**FedMall Design:**

**1) “The Coalition recommends that DLA address issues in FedMall’s design that have hampered vendors from successfully transitioning to the new portal. For instance, vendors report that: the FedMall system’s “error function” does not always function properly. At times, it improperly identifies the absence of a certification or registration. Consequently, vendors, who already hold the necessary certification or registration identified as absent by FedMall, spend considerable time and resources trying to reobtain certifications or registrations that they already possess.”**

There are two FedMall (FM) design issues the team has been working diligently to resolve. First, some suppliers reported they were not able to authenticate to the Supplier Portal using their certificate. As a result, the Supplier Portal only recognized a narrow set of valid certificate authorities (CAs) when FM went live. Since that time, the set of CAs has been expanded dramatically, allowing users with additional credentials to access the system.

In addition, some users saw an "MDM error" message during registration and catalog upload within the Supplier Portal. This error was the result of excessive demand on the system and a large backlog of queued processes. The FedMall team performed additional maintenance to the hardware environment to support increased performance and expects the majority of the "MDM error" related issues to subside once the data load is complete and the system achieves its steady state of performance. The data load completion was completed on August 30, 2017.

**2) “When vendors receive an order, the search function does not provide the capability necessary to identify who the customer is, what they ordered, and where it needs to be shipped.”**

Outbound orders from FedMall are transmitted to suppliers in one of four ways, which is dependent upon the contract and supplier preference: Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) 850, commerce eXtensible Markup Language (cXML), secure email [Pretty Good Privacy (PGP)], and 511R requisitions [Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) FedMall Contracts]. Orders from the DLA Contracts are required to be submitted to the DLA Enterprise Business System (EBS) for processing. Regardless of the delivery method, orders submitted from FedMall contain the following information: Buyer Phone, Buyer Email, Ship to Address, and Mark for Address.

However, the DLA Contract 511R transactions that are routed through EBS generate an EDI 850 transaction to the supplier. The EBS generated file includes Ship to Address, but only designates "EMALL Contracting Office" as the buyer. This issue was present in DOD EMALL but was mitigated because DOD EMALL allowed for the transmission of non-secure email. DLA is working to provide the same level of information for DLA contract orders to provide the information previously sent to suppliers.

**3) “Due to the absence or malfunction of the contract minimum order function of the FedMall system, vendors are receiving orders below their contract minimum order threshold. This places vendors in an untenable position where they must either risk damaging their relationship with Federal customers or lose substantial money fulfilling orders below their minimum order threshold.”**

This capability was not available at the initial deployment FedMall and was identified as a priority issue to resolve. The minimum order quantity was implemented in FedMall on August 4, 2017 so suppliers can now stipulate their minimum order quantity.

**4) “The format for images on FedMall is unique to the portal and unlike any similar format used in the commercial space. This process is unnecessarily complicated and burdensome for vendors. Moreover, by restricting vendors from uploading images until after their catalog is uploaded, it further protracts the catalog upload process, which currently takes weeks, if not months.”**

Due to the larger than normal size of the files with the included images, the decision was made to upload the catalog and the images separately for faster processing.

Based on the current issues and the multiple actions needed to upload separate images for each item, DLA will explore the capability for suppliers to upload their catalog data files and associated images at the same time.

**Vendors are Unable to Access Critical Information:**

**“The Coalition recommends that DLA address the quality of assistance available through the FedMall Help Desk, which so far has hampered the ability of vendors to receive the support they need. Specifically, obtaining critical information regarding FedMall can be very challenging for vendors. For instance, one vendor reported that when they contacted the FedMall Help Desk for information on an issue, the help desk was unable to even log into FedMall to access the information. Overall, vendors report that, if they do receive a response to their inquiry, it often takes a protracted period of time.”**

In response to the suppliers’ issues with the FedMall Help Desk, the FM Program Office has taken the following measures to provide access to and communicate critical information:

1. Host Supplier Town Halls twice a week to review critical issues reported to the program office and field questions from suppliers. We also share resolutions to reported problems as well. All questions and information discussed in the town hall are also published to the frequently asked questions section on the FedMall Homepage at <https://www.fedmall.mil/> and the FedMall Public Information page at: <http://www.dla.mil/Info/FedMall/>.
2. Established a FedMall Vendor Support email (fedmallvendors@dla.mil) for suppliers to report issues.
3. Provided access to quick start guides on the FedMall Supplier Portal, which provides instructions on how to register and upload catalogs as well as the validation rules for catalogs. These documents are also available on the FedMall homepage and DLA Public Information page (websites listed in #1above).
4. Provides the following information for navigation, ordering assistance, and/or procedural issues to contact:

