

# Property Procurement Services - Incident Procurement Operations Equipment Services Branch

## 2024 Vendor Engagement Meeting Q&A – Session 1 – February 8

### Resources and Links Shared:

- For MSPA questions, please contact Department of Labor, Wage & Hour Division - Andrea Rasmussen, [rasmussen.andrea@dol.gov](mailto:rasmussen.andrea@dol.gov) or 208-813-7761 (*Information from the Department of Labor*)
- VIPR contact page: [https://www.fs.usda.gov/business/incident/contacts.php?tab=tab\\_c](https://www.fs.usda.gov/business/incident/contacts.php?tab=tab_c)
- East Zone <https://www.fs.usda.gov/business/incident/esb-east-zone.php>
- West Zone <https://www.fs.usda.gov/business/incident/esb-west-zone.php>
- National Zone [https://www.fs.usda.gov/business/incident/esb-national-zone.php?tab=tab\\_c](https://www.fs.usda.gov/business/incident/esb-national-zone.php?tab=tab_c)
- R5 & R6 In-Person Meetings Registration link: <https://forms.office.com/g/LM2Fpdbkud>
- DPL list look up [https://www.fs.usda.gov/business/incident/dispatch.php?tab=tab\\_d](https://www.fs.usda.gov/business/incident/dispatch.php?tab=tab_d)
- VIPR Vendor access and information:  
[https://www.fs.usda.gov/business/incident/vendorapp.php?tab=tab\\_d](https://www.fs.usda.gov/business/incident/vendorapp.php?tab=tab_d)
- FAQs: [https://www.fs.usda.gov/business/incident/faq.php?tab=tab\\_d](https://www.fs.usda.gov/business/incident/faq.php?tab=tab_d)
- HELPDESK 1-866-224-7677 <https://iiahelpdesk.nwcg.gov/>
- Click on link “Vendor Information Brochure”  
[https://www.fs.usda.gov/business/incident/vendors.php?tab=tab\\_signup](https://www.fs.usda.gov/business/incident/vendors.php?tab=tab_signup)
- Number from the System for Award Management (SAM): <https://sam.gov/content/entity-registration>
- Information can be found on the VIPR website <https://www.eauth.usda.gov/eauth/b/usda/registration>
- <https://www.apexaccelerators.us/#/>
- Wyoming APEX- [smikese3@uwyo.edu](mailto:smikese3@uwyo.edu)
- Montana APEX website: <https://www.montanaapex.org/>
- Oregon APEX Accelerator: [www.gcap.org](http://www.gcap.org) / 541-736-1088
- Helpful guide using screen shots of the vendor application to help walk vendors through various processes:  
<https://www.fs.usda.gov/business/incident/static/Overview%20for%20Using%20the%20Vendor%20Application.pdf>
- New VIPR picture and documentation upload submission process for 2024. VIPR submission guidance:  
<https://www.fs.usda.gov/business/incident/static/Overview%20for%20Using%20the%20Vendor%20Application.pdf>
- <https://www.ipp.gov/vendors/enrollment>
- OREGON <http://osha.oregon.gov/Pages/topics/forest-activities.aspx>
- Washington <https://www.lni.wa.gov/>
- Wage and Hour Training For Wildland Fire Vendors:  
[https://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE\\_DOCUMENTS/fseprd1162841.pdf](https://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/fseprd1162841.pdf)
- Any non-VIPR services and supplies can be added to the vendor list linked here: <https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=5zZb7e4BvE6GfuA8-g1GlwGPSq-taB5CgQhVR81z4-pUNDFLMThQU0FDN1pQSjIXUjAxRkVRQ0ZGNSQIQCN0PWcu&wdLOR=cF7C6756C-B957-4447-B2C8-12D377C789BF>
- Secondary Source list [https://www.fs.usda.gov/business/incident/fire.php?tab=tab\\_b](https://www.fs.usda.gov/business/incident/fire.php?tab=tab_b)
- AIMS Inbox: [sm.fs.woaims@usa.gov](mailto:sm.fs.woaims@usa.gov)



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Q: Are all VIPR solicitations advertised on SAM or only in the VIPR system?

