

ALERT

Calling All Contractors: Government Seeks Input on Reducing Reporting Compliance Costs

April 6, 2015

On April 1, 2015, the Chief Acquisition Officers Council (CAOC), along with General Services Administration (GSA) and the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), published a notice in the Federal Register seeking input from contractors and federal grantees regarding the reduction of reporting compliance costs. See 80 Fed. Reg. 17,438 (Apr. 1, 2015) ("National Dialogue and Pilot to Reduce Reporting Compliance Costs for Federal Contractors and Grantees").

The impetus for the "dialogue" stems from the CAOC's acknowledgement that the management of federal contract and grant business requires "multiple layers of reporting across multiple agencies," yet reporting requirements are not common across all contracting agencies. The CAOC recognizes that this lack of standardization creates significant costs and burdens for contractors and grantees—costs that can and should be reduced by implementing a more efficient compliance reporting system. To that end, the CAOC seeks to address three principal topics with contract and grant stakeholders:

- Reporting compliance requirements shared by prime and subawardees of federal procurements and grants;
- Procurement practices, processes, and reporting; and
- Grants practices and processes.

The notice advises that the CAOC is interested in any ideas regarding how to reduce the reporting burden, whether through a revision of data standards, changes to reporting procedures, executive actions, including regulatory and administrative fixes, or legislative action.

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Practice Areas

Government Contracts

The notice is the latest in a series of efforts by the Government to streamline procurement practices and procedures to avoid redundancies in federal government contracting. As an initial matter, the notice advises that the dialogue is meant to further the President's Management Agenda, which features as its primary goal the creation of a more effective, efficient, and economic growth-oriented Government. In addition, the planned dialogue appears to build on feedback the CAOC received last year from industry stakeholders who participated in the Open Dialogue on Improving Federal Procurement-feedback that focused on improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the Government's acquisition practices by reducing redundant reporting requirements. *See* 79 Fed. Reg. 22,682 (Apr. 23, 2014).

Contractors that engage in compliance reporting, particularly reporting among multiple government agencies, should consider providing input into the decision making process. There is plenty of time to do so: the dialogue will be conducted through an online platform from May 30, 2015 through May 30, 2017.