

**ALLIANCE
NORTHWEST**



**Breakout
Session**

Defense Contracting

**Opportunities for Manufacturers
& Distributors**



First DIBBS

An Introductory Workshop for Suppliers Interested in
Selling to the DLA

The Defense Logistics Agency Internet Bid Board System

AGENDA

- Welcome & Introductions
- Alphabet Soup
- What is DIBBS and Why Does it Matter?
- Supplier Roles: Distributor vs Manufacturer
- Doing Your Homework: Market Research
- Requirements to Participate
- Basic Cybersecurity Overview
- Solicitation Overview/Go/No Go Decisions
- Delivering the Goods: Packaging, Marking & Shipping
- Resources



Introductions

Mark Johnson with Washington APEX Accelerator at Economic Alliance of Snohomish County. Mark has his BA in Public Policy from the University of Washington.

Before APEX, Mark worked in state and local government, and consulted a county government on program development

Prior to his time in the public sector, Mark developed his skillset working for small businesses. His experience seeded a passion for helping small businesses grow, helping communities thrive through economic empowerment and skill development.



Who is APEX Accelerator?



Designated as the lead Government Procurement Technical Assistance provider by the Department of Defense.



Our team of 17 advisors increase the number of government contracts that are awarded to businesses in Washington State via no-cost advising with 30+ years experience using national best practices



Headquartered at Thurston EDC, in partnership with subrecipients including Economic Alliance Snohomish County



We help with: Trainings, Workshops, Networking Events, Market Research, Certifications, Registrations, Strategy, Marketing, Solicitation Review, Bid Review, and Post Award Assistance



1 Kitsap Economic Development Alliance

Mary Jo Juarez, Terry Homburg, James Davis



2 Thurston Economic Development Council

Grady Smith



3 Columbia River Economic Development Council

Julia Krivoruk



4 Economic Alliance Snohomish County

Cara Buckingham, Mark Johnson



5 Green River College

Darrell Sundell, Melinda Martirosian



6 Washington APEX Accelerator in Pierce County

Trena Payton, Maryam Lynch-Tate



7 Greater Spokane Incorporated

Aleesha Roedel



8 Tri-City Regional Chamber of Commerce

Maria Alleman

Other APEX Accelerators Serving Washington State

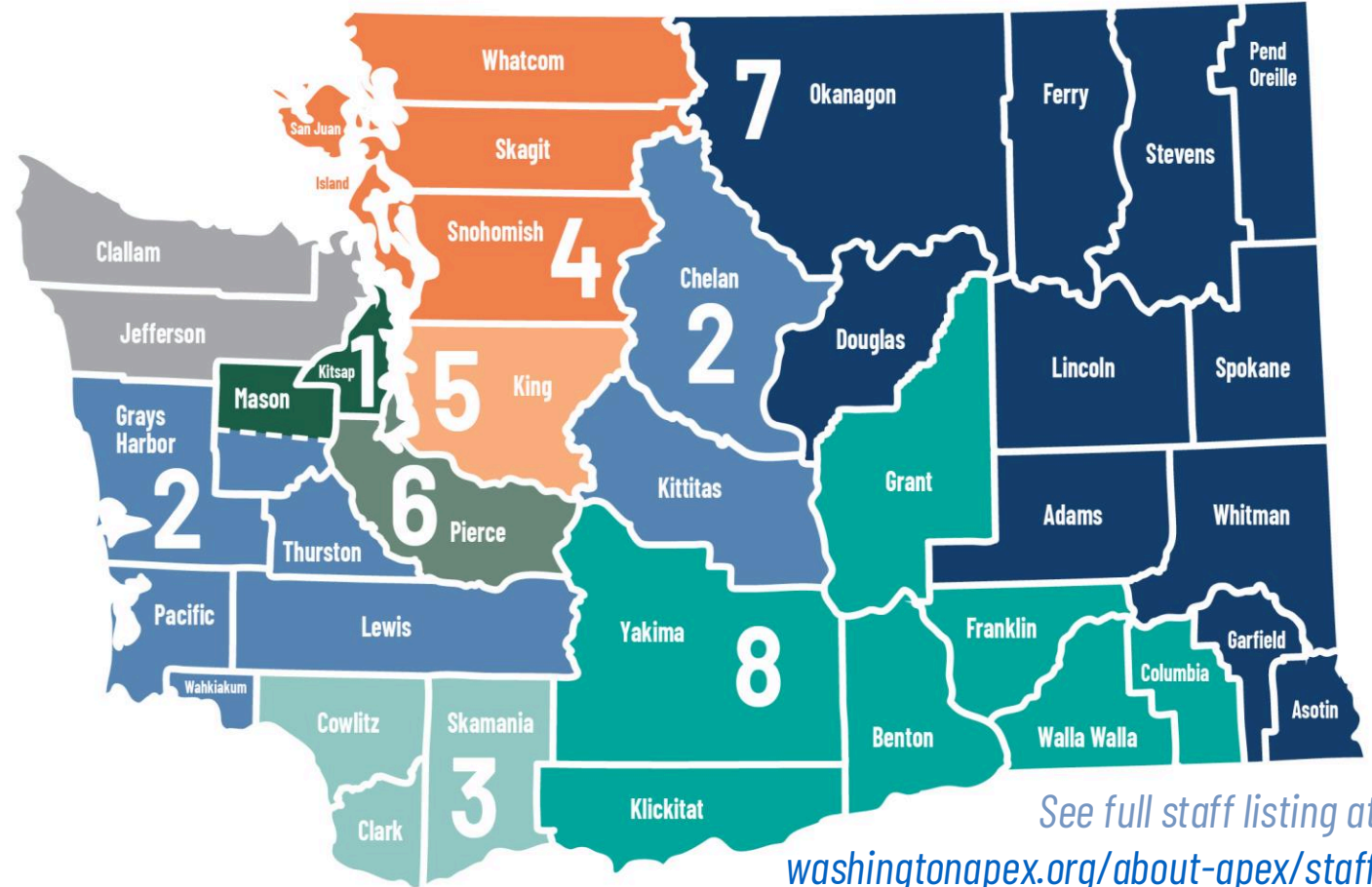
North Olympic Peninsula
APEX Accelerator:
clallam.org/apex

American Indian Chamber
Education Fund APEX
Accelerator: aicef-apex.org

NW Native Apex
Accelerator:
nnapex.org

Innovation & SBIR Program
washingtontapex.org/sbir

WASHINGTON APEX ACCELERATOR



See full staff listing at
washingtontapex.org/about-apex/staff

360.860.6945 info@washingtontapex.org washingtontapex.org

"This APEX Accelerator is funded in part through a cooperative agreement with the Department of Defense."



City of Seattle



Washington State
**DEPARTMENT OF
ENTERPRISE SERVICES**

**Thank You Program
Supporters**



What is DIBBS?



