

# Subpart 515.4 - Contract Pricing

Parent topic: [Part 515 - Contracting by Negotiation](#)

## 515.403 Obtaining certified cost or pricing data.

### 515.403-4 Requiring certified cost or pricing data (10 U.S.C. chapter 271 and 41 U.S.C. 254b).

To determine if a contract action meets the threshold at FAR 15.403-4 for requesting certified cost and pricing data, the contracting officer shall consider the value of the action plus any priced options. Exercise of a priced option is not a price adjustment and does not require submission of certified cost and pricing data.

## 515.404 Proposal Analysis

### 515.404-2 Information to support proposal analysis.

(a) "Field pricing assistance" is provided by the Assistant Inspector General for Auditing, or the Regional Inspector General for Auditing, as appropriate.

(b) Follow the procedures in GSA Order ADM 2030.2, Internal Audit Follow-up Handbook, for handling contract audit reports.

### 515.404-70 Profit Analysis.

(a) *Structured approach for determining profit or fee objectives.* The contracting officer shall base the analysis of profit factors on information available to the Government before negotiations. The contracting officer may obtain such information from proposals, audit data, performance reports, preaward surveys and the like. The structured approach helps establish a profit objective. It also provides a basis for documenting the objective, including an explanation of any significant departure from this objective in reaching a final agreement. The contracting officer shall prepare documentation commensurate with the dollar value and complexity of the proposed procurement.

(b) *Exemptions from requirement to use the structured approach.*

(1) The following types of procurements are exempt from the structured approach:

- (i) Management contracts for operation and/or maintenance of Government facilities.
- (ii) Contracts primarily requiring delivery of material supplied by subcontractors.
- (iii) Termination settlements.
- (iv) Cost-plus-award-fee contracts.

(v) Contracts and contract modifications below the simplified acquisition threshold.

(vi) Architect-engineer and construction contracts.

(2) The contracting officer may request exemptions for other contracts having unusual pricing situations where the contracting officer determines that the structured approach is unsuitable. The contracting officer shall document the justification in writing. The HCA must approve all such exemptions.

(c) *Other methods for exempted procurements.* Under exempted procurements, the contracting officer shall use other methods for establishing profit objectives. In general, the contracting officer shall use methods supported in a manner similar to the structured approach (profit factor breakdown and documentation of profit objective). Exclude factors within the structured approach that do not apply to the procurement.

(d) *Profit-analysis factors.* The contracting officer shall consider the following factors when negotiating profit. Use the weight ranges listed after each factor when using the structured approach.

<b>Profit Factors</b>		<b>Weight Ranges in Percent</b>
Contractor Effort	Material acquisition	1 to 4
	Conversion direct labor	4 to 12
	Conversion related indirect cost:	1 to 3
	Other costs	2 to 5
Other Factors	General management	2 to 5
	Contract cost risk	0 to 7
	Capital investments	-2 to +2
	Federal socioeconomic programs	-.5 to +.5
	Cost-control and other past accomplishments	-2 to +2
	Independent development and additional factors	-2 to +2

(e) [GSA Form 1766](#). The contracting officer may use [GSA Form 1766](#), Structured Approach Profit/Fee Objective, to help compute the profit objective. Measure the Contractor Effort by assigning a profit percentage within the designated weight ranges to each element of cost recognized.

(f) *Facilities capital cost of money.* If the contracting officer allows facilities capital cost of money as

an item of cost, either as a part of the price/cost objective in a firm fixed price type contract or as an allowable cost in a flexibly priced type contract, *e.g.*, cost reimbursement or fixed price incentive type contract, reduce the profit/fee objective as follows. After a dollar profit/fee amount for the requirement is developed, subtract from that aggregate dollar profit/fee amount any dollar amount allowed for facilities capital cost of money. The remainder is the profit/fee objective.

(g) *Calculating profit dollars.* After computing a total dollar profit for Contractor Effort, calculate the specific profit dollars for the categories under Other Factors. Do this by multiplying the total Government cost objective, excluding any cost of money for facilities capital, by the specific weights assigned to the elements in Other Factors.

