/Trademarks****Copyright Office**

Library of Congress

Copyright Office

101 Independence Avenue SE

Washington DC 20559-6000

Phone: 202-707-3000

<http://www.copyright.gov>

Although registration is not necessary to claim copyright in an original literary, musical, dramatic or artistic work, registration does provide certain legal benefits in case of infringement. To order copyright forms, call 202-707-9100 or go to <http://www.copyright.gov/forms/>.

**US Patent and Trademark Office**

General Information Services Division

US Patent and Trademark Office

Crystal Plaza 3, Room 2C02

Washington DC 20231

Phone: 800-786-9199 or 703-305-7785

E-mail: [usptoinfo@uspto.gov](mailto:usptoinfo@uspto.gov)<http://www.uspto.gov/>

A trademark is a unique symbol, name, design, slogan or sound used in trade to distinguish the goods and services of one party from another. While registration is not necessary for trademark protection, it does give the registrant certain legal priority and provides the benefit of being able to use the trademark symbol with the mark. The publication *Basic Facts About Trademarks* is available by calling (703) 557-4636 and is also available online at: <http://www.uspto.gov/web/offices/tac/doc/basic/>.

Patents give owners the exclusive right to manufacture, use or sell their invention throughout the United States, or the right to exclude others from using or selling it throughout the US or importing into the U.S. products made by that process. Information and patent applications can be ordered by calling the same phone number listed above. The PAC is able to provide one stop answers to most questions. Publications such as *Basic Facts About Patents*, *A Guide to Filing A Patent Application*, and *Provisional Application For Patent* are available for mailing and the staff can briefly discuss the requirements set forth therein.

## Tax

### State Departments of Revenue

All states have Revenue Departments which can give you information and assistance regarding your tax liability. See *Tab 2 - Business Start-Up Information by State*.

### US Department of the Treasury—Internal Revenue Service

*Find your local office at:*

*<http://www.irs.ustreas.gov/>*

The IRS is responsible for administering and enforcing the internal revenue laws and related statutes. The IRS education department also offers several programs and services such as the Small Business Tax Education Program; and, it offers several programs through selected Small Business Development Centers including small business workshop programs, specific topic seminars and small business tax-kit counseling. There are a number of free forms and publications available on their Website.

## International Trade

### Business and International Trade Online Bookstore

*US Department of Commerce*

*<http://tradecenter.ntis.gov/other.htm>*

“A World Class Collection of Trade and Business Publications from both the Public and Private Sectors.”

### Export-Import Bank of the United States (Ex-Im Bank)

*811 Vermont Ave NW*

*Washington DC 20571*

*Phone: 800-565-EXIM*

*E-mail: [info@exim.gov](mailto:info@exim.gov)*

*<http://www.exim.gov>*

The Export-Import Bank is the official export credit agency of the US government. It is the principal government agency responsible for aiding the export of US goods and services through a variety of loan, guarantee, and insurance programs. The Bank offers financial services, briefing programs and seminars to encourage small businesses to sell overseas.

### US Department of Commerce

*International Trade Administration*

*US Department of Commerce*

*401 Constitution Avenue NW*

*Washington DC 20230*

*Phone: 800-USA-TRADE*

*E-mail: [tic@ita.doc.gov](mailto:tic@ita.doc.gov)*

*<http://www.export.gov> or <http://www.ita.doc.gov/>*

**US Small Business Administration***Office of International Trade**<http://sba.gov/oit/>*

This “one-stop” source of information on all federal export assistance programs is operated by the Trade Promotion Coordinating Committee (TPCC), a committee composed of nineteen Federal agencies responsible for international trade and export promotion. The Center provides information on a variety of topics, including: how to get started in exporting, foreign markets, export financing, locating overseas buyers, overseas trade promotion opportunities and information on export assistance programs offered by other organizations involved in international trade, such as state and local economic development organizations, world trade centers and chambers of commerce.

The book *A Basic Guide to Exporting* is designed to help U.S. firms learn the costs and risks associated with exporting and develop a strategy for exporting. While it is a publication of the US Department of Commerce, it directs readers to sources of assistance throughout the federal and state governments as well as the private sector.

The **International Trade Administration** of the US Department of Commerce has district and regional offices in cities throughout the United States that are staffed with trade and other area specialists. These professionals counsel companies on the steps involved in exporting, aid in evaluating attractive markets and help firms assess their export potential.

**World Trade Centers** are composed of area business people who represent firms engaged in international trade. These organizations conduct educational programs on international business and organize promotional events to stimulate interest in world trade. Some eighty world trade centers are located in major trading cities throughout the world.

**District Export Councils (DECs)** are organizations of leaders from the local business community, appointed by successive Secretaries of Commerce, whose knowledge of international business provides a source of professional advice for local firms. For more than 25 years, DECs have served the United States by assisting companies in their local communities export, thus promoting our country's economic growth and creating new and higher-paying jobs for their communities. Closely affiliated with the US Commercial Service's Export Assistance Centers, the 56 DECs combine the energies of more than 1,500 exporters and private and public export service providers throughout the United States. If you would like more information about the District Export Councils, contact your local Export Assistance Center.