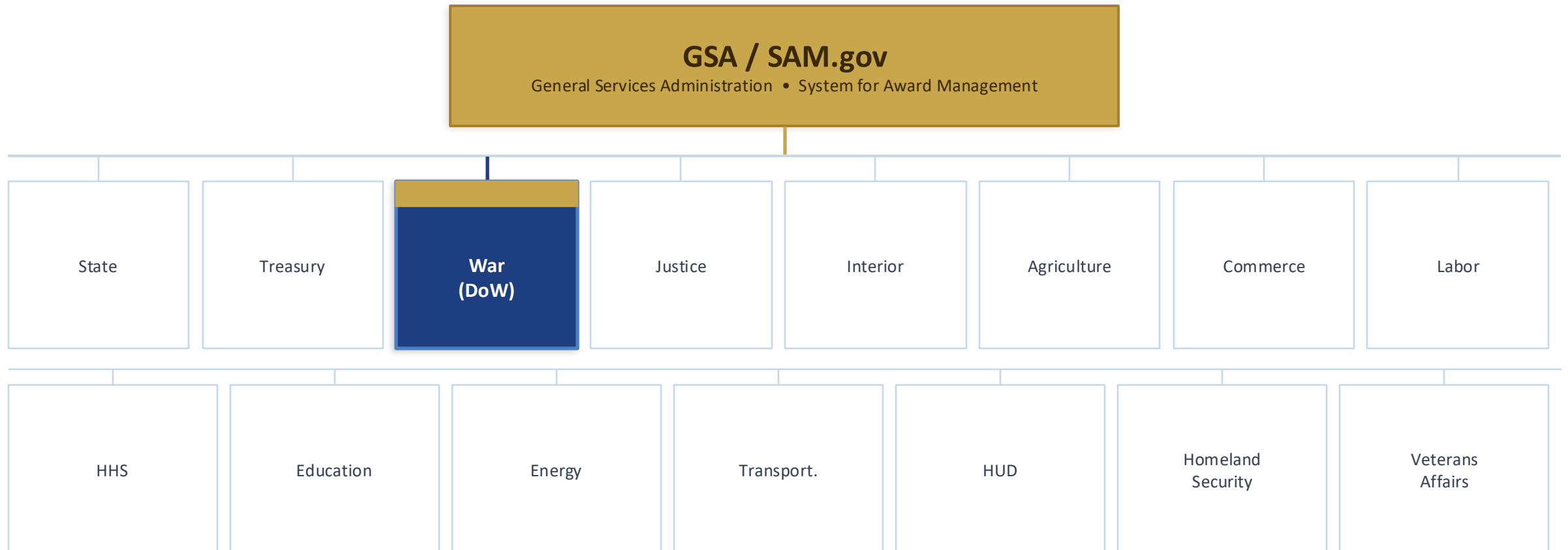
The Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) Internet Bid Board System (DIBBS) is a procurement site where the DLA sources supplies (goods) for the armed forces.

Some DIBBS functions:

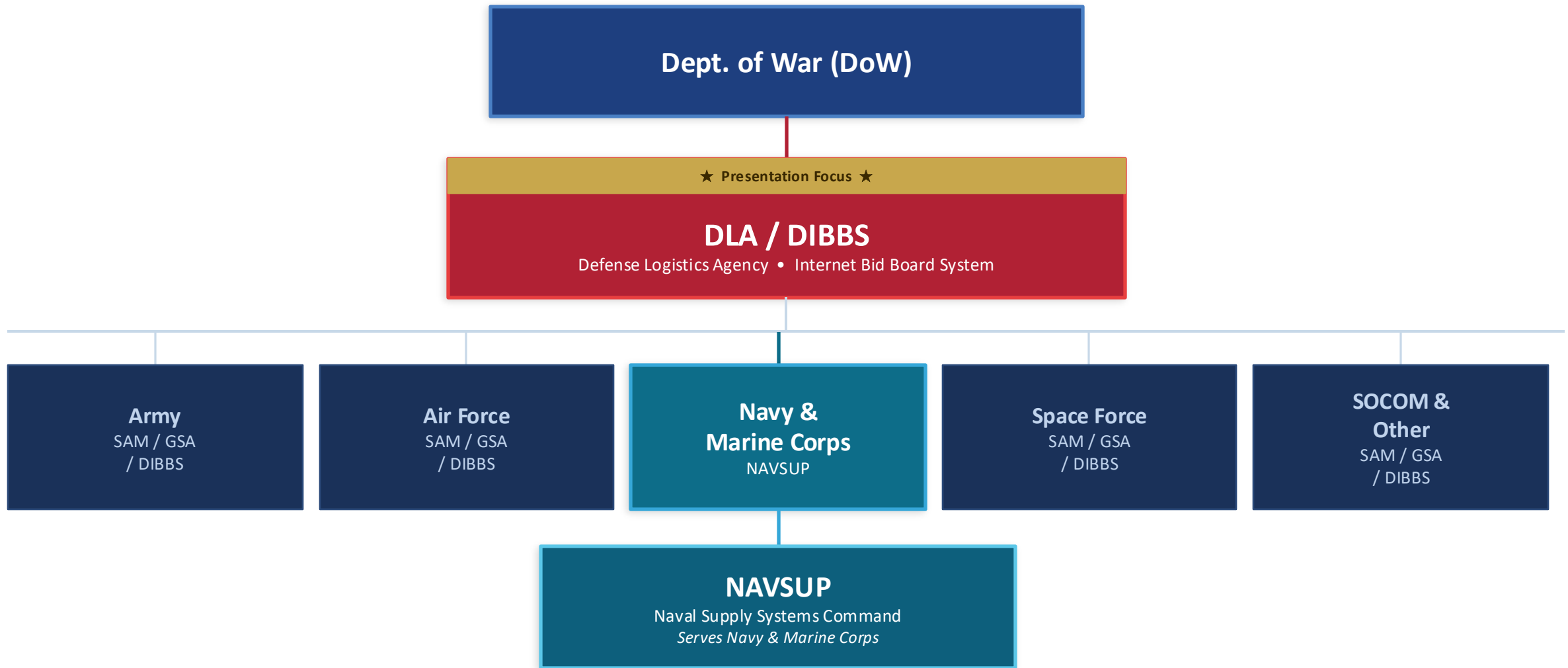
- View solicitations
- Submit quotes
- View provisions, clauses, and Packaging specifications
- View award history
- View drawings/Technical data (cFolders – JCP/eJCP)