(h) *Common factors.* In determining the value of each factor, consider the definition, description, and purpose of the factors prescribed in FAR 15.404-4(d) and this subsection.

(1) *General management.* Management problems surface in various degrees. Consider the management expertise exercised to solve them as an element of profit. For example, a new program for an item that involves advanced state of the art techniques may involve more problems and require more managerial time and abilities of a higher order than a follow-on contract. If an initial contract creates more problems and merits a higher profit weight, then a follow-on should merit a downward adjustment, as many of the problems should have been solved. Evaluate the underlying managerial effort involved on a case-by-case basis.

(2) *Other costs.* Include all other direct costs of contractor performance under this item (*e.g.*, travel and relocation, direct support, and consultants). When these costs are analyzed, consider-

(i) Their significance;

(ii) Their nature; and

(iii) How much they contribute to contract performance.

(3) *Contract cost risk.* When the contracting officer selects the proper contract type, the reward for risk by contract type will usually fall into the ranges below.

(i) *Cost-reimbursement type contracts.* 0-3 percent. A cost-plus-a-fixed-fee contract does not normally justify a reward for risk in excess of 0 percent. Only a contract that contains cost risk features such as ceilings on overhead might merit a higher weight. Such cases may justify up to 1 percent. Cost-plus-incentive-fee contracts fill the remaining portion of the 0 to 3 percent range. For these, assign weightings based on such factors as confidence in target cost, share ratio of fee(s), etc.

(ii) *Fixed-price type contracts.* 3-7 percent. This weight range is wide enough to accommodate the many types of fixed-price arrangements. Assign weightings based on the cost risk assumed. Only firm fixed-price contracts should reach the top end of the range.

(iii) *Subcontracting program.* The contractor's subcontracting program may significantly impact the contractor's risk under a contract. It could affect risk in terms of both cost and performance. Consider this in selecting a weight for cost risk. The prime contractor may effectively transfer cost risk to a subcontractor. This merits a risk evaluation below the range that would otherwise apply for the contract type proposed. However, the contracting officer should not evaluate risk lower when a substantial portion of the contract cost represents subcontracts, but without any substantial transfer of contractor's risk.

(iv) *Definitizing letter contracts, unpriced change orders, and unpriced orders under basic ordering*

*agreements*. Consider the effect on risk as a result of partial performance before definitization. Some circumstances may effectively reduce the contractor's total risk, while others may have no effect. Determine an equitable profit weight for all recognized costs, both those incurred and future costs. Consider all attendant circumstances, not just the portion of costs incurred or percentage of work completed before definitization.

(v) *Service contracts*. Apply a weight range of 0 to 4 percent for cost risk. A firm fixed-price contract, not priced on a labor-hour method, may warrant high consideration for contractor cost risk. It may merit a weight up to 4percent. Conversely, a cost-plus-fixed-fee service contract normally warrants a zero cost risk factor.

(4) *Capital investments*. In evaluating this factor for profit weights, consider the following:

(i) *Facilities*.

(A) To evaluate how this factor contributes to the profit objective, the contracting officer needs to know the level of facilities use needed for contract performance, the source of financing for the facilities, and the overall cost effectiveness of the facilities offered.

(B) Contractors who furnish their own facilities that significantly contribute to lower total contract costs, warrant additional profit. Contractors who rely on the Government to provide or finance facilities warrant less profit. Evaluate situations between the above examples on their merits and make either a positive or negative profit weight adjustment, as appropriate.

(C) The contracting officer is not required to adjust the profit when a contractor who owns a large quantity of facilities will perform a contract that does not benefit from these facilities, or when a contractor's use of its facilities has a minimum cost impact on the contract.

(ii) *Payments*. Consider the frequency of payments by the Government to the contractor. Assess the impact the contract will have on the contractor's cash flow. Generally, payments more frequent than monthly merit negative consideration, with maximum reduction as the contractor's working capital approaches zero. Payments less frequent than monthly merit positive consideration, with additional consideration for payments less frequent than the contractor's or the industry's normal practice.