A: Our VIPR Solicitations are advertised through <https://sam.gov/content/opportunities> and then you will respond by submitting a quote through the VIPR system. Not all Solicitations are open at this time and typically open around 15 days after the Pre-Solicitation Notice has been published.

Q: When the contract says Region 1 will not be accepting Tired Strip Mulchers, are they talking about any and all or just Rubber Tire Skid steer strip mulchers?

A: The Northern Rockies, Region One, only solicits for tracked strip mulchers.

Q: What is the status on the Rollover and On-Ramping MODS?

A: All rollover and on-ramping modifications are now open except for medical. Please check your inbox for an announcement from your CO. The on-ramping, reopening the solicitation is announced at sam.gov. Please reference your agreement's solicitation number.

Q: If a firm has specialty equipment, to do a job faster, but it is not listed as a Resource Category in the solicitation, where does that information go when responding to a BPA?

A: If your resource category does not exist for a VIPR Agreement, you can list it here for a possible EERA: <https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=5zZb7e4BvE6GfuA8-g1GlwGPSq-taB5CgQhVR81z4-pUNDFLMThQU0FDN1pQSjIXUjAxRkVRQ0ZGNSQIQCN0PWcu&wdLOR=cF7C6756C-B957-4447-B2C8-12D377C789BF>

Q: In regard to ambulance deployments - is there a maximum number of consecutive days the crew members can be deployed before they must be swapped out with a new crew?

A: Crew members must maintain the work rest ratio outlined in the incident business handbook which includes a maximum for all personnel. You can find this in Section D.6.7 of the ambulance agreement and clearer reference to days off is in the incident business handbook in Chapter 10. Chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpajpcglclefindmkaj/https://www.nwcg.gov/sites/default/files/publications/pms902.pdf

Q: How do we get the incident business handbook?

A: It is available on-line. The work rest guidelines are also outlined in your agreement or <https://www.nwcg.gov/publications/902>

Q: Do we have to pay the minimum wage for the region you are working in or the region your company is based in.

A: Where the work is being performed. *(Information from the Department of Labor)*

Q: So that's in addition to hourly wage?

A: Fringe Benefits - Yes. *(Information from the Department of Labor)*

Q: Is there any update on when the onboarding (new solicitation) will begin for the ambulance contracts?

A: It is being held up until the next VIPR update, which is planned to occur towards the end of February.

Q: For Andrea: Does the USDOL Wage Determination, PROTECTIVE SERVICE OCCUPATIONS Code 27070 apply to both Vehicle with Driver and Chipper Agreements? Since these are called to a wildland fire incident and each employee is required to have PPE and wildland fire safety training as per these agreements.

A: Yes. They should apply to both. If they perform any manual firefighting then they would fall under the 27070. *(Information from the Department of Labor)*

Q: Will this apply to contract security personnel as well?

A: The Service Contract Act will apply and how you have to pay your workers. However, if they do not do firefighting directly, you will not have to register as a Farm Labor Contractor. If they ever do manual firefighting activities, you will have to register. *(Information from the Department of Labor)*



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Q: Do medical contractors also need to register as Agriculture Workers?

A: No. The duties Andrea described are not included within the scope of either medical agreement. *(Information from the Department of Labor)*

Q: Once registered with MSPA, the MSPA has a lot of regulatory rules. These rules contradict DOT regulations, OSHA and fire aviation operations such as a toilet within 1/2 mile walk, driving only 600 miles, vehicle seat height etc. the MSPA regulations will greatly affect firefighting operations.

A: There are not actually specific regulations tied to toilets and water, those are different regulations that are usually implemented State to State. *(Information from the Department of Labor)*

Q: Are contracts 5 years now? Instead of 3 years?

A: Correct. The agreements went from 3 to 5 year with the solicitations last year.

