



## Virtual Small Business Training Week 2021 August 17 - 19

### Session Q&As

**Day 1: Tuesday, August 17 @ 4:30pm – 5:30pm**

**Session: PTAC – What is their role and how can they help you?**

<b>Q</b>	<b>How can I contact my local PTAC in Michigan?</b>
<b>A</b>	You will find a locator for all PTACs at <a href="http://www.aptac-us.org">www.aptac-us.org</a> . Some states have a single statewide PTAC, often with multiple locations. You should contact the main office and will be directed to your local PTAC office. Other states, including Michigan, have multiple, regional PTACs. You should contact the one that seems closest to your business. They will either serve you directly, or refer you to the PTAC that services your area. Native American PTACs divide the country by Bureau of Indian Affairs Regions, and a separate map on the same APTAC website.-
<b>Q</b>	<b>I work with NAVSEA at the Washington Navy Yard in Washington, DC and meet companies from all across the country. I'm interested in building a relationship with PTACs but not sure if I should connect with just my local DC metro area PTAC or PTACs from other regions as well?</b>
<b>A</b>	All PTACs welcome relationships with federal agencies, regardless of location. The DC PTAC can help you connect with other PTACs. Also, the Association of Procurement Technical Assistance Centers (APTAC) provides a nexus for the PTACs. Through APTAC, you can arrange to present at a conference or webinar, achieving one-stop outreach to all of the PTACs. You can contact APTAC via this link: <a href="https://www.aptac-us.org/contact-us/">https://www.aptac-us.org/contact-us/</a>
<b>Q</b>	<b>Do you think it is a positive execution of the PTAC offices to fall under the Office of Small Business Programs (OSBP)?</b>
<b>A</b>	The National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) 2020 Section 852 transferred the Procurement Technical Assistance Program (PTAP) management, execution, and oversight from DLA to OUSD A&S. As a result, the PTAP will continue to issue cooperative agreements consistent with Public Law 98– 525 to establish Procurement Technical Assistance Centers (PTAC) under the management, execution and oversight of OUSD A&S.
<b>Q</b>	<b>Will there be any significant changes now that PTACs fall under his DoD OSBP?</b>
<b>A</b>	The NDAA 2020 Section 852 officially transitions the PTAP effectively on 10/1/2021. Thus, it is premature to discuss anticipated changes at this time.

Q	<b>What is the normal response time for a PTAC? I know this will differ based on the nature/complexity of the work, but are their rough timeframes for system assistance (SAM/WAWF) and proposal review?</b>
A	PTAC counselor resources vary considerably from office to office, as does demand for services from our clients. Some PTACs schedule counseling sessions many weeks in advance, while others routinely provide same day service. In any case, every PTAC constantly adjusts to accommodate the specific needs of clients, particularly when their need is for bid/proposal assistance. All PTACs do their utmost to work within the time constraints faced by our clients.
Q	<b>Are there set steps that a PTAC take to assist a client and what are they?</b>
A	<p>This varies substantially from PTAC to PTAC and even more so from client to client, but typically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Readiness assessment</li> <li>- Market evaluation</li> <li>- Registrations and certifications</li> <li>- Marketing to government and prime contractors</li> <li>- Finding and selecting roles and opportunities</li> <li>- Responding to solicitations</li> <li>- Post-award compliance and invoicing</li> <li>- Recordkeeping, audits and closeout</li> <li>- Other matters as required</li> </ul> <p>We commence with an initial readiness assessment. Is the firm fundamentally ready to compete for government contracts/subcontracts? If not, they are not ready to be a PTAC client. Once initial readiness has been established, a market assessment must be performed. Are there government markets for the firm’s products or services? Can the firm compete on quality, responsiveness and price? If yes, can they achieve their business goals while doing so? Once the basics are in place and a determination is made that government markets are attractive, we tackle the unique administrative burdens of government business – SAM registration, certifications, and a multitude of other tasks that must be completed before they are ready to bid. Firms must learn how to position and market themselves to government and its prime contractors. Next, we move on to finding specific opportunities and understanding how to respond to them. Once a successful bid or proposal is submitted and an award ensues, it is critical that the awardee perform to meet or exceed expectations, and deals effectively with problems that may arise. Learning to use government invoicing systems, such as WAWF, properly often comes next, followed by successfully coping with performance reviews and audits, record retention, finally culminating in contract closeout. PTACs assist firms with any and all of these steps.</p>
Q	<b>Do PTAC's assist with post-award requirements like bonding issues and accident prevention plans?</b>
A	Yes, PTACs can and do assist companies with post-award requirements, with the caveat that in order to constitute “procurement technical assistance” the topic must be specific to government contracts and subcontracts and not a generic business need. For an example of this distinction, PTACs can help companies with NIST 800-171 self assessment and SPRS score uploads, or CMMC requirements, but we do not offer training on general cybersecurity issues. We are also limited in the extent to which we can assist with protests.

