

unanswered request for a job status report; and

(10) All documentation relating to any collateral held by or available to the Surety.

(c) *Purpose of audit.* SBA's audit will determine, but not be limited to:

(1) The adequacy and sufficiency of the Surety's underwriting and credit analysis, its documentation of claims and claims settlement procedures and activities, and its recovery procedures and practices;

(2) The Surety's minimization of Loss, including the exercise of bond options upon Contract default; and

(3) The Surety's loss ratio in comparison with other Sureties participating in the same SBA Surety Bond Guarantee Program to a comparable degree.

(d) *Investigations.* SBA may conduct investigations to inquire into the possible violation by any Person of the Small Business Act or the Investment Act, or of any rule or regulation under those Acts, or of any order issued under those Acts, or of any Federal law relating to programs and operations of SBA.

Subpart B—Guarantees Subject to Prior Approval

§ 115.30 Submission of Surety's guarantee application.

(a) *Legal effect of application.* By submitting an application to SBA for a bond guarantee, the Prior Approval Surety certifies that the Principal meets the eligibility requirements set forth in § 115.13 and that the underwriting standards set forth in § 115.15 have been met.

(b) *SBA's determination.* SBA's approval or decline of a guarantee application is made in writing by an authorized SBA officer. The officer may provide telephone notice before the Prior Approval Surety receives SBA's guarantee approval form if the officer has already signed the form. In the event of a conflict between the telephone notice and the written form, the written form controls.

(c) *Reconsideration-appeal of SBA determination.* A Prior Approval Surety may request reconsideration of a decline from the SBA officer who made the decision. If the decision on recon-

sideration is negative, the Surety may appeal to an individual designated by the AA/SG. If the decision is again adverse, the Surety may appeal to the AA/SG, who will make the final decision.

(d) *Notice and payment to SBA.* When the Surety has Executed a Final Bond, including a Final Bond under a bonding line, the Surety must complete the Prior Approval Agreement, and submit the form, together with the Principal's payment for its guarantee fee (see § 115.32(b)) to SBA within 45 days, or in the case of a bonding line, within 15 business days (see § 115.33(d)(2)) after Execution of the bond.

§ 115.31 Guarantee percentage.

(a) *Ninety percent.* SBA reimburses a Prior Approval Surety for 90% of the Loss incurred and paid if:

(1) The total amount of the Contract at the time of Execution of the bond is \$100,000 or less; or

(2) The bond was issued on behalf of a small business owned and controlled by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals. See part 124 of this chapter for applicable definitions and criteria.

(b) *Eighty percent.* SBA reimburses a Prior Approval Surety in an amount not to exceed 80% of the Loss incurred and paid on bonds for Contracts in excess of \$100,000 which are executed on behalf of non-disadvantaged concerns.

(c) *Contract increase to over \$100,000.* If the Contract amount increases to more than \$100,000 after Execution of the bond, the guarantee percentage decreases by one percentage point for each \$5,000 of increase or part thereof, but it does not decrease below 80%. This provision applies only to guarantees which qualify under paragraph (a)(1) of this section.

(d) *Contract increase to over \$1,250,000.* If the Contract amount increases above the statutory limit of \$1,250,000 after Execution of the bond, SBA's share of the Loss is limited to that percentage of the increased Contract amount which the statutory limit represents, multiplied by the guarantee percentage approved by SBA. For example, if a Contract amount increases to \$1,375,000, SBA's share of the Loss under an 80% guarantee is limited to

72.73% [1,250,000 / 1,375,000=90.91%×80%=72.73%].

(e) *Contract decrease to \$100,000 or less.* If the Contract amount decreases to \$100,000 or less after Execution of the bond, SBA's guarantee percentage increases to 90% if the Surety provides SBA with evidence supporting the decrease and any other information or documents requested.

§ 115.32 Fees and Premiums.

(a) *Surety's Premium.* A Prior Approval Surety must not charge a Principal an amount greater than that authorized by the appropriate insurance department. The Surety must not require the Principal to purchase casualty or other insurance or any other services from the Surety or any Affiliate or agent of the Surety. The Surety must not charge non-Premium fees to a Principal unless the Surety performs other services for the Principal, the additional fee is permitted by State law, and the Principal agrees to the fee.

(b) *SBA charge to Principal.* SBA does not charge Principals application or Bid Bond guarantee fees. If SBA guarantees a Final Bond, the Principal must pay a guarantee fee equal to a certain percentage of the Contract amount. The percentage is determined by SBA and is published in Notices in the FEDERAL REGISTER from time to time. The Principal's fee is rounded to the nearest dollar and is to be remitted to SBA by the Surety together with the form required under § 115.30(d). See paragraph (d) of this section for additional requirements when the Contract amount changes.

(c) *SBA charge to Surety.* SBA does not charge Sureties application or Bid Bond guarantee fees. Subject to § 115.18(a)(4), the Surety must pay SBA a guarantee fee on each guaranteed bond (other than a Bid Bond) in the ordinary course of business. The fee is a certain percentage of the bond Premium, determined by SBA and published in Notices in the FEDERAL REGISTER from time to time. The fee is rounded to the nearest dollar. SBA does not receive any portion of a Surety's non-Premium charges. See paragraph (d) of this section for additional requirements when the bond amount or the Contract amount changes.

(d) *Contract or bond increases/decreases—(1) Notification and approval.* The Prior Approval Surety must notify SBA of any increases or decreases in the Contract or bond amount that aggregate 25% or \$50,000, as soon as the Surety acquires knowledge of the change. Whenever the original bond amount increases as a result of a single change order of at least 25% or \$50,000, the prior written approval of such increase by SBA is required on a supplemental Prior Approval Agreement (Supplemental Form 990) and is conditioned upon payment by the Surety of the increase in the Principal's guarantee fee as set forth in paragraph (d)(2) of this section.

(2) *Increases; fees.* Notification of increases in the Contract or bond amount under this paragraph (d) must be accompanied by payment of the increase in the Principal's guarantee fee computed on the increase in the Contract amount. If the increase in the Principal's fee is less than \$40, such increase is not due until all unpaid increases in the Principal's fee aggregate at least \$40. The Surety's check for payment of the increase in the Surety's guarantee fee, computed on the increase in the bond Premium, may be submitted in the ordinary course of business. Increases in the Surety's fee are not due until they aggregate at least \$40.

(3) *Decreases; refunds.* Whenever SBA is notified of a decrease in the Contract or bond amount, SBA will refund to the Principal a proportionate amount of the Principal's guarantee fee and rebate to the Surety a proportionate amount of SBA's Premium share in the ordinary course of business. If the amount to be refunded or rebated is less than \$40, such refund or rebate will not be made until the amounts to be refunded or rebated, respectively, aggregate at least \$40. Upon receipt of the refund, the Surety must promptly pay a proportionate amount of its Premium to the Principal.

§ 115.33 Surety bonding line.

A surety bonding line is a written commitment by SBA to a Prior Approval Surety which provides for the Surety's Execution of multiple bonds for a specified small business strictly