

42.1503

contracting officer to be unjustified. The contracting officer shall—

(i) Consider and evaluate a contractor's written explanation for a reduced or an untimely payment when determining whether the reduced or untimely payment is justified; and

(ii) Determine that a history of unjustified reduced or untimely payments has occurred when the contractor has reported three or more occasions of unjustified reduced or untimely payments under a single contract within a 12-month period (see 42.1503(h)(1)(vi) and the evaluation ratings in Table 42-2). The following payment or nonpayment situations are not considered to be unjustified:

(A) There is a contract dispute on performance.

(B) A partial payment is made for amounts not in dispute.

(C) A payment is reduced due to past overpayments.

(D) There is an administrative mistake.

(E) Late performance by the subcontractor leads to later payment by the prime contractor.

(h) Agencies shall not evaluate performance for contracts awarded under Subpart 8.7.

(i) Agencies shall promptly report other contractor information in accordance with 42.1503(h).

[74 FR 31560, July 1, 2009, as amended at 75 FR 53134, Aug. 30, 2010; 75 FR 60260, Sept. 29, 2010; 78 FR 46788, Aug. 1, 2013; 80 FR 26427, May 7, 2015; 80 FR 38298, July 2, 2015; 81 FR 58644, Aug. 25, 2016; 81 FR 91640, Dec. 16, 2016; 81 FR 93486, Dec. 20, 2016; 82 FR 51530, Nov. 6, 2017; 85 FR 62489, Oct. 2, 2020]

42.1503 Procedures.

(a)(1) Agencies shall assign responsibility and management accountability for the completeness of past performance submissions. Agency procedures for the past performance evaluation system shall—

(i) Generally provide for input to the evaluations from the technical office, contracting office, program management office, and, where appropriate, quality assurance and end users of the product or service;

(ii) Identify and assign past performance evaluation roles and responsibilities to those individuals responsible

48 CFR Ch. 1 (10-1-23 Edition)

for preparing and reviewing interim evaluations, if prepared, and final evaluations (e.g., contracting officers, contracting officer representatives, project managers, and program managers). Those individuals identified may obtain information for the evaluation of performance from the program office, administrative contracting office, audit office, end users of the product or service, and any other technical or business advisor, as appropriate; and

(iii) Address management controls and appropriate management reviews of past performance evaluations, to include accountability for documenting past performance on CPARS.

(2) If agency procedures do not specify the individuals responsible for past performance evaluation duties, the contracting officer is responsible for this function.

(3) Interim evaluations may be prepared as required, in accordance with agency procedures.

(b)(1) The evaluation should include a clear, non-technical description of the principal purpose of the contract or order. The evaluation should reflect how the contractor performed. The evaluation should include clear relevant information that accurately depicts the contractor's performance, and be based on objective facts supported by program and contract or order performance data. The evaluations should be tailored to the contract type, size, content, and complexity of the contractual requirements.

(2) Evaluation factors for each assessment shall include, at a minimum, the following:

(i) Technical (quality of product or service).

(ii) Cost control (not applicable for firm-fixed-price or fixed-price with economic price adjustment arrangements).

(iii) Schedule/timeliness.

(iv) Management or business relations.

(v) Small business subcontracting, including reduced or untimely payments to small business subcontractors when 19.702(a) requires a subcontracting plan (as applicable, see Table 42-2).

(vi) Other (as applicable) (e.g., trafficking violations, tax delinquency, failure to report in accordance with

contract terms and conditions, defective cost or pricing data, terminations, suspension and debarments, and failure to comply with limitations on subcontracting).

(3) Evaluation factors may include subfactors.

(4) Each factor and subfactor used shall be evaluated and a supporting narrative provided. Each evaluation factor, as listed in paragraph (b)(2) of this section, shall be rated in accordance with a five scale rating system (*i.e.*, exceptional, very good, satisfactory, marginal, and unsatisfactory). The ratings and narratives must reflect the definitions in the tables 42-1 or 42-2 of this section.

(c)(1) When the contract provides for incentive fees, the incentive-fee contract performance evaluation shall be entered into CPARS.