Q: Is a Mechanic with a service truck considered an Agricultural worker when we are on fire?

A: It depends on the work the mechanic is performing. If he is only doing mechanic work on the trucks and is not firefighting directly, then they would not be an agriculture worker. But if at any time they do perform manual firefighting activities, then they would be. *(Information from the Department of Labor)*

Q: Hi Andrea, we are applying for a Farm labor contractor license as well as all of our employees. Due to our solicitation being due the 23 of February, how fast does the DOL process our application?

A: They will try to expedite it for you. However, I would suggest that you send the applications via certified mail, so you have proof that you have sent them in - and so it is not held against you that you have not received your cards yet. *(Information from the Department of Labor)*

Q: Last year we were told that 31B dollars were allocated for forest work to mitigate the incidence and severity of fires and that VIPR resources would be used to help with that work where applicable.

A: We did just get language approved and added to the current IBPA's that will allow the local units to use current IBPA's to do the Rx (prescribed fire) work.

Q: We would like to have the opportunity to provide technical services like GISS, but also FBAN, READ, FEMO and possibly other qualified personnel - independent of our GIS trailer rentals. Can we talk about that possibility and where we might go to try to put that in motion?

A: Those individuals are hired as an AD by the Agency. We do not contract individuals for inherently government positions.

Q: Do contractors need to pay for Workers Comp. for subs.

A: REMINDER: IT IS THE VENDORS' SOLE RESPONSIBILITY TO ADHERE TO ALL LABOR LAWS TO INCLUDE PROVIDING THE REQUIRED WORKERS' COMPENSATION INSURANCE TO ALL EMPLOYEES. EACH INDIVIDUAL PERFORMING UNDER THIS AGREEMENT IS A SERVICE EMPLOYEE BY DEFINITION. The Government will not track, record, or manage contractor insurance records or training records under this agreement. Insurance coverage and company employee documentation is the sole responsibility of the contractor. *(Information from the Department of Labor)*

Q: Where do we find the holiday pay schedule for this contract?

A: The BPA contracts do not have different rates for holidays.

Q: If you sub-contract out the transport to another company to move the contract holders equipment on fire, who is responsible for the wage determination? The contract holder or the company that owns the truck and driver? The truck driver not working for the contract holder, who legally would have no business telling another company what to pay or even knowing what they are paying their truck driver.



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A: The person that has the contract is responsible to ensure that any subcontractors are paying their workers correctly. You would need to flow down the wage determination to any subcontracting companies.

Q: So, there is still no VIPR category for contract security?

A: Not at this time, no.

Q: Is MSPA required for companies that only contract Water Tenders?

A: If you do not have any workers that are doing manual firefighting than you do not have to register. If they are only transporting water, then you would not have to register. *(Information from the Department of Labor)*

Q: I thought that with logging into VIPR with login.gov you no longer needed to register with eAuthentication Level 2?

A: You will need eAuth to log into IROC to self status.

Q: Do you get automatically receive level2 eAuth login when you signup through file vendor application?

A: Level 2 eAuth is your VIPR Vendor application log in.

Q: What 7 pics do you need to submit?

A: That will be listed within the Solicitation under E.2 - INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMITTING TECHNICAL QUOTES.

Q: Does listing an Equipment resource on a VIPR BPA prohibit you from [also] using [it] on a, for example, Stewardship BPA?

A: No, it does not.

Q: Are there solicitations for region 6 only i.e. not just 5/6?

A: There will be separate Solicitations for both: Potable Water, Gray Water Trucks, & Hand Washing Trailers as well as Misc. Heavy Equipment this year.

Q: I see solicitations for Truck/Driver Regions 5/6 but not just one region.

