

**DISADVANTAGED BUSINESS ENTERPRISE (RACE CONSCIOUS AND RACE AND GENDER NEUTRAL) LONG TERM AGREEMENTS ONLY:**

(8-19-08)

SP1G 66

**Policy**

It is the policy of the North Carolina Department of Transportation that Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBEs) as defined in *49 CFR Part 26* shall have the equal opportunity to compete fairly for and to participate in the performance of contracts financed in whole or in part by Federal Funds.

The Firm is also encouraged to give every opportunity to allow DBE participation in Supplemental Agreements.

**Obligation**

The Firm, subconsultant, and subfirm shall not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, age, disability or sex in the performance of this contract. The Firm shall comply with applicable requirements of *49 CFR Part 26* in the award and administration of federally assisted contracts. Failure by the Firm to comply with these requirements is a material breach of this contract, which will result in the termination of this contract or such other remedy, as the Department deems necessary.

**Definitions**

*Commitment* - The approved DBE participation submitted by the prime contractor during the bidding process. **(Phase II)**

*Committed DBE* - Any DBE listed on the DBE commitment list approved by the Department at the time of bid submission or any DBE utilized as a replacement for a DBE firm listed on the commitment list. **(Phase II)**

*Department* - North Carolina Department of Transportation

*Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE)* – A firm certified through the North Carolina Unified Certification Program.

*Advertised Goal* - The DBE participation specified herein. **(Phase II)**

*Letter of Intent* – Written documentation of the bidder/offeror's commitment to use a DBE subcontractor. **(Phase II)**

*Manufacturer* - A firm that operates or maintains a factory or establishment that produces on the premises the materials or supplies obtained by the Contractor.

*Regular Dealer* - A firm that owns, operates, or maintains a store, warehouse, or other establishment in which the materials or supplies required for the performance of the contract are bought, kept in stock, and regularly sold to the public in the usual course of business. A regular dealer engages in, as its principal business and in its own name, the purchase and sale or lease of

the products in question. A regular dealer in such bulk items as steel, cement, gravel, stone, and petroleum products need not keep such products in stock, if it owns or operates distribution equipment. Brokers and packagers are not regarded as manufacturers or regular dealers within the meaning of this section.

*Form RS-1-D* - Form for subcontracts involving DBE subcontractors attesting to the agreed upon unit prices and extensions for the affected contract items. (**Phase II**)

*Form RS-2* - Form to be completed showing the participation of all known DBE subconsultant firms who will participate in the performance of the identified work (**Phase I**)

*Form DBE-IS* – Form required to record payments made to subconsultants (SPSFs), including material suppliers. The accounting shall be listed on the Department’s Subcontractor Payment Information Form (Form DBE-IS).

*North Carolina Unified Certification Program* - A program that provides comprehensive information to applicants for certification, such that an applicant is required to apply only once for a DBE certification that will be honored by all recipients of USDOT funds in the state and not limited to the Department of Transportation only. The Certification Program is in accordance with *49 CFR Part 26*. The program also certifies Small Business Enterprise (SBE) firms.

*USDOT* - United States Department of Transportation, including the Office of the Secretary, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA).

## **Participation and Goals**

### **A. Phase I**

Specific project goals are not established for Professional Services agreements as identified in the scope of work for this project. However, it is the Department’s policy to encourage the participation from Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE) consultants and/or suppliers who have been prequalified by the Department.

### **Listing of DBE Subconsultants**

The firm, at the time the Letter of Interest is submitted, shall submit a listing of all known DBE subconsultants that will participate in the performance of the identified work. The participation of each DBE subconsultant shall be submitted on the Department’s Form RS-2. In the event the firm has no subconsultant participation, the firm shall indicate this on the Form RS-2 by entering the word ‘None’, affixing his/her signature to the form, and submitting the completed Form RS-2 with the Letter of Interest. Letters of Interest submitted without the Form RS-2 will be considered unresponsive. Directions for completing the Form RS-2, and an electronic copy of the form, may be accessed at <https://apps.dot.state.nc.us/quickfind/forms/Default.aspx>.

## Reporting DBE Subconsultant Participation

When payments are made to Disadvantaged Business Enterprise firms (DBE) including material suppliers, firms at all levels (Prime Consultant, subconsultant or subfirm) shall provide the Contract Administrator with an accounting of said payments. The accounting shall be listed on the Department's Subcontractor Payment Information Form (Form DBE-IS). In the event the firm has no DBE subconsultant participation, the firm shall indicate this on the Form DBE-IS by entering the word "NONE", affix his/her signature, and attached to invoice. Form DBE-IS may be accessed at <http://www.ncdot.org/doh/forms/files/DBE-IS.xls>.

