

# **Fiber Rope, Cordage, Twine and Tape Qualified Suppliers List for Manufacturers (QSLM)**

## ***Criteria and Provisions***

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### **PREFACE**

The DLA Troop Support Construction & Equipment Supply chain, in conjunction with the DLA Troop Support Industrial Hardware Supply chain, has instituted a Qualified Suppliers List for Manufacturers (QSLM) of Fiber Rope, Cordage, Twine, & Tape. The purpose of this QSLM Program is to establish and maintain a list of pre-qualified sources for certain fully competitive products which are purchased and managed by DLA. The Criteria for qualification are tailored along the lines of best commercial business practices. This document contains the Criteria and Provisions for the Program. The technical requirements of the program are contained in Section 3.0, Criteria, and the administrative procedures are contained in Section 4.0, Provisions.

All Manufacturers who wish to participate in this QSLM Program must have an assigned Commercial and Government Entity (CAGE) Code and become QSLM qualified. CAGE Codes may be requested online from <http://www.sam.gov>. To become qualified, a candidate Manufacturer must satisfy Section 3.0, Criteria, and comply with Section 4.0, Provisions. Qualification is valid for 3 years unless terminated or revoked. There is no fee to apply or to become qualified.

Only QSL listed Distributors and Manufacturers will receive awards solicited under this program. Items purchased under the QSLM program will be identified in the Purchase Order Text (POT). Once qualified, and listed as a source on the QSLM, the Manufacturer will be required to adhere to contractual clauses and procurement provisions with the responsible DLA buying office.

The QSLM Program application forms, criteria and provisions are published and maintained by the Engineering Logistics Support QSL Office of the DLA Troop Support Industrial Hardware Supply chain here in Philadelphia. QSL correspondence may be sent via email to [trpsptqsl@dla.mil](mailto:trpsptqsl@dla.mil) or mail addressed to:

*DLA Troop Support, Industrial Hardware  
ATTN: QSL Office (NASA)  
700 Robbins Ave. Bldg 6D-139  
Philadelphia, PA 19111-5096*

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

1.1 Qualification for placement on the Qualified Suppliers List for Manufacturers (QSLM), and the maintenance of QSLM status, requires the Manufacturer to demonstrate that it has in place, and uses on a routine basis, a Quality Program that meets the criteria set forth in this document. The objective of the QSLM Program is to ensure that the Manufacturer routinely controls his processes to provide consistent delivery of products that conform to contract and specification requirements. Three key elements are required of Manufacturers who wish to be listed on the QSLM. These are:

- a. Evidence of using a documented Quality Control Program which meets the QSLM criteria.
- b. Evidence that product is fully traceable; raw material must also be traceable.
- c. Products manufactured by a QSLM prior to their qualification date may not be sold to another QSL participant for the purpose of supplying a QSL contract, nor may the QSLM use such product themselves to supply a QSL contract.

## **2.0 SCOPE**

The products that DLA's procures which are included in this program are fully competitive items which fall into the Federal Supply Class of 4020.

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## **3.0 CRITERIA**

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### ***3.1 MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITY***

3.1.1 The Manufacturer shall be responsible for establishing, implementing and maintaining an organizational Quality Control (QC) Program. The Quality Control program shall be documented by written policies, procedures, processes and instructions which meet the QSLM criteria for qualification, and which are contained in a Quality Manual. Further, the manufacturer's executive management shall ensure that the Quality Control program is:

- a. under the control of the manufacturer whose Commercial and Government Entity (CAGE) Code is identified for the location specified on the Application for Qualification. Each location from which product will be supplied must have a unique CAGE code, and must qualify under the QSLM.
- b. applied consistently, on a day-to-day basis, regardless of customer. The QC program is generally required have been in-place at least eighteen (18) months prior to applying to the QSL program.

c. reviewed periodically, and that any substantive revisions in the policies, procedures, processes or instructions of the Quality Control program are implemented by formal revisions to the Quality Manual, a copy of which shall be furnished to the QSL Office.

d. implemented and applied on all levels and by all personnel throughout the manufacturer's business operations.

3.1.2 Quality Control Policy Statement - The manufacturer's executive management shall develop and provide, in the QC manual, a written and signed statement of policy regarding Quality Control. This QC policy statement shall establish the resolve of the organization to provide quality products and to follow quality procedures.

