

PART 3

SOURCE SELECTION AND CONTRACT FORMATION

SUBPART 3-7 -- TYPES OF CONTRACTS

3-701 Policy Regarding Selection of Contract Types.

(1) General. The selection of an appropriate contract type depends on factors such as the nature of the supplies, services, or construction to be procured, the uncertainties which may be involved in contract performance, and the extent to which the purchasing agency or the contractor is to assume the risk of the cost of performance of the contract. Contract types differ in the degree of responsibility assumed by the contractor for the costs of performance and the amount and kind of profit incentive offered the contractor to achieve or exceed specified standards or goals.

Among the factors to be considered in selecting any type of contract are:

(a) the type and complexity of the supply, service, or construction item being procured;

(b) the difficulty of estimating performance costs such as the inability of the purchasing agency to develop definitive specifications, to identify the risks to the contractor inherent in the nature of the work to be performed, or otherwise to establish clearly the requirements of the contract;

(c) the administrative costs to both parties;

(d) the degree to which the purchasing agency must provide technical coordination during the performance of the contract;

(e) the effect of the choice of the type of contract on the amount of competition to be expected;

(f) the stability of material or commodity market prices or wage levels;

(g) the urgency of the requirement;

(h) the length of contract performance; and

(i) federal requirements.

The purchasing agency should not contract in a manner that would place an unreasonable economic risk on the contractor, since such action would tend to jeopardize satisfactory performance on the contract.

(2) Use of Unlisted Contract Types. The provisions of this subpart list and define the principal contract types. In addition, any other type of contract, except cost-plus-a-percentage-of-cost, may be used provided the purchasing agent determines in writing that such use is in the purchasing agency's best interest.

### 3-702 Fixed-Price Contracts.

(1) General. A fixed-price contract is the preferred and generally utilized type of contract. A fixed-price contract places responsibility on the contractor for the delivery of the product or the complete performance of the services or construction in accordance with the contract terms at a price that may be firm or subject to contractually specified adjustments. The fixed-price contract is appropriate for use when there is a reasonably definitive requirement, as in the case of construction or standard commercial products. The use of a fixed-price contract when risks are unknown or not readily measurable in terms of cost can result in inflated prices and inadequate competition; poor performance, disputes, and claims when performance proves difficult; or excessive profits when anticipated contingencies do not occur.

(2) Firm Fixed-Price Contract. A firm fixed-price contract provides a price that is not subject to adjustment.

(3) Fixed-Price Contract With Price Adjustment.

(a) A fixed-price contract with price adjustment provides for variation in the contract price under special conditions defined in the contract, other than customary provisions authorizing price adjustments due to modifications to the work. The formula or other basis by which the adjustment in contract price can be made shall be specified in the solicitation and the resulting contract. However, clauses providing for most-favored-customer prices for the purchasing agency, that is, the price to the purchasing agency will be lowered to the lowest priced sales to any other customer made during the contract period, shall not be used. Examples of conditions under which adjustments may be provided in a fixed-price contracts are:

(i) changes in the contractor's labor contract rates (such as in contracts for coal;)

(ii) changes due to rapid and substantial price fluctuations, which can be related to an accepted index (such as contracts for gasoline, heating oils, and dental gold alloys); and

(iii) when a general price change alters the base price (such as a change in a manufacturer's published price list or posted price to which a fixed discount is applied pursuant to the contract to determine the contract price).

(b) If the contract permits unilateral action by the contractor to bring about the condition under which a price increase may occur, the contract shall reserve to the purchasing agency the right to reject the price increase and terminate the contract without cost or damages. Notice of such price increase shall be given by the contractor in the manner and within such time as is specified in the contract.

3-703 Cost-Reimbursement Contracts.

(1) General. The cost-reimbursement contract provides for payment to the contractor of allowable costs incurred in the performance of the contract as determined in accordance with Subpart 3-7 (Cost Principles) of these regulations and provided in the contract. This type of contract establishes at the outset an estimated cost for the performance of the contract and a dollar ceiling which the contractor may not exceed without prior approval of subsequent ratification by the purchasing agent and, in addition, may provide for payment of a fee. The contractor agrees to perform as specified in the contract until the contract is completed or until the costs reach the specified ceiling, whichever occurs first.

This contract type is appropriate when the uncertainties involved in contract performance are of such magnitude that the cost of contract performance cannot be estimated with sufficient reasonableness to permit use of any type of fixed-price contract. In addition, a cost-reimbursement contract necessitates appropriate monitoring by purchasing agency personnel during performance so as to give reasonable assurance that the objectives of the contract are being met. It is particularly suitable for research, development, and study-type contracts.

(2) Determination Prior To Use. A cost-reimbursement contract may be used only when the purchasing agent determines in writing that:

(a) such a contract is likely to be less costly to the purchasing agency than any other type or that it is impracticable to obtain otherwise, the supplies, services, or construction;

(b) the proposed contractor's accounting system will permit timely development of all necessary cost data in the form required by the specific contract type contemplated; and

(c) the proposed contractor's accounting system is adequate to allocate costs in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.

(3) Cost Contract. A cost contract provides that the contractor will be reimbursed for allowable costs incurred in performing the contract.

