

Date: December 22, 2015

From: Principal Executive Director, Office of Acquisition, Logistics, and Construction (003)
and Acting Chief Acquisition Officer

Subj: Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Acquisition Principles (VAIQ 7638597)

To: Under Secretaries, Assistant Secretaries, and Other Key Officials

1. One of the keys to a successful acquisition operation is to have a strong foundation from which we base our acquisition efforts. VA Acquisition Guiding Principles provide that strong foundation so that the enterprise strategic vision is guided by sound business principles and is reflected in proper procurement execution.
2. These Guiding Principles for VA represent a concise statement designed to be user-friendly for all participants in the VA acquisition community. All participants in the VA acquisition community have a responsibility to use these principles as we make decisions that lead to the delivery of products or services in the best interest of our Veterans, taxpayers, and our employees.
3. Below are VA's Acquisition Guiding Principles:
 - a. Conduct business with integrity, fairness, and openness;
 - b. Good requirements make for good contracts;
 - c. Decisions should be delegated to the lowest appropriate level;
 - d. Industry engagement enables better proposals and better execution;
 - e. Speed matters;
 - f. Competition is our default strategy;
 - g. Commercial products and services should be maximized;
 - h. Use of contractors who have a track record of successful past performance or who demonstrate a current, superior ability to perform is preferred;
 - i. Existing contracts should be used whenever possible; and
 - j. Meeting our public policy objectives is important.

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4. VA acquisition teams consist of all participants in VA acquisition including not only representatives from the program management, technical, supply, legal, and procurement communities but also the internal customers they serve. Each member of the acquisition team must exercise personal initiative and sound business judgment in providing the best value product or service to meet the mission needs. In exercising initiative, members of the acquisition team may assume that if a specific strategy, practice, policy, or procedure is in the best interests of the Government and is not addressed in the Federal Acquisition Regulation, nor prohibited by law (statute or case law), Executive Order, or other regulation, that the strategy, practice, policy, or procedure is a permissible exercise of authority.

5. Please direct questions regarding this memorandum to the Office of Acquisition and Logistics Procurement Policy and Warrant Management Service, via email at va.procurement.policy@va.gov.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. L. Giddens', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Gregory L. Giddens