### 3.1.3 Quality Control Functions:

a. Independent Function - The manufacturer's QC organization shall be established and operated independently from the functions of producing, processing or selling the product. Those personnel performing QC functions shall not be subject to the supervision or control of anyone engaged in the production, processing, or sale of the product. The QC function shall include, but not necessarily be limited to:

1. inspecting and checking.
2. auditing.
3. review of test procedures and test results.
4. collecting and recording data.
5. identifying problems and trends.
6. verifying that corrective actions have been implemented.
7. suspending shipments when non-conformance has been revealed.

b. Delegation of QC Authority - When QC is delegated to personnel who are outside the executive management of the organization, the delegation must empower those delegated the QC function to implement fully the organization's quality program. This delegation must include sufficient stature, authority, and organizational freedom to conduct the program.

c. Organizational Chart - The manufacturer's QSLM Application must include an organizational chart which clearly sets out the organizational structure, functional responsibilities, and lines of communication within the organization. The chart shall include the names of key personnel at every level. A copy of the chart shall be resubmitted to the QSL Office whenever it is revised.

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## **3.2 DOCUMENT CONTROL**

3.2.1 The manufacturer shall establish and maintain a document control system which ensures that:

- a. appropriate documents are available at the location where the particular function of the business operation is performed.
  - b. only current or applicable drawings, electronic data, specifications, standards and work instructions are found in operating areas.
  - c. review, modification, approval, revision, issuance and recall of documents occur in a practical and timely fashion.
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### **3.3 PURCHASING**

3.3.1 The manufacturer shall have written procedures in-place and in-use, which describe that all purchased materials conform to customer's documented procurement requirements. Thus, written procedures shall exist to ensure that the following criteria are met:

- a. The manufacturer's QC personnel shall review all purchase orders prior to issuance, and indicate acceptance by initial, signature, or stamp.
- b. Purchase documents flowing from Manufacturer to its source for materials or products shall include express requirements for fully traceable invoices and Certificates of compliance or other original test reports that meet the requirements of Section 3.4.
- c. Manufacturer must meet all contract requirements, e.g. 100% NDT testing. Moreover, such supplemental requirements must be evident in traceability record documentation.

3.3.2 Manufacturer shall have in-place and in-use, a documented vendor selection methodology supported by its Quality Program. This written procedure shall delineate the method by which the manufacturer establishes and maintains a list of approved vendors, including review of vendor performance, quality audits, and corrective action requirements imposed on vendors.

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### **3.4 PRODUCT TRACEABILITY**

3.4.1 Manufacturer Traceability - The Manufacturer shall identify its product by inserting a marker tape, colored tracer filament, or other unique marking, as required by DLA contract or specification. The tracer filament color code shall be unique to that manufacturer. Product supplied under the QSL must be traceable to a Qualified source. Sources are qualified, under the QSL program, on the basis of verification of adequate process controls. Sources may be qualified by the QSL Office in conjunction with the Defense Contract Management Command (DCMC) through site visitations or by virtue of recent verifiable OEM surveys/audits.

Specifically, products from sources qualified as a result of QSL Office/DCMA site visits are acceptable upon QSL Office notification of qualification. Whereas, product from sources qualified on the basis of OEM surveys/audits are acceptable after the date of the OEM certification or accreditation.

### 3.4.2 Material and End Product Traceability

a. The manufacturer must maintain a system of in-house traceability records which reflects an unbroken chain of documentation from the original raw material producer to the manufacturer's customer, regardless of the number of entities through which the materials or end product have passed. As a minimum, the documentation trail should include manufacturer's Purchase Order (PO) to its immediate vendor pursuant to DLA's contract or order with manufacturer, in addition to each and every PO from manufacturer's immediate vendor through the actual Manufacturer or raw material source, for the material or end product. There shall be a control number which connects and identifies the raw material through all processes to the end product. This traceability may be identifiable by lot number, batch number, or purchase order number, and may be combined with the date of manufacture. Neither the date of manufacture nor the raw material merge number alone is acceptable for traceability.

b. Raw material traceability and test documentation must be secured and kept on file. Accordingly, these reports must be record-controlled in accordance with the following rationale. If you are a Manufacturer who:

1. buys raw material directly from a textile producer, you must obtain and retain a true copy of the original test report (or the original certification of analysis). This certification must show traceability to your (the Manufacturer's) purchase order number. The textile producer, here, is the entity that produces the fiber, polymer, yarns, or other raw material.
2. buys raw material directly from a textile processor, and if you cannot obtain the original test report, you may accept the textile supplier/processor's test report or their certificate of conformance (or compliance), which documents the material's specifications, provided that this documentation unequivocally identifies the original raw material producer and the lot number of the pre-processed material. Again, this certification must show traceability to your (the Manufacturer's) purchase order number, and emulate that described in 3.4.2b. An example of a textile processor is a 'twist shop'.
3. supplies material for which a certification described in 3.4.2b(1) or 3.4.2b(2) is not available, or when you provide material from a previous revision to the material specification, you may provide an "Accredited Laboratory Test Report" to satisfy this product traceability requirement. This laboratory may be an "in" or "out" of house laboratory. This laboratory must have been approved by a nationally recognized accreditation institution; and the test report must be on

the laboratory's company letterhead stationery. Again, this accredited laboratory test report must be similar to, and emulate that described in 3.4.2b.