(i) *Nonprofit organizations*.

(1) The structured approach for determining profit or fee objectives was designed for other than nonprofit organizations. However, if modified as below, the contracting officer may use it to establish fee objectives for nonprofit organizations (See FAR 31.701). Do not apply the modifications as a deduction to historical fee levels. Instead apply them as a reduction in the fee objective calculated under the structured approach.

(2) For contracts with nonprofit organizations, subtract an adjustment of up to 3percent from the total profit-fee objective. In developing this adjustment, consider each of the following factors:

(i) Tax position benefits.

(ii) Granting of financing through letters of credit.

(iii) Facility requirements of the nonprofit organization.

(iv) Other factors that may work to the advantage or disadvantage of the contractor as a nonprofit organization.

## **515.408 Solicitation provisions and contract clauses.**

### **MAS Requests for Information Other Than Cost or Pricing Data**

(a) Use Alternate IV of the FAR provision at 52.215-20, Requirements for Cost or Pricing Data or Information Other Than Cost or Pricing Data, for MAS solicitations to provide the format for submission of information other than cost or pricing data for MAS solicitations. To provide uniformity in requests under the MAS program, you should insert the following in paragraph (b) of the provision:

- (1) Commercial sales practices. When the solicitation contains the basic clause 552.238-80 Industrial Funding Fee and Sales Reporting, the Offeror must submit information in the format provided in this solicitation in accordance with the instructions at Figure 515.4-2 of the GSA Acquisition Regulation (48 CFR 515.4-2), or submit information in the Offeror's own format.
  - (2) Any additional supporting information requested by the Contracting Officer. The Contracting Officer may require additional supporting information, but only to the extent necessary to determine whether the price(s) offered is fair and reasonable.
  - (3) By submission of an offer in response to this solicitation, the Offeror grants the Contracting Officer or an authorized representative the right to examine, at any time before initial award, books, records, documents, papers, and other directly pertinent records to verify the pricing, sales and other data related to the supplies or services proposed in order to determine the reasonableness of price(s). Access does not extend to Offeror's cost or profit information or other data relevant solely to the Offeror's determination of the prices to be offered in the catalog or marketplace.
- (b) When the contract contains the basic clause 552.238-80 Industrial Funding Fee and Sales Reporting, insert the following format for commercial sales practices in the exhibits or attachments section of the solicitation and resulting contract (see FAR 12.303).

#### **COMMERCIAL SALES PRACTICES FORMAT**

**Name of Offeror** \_\_\_\_\_ **SIN(s)** \_\_\_\_\_

**NOTE:** Provide the following information for each SIN (or group of SINS or Sub SIN for which information is the same).

- (1) Provide the dollar value of sales to the general public at or based on an established catalog or market price during the previous 12-month period or the offerors last fiscal year:  
\$ \_\_\_\_\_. State beginning and ending of the 12 month period. Beginning \_\_\_\_\_  
ending \_\_\_\_\_. In the event that a dollar value is not an appropriate measure of the sales, provide and describe your own measure of the sales of the item(s).

(2) Show your total projected annual sales to the Government under this contract for the contract term, excluding options, for each SIN offered. If you currently hold a Federal Supply Schedule contract for the SIN the total projected annual sales should be based on your most recent 12 months of sales under that contract.

SIN \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 SIN \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 SIN \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

(3) Based on your written discounting policies (standard commercial sales practices in the event you do not have written discounting policies), are the discounts and any concessions which you offer the Government equal to or better than your best price (discount and concessions in any combination) offered to any customer acquiring the same items regardless of quantity or terms and conditions? YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

(4) (a) Based on your written discounting policies (standard commercial sales practices in the event you do not have written discounting policies), provide information as requested for each SIN (or group of SINS for which the information is the same) in accordance with the instructions at Figure 515.4, which is provided in this solicitation for your convenience. The information should be provided in the chart below or in an equivalent format developed by the offeror. Rows should be added to accommodate as many customers as required.

