



Virtual Small Business Training Week 2021 August 17 - 19

Session Q&As

Day 2: Wednesday, August 18 @ 4:30pm – 5:30pm

Session: Manufacturing Extension Program Partners with DoD

Q	Can you please elaborate on how you are providing Cyber security services or preparing small firms for CMMC? Also, can you provide POCs at the respective Partner Centers?
A	Manufacturing Extension Services (MEP) Centers act as trusted advisers to manufacturers – especially small and medium sized manufacturers - and can provide consultative services specific to the manufacturer’s needs. This might include helping the manufacturer conduct a gap assessment, providing templates for company policies, and helping them implement changes necessary for DFARS compliance. Centers may refer manufacturers to one or more industry, academic, or government partner organizations depending on the specific needs. You can find contact information for all of the MEP centers at https://www.nist.gov/mep/centers
Q	I made this suggestion to Ms. Arrington at the SBTW in St. Louis and wondered if it has received any consideration. Would it behoove the Govt. to provide the Gateway Routers, "Black Boxes", and other necessary hardware to secure the network, as standard GFE hardware for the small businesses that are deemed most vulnerable to hacking? Once a baseline of hardware is achieved, then software updates can occur?
A	This is a question best asked of the DoD, especially since the original question was posed to Ms. Arrington. However, we at NIST MEP have not heard any significant dialogue on this topic; the closest equivalent would be rare instances where work is deemed so critical and sensitive that it is performed on a US government facility.

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

Q	As we hear about firms closing their doors, is there anything the MEP can do to step in to assist to keep them from closing?
Q	If the items supplied by a government contractor fail to pass the First Article Testing required under the contract, can MEP assist the contractor?
Q	Do companies have any concerns about disclosure of trade secrets/ intellectual property?
Q	Small DoD contractors are faced with what can be very expensive requirements for cybersecurity. It has been our understanding that MEPs were receiving funds to provide grants to those companies. Can you provide any information on that program?