A: Region 1 has opted out of this requirement for the VIPR agreements. For Regions 5/6, this one is not separated out and still resides as a zoned agreement. What you are seeing is the option to submit a quote during the on-ramping period if interested. R1 negotiates EERAs when the resource is ordered. You can submit your information to the vendor source link at <https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=5zZb7e4BvE6GfuA8-g1GlwGPSq-taB5CgQhVR81z4-pUNDFLMThQU0FDN1pQSjIXUjAxRkVRQ0ZGNSQIQCN0PWcu&wdLOR=cDE0F90F5-58CB-4FF7-80F8-BF98C908600E>

Q: Will Exhibit O, regarding MSPA and workforce certification, be required for when submitting the technical quote?

A: The Exhibit O is now built into the VIPR System and no form will be required to be submitted. *(Information from the Department of Labor)*

Q: Is 129J6124Q7001 Region 5 Heavy Equip unrestricted or small business set aside?

A: Yes, this solicitation is a small business set aside.

Q: Please explain GAAC (GACC) again vs Local?

A: Geographic Area - Encompasses a general Region/States. For example, Great Basin includes Idaho, Nevada, Utah and a portion of Wyoming. The slide show does have a slide with how the Nation is broken up. It was at the beginning but could be referenced to define GACC's. Local- A dispatch center's jurisdiction - Boise Dispatch includes, Boise National Forest, Boise District BLM, and State Lands within Southwest Idaho.

Q: Last year I had issues with IROC not allowing me to change status. I would hit save and it would look like it would, then I refresh and it was marked unavailable again



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A: If this happens again, please contact the IROC helpdesk.

Q: Is an MC federal number required to cross state lines for hire?

A: Yes, a DOT number is required for any commercial vehicle (>10000 GVWR) that crosses state lines.

Q: Operating as for-hire carriers (for a fee or other compensation) Transporting passengers, or arranging for their transport, in interstate commerce Transporting federally regulated commodities or arranging for their transport, in interstate commerce?

A: It is your responsibility to follow all state/federal laws.

Q: Should the DPL be used to facilitate EERA's for non-DPL EERAs?

A: AIMS has a source list that provides the COs with information including location and we typically use closest resources and the rates provided at the time you sign up. We also negotiate pricing when we contact you for availability.

Q: Can we add sources to this list at any time?

A: Yes. You can add resources to the AIMS source list at any time.

Q: Are resources active in VIPR contracts eligible for the AIMS list as well?

A: No.

Q: Are we allowed to subcontract?

A: Yes.

Q: I have submitted my roll-over agreement. Is there a way to verify all was received and going well?

A: Please contact your CO and they can verify.

Q: Can a new resource be added if you've never done any contracting i.e. new contractor?

A: Yes. You can respond to those advertised on sam.gov.

Q: Is there going to be a Tactical option for the UTV IBPA?

A: Not at this time.

Q: Did I understand if we have an existing contract, like vehicle with driver, we can add additional vehicles throughout the year?

A: No. Resources under VIPR agreements can only add equipment during the on-ramping process. Non-VIPR equipment can be added to the secondary source list at any time.

Q: When might AIMS REMS teams and Medical Trailer BPA's be available to bid on?

A: Please keep a watch on SAM.gov.

Q: Last year there was talk about using VIPR resources for prevention. Has that happened?

A: VIPR resources were used for fuels work last year, but it was not widespread.

Q: So just to clarify if the solicitation was awarded in 2023, are new vendors allowed to apply in VIPR?

A: Yes, through the on-ramping process. Open on-ramping opportunities are now listed on SAM.gov.

Q: This is a tremendous amount of info to digest. Do you have any simple pathways for very small, but capable firms who can do start w/o becoming overwhelmed and intimidated by all the rules?

A: I would contact Apex Accelerators in your state for assistance.





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Q: Must wood chippers be "tow behind"?

A: Chippers can be tow behind or self-propelled.

Q: Are all contracts awarded post 2023 going to be allowed to on-board?

A: Per C.3.1 of the agreement... "the annual CO review period may also allow the option of an open season on-ramping of additional contractors and resources".

Q: Are we listing individual Emergency Medical Responders as resources in VIPR if we're using something like RAT/ALS Team?

A: There is a current VIPR agreement for individual EMRs.