### B. Phase II

A goal for participation by Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE) shall be established for the construction phase of this contract and approved by NCDOT **prior to advertising for construction bids.**

### Contract Goal

The following goal for participation by Disadvantaged Business Enterprises **will be** established for this contract prior to the construction phase of the project:

Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (insert number) %

- (A) *If the goal is more than zero*, the Contractor shall exercise all necessary and reasonable steps to ensure that Disadvantaged Business Enterprises participate in at least the percent of the contract as set forth above as the goal.
- (B) *If the goal is zero*, the Contractor shall continue to recruit the DBEs and report the use of DBEs during the construction of the project. A good faith effort will not be required with a zero goal.

### Contract Requirement

The approved DBE participation submitted by the Contractor shall be the **Contract Goal Requirement.**

### Listing of DBE Subcontractors in Contract

Only those DBE firms with current certification are acceptable for listing in the bidder's submittal of DBE participation. The Contractor shall indicate the following required information:

- (A) Electronic Bids

Bidders shall submit a listing of DBE participation in the appropriate section of Expedite, the bidding software of Bid Express<sup>®</sup>.

- (1) The names and addresses of DBE firms committed to participate in the contract. If the bidder uses the updated listing of DBE firms shown in Expedite, the bidder may use the dropdown menu to access the name and address of the DBE firm.
- (2) The contract line numbers of work to be performed by each DBE firm. When no figures or firms are entered, the bidder will be considered to have no DBE participation.

**(B) Paper Bids**

- (1) *If the goal is more than zero*, bidders at the time the bid proposal is submitted, shall submit a listing of DBE participation on the appropriate form (Listing of DBE Subcontractors or facsimile thereof) contained elsewhere in the contract documents in order for the bid to be considered responsive. Bidders shall indicate the total dollar value of the DBE participation for the contract. If bidders have no DBE participation, they shall indicate this on the form “Listing of DBE Subcontractors” by entering the word or number zero. This form shall be completed in its entirety. **Blank forms will not be deemed to represent zero participation.** Bids submitted that do not have DBE participation indicated on the appropriate form will not be read publicly during the opening of bids. The Department will not consider these bids for award and the proposal will be returned to the bidder.
- (2) *If the goal is zero*, bidders at the time the bid proposal is submitted, they shall enter the word “zero” or number “0” or if there is participation, add the value on the “Listing of DBE Subcontractors” (or facsimile thereof) contained elsewhere in the contract documents.

**Written Documentation – Letter of Intent**

The bidder shall submit written documentation of the bidder/offeror’s commitment to use a DBE subcontractor whose participation it submits to meet a contract goal and written confirmation from each DBE, listed in the proposal, indicating their participation in the contract. This documentation shall be submitted on the Department’s form titled “Letter of Intent to Perform as a Subcontractor”. This letter of intent form is available at:

<http://www.ncdot.org/doh/preconstruct/ps/contracts/letterofintent.pdf>.

It shall be received in the office of the State Contractor Utilization Engineer no later than 12:00 noon of the sixth calendar day following opening of bids.

If the bidder fails to submit the letter of intent from each committed DBE listed in the proposal indicating their participation in the contract, the DBE participation will not count toward meeting the goal.

## **Counting DBE Participation toward meeting DBE Goal of Zero or more**

- (A) If a firm is determined to be an eligible DBE firm, the total dollar value of the participation by the DBE will be counted toward the contract requirement. The total dollar value of participation by a certified DBE will be based upon the value of work actually performed by the DBE and the actual payments to DBE firms by the Contractor.
- (B) When a DBE performs as a participant in a joint venture, the Contractor may count toward its DBE goal a portion of the total value of participation with the DBE in the joint venture, that portion of the total dollar value being a distinct clearly defined portion of work that the DBE performs with its forces.

- (C) (1) Commercially Useful Function

The Contractor may count toward its DBE requirement only expenditures to DBEs that perform a commercially useful function in the work of a contract. A DBE performs a commercially useful function when it is responsible for execution of the work of the contract and is carrying out its responsibilities by actually performing, managing, and supervising the work involved. To perform a commercially useful function, the DBE shall also be responsible with respect to materials and supplies used on the contract, for negotiating price, determining quality and quantity, ordering the material and installing (where applicable) and paying for the material itself. To determine whether a DBE is performing a commercially useful function, the Department will evaluate the amount of work subcontracted, industry practices, whether the amount the firm is to be paid under the contract is commensurate with the work it is actually performing and the DBE credit claimed for its performance of the work, and other relevant factors.

