



OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

1000 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1000



DEC 23 2008

MEMORANDUM FOR: SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: Ensuring the Accessibility of Electronic and Information Technologies (E&IT) Procured by DoD Organizations

This memorandum addresses the Office of Federal Procurement Policy and the Office of E-Government and Information Technology November 2007 memorandum regarding compliance with accessibility of E&IT procured by Federal agencies. An assessment by the General Services Administration (GSA) showed that Federal agencies are not adequately incorporating accessibility standards when they develop, procure, maintain, or use E&IT.

Specifically, Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794d) requires Federal agencies to purchase E&IT that meet specific accessibility standards. The law helps to ensure that Federal employees with disabilities have access to information and data needed to perform their jobs. It also helps to ensure that members of the public with disabilities have access to government information and services. When properly implemented, Section 508 improves the accessibility of government information and data, and ensures government E&IT is accessible to Federal employees and citizens with disabilities. E&IT includes, but is not limited to, telecommunication products such as telephones; office equipment such as fax machines, printers, desktop copiers, scanners, laptops, and desktop computers; information kiosks and transactions machines; and websites and multimedia.

The Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) requires agencies to acquire accessible E&IT unless an exception applies and the requiring official provides documentation to the contracting officer for inclusion in the contract file. In accordance with FAR Subpart 39.2, agency acquisitions of E&IT supplies and services must meet the applicable accessibility standards (36 C.F.R. part 1194).

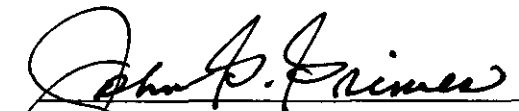
Components should review existing procurement and information technology acquisition policies and procedures to confirm that the Section 508 standards are appropriately considered and clearly stated in requirement and solicitation documents. Contracting offices should consider sampling agency procurements that include E&IT to ensure the proper incorporation of Section 508 standards. Procurements not meeting specified standards must be amended. Please ensure that IT program management and

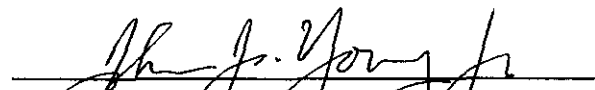


Section 508 compliance is included as a special interest item in all future Procurement Management Reviews (PMRs) or any other relevant internal oversight reviews.

Organizations can take advantage of free online training offered by GSA at <http://www.section508.gov> (click on “508 Training”). Also available is the “Buy Accessible Wizard” at <https://app.buyaccessible.gov/baw/>. This free tool guides officials through the steps necessary to conduct product and service acquisitions that are in compliance with Section 508. The tool may be incorporated into agency procurement procedures to improve compliance with the law.

Please address procurement policy questions regarding Section 508 to Ms. Susan Pollack, OUSD(AT&L)/DPAP, at 703-697-8336, susan.pollack@osd.mil. Questions regarding Section 508 policy, administration, implementation, and management may be directed to Ms. Arleen Oliver, OASD(NII)/DoD CIO, at 703-604-1489 x148, arleen.oliver@osd.mil. Your assistance in complying with the Section 508 E&IT accessibility standards is appreciated.


John G. Grimes
DoD Chief Information Officer


John J. Young, Jr.
Under Secretary of Defense (AT&L)

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