Q: On SM BUS Set asides VIPR BPA what is the self-performance requirement, 50%?

A: Generally, you must have 51% ownership if you are claiming any of the set-asides.

Q: Can you get on an EERA list if also on VIPR?

A: No - Resources should not be on the EERA list if it is already on a VIPR agreement.

Q: We have UTVs with water, can we add those under AIMS?

A: You can add it to the source list; it isn't considered for the current I-BPA at this time.

Q: Does registering a piece of equipment in AIMS make me available for EERA? OR is there more to do?

A: Yes, however we do not register equipment per say, it is more like a catalogue of vendors/information for us to use when looking for resources to fill orders. You should be sure to be registered in SAM.gov as well – this will facilitate your payment process.

Q: If an engine is approved to mobilize a 4th firefighter, the company will be paid an extra \$450. Also, if an engine is approved to mobilize with only 2 employees, \$450 will be deducted. Because of the new Wage Determination, an entry level firefighter would need to be paid over \$600 per day on average over 7 days. Therefore, it would cost a company more than \$150 per day to send out a 4th firefighter, but a company could actually make an extra \$150 per day by sending out only 2. Is there any plan to bring this more in line with the actual rates we need to pay?

A: This is an issue being discussed at this time.

Q: Can I update my faller resources mid-season based on availability?

A: You have the ability to set the status of your resources in IROC, but you can only add new resources and additional fallers during the annual on-ramping modification period.

Q: Does a company have to list its EMRs and medical providers by how many pieces of equipment they actually have? An example would be a heart monitor. Only listing providers available by how many heart monitors you actually have.

A: You need to be able to provide as many responders as you have slots for (that you provided certs in the tech eval.) If you're adding more during on-ramping, you'll need to provide additional current certs. The requirement for cardiac monitors is dependent on the location of the incident as it depends on state law equipment requirements.

Q: How do I classify a track skid steer with a masticating head?

A: This would be a Strip Mulcher/Masticator - under the Misc. Heavy Equipment solicitation.

Q: Has the solicitation for hand wash stations for Region 6 been posted? Will it be on an on-ramping or roll over agreement?

A: It will be posted soon, starting new agreements.



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Q: Does EERA go to the local vendors prior to out-of-town vendors?

A: This will depend on the Best Value, Date Time Needed and other applicable criteria.

Q: The agreement requires a pacing capable heart monitor. Does the heart monitor have to be FDA compliant or can you utilize non-FDA approved medical equipment?

A: You'll recall that all equipment in Exhibit M is required if the incident occurs in a state that does NOT have a mandated equipment list. In states that have a list, you are required to follow state law.

Q: We are based in NCal. Can I work in Zone 5 and 6? And if so, how do I meet the requirements for OR, WA, and CA?

A: Yes, you may make yourself both locally and nationally available. Keep in mind Section D.5.1 of your agreement (within 450 miles).

Q: Hello, totally new to this, is there a site to get an idea of current daily averages for bidding?

A: There is no one stop shop but all agreements with rates are public information. You can view them at [https://www.fs.usda.gov/business/incident/viprfinance.php?tab=tab\\_d](https://www.fs.usda.gov/business/incident/viprfinance.php?tab=tab_d)

Q: I wanted to buy some equipment this spring. If it's new how do I get it inspected? This includes transport, trailer and dozer.

A: Please reach out to the Regional Contract Operations POC that you are interested in to find out the specific requirements.

Q: Is AIMS going to keep requesting multiple REMS and RAT teams as one contract or will you separate the contract so small companies can get their teams out there?

A: This will depend on what is being requested, what vendors have available, and pricing.

Q: Under VIPR can we have multiple dispatch centers for the same equipment?

A: No - A resource can only be listed in one Dispatch Center. If you have multiple resources, they could be spread out but be mindful of the 450 mile limitation.

Q: Any update on Heavy equipment task forces being updated for 2025?

A: It will be resolicited next year. It was extended one more year to review specs for Regions 1,4, and 6.