4. buys product from a distributor on the QSLD, or from a manufacturer on the QSLM, you must fulfill the "Material and End Product Traceability" requirements as well as meeting all criteria elements. Procurement of products from another QSL source, such as a distributor or another manufacturer, does not provide you relief from fulfilling the responsibilities of the QSLM criteria and provision requirements.

3.4.3 Unacceptable Traceability Methods - The following items are unsatisfactory and unacceptable traceability methods:

- a. Handwritten - Test Reports, Material Certification Reports, certificates of analysis, certificates of compliance/conformance, or Accredited Laboratory Test Reports.
- b. Modified or revised material certifications, unless those certifications were modified, revised and recorded by the organization which provided the original certification.
- c. Verbal purchase orders and/or reports.

3.4.4 Product traceability attributes which may be used as a means to establish traceability include, but are not limited to the following:

- a. Purchase order numbers and end product description.
- b. Chemical content, where applicable.
- c. Physical, dimensional, quantity, grade, and type information.
- d. Where applicable, stamps, tags, labels, paint, routing cards, or other means.

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### **3.5 LOT CONTROL AND MARKING**

3.5.1 Lot identification shall be maintained. The manufacturer shall document and implement a system:

- a. that marks, identifies, and tags all products by lot. There must be a documented connection between raw material control numbers and the lot numbers of end products that come from a particular lot of raw material. Tags shall indicate the documented connection.
  - b. which provides to DLA and/or DLA's customer, the QSL Manufacturer's certificate of conformance/compliance, test reports, and material certifications for each lot of product, at the time of product delivery.
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### **3.6 PROCESS CONTROL**

3.6.1 General - The manufacturer must establish, implement and maintain process controls which include:

a. procedures which will maintain the integrity and traceability of the product by providing for the transfer of identification markings (tags, labels, filaments, etc.) or traceability documentation from portions of a product which are cut or otherwise severed from the whole to the unmarked remnants.

b. the assignment of certified, trained or otherwise qualified personnel to each production or handling process.

c. clear and complete written instructions regarding inspections required for any processes which are subcontracted.

d. readily accessible, clear and current instructions, with checklists, for personnel who handle or process materials or end products. The instructions shall be located at the work area where the task or function is being performed. The organization's QC monitor shall be responsible for ensuring compliance with the instructions and shall conduct periodic audits to maintain conformity.

3.6.2 In-Process Control - Current work instructions shall exist per section 3.2 (Document Control).

a. Controls shall be instituted and implemented in accordance with documented production plans applicable to the operation(s) being conducted. Product shall be checked at specific processing stations to ensure that the specification requirements are in fact being accomplished.

b. Process control records shall include, at a minimum, inspector and/or data record information, lot identification, observation results, acceptability of product and corrective action taken.

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### **3.7 INSPECTION OF MATERIAL**

3.7.1 The manufacturer shall have in-place and in-use, written inspection/conformance verification procedures for all original materials or products from receipt of the goods through delivery of the product.

3.7.2 Manufacturer's written inspection system shall include procedures that will ensure that incoming materials or products are inspected upon receipt, and that conformance to contract

and specification requirements will be verified prior to their use or processing. Inspection results shall be formally dated and recorded including authorizing initials or stamps. This inspection record shall be traceable to the material inspected and the individual who performed the inspection.

a. Without exception, certificates of compliance/conformance or original test reports shall be checked 100% against customer purchase order (contract) requirements.

b. Verification testing of raw material and of end product samples shall be performed, with the results recorded and maintained.

c. During inspection all incoming materials or products shall be physically marked or tagged to ensure that non-conforming materials or products are not placed into the manufacturer's system for processing or distribution.

d. Receiving inspection, at a minimum, shall include and verify product conformance to requirements through visual examination of quantity, type, size, finish, part or specification number, logo, and general workmanship.

3.7.3 Manufacturer shall have in-place and in-use, a system of internal controls which regulates or maintains the security of inspection stamps, inspection tags, routing cards and other devices essential to the carrying out of quality control procedures.