Customer Interaction Center at:

Toll Free: 1-877-352-2255

DSN CONUS/OCONUS: 877-352-2255

 Email: dlacontactcenter@dla.mil

**DLA Should Extend Vendor’s Contracts to Compensate for Lost Opportunities:**

**“The Coalition recommends that DLA extend all current DOD EMALL participants contracts for one year to compensate for their lost business incurred during the transition to the FedMall portal. To date, no Coalition member has successfully completed the transition to FedMall. Although there have been instances where a vendor has gotten a few items onto the portal, they do not report sales commensurate to the levels typical of this time of year. Indeed, the fourth quarter is a unique and significant business opportunity for Federal contractors. For many vendors, especially small business vendors, the diminution of this business associated with the FedMall transition threatens their long- term viability as suppliers for DOD customers and the warfighter. If vendors cannot recoup this lost business, and thus are forced out of the FedMall marketplace, DOD customers will realize increased prices as a result of reduced competition. Considering the timing of the FedMall transition, and its significant impact for vendors and DoD customers, the Coalition believes that DLA should extend vendors contractual obligations by one year to compensate for their lost business associated with the transition.”**

DLA acknowledges that this time of year is very important to the supplier community and is working diligently to bring all catalogs online so that orders can be processed prior to the end of the fiscal year.

DLA plans to review each supplier's contract for potential extensions or sole source awards prior to its expiration. However, DLA will need to ensure that any action taken to mitigate the supplier's forfeitures during these past few months is legal and does not violate any Government regulations. Any requests for a contract extension should be based on the actual amount of time that the supplier's catalog was offline and made through their DLA Administrative Contracting Officer.

**AbilityOne Program:**

**“The Coalition recommends that DLA ensure the inclusion of all applicable Federal regulations related to the AbilityOne Program as part of the further development of FedMall and the FedMall Marketplace. In particular, DLA should address concerns related to Essentially the Same (“ETS”) compliance, pricing, and performance consistent with the Javits-Wagner-O’Day (“JWOD”) Act.”**

DPAP has been working with AbilityOne (AO) and the National Industries for the Blind (NIB) for over two years regarding Essentially the Same (ETS) items. AbilityOne is responsible for implementing its own authorities and policies. The FAR applies to all federal executive agencies so unless the policy at issue is one that is applicable to procurement on a federal executive agency-wide basis DOD is not authorized to implement this policy.

In FedMall and the FedMall MarketPlace we have taken the following steps to point customers in the right direction when it comes to buying AO items:

1. AO items are clearly identified by the AO icon.
2. AO items are ranked in accordance with FAR 8.702 Purchase Priorities. Meaning those items are listed in the priority order and all other supplier items are randomly rotated and fall after them.
3. Customers can refine their search to just AO items.
4. Suppliers are required to read and “sign” the *Vendor Selling Agreement for MarketPlace Phase I.* If electronic acceptance is not marked, the supplier cannot register in the MarketPlace.In doing so, they acknowledge that “Only Authorized AbilityOne vendors are permitted to sell mandatory source items (reference FAR 8.700, 8.703 and 8.704).” Additionally, the AO mandatory Procurement List web address is provided for customer convenience.

**Industry Day:**

**“In addition, the Coalition requests that Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy (“DPAP”), in coordination with DLA, host an in-person Industry Day to discuss the FedMall transition with industry stakeholders. Specifically, the Coalition requests that DPAP and DLA provide additional details regarding the feedback they have received to date related to the transitions, as well as actions underway to address concerns and ensure a successful FedMall portal.”**

DPAP plans to hold in-person Industry Day that has been announced in the Federal Register. Due to the required 30-day public notice prior to the meeting being held and available venues, the meeting will be held October 16, 2017 at the DLA Headquarters on Fort Belvoir in Virginia. At that time, DPAP and DLA will be open to all comments and concerns. Additionally, we will provide suppliers with information on any outstanding issues, system improvements, and/or updates to FedMall.