Why DIBBS Matters

- **Substantial market:** In FY24, DLA procured over **\$52 billion** dollars worth of goods, with **\$20 billion** going to small businesses
 - DLA Demand Forecast Report 24: [PowerPoint Presentation](#)
- **Variety of procured items:** this includes food, fuel, apparel, pharmaceutical, medical, and surgical products & equipment, and weapons system repair parts (down to nuts and bolts)
- **Consistent demand:** Defense procurement is steady, even in downturns
- **Open to small businesses:** Many awards go to small, veteran-, minority-, and woman-owned firms via set-asides
- **Low barrier to entry:** You don't need to be a manufacturer—distributors can and do win
- **Millions in awards posted daily:** Opportunities range from <\$1K to \$1M+

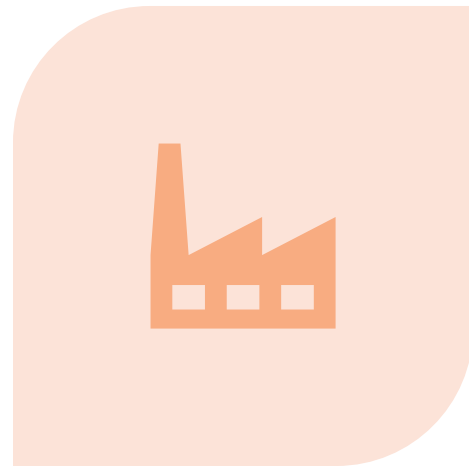


Note: SAM.gov is the federal vendor registration system operated by GSA — vendors must register before receiving contracts. GSA is the actual procurement agency. DoD is highlighted as the path to DIBBS (see Slide 2).



Note: NAVSUP (Naval Supply Systems Command) serves both the Navy and Marine Corps. Other DoD branches use a combination of SAM, GSA, and DIBBS for procurement.

The Two Pathways



MANUFACTURER



DISTRIBUTOR

Supplier Roles: Manufacturer vs. Distributor

There are two relationship dynamics between a vendor and the DIBBS system, the distributor and the manufacturer.

Manufacturer: A manufacturing vendor with an approved CAGE that makes the approved part being requested by a DLA buyer – actually creates the goods being purchased by the DLA.

Distributor: A logistics vendor that sources the approved part via approved sources being requested by a DLA buyer – is an intermediary between the manufacturer and the DLA buyer.

Note:

- A manufacturer can act as their own distributor, but a distributor **cannot** pose as a manufacturer.
- A distributor typically **cannot** compete with a manufacturer who sells to the DLA directly (look at awarded cage in award history in the solicitation)

Common Mistakes



Underestimating Cybersecurity



Not taking packaging requirements seriously



Skipping market research

Market Research – Is There a Viable ROI?



Market Research – Call to Action

Before investing time and money in registration, compliance, and packaging fluency you'll want to validate the opportunity.

DIBBS is a large but specific market. Not every product has demand, and not every demand is winnable. Spending 2-3 hours here can save you thousands in compliance costs chasing a market that isn't there.

Ask three questions:

- **Is DLA buying what I make or distribute?** → DLA Product & Service Search
- **How often and how much?** → DIBBS RFQ history + Award History by NSN
- **Is there room for me?** → Who holds the approved source? What did the last award go for?

*Note that 15% of National Stock Number (NSNs) are actively purchased 1G items – fully open for competition (manufacturers)

- No approved vendor list
- Government owned technical documents

Market Research – Steps

- **Step 1:** Search USASpending.gov: [Government Spending Open Data | USAspending](#)
 - Select “Defense Logistics Agency” as the agency and use keywords to explore the market
 - Be sure to note relevant Product Service Codes (PSC), expand list here: [Product and Service Code Manual | Acquisition.GOV](#)
 - Note preliminary demand
- **Step 2:** Search DLA Product & Service Search: [Product and Service Search](#) to confirm your FSC/PSC codes and validate market- **Note PSC and FSC codes are interchangeable**
- **Step 3:** Search DIBBS RFQs via Federal Supply Classification (FSC) codes to identify NSNs of interest
- **Step 4:** Search DIBBS RFQs via National Stock Number (NSN) to verify individual product demand
- **Step 5:** Search DIBBS RFPs via National Stock Number (NSN) – if no results show then focus on RFQ market
- **Step 6:** Search DIBBS Award history by NSN
- **Step 7:** Review the DLA Demand Forecast: [Demand Forecast](#) – get a feel for upcoming demand

Market Research – Pro Tips

The following resources may require registration or have a learning curve but any dedicated DIBBS practitioner should explore them.

- **SRVA** (Supplier Requirements Visibility Application) – provides up to 24 months of projected purchase order demand by NSN. *Requires active DIBBS account.*
- **WebFLIS** (Web Federal Logistics Information System) – NSN-to-manufacturer/distributor intelligence, part number cross-references, approved source CAGE codes. *Requires CAC, ECA, or PIV credential. Access via dla.mil.*
- **PUB LOG** – publicly releasable FLIS data in downloadable database format, updated monthly. Free, no login, but requires local installation. *Available at dla.mil → FLIS Electronic Reading Room.*
- **DLA FOIA Purchase Transaction Logs** Monthly logs of actual DLA purchase transactions – includes NSN, item name, manufacturer, supplier, quantity, and price paid. Useful for validating real transaction prices and identifying active suppliers. [FLIS Data Electronic Reading Room](#)

Requirements to Participate in DIBBS

How many of you are registered in SAM?



Requirements to Participate

Manufacturer

Needs access to technical documents

1. SAM.gov account
 - CAGE Code
2. Register in DIBBS
3. CMMC Level 1 (soon)
4. Register in PIEE
5. Register in SPRS
6. NIST Score/CMMC level 1 attestation uploaded to SPRS
7. Get JCP certification
8. Register in cFolders (30 day inactivity lockout)

Distributor

Needs to plan for upcoming cybersecurity requirements

1. SAM.gov account
 - CAGE Code
2. Register in DIBBS
3. CMMC Level 1 (soon)
 - Some exempt COTS solicitations

Cybersecurity – CMMC/NIST

CMMC Level 1 – Federal Contract Information (FCI) Required for contracts where systems store, process, or transmit non-public contract information

- Annual self-assessment against 15 basic safeguarding requirements (**FAR 52.240-93** / 52.204-21)
- Active as of **November 10, 2025** – compliance is solicitation-dependent, but best practice for all DIBBS participants
- Exceptions: COTS items and micro-purchases

CMMC Level 2 – Controlled Unclassified Information (CUI) Required for contracts where systems store, process, or transmit CUI – including access to Tech Docs

- Third-party certification (C3PAO) or self-assessment depending on contract designation
- **Phase 2 deadline: November 10, 2026** – C3PAO certifications required at contract award
- Exceptions: COTS items only
- *Currently covered under **NIST SP 800-171** Rev. 2 (DFARS 252.204-7012) pending full CMMC rollout*

[Chief Information Officer > CMMC](#)



CMMC Cont.

Becoming CMMC compliant may require a fundamental change in how you run your business not just your IT. You may need to redefine employee roles, change software systems, and rewrite standard operating procedures.

