

THE BUYERS NETWORK

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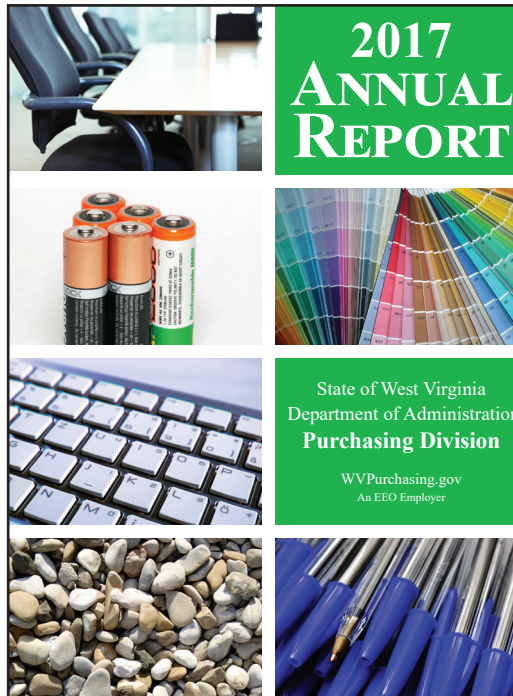
THE BUYERS NETWORK
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of Administration to Promote
Better Value in Public Purchasing

Purchasing Division Publishes 2017 Annual Report

The Purchasing Division is pleased to announce that the Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2017, covering July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017, has been posted online for viewing and may be accessed by visiting www.state.wv.us/admin/purchase/Annualreport/Annual17.pdf.

Although the Purchasing Division is not statutorily required to do so, the staff has produced an annual report since 1999. The report highlights the Purchasing Division's achievements and programs, as well as provides financial statistics for each fiscal year. Together, they provide a comprehensive historical record of the Purchasing Division's accomplishments and initiatives.

"The responsibility of purchasing commodities and services on behalf of state agencies is a critical role in state government," said Acting Purchasing Director Mike Sheets. "Our Annual Report showcases the Purchasing Division's ability to



Each year, the Purchasing Division publishes its Annual Report on its website. The report for Fiscal Year 2017, which covers July 1, 2016 - June 30, 2017, was posted at www.state.wv.us/admin/purchase/Annualreport/default.html. This publication provides a public record of financial statistics for the previous fiscal year and a record of the Purchasing Division's many accomplishments and initiatives. The Purchasing Division is pleased with its continued forward progression of process improvements and customer service.

Please see **ANNUAL REPORT**, page 4

INSIDE...

- **Acting Director's Comments:**
The Purchasing Division Introduces Criteria for New Excellence in Specification Writing Award
- Purchasing Conference Feedback Shows Support and Provides Guidance for Future Conference Planning
- Mandatory Training for High-Level Officials Scheduled for November 2, 2017

Agencies Urged to Allow the Full 10 Days for Advertisement

A few months ago, the Purchasing Division informed agencies of its effort to shorten the solicitation advertisement process to 10 business days from the time it is advertised to the bid opening. However, it is important for agencies to not shorten that time even further unless there are exceptional circumstances. If those circumstances exist, the agency should note that in the contract file or discuss it with their Purchasing Division assigned buyer for further guidance.

"Anything shorter than 10 business days hampers the vendor's ability to see the solicitation and respond accordingly," said Assistant Purchasing Director Frank Whittaker. "We don't want to give the appearance of impropriety or to limit competition in any way." Agency procurement officers should set aside sufficient time to allow 10 business days from the time of the solicitation's "Let Date" to the time of the bid opening. Any questions or requests to modify this time should be directed to your Purchasing Division buyer.

ACTING DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

Purchasing Division Introduces the Criteria for New Excellence in Specification Writing Award

By Acting Purchasing Director Mike Sheets

At the 2017 Agency Purchasing Conference, I was excited to announce a new award recognition program for our agency partners. The award, titled *Excellence in Specification Writing*, will be presented to an agency who demonstrates a strong ability to write specifications for a project that are complete, concise, and competitive.

As I have often stated, specifications are the foundation for all good competitive procurement practices. Not only do they help the agency get exactly what it needs, but they serve as the framework for our vendors when submitting bids, decreasing ambiguity and ultimately resulting in a lower cost to the state. They also serve as the basis for the vendor's contract requirements throughout the life of the contract.

