

Procure-to-Pay Capability Summary

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SUBJECT: Unique Entity Identifier for Awardees

BACKGROUND: Federal Acquisition Regulations (FAR) have long required a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) to uniquely identify the successful offeror on a government contract action. Since the 1970s, the Federal government has used the DUNS® number, a proprietary number managed by the Dun and Bradstreet Corporation, as its UEI. As of April 4, 2022, the government stopped using the DUNS as the primary means of entity identification and transitioned to a new Government-owned UEI. Entities no longer need to go to a third-party website to obtain their identifier allowing for a more streamlined entity identification and validation process. The pervasive use of DUNS® numbers in contracting, grants, logistics, and financial business systems, processes, and policies made the transition from DUNS to UEI a significant and time-sensitive requirement.

POLICY: FAR 4.605 requires contracting officers to “identify and report a unique entity identifier for the successful offeror on a contract action.” The UEI is first captured when the entity registers in the System for Award Management (SAM). This system is mandated by FAR 4.11 as the central source of vendor information for use in contracting. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Memorandum M-03-16 mandated a UEI to identify awardees of grants and other federal assistance awards in 2003. The UEI is also the identifier used by the federal government to comply with the DATA Act, among other statutory reporting requirements.

DATA STANDARDS: The UEI is a 12-character alpha-numeric value with no special characters. The UEI is mapped to other existing entity codes such as CAGE, TIN/EIN, and previously assigned DUNS®. The business rules for the UEI are essentially the same as for the DUNS® number (e.g., unique UEIs will be assigned for different physical locations and the CAGE code assignment/maintenance processes for SAM registrations will be similar). Additional information on the transition to UEI can be found at the following link: <https://www.gsa.gov/about-us/organization/federal-acquisition-service/technology-transformation-services/integrated-award-environment-iae/iae-systems-information-kit/unique-entity-identifier-update>

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY INFRASTRUCTURE: The UEI is the primary key to identify every entity record throughout SAM, other IAE systems, and downstream Government systems. The DUNS® has been phased out. All Integrated Award Environment (IAE) systems and extracts and APIs (e.g., FPDS Atom Feed, SAM API) have been updated to include the new UEI. The assignment of the UEI is part of the SAM registration process, eliminating the need for prospective awardees to seek external identifiers in order to register.

IMPACT: DoD services/agencies successfully made the switch over to the UEI in all systems/processes. All contract writing systems as well as many downstream systems in logistics, finance, etc. now accept and transmit the UEI in place of the DUNS®. In addition, DATA Act and other Congressional reporting now include the UEI.

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