Column 1	Column 2	Column 3	Column 4	Column 5
Customer	Discount	Quantity/Volume	FOB Term	Concessions

(b) Do any deviations from your written policies or standard commercial sales practices disclosed in the above chart ever result in better discounts (lower prices) or concessions than indicated? YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_. If YES, explain deviations in accordance with the instructions at Figure 515.4, which is provided in this solicitation for your convenience.

(5) If you are a dealer/reseller without significant sales to the general public, you should provide manufacturers' information required by paragraphs(1) through (4) above for each item/SIN offered, if the manufacturer's sales under any resulting contract are expected to exceed \$500,000. You must also obtain written authorization from the manufacturer(s) for Government access, at any time before award or before agreeing to a modification, to the manufacturer's sales records for the purpose of verifying the information submitted by the manufacturer. The information is required in order to enable the Government to make a determination that the offered price is fair and reasonable. To expedite the review and processing of offers, you should advise the manufacturer(s) of this requirement. The contracting officer may require the information be submitted on electronic media with commercially available spreadsheet(s). The information may be provided by the manufacturer directly to the Government. If the manufacturer's item(s) is being offered by multiple dealers/resellers, only one copy of the requested information should be submitted to the Government. In addition, you must submit the following information along with a listing of contact information regarding each of the manufacturers whose products and/or services are included in the offer (include the manufacturer's name, address, the manufacturer's contact point, telephone number, and FAX number) for each model offered by SIN:

- (a) Manufacturer's Name.
- (b) Manufacturer's Part Number.
- (c) Dealer's/Reseller's Part Number.
- (d) Product Description.
- (e) Manufacturer's List Price.
- (f) Dealer's/Reseller's percentage discount from list price or net prices.

**(End of Format)**

(c) When the contract contains the basic clause [552.238-80](#) Industrial Funding Fee and Sales Reporting, include the instructions for completing the commercial sales practices format in Figure 515.4-2 in solicitations issued under the MAS program. Offerors are not required to complete the commercial sales practices disclosure for order-level materials (See [subpart 538.72](#)).

#### Figure 515.4 Instructions for Commercial Sales Practices Format

If you responded "yes" to question (3), on the Commercial Sales Practices Format in paragraph (b) of this section, complete the chart in question (4)(a) for the customer(s) who receive your best discount. If you responded "no", complete the chart in question (4)(a) showing your written policies or standard sales practices for all customers or customer categories to whom you sell at a price (discounts and concessions in combination) that is equal to or better than the price(s) offered to the Government under this solicitation or with which the Offeror has a current agreement to sell at a discount which equals or exceeds the discount(s) offered under this solicitation. Such agreement shall be in effect on the date the offer is submitted or contain an effective date during the proposed multiple award schedule contract period. If your offer is lower than your price to other customers or customers categories, you will be aligned with the customer or category of customer that receives your best price for purposes of the Price Reductions clause at 552.238-81. The Government expects you to provide information required by the format in accordance with these instructions that is, to the best of your knowledge and belief, current, accurate, and complete as of 14 calendar days prior to its submission. You must also disclose any changes in your price list(s), discounts and/or discounting policies which occur after the offer is submitted, but before the close of negotiations. If your discount practices vary by model or product line, the discount information should be by model or product line as appropriate. You may limit the number of models or product lines reported to those which exceed 75% of actual historical Government sales (commercial sales may be substituted if Government sales are unavailable) value of the special item number (SIN).

#### Column 1—Identify the Applicable Customer or Category of Customer

A “customer” is any entity, except the Federal Government, which acquires supplies or services from the Offeror. The term customer includes, but is not limited to original equipment manufacturers, value added resellers, state and local Governments, distributors, educational institutions (an elementary, junior high, or degree granting school which maintains a regular faculty and established curriculum and an organized body of students), dealers, national accounts, and end users. In any instance where the Offeror is asked to disclose information for a customer, the Offeror may disclose information by category of customer if the Offeror's discount policies or practices are the same for all customers in the category. (Use a separate line for each customer or category of customer.)