3.7.4 Inventory obtained from buyout of a QSL company must undergo re-inspection prior to sale.

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### **3.8 TEST CONTROL**

3.8.1 Manufacturer shall have in-place and in-use, written instructions and procedures related to any testing required by contract or relevant specifications, when applicable.

a. Tests shall be performed by qualified/certified QC personnel, who shall use relevant specifications or other appropriate test methods and instrumentation under prescribed or otherwise appropriate environmental conditions.

b. Test results shall be evaluated, clearly documented, and traceable to the material and product lot tested.

c. Tests performed outside of the manufacturer's facility shall be performed by qualified test laboratories with the above criteria being applicable. Test laboratories shall be selected, approved, and monitored in accordance with paragraph 3.3.2 relating to the vendor selection system.

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### **3.9 TEST & MEASUREMENT EQUIPMENT**

3.9.1 Manufacturer shall have in-place and in-use, a system for the control, maintenance and calibration of its inspection equipment, test equipment, gages, and other measuring devices, including personal equipment.

3.9.2 Inspection and test equipment shall be calibrated on a routine basis in accordance with standards traceable to the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST).

a. Calibration records shall be maintained for all inspection and test equipment. All measuring, inspection, and test equipment shall be uniquely identified and labeled/tagged. Identification and labeling shall indicate the date of last calibration and the date for the next scheduled calibration.

b. Written procedures and controls shall be formulated to ensure that inspection and test equipment which is overdue for calibration is not used. Such equipment should be withdrawn from use until calibration has taken place.

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### **3.10 NON-CONFORMING MATERIAL & CORRECTIVE ACTION**

#### **3.10.1 Non-Conforming Material**

a. The manufacturer shall establish and maintain documented procedures to ensure that non-conforming product or material is prevented from entering or continuing in the distribution, production, or manufacturing process. Accordingly, the manufacturer shall:

(1) identify, document and segregate non-conforming material.

(2) provide a readily identifiable and adequate holding area for the segregation of non-conforming material. Non-conforming material must not be intermingled with conforming material.

(3) provide and apply effective controls to ensure that corrective action(s) are taken to preclude the recurrence of the circumstance which caused the non-conformance.

#### **3.10.2 Corrective Action**

a. The manufacturer shall describe, document and implement a corrective action system.

b. Processes or procedures resulting in non-conformance shall be documented, recorded, reported to management and promptly corrected.

c. The manufacturer shall have a system in place to notify all customers of any defective products. Provisions shall be in-place for a total product recall, if necessary.

d. There shall be a system procedure which specifically delineates responsibilities for items such as discrepancy reports, tracking logs, investigation results, follow-up actions and resolutions.

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### **3.11 STORAGE, PACKAGING & SHIPPING**

3.11.1 Storage - The manufacturer's system shall provide for control of the storage environment. A system shall be in place, and used to preclude deterioration of material or finished product. The Manufacturer shall ensure that product meets shelf life specification requirements.

a. Products which have a shelf-life by contract and/or product specification requirement, shall be stored in accordance with a documented system to control shelf time. This must include, but is not limited to, identification which specifies the date of manufacture.

3.11.2 Packaging - Manufacturer's system shall provide for the control of the packaging process to ensure compliance with specified requirements. In-place process controls must extend to any subcontracted and/or off-site packaging services while remaining under the authority, responsibility and quality control of the Manufacturer. Process controls must provide for continuing preservation of product, and must ensure the maintenance of product identity at all times. Only vendors approved and audited under Criteria paragraphs 3.3.2 and 3.13.3 may be used.

3.11.3 Shipping - The manufacturer's system must provide for shipment of the finished product from the manufacturer's QSLM facility to the packager or the consignee.

a. Manufacturer shall select carriers for transportation of products in accordance with the criteria pertaining to its approved vendor selection system.

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### **3.12 RECORDS CONTROL**

3.12.1 Manufacturer shall have in-place and in-use, a system by which pertinent records are established, identified, maintained, controlled and secured to ensure their integrity. All such records shall be legible, identifiable, and readily available at the manufacturer's facility or site that is QSLM qualified under these Criteria and Provisions. If such records are maintained in electronic or computer media, they shall be retrievable and capable of being reduced to printed form at the manufacturer's facility or site that is QSLM qualified. All records shall be made available to DLA-authorized Government representatives for verification purposes consistent with the Criteria and Provisions of this document.

3.12.2 The manufacturer shall maintain, for at least 6 years, the following categories of records as part of his quality records system. The items below marked with "(\*\*\*)" are required to be retained for only 3 years.

