(2) Ask the Area Director to suspend the case for one or more of the following purposes:
   (i) To permit the SBA to forward a detailed rationale for the decision to the contracting officer for review within a specified period of time.
   (ii) To afford the contracting officer the opportunity to meet with the Area Office to review all documentation contained in the case file and to attempt to resolve any issues.
   (iii) To submit any information to the SBA Area Office that the contracting officer believes the SBA did not consider (at which time the SBA Area Office will establish a new suspense date mutually agreeable to the contracting officer and the SBA).
   (iv) To permit resolution of an appeal by the contracting agency to SBA Headquarters under 19.602–3. However, there is no contracting officer’s appeal when the Area Office proposes to issue a COC valued at $100,000 or less.

(e) At the completion of the process, notify the concern and the contracting officer that the COC is denied or is being issued.

(f) Refer recommendations for issuing a COC on contracts greater than $25,000,000 to SBA Headquarters.


19.602–3 Resolving differences between the agency and the Small Business Administration.

(a) COCs valued between $100,000 and $25,000,000. (1) When disagreements arise about a concern’s ability to perform, the contracting officer and the SBA shall make every effort to reach a resolution before the SBA takes final action on a COC. This shall be done through the complete exchange of information and in accordance with agency procedures. If agreement cannot be reached between the contracting officer and the SBA Area Office, the contracting officer shall request that the Area Office suspend action and refer the matter to SBA Headquarters for review. The SBA Area Office shall honor the request for a review if the contracting officer agrees to withhold award until the review process is concluded. Without an agreement to withhold award, the SBA Area Office will issue the COC in accordance with applicable SBA regulations.

(2) SBA Headquarters will furnish written notice to the procuring agency’s Director, Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU) or other designated official (with a copy to the contracting officer) that the case file has been received and that an appeal decision may be requested by an authorized official.

(3) If the contracting agency decides to file an appeal, it must notify SBA Headquarters through its procuring agency’s Director, OSDBU, or other designated official, within 10 business days (or a period agreed upon by both agencies) that it intends to appeal the issuance of the COC.

(4) The appeal and any supporting documentation shall be filed by the procuring agency’s Director, OSDBU, or other designated official, within 10 business days (or a period agreed upon by both agencies) after SBA Headquarters receives the agency’s notification in accordance with paragraph (a)(3) of this subsection.

(b) SBA Headquarters’ decisions on COCs valued over $25,000,000. (1) Prior to taking final action, SBA Headquarters will contact the contracting agency and offer it the following options:

   (i) To request that the SBA suspend case processing to allow the agency to meet with SBA Headquarters personnel and review all documentation contained in the case file; or
   (ii) To submit to SBA Headquarters for evaluation any information that the contracting agency believes has not been considered.

(2) After reviewing all available information, the SBA will make a final decision to either issue or deny the COC.

(c) Reconsideration of a COC after issuance. (1) The SBA reserves the right to reconsider its issuance of a COC, prior to contract award, if—

   (i) The COC applicant submitted false information or omitted materially adverse information; or
   (ii) The COC has been issued for more than 60 days (in which case the SBA...
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may investigate the firm’s current circumstances).
(2) When the SBA reconsiders and reaffirms the COC, the procedures in subsection 19.602-2 do not apply.
(3) Denial of a COC by the SBA does not preclude a contracting officer from awarding a contract to the referred concern, nor does it prevent the concern from making an offer on any other procurement.


19.602-4 Awarding the contract.
(a) If new information causes the contracting officer to determine that the concern referred to the SBA is actually responsible to perform the contract, and award has not already been made under paragraph (c) below, the contracting officer shall reverse the determination of nonresponsibility, notify the SBA of this action, withdraw the referral, and proceed to award the contract.
(b) The contracting officer shall award the contract to the concern in question if the SBA issues a COC after receiving the referral. An SBA-certified concern shall not be required to meet any other requirements of responsibility. SBA COC’s are conclusive with respect to all elements of responsibility of prospective small business contractors.
(c) The contracting officer shall proceed with the acquisition and award the contract to another appropriately selected and responsible offeror if the SBA has not issued a COC within 15 business days (or a longer period of time agreed to with the SBA) after receiving the referral.

Subpart 19.7—The Small Business Subcontracting Program

19.701 Definitions.

As used in this subpart—
Alaska Native Corporation (ANC) means any Regional Corporation, Village Corporation, Urban Corporation, or Group Corporation organized under the laws of the State of Alaska in accordance with the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, as amended (43 U.S.C.A. 1601 et seq.), that is recognized by the Federal Government as eligible for services from the Bureau of Indian Affairs in accordance with 25 U.S.C. 1452(c).

Indian tribe means any Indian tribe, band, group, pueblo, or community, including native villages and native groups (including corporations organized by Kenai, Juneau, Sitka, and Kodiak) as defined in the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (43 U.S.C.A. 1601 et seq.), that is recognized by the Federal Government as eligible for services from the Bureau of Indian Affairs in accordance with 25 U.S.C. 1452(c).

Individual contract plan means a subcontracting plan that contains all the required elements of an individual contract plan, except goals, and may be incorporated into individual contract plans, provided the master plan has been approved.

Subcontract means any agreement (other than one involving an employer-