- Level 1 (15 controls) is more accessible than Level 2 (110), but outside help is often still worth the investment to do it right
- Compliance costs vary by size, industry, and complexity, expect **\$15K–\$50K annually for Level 1** and **\$100K+ for Level 2** (Be sure to perform market research to validate the ROI)
- In-house solutions cost more. Building internal compliance staff means six-figure salaries before factoring in tooling and documentation
- **Leadership must be involved.** A significant portion of compliance requirements are business process controls, not IT. Officers of the company will need to understand and speak to CMMC requirements as well as attest to them.

Cybersecurity – JCP/eJCP/cFolders

JCP – Joint Certification Program - Covers unclassified military technical data

Steps for JCP: <https://www.dla.mil/Logistics-Operations/Services/JCP/>

1. NIST score entered into SPRS
2. Complete “DLA Introduction to Proper Handling of DoD Export-Controlled Technical Data Training”

eJCP – Enhanced Joint Certification Program - Covers unclassified military technical data *and* export-controlled data

Steps for eJCP: <https://www.dla.mil/Logistics-Operations/Enhanced-Validation/>

1. Get JCP
2. Create a cFolders account
3. Request an approved DLA-specific certification for access to export-controlled data

cFolders – Collaboration Folders: The program that hosts technical documents in DIBBS – JCP/eJCP required for registration

Cybersecurity – PIEE/SPRS

PIEE – Procurement Integrated Enterprise Environment DoD's centralized procurement portal and your gateway to doing business with the federal government online. If you've ever used WAWF to submit an invoice, you're already in PIEE.

SPRS – Supplier Performance Risk System A DoD database that contracting officers use when evaluating vendors. It tracks your past performance, delivery history, and cybersecurity compliance status all in one place. *Think of it as your DoD report card.*

Key connection for DIBBS suppliers:

- Your **NIST score** and **CMMC attestation** both get submitted here
- Contracting officers check SPRS before making award decisions
- No current record in SPRS = a red flag at best, ineligible at worst

DIBBS CYBERSECURITY PROCESS – ACCESS TO TECHNICAL DOCUMENTS

*Assuming SAM registration, DIBBS registration, and Cybersecurity Audit - CMMC Compliance

1. Register in PIEE



[Link to PIEE](#)

2 - Register in SPRS



[Link to SPRS](#)

3 - Upload NIST
Score/CMMC Level 1
Compliance
Attestation



[Upload into SPRS](#)

4 - Register in JCP



[Link to JCP](#)

5 - Register in
cFolders



[Link cFolders](#)

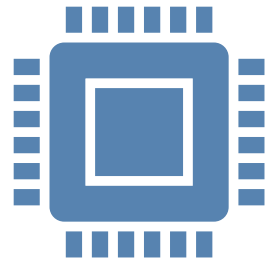
Solicitation Overview & Go No-Go Decisions



Key Elements in a Solicitation

NSN	Quantity	Unit of Measure	Required Delivery Date
Packaging Requirements	Inspection/Acceptance Points (Origin or Destination)	Award Method (Auto or Manual)	Previous Price (if listed)
Set-Aside Status (e.g., Small Business)	Part Number	Approved CAGE (or lack thereof)	Contract Line Item Number (CLIN)

Automated vs Manual Award



Automated

Typically an RFQ

Usually under \$150K

Requires very fast response (within hours or a day)

Awarded to the lowest responsible bidder

Automated procurements have a "T" or "U" in the 9th position of the solicitation number -

Ex: SPE7M114T0123



Manual

Typically an RFP

More complex or higher-dollar

May include technical specs, drawings, set-aside language

May allow for additional evaluation criteria (e.g., past performance)

RFQ Quoting – Bid Type

Quoting on a DIBBS RFQ is done through the DIBBS system. The process is similar to filling out an online form. You want to go through the form and fill out the highlighted items.

There are four options you can select when choosing a bid type.

- **Bid Without Exception** – Only option accepted by automated bid – the only factor that you can extend without changing the bid type is the delivery window
- **Bid With Exception** – This will prevent you from being selected for an automated award
- **Alternate Bid** – This will prevent your bid from being considered, but will open alternate products to be considered for future procurements
- **No Bid** – A way to delete a previously submitted bid

RFP Quoting

Unlike RFQs which are quoted through their automated system, most RFPs require you to fill out a form attached to the solicitation (part IV) and upload it to submit.

Keep in mind that there are actionable questions throughout the solicitation that require you to check a box in order to submit a responsive bid. As always in government contracting, read the solicitation in its entirety.

Manufacturer: SAR & AO

If you're wanting to be an approved source for a specific NSN, there are two approaches you can take.
*Note: you'll need access to the technical data to provide alternative products be it from the approved source, the DLA, or be it through reverse engineering



Source Approval Request (SAR): A Source Approval Request is a package of information provided by a prospective new supplier to become an approved source for procurement of an NSN.



Alternative Offer: An Alternative Offer is submitted for evaluation against an active solicitation in order for a company and their product information to be reviewed and potentially qualified as an approved source.

Go/No-Go Decisions

When identifying opportunities, it's important to have a standard process or lens to view it through to know if it's right for your business.

Having a stream of good and relevant questions while performing market research will ideally help you hone your bid pipeline. The following slides will touch share decision trees that you can adopt when doing your market research. They will be separated by the distributor vs. manufacturer perspective that are built into this presentation.

Common threads:

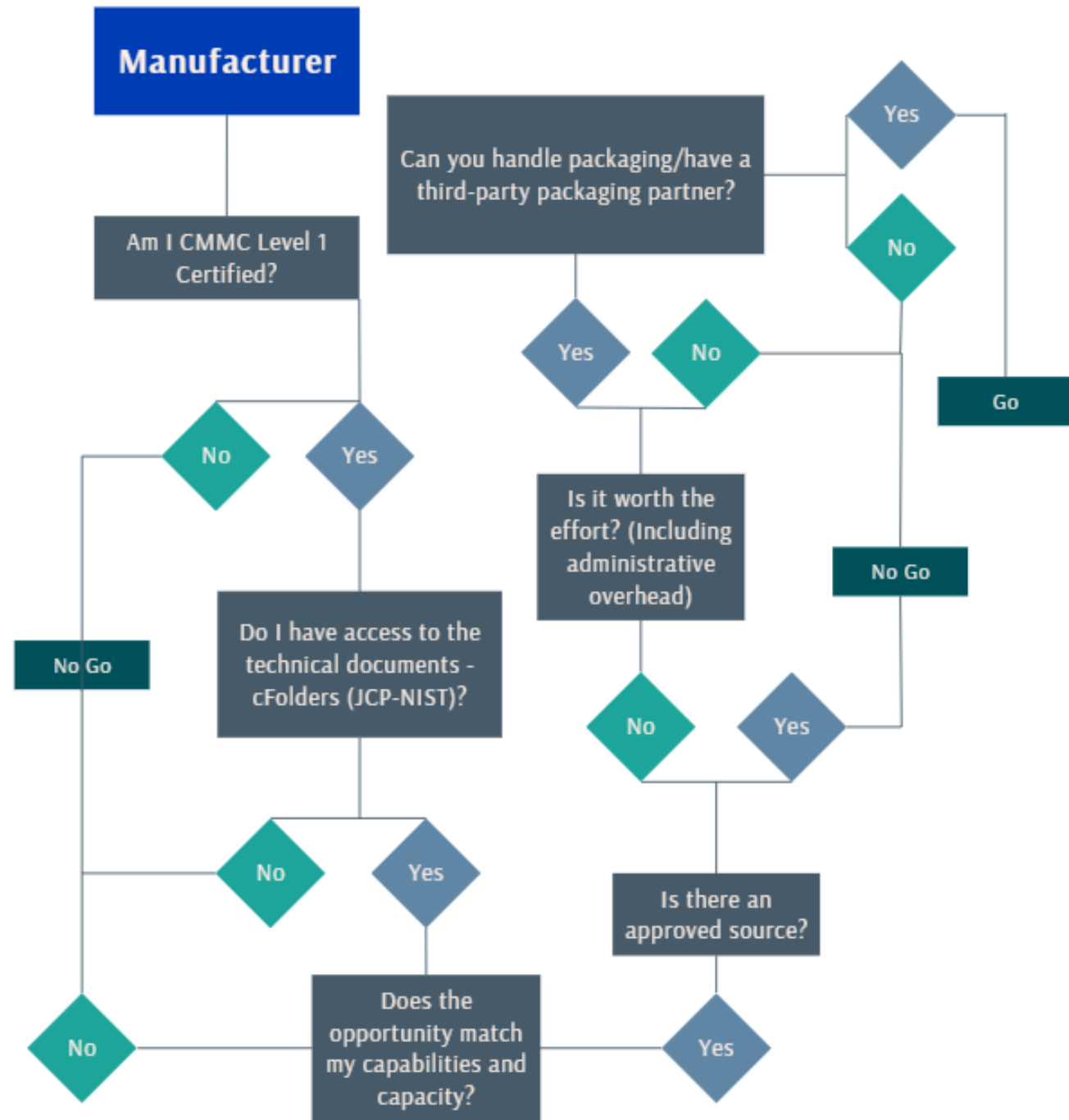
- Both need to be CMMC Level 1 compliant (with certain COTS exceptions for distributors)
- Both need a packaging solution priced in.

Differences:

- Distributors need approved sources
- Manufacturers want to seek opportunities without approved sources (open competition/government owned technical drawings)

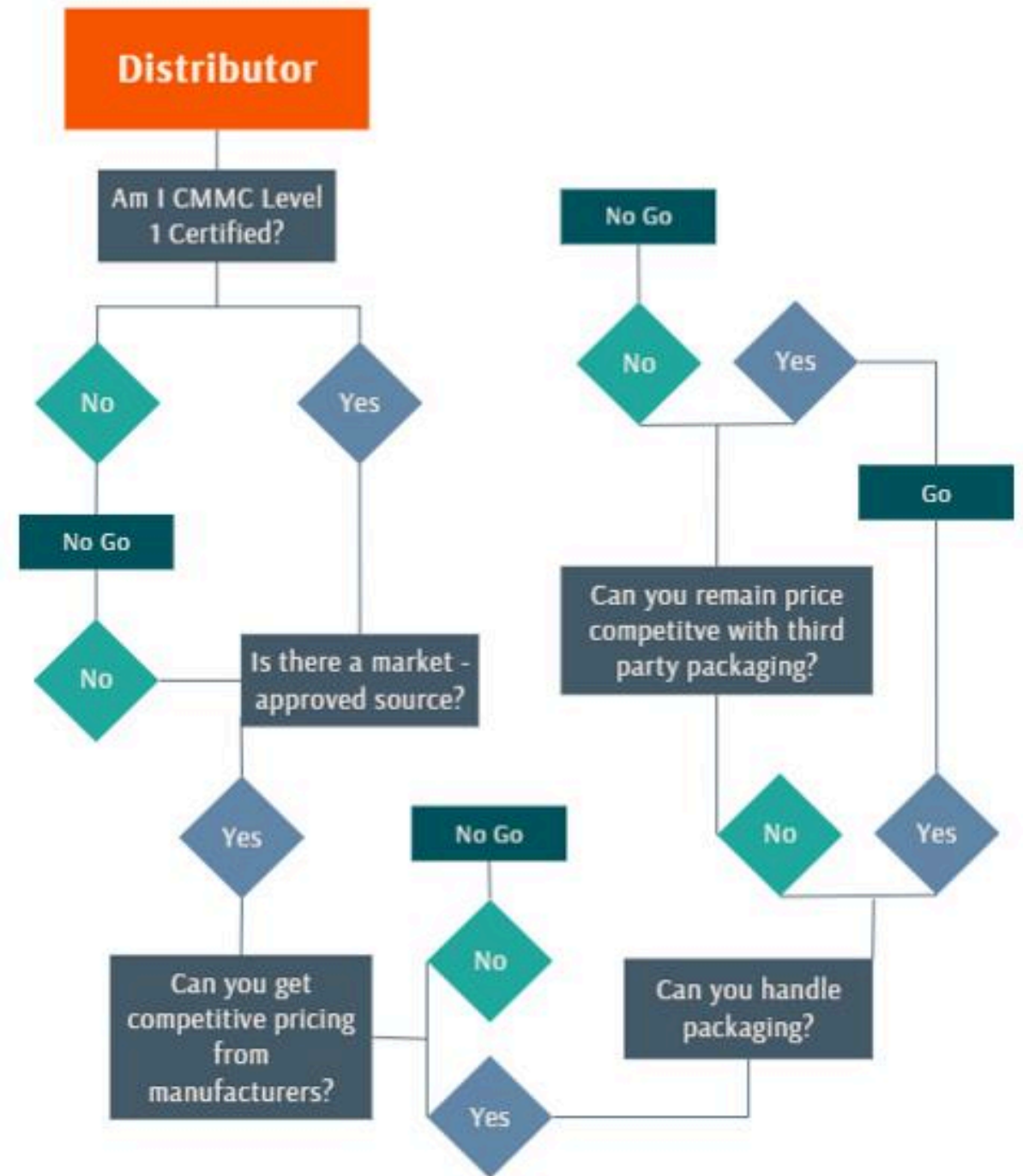
Go/No-Go Manufacturer

The decision tree for manufacturers is focused on access to technical documents and capability match.



Go/No-Go Distributor

The decision tree flow for a distributor is focused on price competitiveness and packaging.