#### Column 2—Identify the Discount

Indicate the best discount (based on your written discounting policies or standard commercial discounting practices if you do not have written discounting policies) at which you sell to the customer or category of customer identified in column 1, without regard to quantity; terms and conditions of the agreements under which the discounts are given; and whether the agreements are written or oral. Net prices or discounts off of other price lists should be expressed as percentage discounts from the price list which is the basis of your offer. If the discount disclosed is a combination of various discounts (prompt payment, quantity, etc.), the percentage should be broken out for each type of discount. If the price lists which are the basis of the discounts given to the customers identified in the chart are different than the price list submitted upon which your offer is based, identify the type or title and date of each price list. The contracting officer may require submission of these price lists. To expedite evaluation, offerors may provide these price lists at the time of submission.

#### Column 3—Identify the Quantity or Volume of Sales

Insert the minimum quantity or sales volume which the identified customer or category of customer must either purchase/order, per order or within a specified period, to earn a discount indicate the time period.



Column 4—Indicate the FOB Delivery Term for Each Identified Customer

See FAR 47.3 for an explanation of FOB delivery terms.

Column 5—Indicate Concessions Regardless of Quantity Granted to the Identified Customer or Category of Customer

Concessions are defined in solicitation clause 552.12-70, Preparation of Offers (Multiple Award Schedule). If the space provided is inadequate, the disclosure should be made on a separate sheet by reference.

If you respond “yes” to question 4(b) in the Commercial Sales Practices Format, provide an explanation of the circumstances under which you deviate from your written policies or standard commercial sales practices disclosed in the chart on the Commercial Sales Practices Format and explain how often they occur. Your explanation should include a discussion of situations that lead to deviations from standard practice, an explanation of how often they occur, and the controls you employ to assure the integrity of your pricing. Examples of typical deviations may include, but are not limited to, one time goodwill discounts to charity organizations or to compensate an otherwise disgruntled customer; a limited sale of obsolete or damaged goods; the sale of sample goods to a new customer, or the sales of prototype goods for testing purposes.

If deviations from your written policies or standard commercial sales practices disclosed in the chart on the Commercial Sales Practices Format are so significant and/or frequent that the Contracting Officer cannot establish whether the price(s) offered is fair and reasonable, then you may be asked to provide additional information. The Contracting Officer may ask for information to demonstrate that you have made substantial sales of the item(s) in the commercial market consistent with the information reflected on the chart on the Commercial Sales Practices Format, a description of the conditions surrounding those sales deviations, or other information that may be necessary in order for the Contracting Officer to determine whether your offered price(s) is fair and reasonable. In cases where additional information is requested the Contracting Officer will target the request in order to limit the submission of data to that needed to establish the reasonableness of the offered price.

(End of Figure)

(d) Use Alternate IV of FAR 52.215-21, Requirements for Cost or Pricing Data or Information Other Than Cost or Pricing Data—Modifications, to provide for submission of information other than cost or pricing data for MAS contracts. To provide for uniformity in requests under the MAS program, insert the following in paragraph (b) of the clause:

- (1) Information required by the clause at 552.238-82, Modifications (Multiple Award Schedule).
- (2) Any additional supporting information requested by the Contracting Officer. The Contracting Officer may require additional supporting information, but only to the extent necessary to determine whether the price(s) offered is fair and reasonable.
- (3) By submitting a request for modification, the Contractor grants the Contracting Officer or an authorized representative the right to examine, at any time before agreeing to a modification, books, records, documents, papers, and other directly pertinent records to verify the pricing, sales and other data related to the supplies or services proposed in order to determine the reasonableness of price(s). Access does not extend to Contractor’s cost or profit information or other data relevant solely to the Contractor’s determination of the prices to be offered in the catalog or marketplace.