

§ 223.140

request under paragraph (c) of this section in writing within 30 working days of receipt of the reconsideration request and supporting documentation, unless the debarring official extends this period for good cause. The notice of the decision shall set forth the reasons for granting or denying the request.

[52 FR 43329, Nov. 12, 1987, as amended at 60 FR 46921, Sept. 8, 1995]

§ 223.140 Scope of debarment.

(a) *Scope in general.* (1) Debarment of a purchaser constitutes debarment of all divisions or other organizational elements of the purchaser, unless the debarment decision is limited by its terms to specific divisions, organizational elements, or classes of sales.

(2) The debarring official may extend a debarment decision to include any affiliates of the purchaser, if they are—

(i) Specifically named and

(ii) Given written notice of the proposed debarment and provided an opportunity to respond (see § 223.138(b)).

(b) *Imputing conduct.* For purposes of determining the scope of debarment, conduct may be imputed as follows:

(1) The fraudulent, criminal, or other seriously improper conduct of any officer, director, shareholder, partner, employee, or other individual associated with a purchaser may be imputed to a purchaser when the conduct occurred in connection with the individual's performance of duties for or on behalf of the purchaser, or with the purchaser's knowledge, approval, or acquiescence. The purchaser's acceptance of the benefits derived from the conduct shall be evidence of such knowledge, approval, or acquiescence.

(2) The fraudulent, criminal, or other seriously improper conduct of a purchaser may be imputed to any officer, director, shareholder, partner, employee, or other individual associated with the purchaser who participated in, knew of, or has reason to know of the purchaser's conduct.

(3) The fraudulent, criminal, or other seriously improper conduct of one purchaser participating in a joint venture or similar arrangement may be imputed to other participating purchasers if the conduct occurred for or on behalf of the joint venture or similar arrange-

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ment or with the knowledge, approval, or acquiescence of those purchasers. Acceptance of the benefits derived from the conduct shall be evidence of such knowledge, approval or acquiescence.

§ 223.141 Suspension.

(a) The suspending official may, in the public interest, suspend a purchaser on the basis of adequate evidence for any of the causes in § 223.142, using the procedures in § 223.143. However, the existence of a cause for suspension does not necessarily require that the purchaser be suspended. In making any suspension decision, the suspending official shall consider the seriousness of the purchaser's acts or omissions and any mitigating factors.

(b) Suspension is a serious action to be imposed, pending the completion of investigation or legal proceedings, when it has been determined that immediate action is necessary to protect the Government's interest. In assessing the adequacy of the evidence, consideration shall be given to how much information is available, how credible it is given the circumstances, whether or not important allegations are corroborated and what inferences can reasonably be drawn as a result. This assessment shall include an examination of basic documents such as contracts, bids, awards, inspection reports, and correspondence, as appropriate.

§ 223.142 Causes for suspension.

(a) The suspending official may suspend a purchaser suspected, upon adequate evidence, of the following:

(1) Commission of:

(i) Theft, forgery, bribery, embezzlement, falsification or destruction of records, making false statements, or receiving stolen property;

(ii) Fraud, a criminal offense, or violation of Federal or State antitrust laws, any of which occurred in connection with obtaining, attempting to obtain; or performing a public contract or subcontract; or

(iii) Any other offense indicating a lack of business integrity or business honesty that seriously and directly affects the present responsibility of a purchase of Government timber.