Delivering the Goods: Packaging, Marking & Shipping



Packaging & Marking Basics

There are three main standards to keep in mind when learning about packaging.

They are:

MIL-STD-2073-1E (How to package the item – protect contents and prepare for shipping/handling/storage)

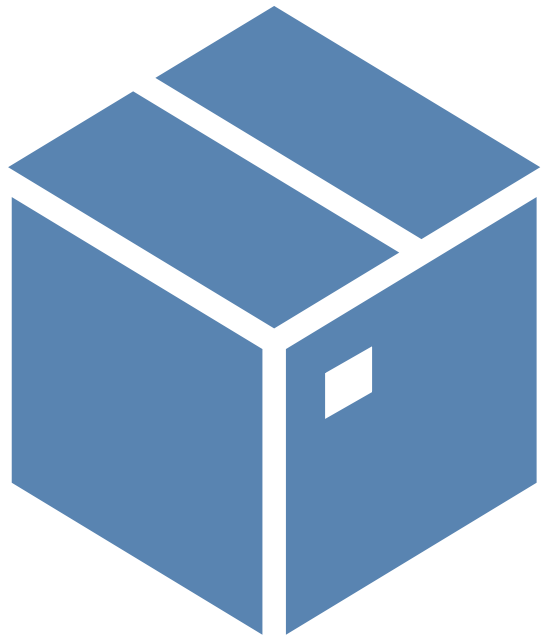
This is a military standard that outlines the methods, materials, and procedures for packaging military supplies to ensure they are protected during handling, storage, and shipment.

MIL-STD-129R (How to label the item to stay in compliance)

This standard provides the minimum requirements for uniform military marking for shipment and storage. Additional marking may be required by the contract or the cognizant activity.

ASTM D3951 (Commercial Pack)

This standard provides basic protective guidelines and isn't as stringent as MIL-STD requirements – may require only minor packaging adjustments or none at all.



MIL-STD-2073-1E

- Standard Practice for Military Packaging
- Decodes preservation, packaging, packing, and special marking requirements
- Section B denotes packaging data
- Required for long-term storage and/or items with specific protection needs that cannot be met with commercial practices

NOTE: If packaging data is missing, review paragraph 4.2 and notify contracting officer.

MIL-STD-129R

- Military Marking for Shipment and Storage
- Department of Defense uniformed marking requirements
- Mandatory marking requirements for ALL DoD shipments to identify material and trace back to the contractor (labels available in the VSM)

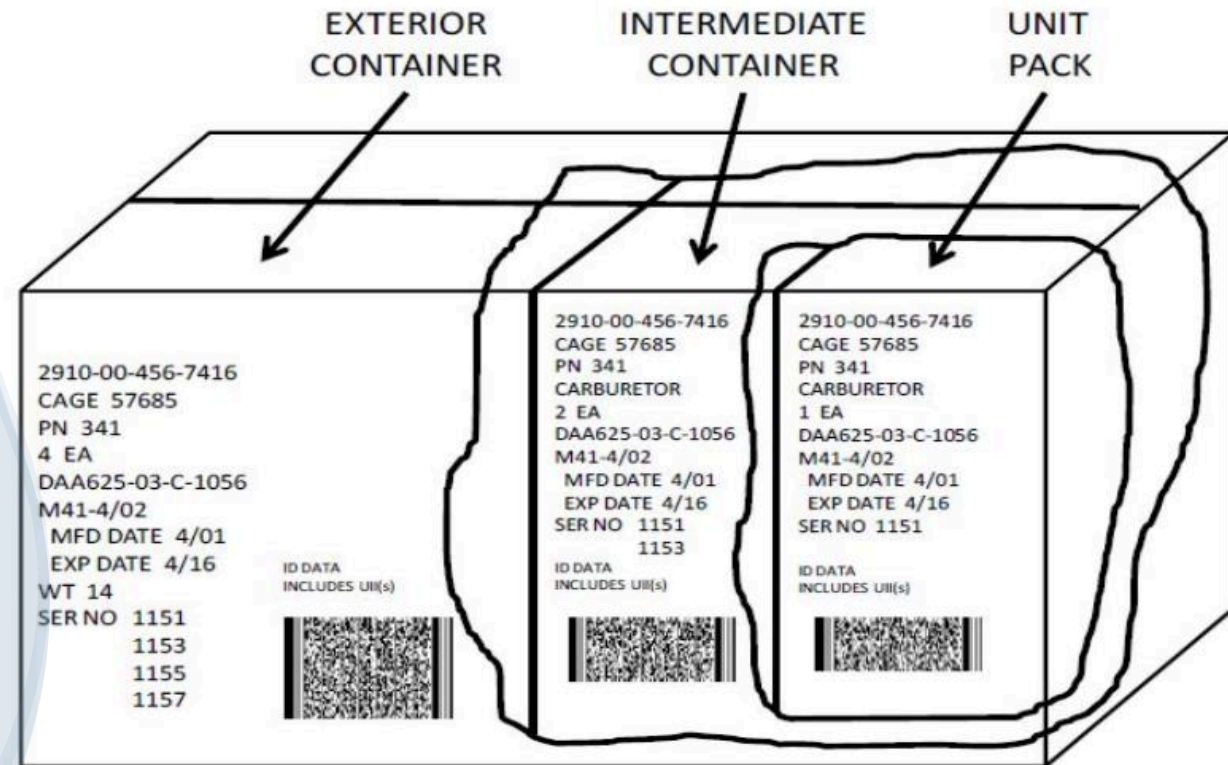
NOTE: Review pictorial marking requirements within ASTM D5445 when special markings required.

Look out for RFID requirements



*Note that all packages require labelling

MIL-STD-129 Marking Examples





ASTM D3951 (Commercial Pack)

- Standard Practice for Commercial Packaging
- Establishes minimum requirements for packaging of supplies and equipment
- Package design must facilitate multiple handling, shipment by any mode, and storage for minimum of one year in enclosed facility without damage to the product.
- Unit package must also be ready for issue and redistribution without any additional packaging and/or marking.

NOTE: Only applicable when an acquisition document references this document solely.

Packaging Resources

Packaging is a common roadblock for vendors wanting to participate in DIBBS.

Be sure that you understand packaging **before** bidding on a solicitation. Issues that arise from a lack of understanding:

- Shipping the wrong number of items/losing money
- Not pricing in packaging correctly/losing money
- Poor relationship with the DLA/lower odds of winning awards/losing money

Resources:

[ASSIST-QuickSearch Basic Search](#) – a DLA searchable database

[Packaging Code Lookup](#) – a packaging database that interprets codes (not an endorsement of their services)

[Mil-Std-129R Labeling with IUID and RFID | Mil-Pac Technology](#) – an overview of Mil-Std-129R from a private company (not an endorsement of their services)

Shipping - VSM Module

The DLA's Vendor Shipping Module (VSM) is a DLA enterprise wide, web-based system that supports cargo movement from DLA suppliers to DLA customers and DLA warehouses.