Alternatively, poorly written specifications have been the reason behind the cancellation of solicitations, re-award of contracts, protests and more. The signifi-

cance of writing good specifications reaches far and wide, but ideally, they reduce risks and provide protection to our state and our limited taxpayer dollars by ensuring that the money is spent effectively and efficiently.

The new award will be based on the following criteria: scope, money/pricing, administrative, time, and appearance/readability. In short, the nomination submission should:

- Clearly state the work and provide the unit of measurement to accurately reflect the work, provide valid benchmarks for performance, and be competitive in nature;
- Provide adequate time to solicit and evaluate bids;
- Use the right template, if applicable;
- Require little to no modifications;
- Adequately reflect the specification criteria, capturing all pricing in an apples-to-apples comparison;
- Provide a reasonable time for delivery and life of the contract; and
- Have clear headings that make sense, be organized in a manner that is easy to navigate and read, and be free of spelling and grammatical errors and ambiguous terms.

Although the award recipient will not be announced until the 2018 conference, I want agencies to start thinking now about what is involved in the nomination submission and which project you would like to nominate for this prestigious award. The criteria for this award can be found on the Purchasing Division's intranet at <http://intranet.state.wv.us/admin/purchase/Recognition>.

The Purchasing Division staff is always encouraging state agencies to utilize strong specifications. This new award gives the Purchasing Division an opportunity to recognize you, the agency, for your commitment to strong specifications and a strong, solid purchasing process.



Diligently Checking the Secretary of State Website Can Help Eliminate Possible Delays

During the procurement process, it is important that agencies check the Secretary of State (SOS) database to ensure that vendors are in good standing with SOS registration requirements. Properly reviewing the SOS website can help alleviate time delays and other issues that may occur.

When reviewing the SOS website, there are several key pieces of information that agencies should check. The first is the termination date. Vendors need to be properly registered with the SOS and awards cannot be made to

businesses that are not in good standing. If a registration has terminated for any reason, an explanation will be documented in the database.

Each business listed on the SOS website will have a designated charter of "domestic" or "foreign." Domestic businesses are West Virginia-based companies, while "foreign" refers to businesses located out of state. This feature may especially come into play when checking for the vendor's status when determining the resident vendor preference.

Finally, it is key that the address provided is consistent between the SOS database and the one provided as part of the vendor's account with the Purchasing Division. The address must be correct when a purchase order is issued. If needed, businesses can update their information with SOS and within the Vendor Self Service. If a discrepancy in addresses exists between the two but are different offices of the same business,

Please see SOS, page 5

Purchasing Conference Feedback Shows Support and Provides Guidance for Future Conference Planning

Following the conclusion of each Purchasing Division conference, attendees are invited to provide valuable feedback through an online evaluation. Fifty-two percent (52%) of this year's attendees took time to evaluate the 2017 conference, providing feedback and suggestions for next year's conference. Having reviewed all the data and comments submitted, the Purchasing Division would like to share the results.

Conference participants rated various categories as "excellent" or "good" in a four-scale survey, ranging from excellent to poor, for the following categories:

- 92% for the overall opinion of the conference;
- 98% for the conference registration;
- 97% for the organization of the conference;
- 93% for the Advanced Track and 89% for the Beginner's Track;
- 98% for the atmosphere being conducive to learning; and,
- 100% for the overall quality of the conference sessions as being professional and effective.

The Purchasing Division received many comments praising the new workshop topics that were added this year as well as suggestions for how to improve existing classes. Other comments showed appreciation for the networking opportunities and ability to learn from their peers.

"As a first-time attendee, I felt the conference was run very well," shared one attendee.

"These courses are truly beneficial—especially when they promote participation and open questions and answers. Wonderful conference for beginners as well as those with more experience," noted another.

The Purchasing Division staff would like to express our sincere appreciation to all respondents of this survey. The results will be reviewed throughout the year as we begin to plan for the 2018 Agency Purchasing Conference.

Buyers Network



More than 250 agency procurement officers attended the Purchasing Division's annual conference in August. According to a survey conducted after the conference, 92% of attendees indicated that the conference was "excellent" or "good." Pictured is a glimpse of the various instruction and activities that occurred throughout the week.



Vendor Webinar Scheduled for October 11, 2017

The Purchasing Division will present a vendor webinar, titled *Doing Business with West Virginia*, on Wednesday, October 11, 2017, from 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. The webinar provides guidelines and information to current and potential vendors wishing to conduct business with the state of West Virginia.

Vendors will learn how to capitalize

on their opportunity to bid and perform work for state government. Purchasing Division personnel will discuss how vendors may register their company with the Purchasing Division and how to submit bids for solicitations.