(4) Cost-Plus-Fixed-Fee Contract. This is a cost-reimbursement type contract which provides for payment to the contractor of an agreed fixed fee in addition to reimbursement of allowable, incurred costs. The fee is established at the time of contract award and does not vary whether the actual cost of contract performance is greater or less than the initial estimated cost established for such work. Thus, the fee is fixed but not the contract amount because the final contract amount will depend on the allowable costs reimbursed. The fee is subject to adjustment only if the contract is modified to provide for an increase or decrease in the work specified in the contract.

3-704 Cost Incentive Contracts.

(1) General. Cost incentive contracts provide for the sharing of cost risks between the purchasing agency and the contractor. This type of contract provides for the reimbursement to the contractor of allowable costs incurred up to a ceiling amount and establishes a formula whereby the contractor is rewarded for performing at less than target cost (that is, the parties' agreed best estimate of the cost of performing the contract) or is penalized if it exceeds target cost. Profit or fee is dependent on how effectively the contractor controls cost in the performance of the contract.

(2) Fixed-Price Cost Incentive Contract.

(a) Description. In a fixed-price cost incentive contract, the parties establish at the outset a target cost, a target profit (that is, the profit which will be paid if the actual cost of performance equals the target cost), a cost-sharing formula which provides a percentage increase or decrease of the target profit depending on whether the cost of performance is less than or exceeds the target cost, and a ceiling price. After performance of the contract, the actual cost of performance is arrived at based on the total incurred allowable cost as determined in accordance with Subpart 3-7 (Cost Principles) of these regulations and as provided in the contract. The final contract price is then established in accordance with the cost-sharing formula using the actual cost of performance. The final contract price may not exceed the ceiling price. The contractor is obligated to complete performance of the contract, and, if actual cost exceeds the ceiling price, the contractor suffers loss.

(b) Objectives. The fixed-price cost incentive contract serves three objectives. It permits the establishment of a firm ceiling price for performance of the contract which takes into account uncertainties and contingencies in the cost of performance. It motivates the contractor to perform the contract economically since cost is in inverse relation to profit; the lower the cost, the higher the profit. It provides a flexible pricing mechanism for establishing a cost sharing responsibility between the purchasing agency and contractor depending on the nature of the supplies, services, or construction being procured, the length of the contract performance, and the performance risks involved.

(3) Cost-Plus Contract with Cost Incentive Fee. In a cost-plus contract with cost incentive fee, the parties establish at the outset a target cost; a target fee; a cost-sharing formula for increase or decrease of fee depending on whether actual cost of performance is less than or exceeds the target cost, with maximum and minimum fee limitations; and a cost ceiling which represents the maximum amount which the purchasing agency is obligated to reimburse the contractor. The contractor continues performance until the work is complete or costs reach the ceiling specified in the contract, whichever first occurs. After performance is complete or costs reach the ceiling, the total incurred, allowable costs reimbursed in accordance with Subpart 3-7 (Cost Principles) of these regulations and as provided in the contract are applied in the cost-sharing formula to establish the incentive fee payable to the contractor. This type contract gives the contractor a stronger incentive to efficiently manage the contract than a stronger incentive to efficiently manage the contract than a cost-plus-fixed-fee contract provides.

(4) Determinations Required. Prior to entering into any cost incentive contract, the purchasing agent shall make the written determination required by Subsections 3-703(2)(b) and (c) (Cost-Reimbursement Contracts, Determination Prior to Use) of these regulations. In addition, prior to entering any cost-plus contract with cost incentive fee, the purchasing agent shall include in such written determination the determination required by Subsection 3-703(2)(a) of these regulations.

### 3-705 Performance Incentive Contracts.

In a performance incentive contract, the parties establish at the outset a pricing basis for the contract, performance goals, and a formula for increasing or decreasing the compensation if the specified performance goals are exceeded or not met. For example, early completion may entitle the contractor to a bonus while late completion may entitle the purchasing agency to a price decrease.

### 3-706 Time and Materials Contracts; Labor Hour Contracts.

(1) Time and Materials Contracts. Time and materials contracts provide for payment for materials at cost and labor performed at an hourly rate which includes overhead and profit. These contracts provide no incentives to minimize costs or effectively manage the contract work. Consequently all such contracts shall contain a stated cost ceiling and shall be entered into only after the purchasing agent determines in writing that:

(a) personnel have been assigned to closely monitor the performance of the work; and

(b) no other type of contract will suitably serve the purchasing agency's purpose.

(2) Labor Hour Contracts. A labor hour contract is the same as a time and materials contract except the contractor supplies no material. It is subject to the same considerations, and the purchasing agent shall make the same determinations before it is used.

### 3-707 Definite Quantity and Indefinitely Quantity Contracts.

(1) Definite Quantity. A definite quantity contract is a fixed-price contract that provides for delivery of a specified quantity of supplies or services either at specified times or when ordered.