Link to VSM: [VSM - Vendor Shipment Module > Defense Logistics Agency > Details](#)

Some functions of the VSM:

- DLA suppliers access VSM to notify DLA that an FOB Origin order is ready for pickup
- DLA suppliers access VSM to print Military shipping labels which contain correct addressing.
 - In addition, package or box labels, BOLs, and packing lists will print dependent on whether the order is FOB Origin or FOB Destination

FOB Origin vs FOB Destination

FOB, or Free on Board, is a shipping term that defines the point in the supply chain when a buyer or seller becomes liable for the goods transported. Purchase orders between buyers and sellers set FOB terms and help determine ownership, risk, and transportation costs.

FOB Origin= DLA manages and pays for transportation

FOB Destination= Supplier manages and pays for transportation (price into bid)

Notes:

- Whether a solicitation is FOB origin or FOB destination will be noted in **Block 8** of the solicitation
- Use of VSM is a requirement
- Supplier enters shipment details, weight, pieces, and dimensions into VSM for both options

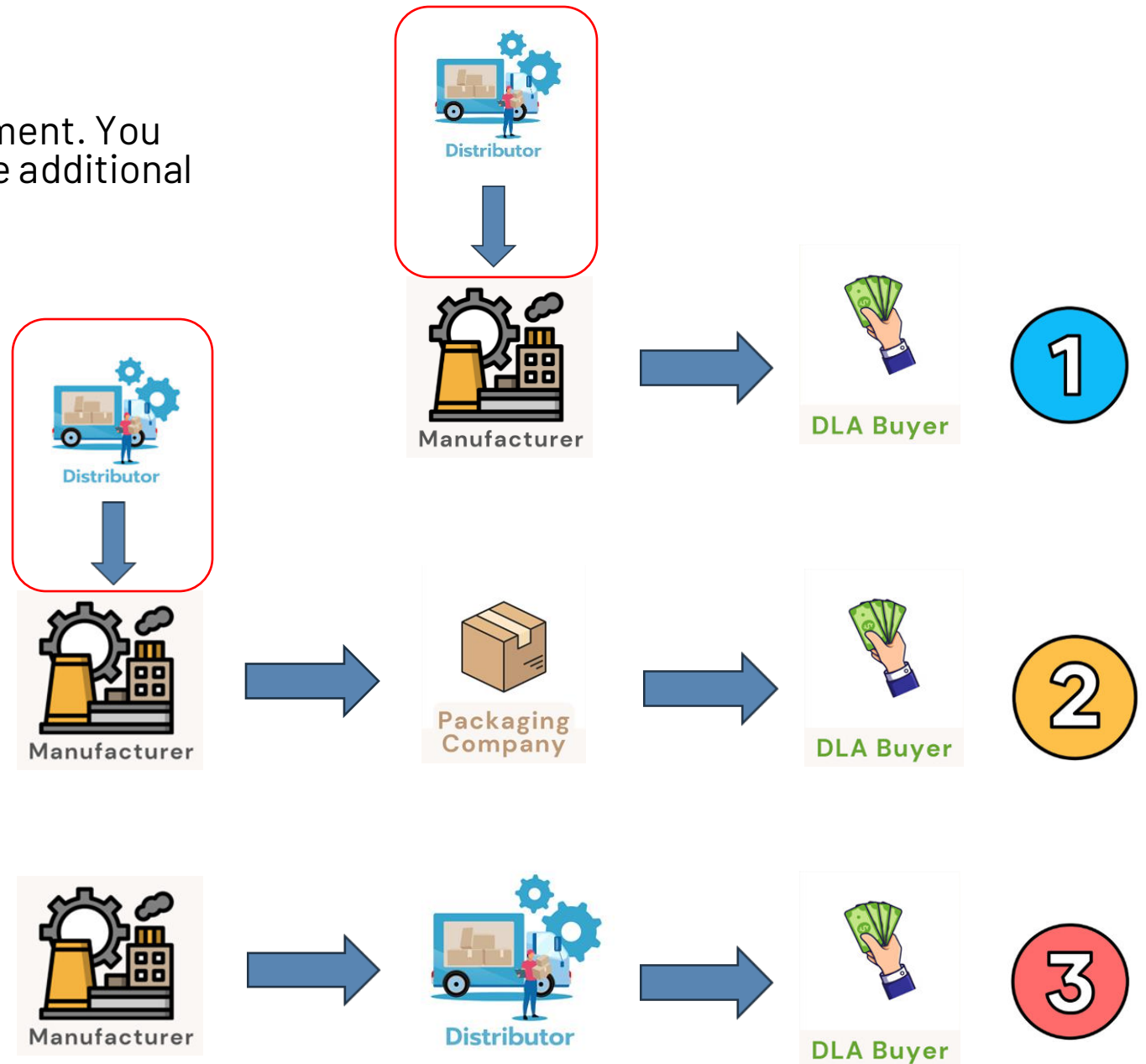
Logistics

You may have multiple touch points in your shipment. You want to minimize them as you will have to price the additional shipping into your bid.

- 1. Manufacturer as origin:** the manufacturer has the capabilities to meet the packaging requirements *(may or may not have a distributor involved)*
- Example: Commercial Packaging

- 2. Packaging company as origin:** manufacturer is unable to meet the packaging requirements *(may or may not have a distributor involved)*

- 3. Distributor as origin:** manufacturer is unable to meet the packaging requirements - there needs to be minor packaging/labelling corrections that the distributor can handle

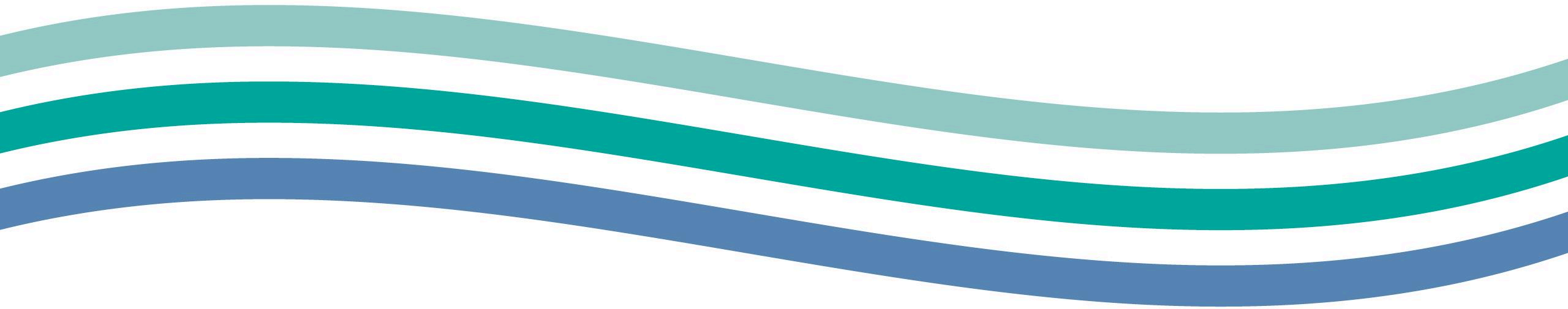


Takeaways

The goal of this presentation was to break down DIBBS into actionable steps, and to provide an practical perspective when approaching the system.