Other topics offered during the webinar will include how bids are evaluated, how changes to contracts are made, bidding limits and their requirements,

and guidelines for marketing commodities and services to state agencies.

Registration and additional information on vendor training can be found at www.state.wv.us/admin/purchase/VendorWebinarPromotion.pdf.

All other questions may be directed to Administrative Services Manager Samantha Knapp at 304.558.7022 or Samantha.S.Knapp@wv.gov.

Procurement Location Report now Available in wvOASIS

wvOASIS contains multiple tables within the Financial Application where location information is maintained. For example, departments are required to provide location information for fixed assets, as well as information for various procurement location types.

Information contained in the Procurement Location (PLOC) table is used to determine where bids must be submitted, where goods or services must be delivered, and where invoices must be sent. It also contains Site IDs, which are used to identify the locations of department P-Card coordinators.

Procurement location information is now available to department users with the ability to access the Business Intelligence application. The *WV-FIN-PROC-056 Procurement Locations* report contains addresses for department warehouse(s), bid receiving, billing, shipping, and Site ID locations. To access the report, select the Business Intelligence tile on myApps, and then navigate to the *Document List*.

From there, select *Public Folders* to view the *Advantage Financial* folder. This is the folder that contains all Procurement reports.

Select *WV-FIN-PROC-056 Procurement Locations* in the reports listed to the right. Click Refresh Data and enter the search criteria when prompted. You will then have the option to search by specific Location Code or to view by Location Type. After entering the search criteria, click on Run Query to view the results.

The location information is available on demand and is presented in a downloadable Excel format. Changes to procurement locations can be denoted on the Excel document and emailed to FinanceTeam@wvOASIS.gov to be updated in wvOASIS.

Enter value(s) for Department: (optional) 0947
Enter value(s) for Location Code: (optional) This filter will be ignored because no value has been entered.
Enter value(s) for Location Type: Bid Receiving;Billing;Shipping;Site ID;Warehouse
Enter Location Name(Use "%" as Wildcard): (optional) This filter will be ignored because no value has been entered.

Enter value(s) for Location Type:
Bid Receiving
Billing
Shipping
Site ID
Warehouse

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Bid Receiving
Billing
Shipping
Site ID
Warehouse

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Currently-selected values in listbox
Bid Receiving
Billing

Run Query

State agency procurement officers can search the Procurement Location folder within wvOASIS to determine pertinent information for a solicitation, such as where bids must be submitted, where goods or services must be delivered, and where invoices must be sent.

ANNUAL REPORT

Continued from Page 1

make quality procurements at the lowest cost to state taxpayers while also providing the best customer service possible to our state agency partners.”

In addition to featuring the Purchasing Division’s accomplishments, the Annual Report also highlights the *2016 Agency Procurement Officer of the Year*, as well as shares information about legislative changes which directly affected the state purchasing process.

Some of the accomplishments during Fiscal Year 2017 that are noted in this year’s Annual Report include but are not limited to:

- The Purchasing Division received the National Procurement Institute’s Achievement of Excellence in Procurement award for the fourth consecutive year;
- More than 400 state employees were trained through the Purchasing Division’s training program;
- 19,754 new awards and delivery orders processed totaling \$337,281,332.40;
- The Purchasing Division underwent the extensive process of updating its Google directory listing. The top search results now displayed for the Purchasing Division office and the West Virginia Agency for Surplus Property (WVSASP) are the official state-owned websites; and
- A decrease to a 0.98% rate of protests was realized. This statistic reflects the percentage of purchase orders and contracts for which a protest of any type is filed for the fiscal year.

Agency procurement officers are encouraged to view the Fiscal Year 2017 Annual Report. All annual reports are archived and available on the Purchasing Division’s website at www.state.wv.us/admin/purchase/Annualreport/default.html.

Purchasing Division Recognizes Latest West Virginia Procurement: Basic Certification Recipients

The Purchasing Division is pleased to announce Jessica Vartz and Lynn Pugh as the latest recipients in its West Virginia Procurement: Basic Certification program.

Vartz, an Administrative Services Assistant III for the Public Employees Insurance Agency, has worked for the state for six years, with the past two in her current role.

“The purchasing aspect of my position has been the most daunting part to navigate, and going through this process has helped me gain a more thorough understanding of the state’s procurement rules,” she said. “I want to give a huge ‘thank you’ to all of the staff in the Purchasing Division who have been happy to answer my questions even when they’ve probably already answered them three times before. They are always willing to assist!”