- (2) Subcontracts

A DBE may enter into subcontracts. Work that a DBE subcontracts to another DBE firm may be counted toward the contract requirement. Work that a DBE subcontracts to a non-DBE firm does not count toward the contract requirement. If a DBE contractor or subcontractor subcontracts a significantly greater portion of the work of the contract than would be expected on the basis of standard industry practices, the DBE shall be presumed not to be performing a commercially useful function. The DBE may present evidence to rebut this presumption to the Department for commercially useful functions. The Department's decision on the rebuttal of this presumption will be subject to review by the Federal Highway Administration but will not be administratively appealable to USDOT.

- (3) The following factors will be used to determine if a DBE trucking firm is performing a commercially useful function.

- (a) The DBE shall be responsible for the management and supervision of the entire trucking operation for which it is responsible on a particular contract, and there shall not be a contrived arrangement for the purpose of meeting DBE goals.
  - (b) The DBE shall itself own and operate at least one fully licensed, insured, and operational truck used on the contract.
  - (c) The DBE receives credit for the total value of the transportation services it provides on the contract using trucks it owns, insures, and operates using drivers it employs.
  - (d) The DBE may lease trucks from another DBE firm, including an owner-operator who is certified as a DBE. The DBE who leases trucks from another DBE receives credit for the total value of the transportation services the lessee DBE provides on the contract.
  - (e) The DBE may also lease trucks from a non-DBE firm, including from an owner-operator. The DBE who leases trucks from a non-DBE is entitled to credit for the total value of transportation services provided by non-DBE lessees not to exceed the value of transportation services provided by DBE-owned trucks on the contract. Additional participation by non-DBE lessees receives credit only for the fee or commission it receives as a result of the lease arrangement.
  - (f) For purposes of this paragraph, a lease shall indicate that the DBE has exclusive use of and control over the truck. This does not preclude the leased truck from working for others during the term of the lease with the consent of the DBE, so long as the lease gives the DBE absolute priority for use of the leased truck. Leased trucks shall display the name and identification number of the DBE.
- (D)** A contractor may count toward its DBE requirement 60 percent of its expenditures for materials and supplies required completing the contract and obtained from DBE regular dealer and 100 percent of such expenditures to a DBE manufacturer.
- (E)** A contractor may count toward its DBE requirement the following expenditures to DBE firms that are not manufacturers or regular dealers:
- (1) The fees or commissions charged by a DBE firm for providing a bona fide service, such as professional, technical, consultant, or managerial services, or for providing bonds or insurance specifically required for the performance of a DOT-assisted contract, provided the fees or commissions are determined to be reasonable and not excessive as compared with fees and commissions customarily allowed for similar services.

- (2) The fees or commissions charged for assistance in the procurement of the materials and supplies, or for transportation charges for the delivery of materials or supplies required on a job site (but not the cost of the materials and supplies themselves), provided the fees are not from a manufacturer or regular dealer and provided the fees are determined to be reasonable and not excessive as compared with fees customarily allowed for similar services.

### **Good Faith Effort for Projects with Goals More Than Zero**

If the DBE participation submitted in the bid by the apparent lowest responsive bidder does not meet or exceed the DBE contract goal, the apparent lowest responsive bidder shall submit to the Department documentation of its good faith efforts made to reach the contract goal. One complete set and 9 copies of this information shall be received in the office of the State Contractor Utilization Engineer no later than 12:00 noon of the sixth calendar day following opening of bids. Where the information submitted includes repetitious solicitation letters it will be acceptable to submit a representative letter along with a distribution list of the firms that were solicited. Documentation of DBE quotations shall be a part of the good faith effort submittal as necessary to demonstrate compliance with the factors listed below which the Department considers in judging good faith efforts. This documentation may include written subcontractor quotations, telephone log notations of verbal quotations, or other types of quotation documentation.

The following factors will be used to determine if the bidder has made adequate good faith effort:

- (A) Whether the bidder attended any pre-bid meetings that were scheduled by the Department to inform DBEs of subcontracting opportunities.
- (B) Whether the bidder provided solicitations through all reasonable and available means (e.g. advertising in newspapers owned and targeted to the Disadvantaged) at least 10 calendar days prior to bid opening). Whether the bidder provided written notice to all DBEs listed in the NCDOT Directory of Transportation Firms, within the Divisions and surrounding Divisions where the project is located, that specialize in the areas of work (as noted in the DBE Directory) that the bidder will be subletting.
- (C) Whether the bidder followed up initial solicitations of interests by contacting DBEs to determine with certainty whether they were interested. If a reasonable amount of DBEs within the targeted Divisions do not provide an intent to quote or no DBEs specialize in the subcontracted areas, the bidder shall notify DBEs outside of the targeted Divisions that specialize in the subcontracted areas, and contact the Business Development Manager in the NCDOT Office of Civil Rights to give notification of the bidder's inability to get DBE quotes.
- (D) Whether the bidder selected portions of the work to be performed by DBEs in order to increase the likelihood of meeting the contract goals. This includes, where appropriate, breaking out contract work items into economically feasible units to facilitate DBE

participation, even when the bidder might otherwise perform these work items with its own forces.