(2) Indefinite Quantity. An indefinite quantity contract is a contract for an indefinite amount of supplies or services to be furnished as ordered that establishes unit prices of a fixed-price type. Generally an approximate quantity or the best information available is stated in the solicitation. The contract may provide a minimum quantity the purchasing agency is obligated to order and may also provide for a maximum quantity provision that limits the purchasing agency's obligation to order. The time of performance of an indefinite quantity contract may be extended upon agreement of the parties provided the extension is for 90 days or less and the purchasing agent determines in writing that it is not practical to award another contract at the time of such extension.

(3) Requirements Contracts. A requirements contract is an indefinite quantity contract for supplies or services that obligates the purchasing agency to order all the actual, normal requirements of designated using agencies during a specified period of time; and for the protection of the purchasing agency and the contractor. Invitations for Bids and resulting requirements contracts shall include such a provision. However, the purchasing agency may reserve in the solicitation and in the resulting contract the right to take bids separately if a particular quantity requirement arises which exceeds an amount specified in the contract. Requirements contracts shall contain an exemption from ordering under the contract when the purchasing agent approves a finding that the supply or service available under the contract will not meet a nonrecurring, special need of the purchasing agency.

### 3-708 Progressive and Multiple Awards.

(1) Progressive Award. A progressive award is an award of portions of a definite quantity requirement to more than one contractor. Each portion is for a definite quantity and the sum of the portions is the total definite quantity procured. A progressive award may be in the purchasing agency's best interest when awards to more than one bidder or offeror for different amounts of the same item are needed to obtain the total quantity or the time or times of delivery required.

(2) Multiple Award. A multiple award is an award of an indefinite quantity contract for one or more similar supplies or services to more than one bidder or offeror, and the purchasing agency is obligated to order all of its actual, normal requirements for the specified supplies or services from those contractors. A multiple award may be in the purchasing agency's best interest when award to two or more bidders or offerors for similar products is needed for adequate delivery, service, or availability, or for product compatibility. In making a multiple award, care shall be exercised to protect and promote the principles of competitive solicitation. Multiple awards shall not be made when a single award will meet the purchasing agency's needs without sacrifice of economy or service. Awards shall not be made for the purpose of dividing the business, making available product or supplier selection to allow for user preference, or avoiding the resolution of tie bids. Any such awards shall be limited to the least number of suppliers necessary to meet the valid

requirements of using agencies. All eligible users of the contract shall be named in the solicitation, and it shall be mandatory that the requirements of such users that can be met under the contract be obtained in accordance with the contract, provided, that:

(a) the purchasing agency shall reserve the right to take bids separately if a particular quantity requirement arises which exceeds an amount specified in the contract; or

(b) the purchasing agency shall reserve the right to take bids separately if the purchasing agent approves a finding that the supply or service available under the contract will not meet a nonrecurring special need of the agency.

(3) Intent to Use. If a progressive or multiple award is anticipated prior to issuing a solicitation, the method of award shall be stated in the solicitation.

3-709 Leases.

(1) Use. A lease may be entered into provided:

(a) it is in the best interest of the purchasing agency;

(b) all conditions for renewal and costs of termination are set forth in the lease; and

(c) the lease is not used to avoid a competitive procurement.

(2) Competition. Lease and lease-purchase contracts are subject to the requirements of competition which govern the procurement of supplies.



(3) Lease With Purchase Option. A purchase option in a lease may be exercised only if the lease containing the purchase option was awarded under competitive bidding or competitive proposals, unless the requirement can be met only by the supply or facility being leased as determined in writing by the purchasing agent. Before exercising such an option, the purchasing agent shall:

(a) investigate alternative means of procuring comparable supplies or facilities; and

(b) compare estimated costs and benefits associated with the alternative means and the exercise of the option, for example, the benefit of buying new state of the art data processing equipment compared to the estimated, initial savings associated with exercise of a purchase option.

### 3-710 Multi-Year Contracts: Installment Payments.

(1) Use. A contract may be entered into which extends beyond the current fiscal period provided any obligation for payment in a succeeding fiscal period is subject to the availability of funds therefore.

(2) Termination. A multi-year contract may be terminated without cost to the purchasing agency by reason of unavailability of funds for the purpose or for lack of performance by the contractor. Termination for other reason shall be as provided by the contract.

(3) Installment Payments. Supply contracts may provide for installment purchase payments, including interest charges, over a period of time. Installment payments, however, should be used judiciously in order to achieve economy and not to avoid budgetary restraints, and shall be justified in writing by the head of the using agency. Heads of using agencies shall be responsible for ensuring that statutory or other prohibitions are not violated by use of installment provisions and that all budgetary or other required prior approvals are obtained. No such agreement shall be used unless provision for installment payments is included in the solicitation document.

### 3-711 Contract Option.

(1) Provision. Any contract subject to an option for renewal, extension, or purchase, shall have had such provision included in the solicitation. When such a contract is awarded by competitive sealed bidding, exercise of the option shall be at the purchasing agency's discretion only, and not subject to agreement or acceptance by the contractor.

(2) Exercise of Option. Before exercising any option for renewal, extension, or purchase, the purchasing agent should attempt to ascertain whether a competitive procurement is practical, in terms of pertinent competitive and cost factors, and would be more advantageous to the purchasing agency than renewal or extension of the existing contract.