- DIBBS has a variety of robust opportunities
- Cybersecurity compliance is a required step in participation
- There are two pathways to take in DIBBS – Manufacturer or Distributor
 - Manufacturers should pursue 1G open competition solicitations with government owned tech docs
 - Distributors should pursue solicitations with approved sources
- Maintain a list of your FSCs/PSCs, NSNs, and solicitations of interest
- **Learn packaging and marking requirements inside and out before bidding on solicitations**

Resources





<https://www.dla.mil/Small-Business/Forecast-of-Contracting-Opportunities/> - DLA's small business resource page



[DLA Land & Maritime DIBBS PPTs](#) Link to SharePoint folder containing all of the DIBBS PowerPoints offered by DLA Land & Maritime TKO training



YouTube - beware of "I made millions by drop shipping in DIBBS, and you can too!" type videos. There are helpful videos showing the bid process.



Your local APEX Accelerator



DLA Land & Maritime Training, Knowledge, and Opportunities (TKO) seminars (virtual and in-person)
[DLA Training, Knowledge, and Opportunities \(TKO\) Seminar > Outreach Calendar](#)

Contacts

Cara Buckingham

WA APEX Accelerator @
Economic Alliance
Snohomish County (EASC)

425.248.4223

carab@economicalliancesc.org

Mark Johnson

WA APEX Accelerator @
Economic Alliance
Snohomish County (EASC)

425.248.4222

markj@economicalliancesc.org

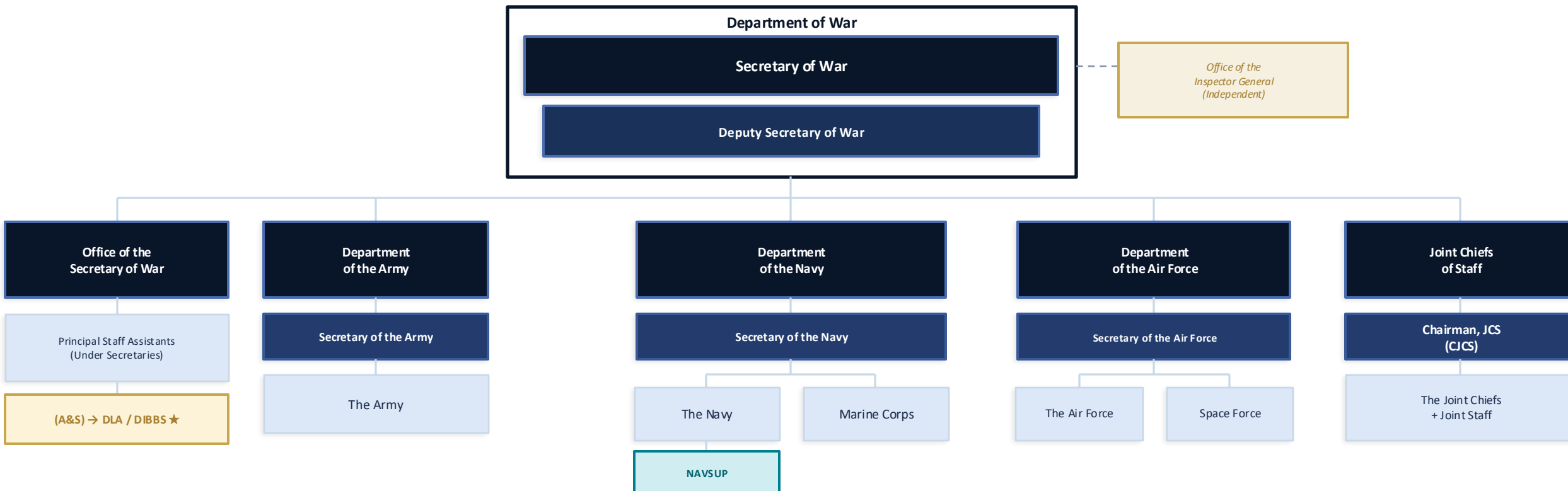
For additional training opportunities, visit
[Washington APEX Accelerator's Calendar of Events](#)



Alphabet Soup

- DIBBS – Defense Logistics Agency Internet Bid Board System
- DLA – Defense Logistics Agency
- SAM – System for Award Management
- CAGE – Commercial and Government Entity
- JCP – Joint Certification Program (eJCP)
- CMMC – Cybersecurity Maturity Model Certification
- NIST – National Institute of Science and Technology (Referencing NIST Interim cybersecurity rule)
- CUI – Controlled Unclassified Information
- FCI – Federal Contract Information
- COTS – Commercial Off the Shelf
- SRVA – Supplier Requirements Visibility Application
- SPRS – Supplier Performance Risk System
- SAR – Source Approval Request
- VSM – Vendor Shipment Module
- QUP – Quantity Unit Pack
- NSN – National Stock Number
- FSC – Federal Supply Classification
- PSC – Product Service Code

Department of War — Organizational Structure (Line-and-Block Chart)



Defense Agencies (19)	
Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency	Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency
Defense Commissary Agency	Defense Security Cooperation Agency
Defense Contract Audit Agency	Defense Security Service
Defense Contract Management Agency *	Defense Threat Reduction Agency *
Defense Finance and Accounting Service	Missile Defense Agency
Defense Health Agency *	National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency *
Defense Information Systems Agency *	National Reconnaissance Office
Defense Intelligence Agency *	National Security Agency / CSS *
Defense Legal Services Agency	Pentagon Force Protection Agency
Defense Logistics Agency * ★ (DIBBS)	

DoD Field Activities (8)
Defense Media Activity
Defense Technical Information Center
Defense Technology Security Administration
DoD Education Activity
DoD Human Resources Activity
DoD Test Resource Management Center
Office of Economic Adjustment
Washington Headquarters Services

Unified Combatant Commands (10)
U.S. Africa Command
U.S. Central Command
U.S. Cyber Command
U.S. European Command
U.S. Indo-Pacific Command
U.S. Northern Command
U.S. Southern Command
U.S. Special Operations Command
U.S. Strategic Command
U.S. Transportation Command

* Designated Combat Support Agency (CSA) per 10 USC §193. ★ = DIBBS focus — DLA operates DIBBS under USD(A&S). Overall structure established per 10 USC §111 & DoDD 5100.01.