

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE**GENERAL SERVICES
ADMINISTRATION****NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND
SPACE ADMINISTRATION****48 CFR Part 19****[FAR Case 2003–010]****RIN 9000–AJ90****Federal Acquisition Regulation;
Contract Federal Acquisition
Regulation; Mentor Protégé Program—
Delegation of Approval Authority for
Mentor Protégé Agreements**

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

ACTION: Proposed rule.

SUMMARY: The Civilian Agency Acquisition Council and the Defense Acquisition Regulations Council (Councils) are proposing to amend the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) to change the approval authority of Mentor Protégé Agreements for the DoD Military Department or Defense Agencies and to make minor changes for clarification.

DATES: Interested parties should submit comments in writing on or before June 7, 2004, to be considered in the formulation of a final rule.

ADDRESSES: Submit written comments to—

General Services Administration, FAR Secretariat (MVA), 1800 F Street, NW., Room 4035, ATTN: Laurie Duarte, Washington, DC 20405.

Submit electronic comments via the Internet to—farcase.2003-010@gsa.gov.

Please submit comments only and cite FAR case 2003–010 in all correspondence related to this case.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: The FAR Secretariat at (202) 501–4755 for information pertaining to status or publication schedules. For clarification of content, contact Ms. Rhonda Cundiff, Procurement Analyst, at (202) 501–0044. Please cite FAR case 2003–010.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**A. Background**

The Pilot Mentor-Protégé Program was established under Section 831 of Public Law 101–510, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal

Year 1991 (10 U.S.C. 2302 note). The purpose of the Program is to provide incentives to major Department of Defense (DoD) contractors to assist Protégé firms in enhancing their capabilities to satisfy DoD and other contract and subcontract requirements. Under the Mentor-Protégé Program, eligible companies approved as mentor firms will enter into mentor-protégé agreements with eligible protégé firms to provide appropriate developmental assistance to enhance the capabilities of the Protégé firms to perform as subcontractors and suppliers. DoD may provide the mentor firm with either cost reimbursement or credit against applicable subcontracting goals established under contracts with DoD or other Federal agencies.

The Department of Defense in an effort to streamline and transform itself in order to more effectively achieve its mission and in recognition that the military departments have the necessary expertise to manage programs efficiently is proposing to transfer the management of the Mentor Protégé program to the military departments and defense agencies. The Office of the Secretary of Defense will maintain oversight and policy development responsibilities.

Accordingly, the FAR is amended to state that the Director, Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization of the cognizant DoD military department or defense agency will be the approval authority for mentor-protégé agreements.

This is not a significant regulatory action and, therefore, was not subject to review under section 6(b) of Executive Order 12866, Regulatory Planning and Review, dated September 30, 1993. This rule is not a major rule under 5 U.S.C. 804.

B. Regulatory Flexibility Act

The Councils do not expect this proposed rule 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.*, because the rule removes a restriction, thus allowing DoD to make a minor policy change. An Initial Regulatory Flexibility Analysis has, therefore, not been performed. We invite comments from small businesses and other interested parties. The Councils will consider comments from small entities concerning the affected

FAR Part 52 in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 610.

Interested parties must submit such comments separately and should cite 5 U.S.C. 601, *et seq.* (FAR case 2003–010), in correspondence.

C. Paperwork Reduction Act

The Paperwork Reduction Act does not apply because the proposed changes to the FAR do not impose information collection requirements that require the approval of the Office of Management and Budget under 44 U.S.C. 3501, *et seq.*

List of Subjects in 48 CFR Part 19

Government procurement.

Dated: March 30, 2004.

Laura Auletta,

Director, Acquisition Policy Division.

Therefore, DoD, GSA, and NASA propose amending 48 CFR part 19 as set forth below:

**PART 19—SMALL BUSINESS
PROGRAMS**

1. The authority citation for 48 CFR part 19 is revised to read as follows:

Authority: 40 U.S.C. 121(c); 10 U.S.C. chapter 137; and 42 U.S.C. 2473(c).

2. Amend section 19.702 by revising paragraph (d) to read as follows:

19.702 Statutory requirements.

* * * * *

(d) As authorized by 15 U.S.C. 637(d)(11), certain costs incurred by a mentor firm in providing developmental assistance to a protégé firm under the Department of Defense Pilot Mentor-Protégé Program, may be credited as if they were subcontract awards to a protégé firm for the purpose of determining whether the mentor firm attains the applicable goals under any subcontracting plan entered into with any executive agency. However, the mentor-protégé agreement must have been approved by the Director, Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization of the cognizant DoD military department or defense agency before developmental assistance costs may be credited against subcontract goals. A list of approved agreements may be obtained at http://www.acq.osd.mil/sadbu/mentor_protege/ or by calling (703) 588–8631.

[FR Doc. 04–7774 Filed 4–5–04; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6820–EP–P