- a. Raw Material (textile) Test reports.
- b. Raw Material (textile) Processor Certified Test reports.
- c. Accredited Lab Test reports.
- d. Inspection results and/or reports.
- e. Certificates of conformance/compliance.
- f. Customer orders, contracts, delivery orders, purchase orders.
- g. Invoicing and receiving documents.
- h. Non-conforming material and corrective actions, including recall actions and customer notifications and responses.
- i. Manufacturing and Production Records including lot identification.
- j. Calibration documents. (\*\*\*)
- k. Internal & external Audit documentation. (\*\*\*)
- l. Personnel qualification records. (\*\*\*)

3.12.3 The manufacturer's records system shall include provisions and controls to ensure that the integrity of paper and electronic records is not compromised. Security measures are required to protect authenticity of material certifications and test reports, and to prevent the loss, deterioration, and unauthorized use, alteration, copying, counterfeiting, or distribution of such documents.

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### **3.13 AUDITS**

3.13.1 The manufacturer shall have in-place and in-use, a documented system for planned, periodic self-audits and auditing of manufacturer's vendors. This system shall be designed and executed to ensure and verify that the quality control program is adequate and effective to meet the criteria of this QSLM program. Audits shall be conducted as often as appropriate based on the nature of manufacturer's products. It is recommended that such internal audits be conducted at least annually.

#### **3.13.2 Internal**

- a. Internal audits shall be performed by qualified personnel whose job responsibilities are independent from those personnel having direct responsibility for the process being audited.
- b. Audit results shall be recorded and shall be reviewed by management. The audit records shall indicate the date and scope of the audit, together with findings and corrective action taken.
- c. Corrective action pursuant to audit reports shall be fully documented.

### 3.13.3 External

a. External audits shall be conducted on all of the manufacturer's vendors and processors in accordance with a documented Quality Control procedure. Also:

(1) Audits shall be conducted on subcontractors and an approved subcontractor list shall be maintained. On-site audits of subcontractor facilities shall be conducted at appropriate intervals.

(2) A documented vendor selection system shall be in place which ensures that only approved subcontractors are solicited and that products or processes, which are subcontracted, conform to specification requirements. Vendor selection methodology must be in accordance with paragraph 3.3.2.

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## **3.14 PERSONNEL TRAINING**

3.14.1 Management shall establish and maintain documented procedures for identifying training needs and provide for the training of all personnel. Personnel performing specific assigned tasks shall be qualified on the basis of relevant education, training and/or experience, as required. Appropriate records of training shall be maintained.

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## **3.15 PRODUCTS**

3.15.1 Manufacturing Capability - In order to be classified as a Manufacturer under this QSLM Program, participants should perform a majority of the fabrication process in-house.

### 3.15.2 Purchased

a. From the manufacturer of the product, through any and all distributors and/or suppliers, those products sold to DLA under this QSLM program must flow through valid qualified QSLM/QSLD organizations. This product flow extends from the organization selling the product to DLA through each and every previous organization which had ownership of the product back to the original manufacturer. No exceptions are permitted under this QSL program. Sources may be qualified by the QSL Office in conjunction with the Defense Contract Management Agency (DCMA) through site visitations or by virtue of recent verifiable OEM surveys/audits. Specifically, product from sources qualified as a result of QSL Office/DCMA site visits are acceptable upon QSL Office notification of qualification. Whereas, product from sources qualified on the basis of OEM surveys/audits are acceptable after the date of the OEM certification or accreditation. Refer to manufacturer Obligations, paragraph 4.3.2e.

b. Products manufactured by a QSLM prior to their qualification date may not be sold to a QSLD for the purpose of supplying a QSL contract, nor may the QSLM use such product themselves to supply a QSL contract. Product from sources qualified on the basis of OEM surveys/audits are acceptable after the date of the OEM certification or accreditation (such as ISO 9002 approval). Refer to manufacturer Obligations, paragraph 4.3.2e.

b. Should these requirements of 3.15.2 be waived by the DLA contracting officer, then the product granted the waiver is considered a non-QSLM procured product and must undergo traditional quality control procedures, for example, source inspection.

3.15.3 Delivered - The manufacturer shall verify that products, prior to delivery, meet all contractual and specification requirements ordered by the customer.

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## 4.0 PROVISIONS

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### **4.1 QUALIFICATION**

4.1.1 Program Objective - The objective of the QSLM Program is to establish and maintain a list of pre-qualified manufacturers whose regular use of in-place process controls is designed to ensure delivery of quality products which meet specified requirements. The ultimate goals are to improve quality control by rigid process controls and reduce product delivery lead times. Under this Program, source inspection of individual contracts is replaced by accepted commercial business practices including post award surveillance for QSLM listed concerns.

4.1.2 To obtain and maintain QSLM status, the manufacturer must comply with both the Criteria of Section 3.0 and the Provisions of Section 4.0 of this document.

4.1.3 Being listed as a QSLM manufacturer does not guarantee award of contracts to anyone. Contract award is by open competition among qualified distributors and manufacturers.