- (E) Whether the bidder provided interested DBEs with adequate and timely information about the plans, specifications and requirements of the contract.
- (F) Whether the bidder negotiated in good faith with interested DBEs without rejecting them as unqualified without sound reasons based on a thorough investigation of their capabilities. Any rejection should be noted in writing with a description as to why an agreement could not be reached.
- (G) Whether quotations were received from interested DBE firms but rejected as unacceptable without sound reasons why the quotations were considered unacceptable. The fact that the DBE firms quotation for the work is not the lowest quotation received will not in itself be considered as a sound reason for rejecting the quotation as unacceptable. The fact that the bidder has the ability and/or desire to perform the contract work with its own forces will not be considered as sound reason for rejecting a DBE quote. Nothing in this provision shall be construed to require the bidder to accept unreasonable quotes in order to satisfy contract goals.
- (H) Whether the bidder specifically negotiated with subcontractors to assume part of the responsibility to meet the contract DBE goal when the work to be sublet includes potential for DBE participation.
- (I) Whether the bidder made any efforts and/or offered assistance to interested DBEs in obtaining the necessary equipment, supplies, materials, insurance, and/or bonding to satisfy the work requirements in the bid proposal.
- (J) Any other evidence that the bidder submits which show that the bidder has made reasonable good faith efforts to meet the contract goal.

If a bidder is the apparent lowest responsive bidder on more than one project within the same letting located in the same geographic area of the state, as a part of the good faith effort the Department will consider allowing the bidder to combine the DBE participation as long as the overall DBE goal value of the combined projects is achieved.

If the Department does not award the contract to the apparent lowest responsive bidder, the Department reserves the right to award the contract to the next lowest responsive bidder that can satisfy the Department that the contract goal can be met or that adequate good faith efforts have been made to meet the goal.

### **DBE Replacement**

The Contractor shall not terminate a committed DBE subcontractor for convenience or perform the work with its own forces or those of an affiliate. If the Contractor fails to demonstrate reasonable efforts to replace a committed DBE firm that does not perform as intended with

another committed DBE firm or completes the work with its own forces without the Engineer's approval, the Contractor may be disqualified from further bidding for a period of up to 6 months.

The Contractor shall comply with the following for replacement of committed DBE:

**(A) Performance Related Replacement**

When a DBE is terminated or fails to complete its work on the contract for any reason, the Contractor shall take all necessary, reasonable steps to replace the DBE subcontractor with another DBE subcontractor to perform at least the same amount of work as the DBE that was terminated. The Contractor is encouraged to first attempt to find another DBE firm to do the same work as the DBE that was being terminated.

To demonstrate necessary, reasonable good faith efforts, the Contractor shall document the steps they have taken to replace any DBE subcontractor who is unable to perform successfully with another DBE subcontractor. Such documentation shall include but not be limited to the following:

- (1) Copies of written notification to DBEs that their interest is solicited in subcontracting the work defaulted by the previous DBE subcontractor or in subcontracting other items of work in the contract.
- (2) Efforts to negotiate with DBEs for specific subbids including, at a minimum:
  - (a) The names, addresses, and telephone numbers of DBEs who were contacted.
  - (b) A description of the information provided to DBEs regarding the plans and specifications for portions of the work to be performed.
- (3) For each DBE contacted but rejected as unqualified, the reasons for the Contractor's conclusion.
- (4) Efforts made to assist the DBEs contacted, if needed, in obtaining bonding or insurance required by the Contractor.

**(B) Decertification Replacement**

- (1) When a committed DBE is decertified by the Department after a Request for Subcontract has been received by the Department, the Department will not require the Prime Contractor to solicit replacement DBE participation equal to the remaining work to be performed by the decertified firm. The participation equal to the remaining work performed by the decertified firm will count toward the contract requirement.

- (2) When a committed DBE is decertified prior to the Department receiving a Request for Subcontract for the named DBE firm, the Prime Contractor shall take all necessary and reasonable steps to replace the DBE subcontractor with another DBE subcontractor to perform at least the same amount of work to meet the contract goal or demonstrate that it has made a good faith effort to do so.

