MEP: SUPPLIER SCOUTING: DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

MEP • MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

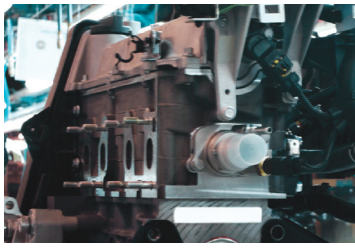
The National Institute of Standards and Technology's (NIST) Hollings Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) works with small and mid-sized U.S. manufacturers to help them create and retain jobs, increase profits, and save time and money. The nationwide network provides a variety of services, from innovation strategies to process improvements to green manufacturing. MEP also works with partners at the state and federal levels on programs that put manufacturers in position to develop new customers, expand into new markets, and create new products.

Supplier Scouting, a component of NIST MEP's Technology Acceleration strategy, is designed to bring business opportunities to small U.S. manufacturers with specific capabilities and capacities. In response to the supply chain needs of federal agency and original equipment manufacturer (OEM) partners, MEP leverages its vast knowledge of local manufacturer capabilities to identify and pre-qualify supplier capabilities and capacities, and provide assistance to suppliers as needed.

MEP Supplier Scouting for the Department of Defense (DOD) is a collaboration of DOD agencies including the Defense Logistics Agency and Naval Air Systems Command, along with the Department of Veterans Affairs, and the national MEP system to scout for U.S. manufacturing capabilities and capacities in an effort to solve difficult supply chain and procurement issues facing the DOD. MEP Supplier Scouting assistance includes:

- Connecting potential suppliers with DOD procurement sources
- Assisting manufacturers with product expansion and/or alterations for additional uses
- Product reverse engineering to produce necessary technical data for production

A number of MEP Centers are uniquely linked with Procurement Technical Assistance Centers (PTACs) to assist the nation's manufacturers in doing business with the U.S. DOD. The mission of PTAC is to expand the number of U.S. businesses capable of participating in government market spaces. PTAC counselors are typically well-trained in government acquisitions, and they are very knowledgeable about continually evolving acquisition procedures and policies – especially those of the DOD. MEP Supplier Scouting for the DOD is facilitating great connections and assistance for U.S. manufacturers in a way that brings together PTAC procurement and acquisition assistance with MEP technical manufacturing assistance.



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