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### **4.2 GENERAL PROVISIONS**

4.2.1 The manufacturer must:

a. have in-place, maintain and use a Quality Program which satisfies all of the Criteria set forth in this document. A copy of manufacturer's current Quality Program manual, reflecting its compliance with the Criteria and Provisions for QSLM qualification, must be provided to The

QSL Office with the completed Application for Qualification. Any and all revisions to the Manual must be furnished to The QSL Office within 15 days of the date of the revision.

b. maintain a single Quality Control Program; and use a single Quality Control Manual for both its Government business and commercial business.

c. possess a Commercial and Government Entity (CAGE) code.

d. submit its Application for QSLM Requalification to the QSL Office at least 120 days prior to expiration of its current qualification.

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### **4.3 OBLIGATIONS**

4.3.1 Government - The QSL Office will serve as the single Department of Defense (DOD) focal point to consolidate findings and recommend corrective actions for QSLM problems. The QSL Office will:

a. process applications.

b. qualify and requalify Manufacturers.

c. maintain the Qualified Suppliers List for Manufacturers.

d. conduct or coordinate site-surveys and audits.

e. remove Manufacturers for non-conformance.

f. disseminate information to users about non-conforming products.

g. make awards only to QSLM listed providers.

h. provide QSLM's with access to a listing of approved distributors.

i. reserve the right to revert to the basic requirements contained in the original solicitation if the manufacturer should be disqualified or removed from the QSLM.

4.3.2 Manufacturer - The manufacturer shall assume responsibility to:

a. meet all contractual specifications and requirements. There are no exceptions or waivers unless provided in writing by the contracting officer.

b. report any product discrepancies discovered, and corrective actions taken.

c. maintain records as indicated in the QSLM Criteria section 3.12, and make them available for examination by DLA, or DLA's agent upon survey or audit.

d. permit DLA, or DLA's agent, to conduct site surveys and audits as discussed in QSLM Provisions 4.5 and 4.7, Surveys and Audits.

e. coordinate open contract actions with the appropriate DLA Contracting Officer (C.O.), should you become disqualified from the QSLM prior to delivery. Moreover, you must also coordinate open contract actions with the appropriate DLA C.O., if you are about to supply to DLA or DLA's customer, product that was supplied to you from a Distributor or Manufacturer who was removed from the QSLM/QSLD subsequent to your entering into your contract agreement with DLA. Product owned by any manufacturer or distributor while disqualified, or unqualified prior to approval to the QSLM/QSLD is not acceptable for delivery under this QSL program. See also paragraph 3.15.3, Products Purchased.

f. provide other participating manufacturers and distributors with material which meets QSLM requirements when notified by the QSL participant that the material being purchased is destined to fill a QSL contract.

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#### **4.4 APPLICATION FOR QUALIFICATION**

4.4.1 Application Request - Applications for qualification can be obtained by writing or calling the QSL Office (see Preface). Application packages sent to interested manufacturers will include the basic application form and a copy of this document. In order to participate in the QSLM Program, a manufacturer must have a CAGE code designation (see *Preface* for assistance).

4.4.2 Application Processing - The candidate shall submit the completed application to the QSL Office along with a copy of his Quality Manual. The Quality Manual will be evaluated by the QSL Office for compliance with the QSLM Criteria. The applicant is encouraged to include references to recent government or industry surveys or audits of his facility where requested in the application. These references will be evaluated by the QSL Office and may obviate the need for a separate site-survey.

4.4.3 Application Revision - Qualified QSLM companies are responsible for notifying the QSL Office when their product lines or facility locations have changed. Companies shall request and submit a revised signed application once changes have occurred.

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#### **4.5 SITE-SURVEY**

4.5.1 When a manufacturer applies to be qualified or re-qualified under the QSLM Program, the QSL Office will customarily require a site-survey of the facility. Site-surveys by the QSL Office or other DLA agent, will be based on the Criteria in section 3.0. Surveys will include a review of the manufacturer's Quality Control Program and all of the systems and processes which the manufacturer is required to have in-place and in-use, under the Criteria of this document.

4.5.2 Industry surveys or audits may be considered by the QSL Office in the review of the manufacturer's Application for Qualification. Such surveys or audits may be used by the QSL Office in lieu of, or in addition to, QSLM site-survey requirements.

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#### **4.6 QUALIFICATION RESULTS**

4.6.1 Upon completion of the evaluation process, the QSL Office shall notify the manufacturer as to whether QSLM status has been attained or has been denied.