### **Changes in the Work**

When the Engineer makes changes that result in the reduction or elimination of work to be performed by a committed DBE, the Contractor will not be required to seek additional participation. When the Engineer makes changes that result in additional work to be performed by a DBE based upon the Contractor's commitment, the DBE shall participate in additional work to the same extent as the DBE participated in the original contract work.

When the Engineer makes changes that result in extra work, which has more than a minimal impact on the contract amount, the Contractor shall seek additional participation by DBEs unless otherwise approved by the Engineer.

When the Engineer makes changes that result in an alteration of plans or details of construction and a portion or all of work had been expected to be performed by a committed DBE, the Contractor shall seek participation by DBEs unless otherwise approved by the Engineer.

When the Contractor requests changes in the work that result in the reduction or elimination of work that the Contractor committed to be performed by a DBE, the Contractor shall seek additional participation by DBEs equal to the reduced DBE participation caused by the changes.

### **Reports**

All requests for subcontracts involving DBE subcontractors shall be accompanied by a certification executed by both the Prime Contractor and the DBE subcontractor attesting to the agreed upon unit prices and extensions for the affected contract items. This information shall be submitted on the Department Form RS-1-D, located at: <http://www.ncdot.org/doh/forms/files/FORMRS-1-D.doc> unless otherwise approved by the Engineer. The Department reserves the right to require copies of actual subcontract agreements involving DBE subcontractors.

Within 30 calendar days of entering into an agreement with a DBE for materials, supplies or services, not otherwise documented by a Request for Subcontract as specified above, the Contractor shall furnish the Engineer a copy of the agreement. The documentation should also indicate the percentage (60% or 100%) of expenditures claimed for DBE credit.

All certifications will be considered a part of the project records, and consequently will be subject to penalties under Federal Law, State Law and the Specifications associated with falsifications of records related to projects.

### **Reporting Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Participation**

- (A) The Contractor shall provide the Engineer with an accounting of payments made to Disadvantaged Business Enterprise firms, including material suppliers, contractors at all levels (prime, subcontractor, or second tier subcontractor). This accounting shall be furnished to the Engineer for any given month by the end of the following month. Failure to submit this information accordingly may result in the following action:
- (1) Withholding of money due in the next partial pay estimate; or
  - (2) Removal of an approved contractor from the prequalified bidders' list or the removal of other entities from the approved subcontractors list.

**(B) Electronic Bids Reporting:**

The Contractor shall report the accounting of payments through the Department's DBE Payment Tracking System, which is located at: <https://apps.dot.state.nc.us/Vendor/PaymentTracking/>. The Contractor shall also provide the Engineer an affidavit attesting the accuracy of the information submitted in the Payment Tracking System. This too shall be submitted for any given month by the end of the following month.

**(C) Paper Bids Reporting:**

The Contractor shall report the accounting of payments on the Department's DBE Subcontractor Payment Information Form DBE-IS, which is available at <http://www.ncdot.org/doh/forms/files/DBE-IS.xls>.

- (D) Contractors reporting transportation services provided by non-DBE lessees shall evaluate the value of services provided during the month of the reporting period only.

Prior to payment of the final estimate, the Contractor shall furnish an accounting of total payment to each DBE. A responsible fiscal officer of the payee contractor, subcontractor, or second tier subcontractor who can attest to the date and amounts of the payments shall certify that the accounting is correct.

While each contractor (prime, subcontractor, 2nd tier subcontractor) is responsible for accurate accounting of payments to DBEs, it shall be the prime contractor's responsibility to report all monthly and final payment information in the correct reporting manner.

Failure on the part of the Contractor to submit the required information in the time frame specified may result in the disqualification of that contractor and any affiliate companies from further bidding until the required information is submitted.

Failure on the part of any subcontractor to submit the required information in the time frame specified may result in the disqualification of that contractor and any affiliate companies from working on any DOT project until the required information is submitted.

### **Failure to Meet Contract Requirements**

Failure to meet contract requirements in accordance with Article 102-16(J) of the *Standard Specifications* may be cause to disqualify the Contractor.

### **Certified Transportation Firms Directory**

Real-time information about firms doing business with the Department and firms that are certified through North Carolina's Unified Certification Program is available in the Directory of Transportation Firms. The Directory can be accessed by the link on the Department's homepage or by entering <https://apps.dot.state.nc.us/vendor/directory/> in the address bar of your web browser. Only firms identified as DBE certified in the Directory shall be listed in the proposal.

The listing of an individual firm in the Department's directory shall not be construed as an endorsement of the firm's capability to perform certain work.