

DOING BUSINESS WITH THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

This guide provides an overview of opportunities available through the United Nations (UN) system for U.S. firms to bid on contracts for defense-related goods and services. As a whole, the UN system procured over US\$3 billion in goods and services in 1998.¹

The United Nations system does not have a single, centralized procurement office. More than 30 UN agencies, programs, and funds procure goods and services. The UN system is increasingly decentralizing procurement authority to field offices. Generally only contracts over US\$30,000 are subject to international competitive tendering.

UN agencies require vendor pre-registration prior to bidding on contracts. Most UN agencies maintain separate rosters of suppliers.

U.S. firms interested in winning contracts for defense-related goods and services should focus their initial marketing efforts on the UN procurement offices supporting UN peacekeeping/field missions - the UN Procurement Division (UN/PD) and each peacekeeping/field mission's procurement office.

U.S. firms may also find opportunities to sell defense-related goods and services to other UN agencies, especially those UN bodies actively involved in emergency relief and humanitarian programs. U.S. firms interested in marketing products and services to the UN system should consider registering in the UN Common Supplier Database. This database is used by the procurement offices of twelve UN agencies to assist in identifying firms to solicit to bid on specific contracts.

It is important for U.S. companies to actively market their capabilities to UN organizations, and not simply wait to be contacted after registering as a potential supplier. U.S. companies should also establish relationships with UN procurement officers both at an agency's headquarters and field offices.

¹ U.S. firms are the largest supplier of goods and services to the United Nations system. U.S. firms won contracts valued at US\$295.5 million in 1998, accounting for 9.7 percent of total UN procurement awards.

UNITED NATIONS PROCUREMENT DIVISION

The United Nations Procurement Division (UN/PD) serves as the central procurement office for UN peacekeeping/field missions, the UN Secretariat in New York, and certain UN regional commissions and tribunals. UN/PD procured \$318 million in goods and services in 1998.

Major Commodities Purchased by UN/PD in 1998	Amount in US\$
Air Transportation Services	38,059,185
Motor Vehicles/Parts & Transportation Equipment	35,809,283
Food Rations/Catering Services	23,277,561
EDP Equipment & Maintenance Services	21,465,829
Legal Services	21,284,007
Real Estate Rental & Lease	19,800,071
Computer & Information Technology Related Services	18,030,988
Architecture, Engineering & Construction Related Services	16,844,588
Building Management & Maintenance	12,976,766
Chemical & Petroleum Products	10,855,752

Source: United Nations Procurement Division

Companies must first register with UN/PD as a vendor in order to bid on tenders. Registration forms are evaluated to ensure that the goods or services offered are relevant to the requirements handled by the Procurement Division. UN/PD only solicits bids from qualified vendors registered in its database.² There is no fee to register with UN/PD as a potential supplier.

Solicitations are issued as Requests for Proposal (RFPs), Invitations to Bid (ITBs), or Requests for Quotation (RFQs). The Procurement Division also issues Requests for Expression of Interest (EOIs).

The Procurement Division strongly recommends that vendors contact the UN/PD officers responsible for procuring the vendor's goods and services after registering as a potential supplier.

²UN/PD maintains a database of over 3,100 suppliers worldwide, including 1,577 U.S. firms (as of February 2000).

UN/PD anticipates that the types of goods and services it will procure in 2000 to support UN peacekeeping/field missions will include:

- Aircraft charter services
- Computer and EDP equipment
- Concertina wire
- Frozen and dry rations
- Generators
- ISO 20' containers
- Medals
- Prefabricated buildings
- Ration packs
- Shipping services
- VHF, UHF, and HF radios
- Water treatment and bagging units

In January and February 2000, UN/PD also issued EOIs concerning armored vehicles.

U.S. companies should contact UN/PD, or visit its website, for more information on vendor registration, recent tenders and expressions of interest, and contract awards:

United Nations Procurement Division
United Nations Headquarters
304 East 45th Street
New York, New York 10017
Tel: (212) 963-8952
Fax: (212) 963-3503
E-mail: registry@un.org
Internet: www.un.org/Depts/ptd

UN PEACEKEEPING/FIELD MISSIONS

Individual UN peacekeeping/field missions have been delegated authority to procure goods and services (up to US\$200,000 for some larger missions). In February 2000, there were seventeen active UN peacekeeping operations.

The total value of procurement by UN peacekeeping/field missions in 1998 was US\$108 million (US\$69 million in goods and US\$39 million in services). UN/PD plays a normative role in setting policies and providing advisory support.