4.6.2 If qualification status has been attained, a Letter-Notice of Qualification shall be issued to the manufacturer along with a copy to the DLA buying office for the commodity of this QSL Program and will include the following:

- a. Designation of the QSLM Program under which manufacturer has been qualified.
- b. Unless QSLM status is terminated, or the manufacturer is otherwise disqualified, the term of qualification shall be three years from the date of the Letter-Notice of Qualification.
- c. The CAGE code and address of the manufacturer's facility which has been qualified.
- d. The address for receipt by the manufacturer of correspondence if different from that in "c" above.

4.6.3 When a manufacturer's Application for Qualification is denied, the QSL Office will issue a Letter-Notice of Denial of Qualification to the manufacturer along with a copy to the DLA buying office. Manufacturer may not reapply for qualification until a minimum of ninety days has elapsed from the date of the Letter-Notice. The Notice shall cite the specific reasons for such denial. Examples of reasons for denial of qualification include, but are not limited to the following:

- a. Deficiencies in the Applicant's Quality Program Manual which are numerous or which indicate that action to correct those deficiencies will require an extended period of time.
- b. Site-survey has shown that implementation of processes and procedures contained in manufacturer's Quality Control Program Manual, and required by the Criteria and Provisions of this document, has not been accomplished.
- c. When the QSL Office has provided the Applicant with specific corrective action to be taken for qualification approval, and Applicant has not responded within the time specified in the Letter-Notice or after 90 days, the Application for Qualification will be considered withdrawn.



d. Manufacturer is debarred, otherwise determined to be ineligible for awards of Government contracts, or has been found to have engaged in practices which indicate less than acceptable integrity or business ethics.

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#### **4.7 AUDITS**

4.7.1 The QSL Office or other DLA agent will conduct random announced or unannounced post-award audits of a manufacturer's facility to confirm adherence to QSLM Criteria. Audits will be an on-going policy during the life of the QSLM Program. All audits are performed at no charge to the manufacturer. During audits, random sample collection of the manufacturer's product shall be allowed for the purpose of independent laboratory testing. Thus, QSL Auditors may pull samples for later testing against specification or contract requirement. The Government will pay for the cost of such tests and the manufacturer's expense is limited only to the cost of a small quantity of samples selected. The manufacturer shall be provided with a copy of the test results when non-conformance has been found.

4.7.2 The purpose of a facility audit is to ensure that the manufacturer has in-place and in daily use, a Quality Program which conforms to the requirements of the Criteria and Provisions of the QSLM Program, as reflected in this document. An audit will involve the examination of applicable documents, processes and procedures, as well as the various systems required for attainment of qualification.

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#### **4.8 QSLM REMOVAL / DISAPPROVAL**

4.8.1 Reasons for Removal - The success of the QSLM Program is dependent upon the integrity of those manufacturers who participate in it. Continued participation in the program is, therefore, contingent upon the QSLM manufacturer's continuing compliance with the Criteria and Provisions upon which qualification was established. The manufacturer's failure to comply may be cause for initiation of removal. The following are some examples of reasons for removal from the QSLM:

- a. The product(s) furnished by the manufacturer under its contract(s) does not meet contract or specification requirements.
- b. Manufacturer no longer produces or supplies the products of the Federal Stock Class included in the QSLM Program.
- c. Manufacturer changes its Quality Program or its facility location without prior notification to the QSL Office.

- d. Manufacturer does not file a renewal application at the end of its 3-year approval term, or fails to requalify at that time.
- e. Manufacturer fails an audit.
- f. Manufacturer denies access to QSL audit or survey personnel, or to other personnel authorized by the QSL Office to conduct such audits or surveys.
- g. Manufacturer ships products from a location other than that for which it has been qualified or authorized.
- h. Qualification Criteria and/or Provisions are revised, and manufacturer fails or refuses to comply with revised Criteria and/or Provisions following opportunity to do so.
- i. Manufacturer misrepresents its quality control process(es) or manual regarding compliance with QSLM.
- j. Manufacturer is debarred, otherwise determined to be ineligible for awards of Government contracts, or has been found to have engaged in practices which indicate less than acceptable integrity or business ethics.
- k. Manufacturer requests that it be removed from the QSLM.
- l. Manufacturer supplies product to DLA or its customers which flowed through a non-QSL provider. Any and all product sold to DLA or its customers must flow through QSL providers during the entire production/supply path of the product. No deviations are permitted under this QSL program.
- m. Manufacturer receives Corrective Action Request from Defense Contract Management Agency or other quality oversight department of the federal government.