Pugh, an Administrative Services

Assistant III for the Department of Environmental Protection, has worked for the state for more than 37 years. She expressed her enthusiasm about being successful with the exam. “I’m shocked, but so glad that I passed the test!” she stated, after receiving confirmation of her success.

State agency procurement officers interested in participating in the basic and/or advanced certification program may review the requirements at www.state.wv.us/admin/purchase/training/Certification.

Questions regarding the certification program may be directed to Communication and Professional Development Manager Samantha Knapp at Samantha.S.Knapp@wv.gov or 304.558.7022.

The Purchasing Division would like to congratulate Vartz and Pugh on this noteworthy accomplishment.

SOS

Continued from Page 2

documentation must be provided explaining the situation and the correct address.

While vendors can fix their expired status or incorrect information, this can cause delays in the procurement process. Because the SOS website is updated each month, the Purchasing Division recommends that agencies check the SOS website at the beginning and end of the process. This will help catch any information that may have changed due to an update.

If you have trouble locating a business on the SOS website, try using the wildcard feature. To search using the wildcard, insert a percent (%) sign. Using the wildcard will help locate businesses that have many possible ways of entering their names (e.g. ZYX, Z.Y.X., ZY.X).

Questions regarding SOS registration should be directed to 304.558.8000. Please note that registering with the Secretary of State is a separate process than registering with the Purchasing Division.

Purchasing Division Welcomes Two New Staff Members

The Purchasing Division is pleased to welcome its two newest employees, Bob Ross and Anna Short. Ross joined the Support Services Unit of the Communication and Technical Services Section as an Office Assistant I, while Short joined the West Virginia State Agency for Surplus Property (WVSASP) in Dunbar as an Office Assistant III.

Currently a Huntington resident, Ross graduated from Sissonville High School before taking some classes at Marshall University. Previously, Ross worked for Amazon and DirectTV. In his free time, Ross enjoys playing music and working on cars and electronics.

Short, a Charleston resident, graduated from Sherman High School and attended Carver Career Center for medical transcription. Upon graduating, Short worked for various hospitals and doctors in West Virginia and North Carolina. Before joining WVSASP, Short worked in the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner. In her free time, Short enjoys growing orchids, hiking, and spending time with her four grandsons.

We are very pleased to welcome Ross and Short to the Purchasing Division!



Bob Ross



Anna Short

THE BUYERS NETWORK

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Current Statewide Contract Update

(As of September 15, 2017)

This page includes a listing of current changes made to statewide contracts issued by the Purchasing Division. Information and dates listed in this **Current Statewide Contract Update** are subject to change. All statewide contracts are available online at www.state.wv.us/admin/purchase/swc. For more information, please contact the buyer assigned to the specific statewide contract.

Miscellaneous Actions

Contract	Vendor	Commodity	Description of Change
SWC*19	Komax LLC	Digital Copiers	To add commodity lines

Mandatory Training for High-Level Officials Scheduled for Nov. 2

Registration is now open for the State Officials' Purchasing Procedures and Purchasing Card Training, co-presented by the West Virginia Purchasing Division and the State Auditor's Office. This two-hour session is scheduled for November 2, 2017, and will be available online via WebEx. This training, offered twice per year, is mandatory for high-level state officials as indicated in *West Virginia Code* §5A-3-60.

The Code requires all high-level state officials, including "executive department secretaries, commissioners, deputy commissioners, assistant commissioners, directors, deputy directors, assistant directors, department heads, deputy department heads, and assistant department heads" to annually complete two hours of training on purchasing procedures and purchasing card processes.

Space is limited to the first 100 people to register. To reserve a spot for this live online training, complete the online form posted at www.state.wv.us/admin/purchase/training/mandatory.html. Designated procurement officers are prohibited from attending unless they hold one of the aforementioned titles.

The content of this training is updated each year to reflect the most up-to-date purchasing rules and regulations, as well as any changes in the law. Specifically, the Purchasing Division will outline its purchasing decision path from the time an agency determines its need to the award of a contract, as well as discuss the procurement methods utilized in the West Virginia state purchasing process.

For those individuals who are unable to attend this live online training, a video recording will be posted on the Purchasing Division's website following the event.

Verification of participation in this online training or viewing the online recording is required to meet the stipulations mandated by the law. For more information on this training or this requirement, contact Administrative Services Manager Samantha Knapp at 304.558.7022 or Samantha.S.Knapp@wv.gov.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Below is a list of Purchasing Division buyers assigned to specific state agencies.

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