Types of procurement activity carried out by individual peacekeeping/field missions include water purification systems; field hospitals; mine clearers; security equipment; buildings for office and housing; medical supplies; engineering and construction equipment and material; generators; mobile cranes; earth moving equipment; petroleum, oil, and lubricants; pharmaceutical products; warehouse equipment; furniture; and cleaning equipment and supplies.

U.S. companies interested in exploring defense-related procurement opportunities associated with individual UN peacekeeping/field missions, should contact each mission's procurement section directly.

U.S. firms can obtain up-to-date contact information from the UN Field Administration and Logistics Division (UN/FALD) - the agency responsible for planning, setting up, and maintaining UN peacekeeping/field missions.

The UN/FALD website does not contain data on the procurement needs of each UN peacekeeping/field mission.

Field Administration and Logistics Division
Division of Peacekeeping Operations
United Nations Secretariat
New York, New York 10017
Tel: (212) 963-6141
Fax: (212) 963-0383
Internet: www.un.org/Depts/dpko

ADDITIONAL UN AGENCIES

U.S. firms may also find opportunities to sell defense-related goods and services to other UN agencies, especially those UN bodies actively involved in emergency relief and humanitarian programs.

The United Nations is developing a central database of active and potential suppliers to the United Nations system, the Common Supplier Database (UNCSD). This database will allow twelve UN agencies to share supplier lists.³

Registering in this database is one way for U.S. firms to be alerted to defense-related procurement opportunities with UN agencies not directly responsible for peacekeeping/field missions. Firms can register with UNCSD for one year (US\$100), or for three years (US\$200).

It is important for U.S. companies to market their capabilities to procurement officers both at the various agencies' headquarters and field offices.

U.S. firms should contact UNCSD for registration information:

The Secretariat
UN Common Supplier Database
Øvre Slottsgate 2B
N-0157 Oslo, Norway
Tel: (+47) 2224-6292
Fax: (+47) 2224-6281
E-mail: registry@uncsd.org
Internet: www.uncsd.org

³The twelve UN agencies participating in this project are the International Atomic Energy Agency, the International Labor Organization, the International Trade Centre, the United Nations Development Program, the UN Field Administration and Logistics Division, the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Office for Project Services, the UN Procurement Division, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency, and the World Food Program.

REFERENCE SOURCES

General Business Guide for Potential Suppliers of Goods and Service

Published by United Nations Interagency Procurement Services Office (IAPSO)

Midtermolen 3, P.O. Box 2530

DK-2100 Copenhagen Ø, Denmark

Tel: (+45) 3546-7000

Fax: (+45) 3546-7001

E-mail: registry.iapso@iapso.org

Internet: www.iapso.org/publications/index.htm

Practical Tips - Doing Business with the United Nations System

Published by United Nations Interagency Procurement Services Office (IAPSO)

Midtermolen 3, P.O. Box 2530

DK-2100 Copenhagen Ø, Denmark

Tel: (+45) 3546-7000

Fax: (+45) 3546-7001

E-mail: registry.iapso@iapso.org

Internet: www.iapso.org/publications/index.htm

UN AGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

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United Nations Headquarters

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New York, New York 10017

Tel: (212) 963-8952

Fax: (212) 963-3503

E-mail: registry@un.org

Internet: www.un.org/Depts/ptd

United Nations Common Supplier Database (UNCSD)

The Secretariat

Øvre Slottsgate 2B

N-0157 Oslo, Norway

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Fax: (+47) 2224-6281

E-mail: registry@uncsd.org

Internet: www.uncsd.org

United Nations Field Administration and Logistics Division (UN/FALD)

Division of Peacekeeping Operations

United Nations Secretariat

New York, New York 10017

Tel: (212) 963-6141

Fax: (212) 963-0383

Internet: www.un.org/Depts/dpko

U.S. GOVERNMENT CONTACT INFORMATION

International Government Procurement Opportunities
U.S. Department of Commerce
Trade Compliance Center
Washington, D.C. 20230
Tel: (202) 482-1191
E-mail: tcc@ita.doc.gov
Internet: www.mac.doc.gov/tcc/TCC2/igp/igp_orgs.htm

The New York U.S. Export Assistance Center
Six World Trade Center
Suite 635
New York, New York 10048
Tel: (212) 466-5222
Fax: (212) 264-1356
Internet: www.nyuseac.org

ASSOCIATION CONTACT INFORMATION

United Nations Association of the United States of America
801 Second Avenue
New York, New York 10017
Tel: (212) 907-1300
Fax: (212) 682-9185
E-mail: unahq@unausa.org
Internet: www.usausa.org