<b>Q</b>	<b>What are some challenges that PTAC encounters while assisting contractors?</b>
A	To a large extent, the PTAC role is that of an educator and/or translator. Our clients (students) are almost infinitely varied, with a tremendous diversity of experience, education, culture, language, technology. Our role is to train and counsel across the full spectrum of Americans on topics that are complex and subject to frequent change. The language of government can be somewhat arcane, and we are required not just to learn and understand it ourselves, but translate it to the layman. Because government procurement regulations are subject to frequent, and sometimes dramatic changes, we are often the front line “explainers” to small and large firms alike. The PTAC role is a unique one, in that our role is to facilitate without advocacy. PTACs represent neither contractors nor government, but exist to facilitate their interactions, reducing errors and failures on both sides and increasing the efficiency of government-business interactions.
<b>Q</b>	<b>What is the process of the PTAC when a Small Business wants to file a protest of an award?</b>
A	PTACs may and do educate businesses about their protest rights and the various protest processes. PTACs may not advise or assist businesses with protest-related matters once a protest has been initiated.
<b>Q</b>	<b>Are both the PTAC and SBDC funded by DLA grants? If so how did that come about?</b>
A	No. The PTAP is funded under cooperative agreements between DLA and over 90 distinct non-profits and state/local government agencies. The SBDCs are funded by the U. S. Small Business Administration. PTACs serve small and other than small businesses, and their assistance is confined to the realm of government contracts, OTAs and SBIR/STTR. SBDCs serve small businesses only across a broad spectrum of business assistance.
<b>Q</b>	<b>Will the DLA team that oversee the PTACs transition with the program to OSD?</b>
A	The National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) 2020 Section 852 transferred the Procurement Technical Assistance Program (PTAP) management, execution, and oversight from DLA to OUSD A&S. As a result, the PTAP will continue to issue cooperative agreements consistent with the purposes of Public Law 98– 525 to establish Procurement Technical Assistance Centers (PTAC) under the management, execution and oversight of OUSD A&S.
<b>Q</b>	<b>Do the PTAC offices measure the size of their SB Industrial Base? How is it changing over time?</b>
A	We are not totally clear on what is being asked here, because the term “their SB industrial base” is not defined. In general, PTACs do not conduct demographic research.  The US Census measures the number of small businesses and the SBA publishes these data: <a href="#">2021 Small Business Profiles For The States, The District of Columbia, and The U.S. – SBA's Office of Advocacy</a> . With few exceptions, the number of small businesses, and the number of persons employed by them has been growing and continues to grow in almost all states. There was a notable but temporary exception during the 2008-2010 recession, and about 20% of states experienced a much smaller dip in 2020, presumably related to the Covid-19 pandemic.

<b>Q</b>	<b>Will the DLA Team that oversees the PTACs transition with the program to OSD?</b>
<b>A</b>	The National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) 2020 Section 852 transferred the Procurement Technical Assistance Program (PTAP) management, execution, and oversight from DLA to OUSD A&S. As a result, the PTAP team will continue to issue cooperative agreements consistent with the purposes of Public Law 98– 525 to establish Procurement Technical Assistance Centers (PTAC) under the management, execution, and oversight of OUSD A&S.

**Questions Below Were Answered Live During the Presentation and Do Not Require an Additional Response**

<b>Q</b>	I work with NAVSEA at the Washington Navy Yard in Washington, DC and meet with companies from across the country. I have yet to build a relationship with my local DC-metro area PTACs because of our ship building portfolio at NAVSEA. Should I have a relationship with various PTACs across the country or can the DC metro area PTACs help by connecting me with PTACs in other area's as well?
<b>Q</b>	How are PTACs evaluated? How will that change come Oct 1, once under the OSBP?
<b>Q</b>	Is there an MOU for cooperation of PTACS with Government contacting centers?
<b>Q</b>	Can PTAC do detailed reviews of a vendor's proposal?
<b>Q</b>	Mr. Mitha mentioned earlier today that the PTACs will soon fall under the DOD Office of Small Business Program. Do you know when that will happen? Will PTAC still be associated with DLA?
<b>Q</b>	What are some off the ways PTAC can assist contractors with post award performance concerns and issues?
<b>Q</b>	Are Bases required to route DD2579 through the PTACs?
<b>Q</b>	How many PTAC offices are located within each state, or overall how many PTAC offices are their throughout the U.S.
<b>Q</b>	Are there statistics regarding PTAC clients achieving 8(a)BD application approvals on the first try?
<b>Q</b>	Some PTACS seem to have close relationships with their local Small Business Development Center (SBDC) while others do not. If any of you interact with the local SBDC, could you speak to that relationship?