

Government entities must comply with Mexico's public purchasing law, and each has its own procurement procedures within that framework. They are also required to comply with official standards for hygiene, personal protective equipment, fire abatement and fire prevention. Government financial institutions have additional security needs. The most important customers are public hospitals and clinics, universities, financial institutions, police forces and fire departments.

The government announced a new five-year public security program known as *Programa Nacional de Seguridad Pública 1995-2000*, National Public Safety Program 1995-2000. The program focuses on revamping the police and the judicial sector. It is part of the government's broader economic development plan, the *Plan Nacional de Desarrollo 1995-2000*, National Development Plan 1995-2000, which calls for increased funding to public safety, security and emergency response systems. This program is expected to substantially increase demand for goods and services by police forces. Other important customers include hospitals and universities that are part of the government's disaster response programs.

POLICE

The police and the army have their own purchasing policies, which are generally subject to public bidding. In 1996, the federal police force is expected to spend 8 percent of its budget on arms, 19 percent on communications equipment, 36 percent on vehicles, and 15 percent on riot gear. The 1995 budget was \$282 billion Mexican pesos. Representatives of the army and navy declined requests for information about their requirements.

HOSPITALS AND CLINICS

Mexican public hospitals and clinics are operated by the *Instituto Mexicano del Seguro Social (IMSS)*, Mexican Institute for Social Security, and the *Instituto de Seguridad y Servicios Sociales para los Trabajadores del Estado (ISSSTE)*, the Social Security and Services Institute for Government Workers. The *IMSS* has more than 20,000 medical attention units of which 5,200 are large clinics and hospitals. This institute has over 60 million users including family members of registered users. The *ISSSTE* has approximately 12.4 million users.

The strain on the medical system is enormous and the government is eager to obtain less expensive products that meet the minimum quality standards set down in the *Cuadro Básico* of the Mexican Red Cross. This is a list of qualified products. If a product is accepted into this *Cuadro*, it is virtually guaranteed sales. However, getting on to the *Cuadro* is difficult and observers report that corrupt practices are widespread.