4.8.2 Procedures for Removal - The following provisions apply to removal of a manufacturer from the QSLM:

- a. When removal of a manufacturer from the QSLM is proposed, and after obtaining DLA buying office concurrence, the QSL Office will notify the manufacturer by Certified Mail, Return Receipt Requested, and/or FAX, citing specific reasons for the proposed removal. Manufacturer shall have 15 days to respond to the notification.
- b. Failure by manufacturer to respond to the Notice of Contemplated Removal within the 15 day period will result in immediate removal of manufacturer from the QSLM.
- c. If manufacturer responds to the Notice of Contemplated Removal within the 15 day period, the QSL Office will evaluate the response, including manufacturer's proposed corrective action, if any, and will determine which of the following shall apply:

- (1) removal from QSLM
- (2) retention on QSLM
- (3) further action, as appropriate

d. Removal Period. Typically, there is not a specific time duration for removal from the QSLM. However, 90 days is normally imposed, as we recognize that this period of time is usually necessary to document process control changes and implement and test corrective actions associated with the disqualification. When the corrective action involves more than one deficiency, removal periods in excess of 90 days may be applied at the discretion of the QSL Office.

e. When the QSL Office has removed a manufacturer from its QSLM, notice of such removal, and the reasons for the removal, may be given to other interested Government Activities. Also, if a manufacturer is removed from one QSL program at DLA, that manufacturer may be removed from all QSL programs at DLA. The QSL Internet Page will also reflect such removals to preclude participants from buying from an unauthorized source.

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## **4.9 REQUALIFICATION**

4.9.1 Requalification by Renewal - Requalification is required upon the lapse of three years from the date of last qualification. To ensure that no gap in qualification status occurs, manufacturer should request a qualification package from the QSL Office at least 120 days prior to expiration of its current 3-year qualification period. Requirements for requalification shall be those QSLM Criteria and Provisions in effect at the time of Application for Requalification. Note: Failure to Re-qualify May Result in Removal of a manufacturer from the QSLM.

4.9.2 Requalification subsequent to Removal or Qualification after Disapproval - In the event that manufacturer's Application for Qualification is not approved, or if manufacturer's status as a QSLM concern is discontinued, qualification will not occur until the QSL Office has determined that satisfactory evidence has been submitted which establishes that all deficiencies have been adequately corrected.

### 4.9.3 Reapplication subsequent to Removal

a. A new application may be submitted after all corrective actions have been implemented and described in a letter accompanying the application. The manufacturer must send in a new QC manual if it has been revised significantly.

b. The re-application and letter should be sent to the address listed in the Preface.

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#### **4.10 SOLICITATION/AWARD**

4.10.1 To be eligible for award under this program, an offeror must be listed on the QSLM at the time of award.

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### **5.0 DEFINITIONS**

**CAGE** Commercial and Government Entity. This designation is a unique five digit alphanumeric sequence of characters; it is issued for a specific location.

**DISTRIBUTOR** A source or concern which owns, operates, or maintains a store, warehouse, or other establishment in which finished FSC 4020 products are bought, kept in stock, and sold to the public in the usual course of business. The Distributor basically stocks and resells only the completed product and may NOT alter, modify or produce that product.

**DOCUMENTS** Printed or written information, or electronically stored information which is retrievable and subject to being reduced to a printed form. These include, but are not limited to bills of material, calibration records, certifications, contracts, drawings, instructions, manuals, packing slips, procedures, purchase orders, standards, specifications, test plans and test reports, and records of all kinds. Modifications or revisions to any of the foregoing constitute documents.

**MANUFACTURER** An organization which owns, operates or maintains a factory or establishment and, in the ordinary course of its business, substantially produces or fabricates fiber rope, cordage, twine, or tape on the premises from raw materials.

**MATERIAL CERTIFICATION REPORT** A document generated by a material supplier or producer which demonstrates, for original/raw materials, conformance to contract or specification requirements.

**QUALIFIED SUPPLIERS LIST for DISTRIBUTORS (QSLD)** The list of distributors who have met the Qualified Suppliers List for Distributors Criteria, and have agreed to the Provisions therein.

**QUALIFIED SUPPLIERS LIST for MANUFACTURERS (QSLM)** The list of manufacturers who have met the Qualified Suppliers List for Manufacturers Criteria and have agreed to the Provisions therein.

**QUALITY CONTROL PROGRAM** The manufacturer's entire program of procedures, process controls, inspections, audits and systems which ensures that the manufacturer's products conform to specified requirements.

**TRACEABILITY** The documented trail of the product covered by the DLA contract or order through all Manufacturers and/or intermediate processors to the Manufacturer or producer of the product or material.

**VENDOR** As used in this document, a person, organization, or entity from or through whom any product, service, or portion thereof, covered by the DLA contract or order was purchased by the DLA prime contractor.

**REVISION 1 - 01/10/2018**