(2) When the contract provides for award fee, the award fee-contract performance adjectival rating as described in 16.401(e)(3) shall be entered into CPARS.

(d) Agency evaluations of contractor performance, including both negative and positive evaluations, prepared under this subpart shall be provided to the contractor as soon as practicable after completion of the evaluation. The contractor will receive a CPARS-system generated notification when an evaluation is ready for comment. Contractors shall be afforded up to 14 calendar days from the date of notification of availability of the past performance evaluation to submit comments, rebutting statements, or additional information. Agencies shall provide for review at a level above the contracting officer to consider disagreements between the parties regarding the evaluation. The ultimate conclusion on the performance evaluation is a decision of the contracting agency. Copies of the evaluation, contractor response, and review comments, if any, shall be retained as part of the evaluation. These evaluations may be used to support future award decisions, and should therefore be marked "Source Selection Information". Evaluation of Federal Prison Industries (FPI) performance may be used to support a waiver request (see 8.604) when FPI is a mandatory source in accordance with subpart

8.6. The completed evaluation shall not be released to other than Government personnel and the contractor whose performance is being evaluated during the period the information may be used to provide source selection information. Disclosure of such information could cause harm both to the commercial interest of the Government and to the competitive position of the contractor being evaluated as well as impede the efficiency of Government operations. Evaluations used in determining award or incentive fee payments may also be used to satisfy the requirements of this subpart. A copy of the annual or final past performance evaluation shall be provided to the contractor as soon as it is finalized.

(e) Agencies shall require frequent evaluation (*e.g.*, monthly, quarterly) of agency compliance with the reporting requirements in 42.1502, so agencies can readily identify delinquent past performance reports and monitor their reports for quality control.

(f) Agencies shall prepare and submit all past performance evaluations electronically in CPARS at <https://www.cpars.gov>. These evaluations, including any contractor-submitted information (with indication whether agency review is pending), become available for source selection officials not later than 14 days after the date on which the contractor is notified of the evaluation's availability for comment. The Government shall update CPARS with any contractor comments provided after 14 days, as well as any subsequent agency review of comments received. Past performance evaluations for classified contracts and special access programs shall not be reported in CPARS, but will be reported as stated in this subpart and in accordance with agency procedures. Agencies shall ensure that appropriate management and technical controls are in place to ensure that only authorized personnel have access to the data and the information safeguarded in accordance with 42.1503(d).

(g) Agencies shall use the past performance information in CPARS that is within three years (six for construction and architect-engineer contracts) of the completion of performance of

the evaluated contract or order, and information contained in the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS), e.g., terminations for default or cause.

(h) *Other contractor performance information.* (1) Agencies shall ensure information is accurately reported in the FAPIIS module of CPARS within 3 calendar days after a contracting officer—

(i) Issues a final determination that a contractor has submitted defective cost or pricing data;

(ii) Makes a subsequent change to the final determination concerning defective cost or pricing data pursuant to 15.407-1(d);

(iii) Issues a final termination for cause or default notice;

(iv) Makes a subsequent withdrawal or a conversion of a termination for default to a termination for convenience;

(v) Receives a final determination after an administrative proceeding, in accordance with 22.1704(d)(1), that substantiates an allegation of a violation of the trafficking in persons prohibitions in 22.1703(a) and 52.222-50(b); or

(vi) Determines that a contractor has a history of three or more unjustified

reduced or untimely payments to small business subcontractors under a single contract within a 12-month period (see 42.1502(g)(2)).

(2) The information to be posted in accordance with this paragraph (h) is information relating to contractor performance, but does not constitute a “past performance review,” which would be exempted from public availability in accordance with section 3010 of the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2010 (Pub. L. 111-212). Therefore, all such information posted in FAPIIS will be publicly available, unless covered by a disclosure exemption under the Freedom of Information Act (see 9.105-2(b)(2)).

(3) Agencies shall establish CPARS focal points who will register users to report data into the FAPIIS module of CPARS (available at <https://www.cpars.gov>”).

(4) With regard to information that may be covered by a disclosure exemption under the Freedom of Information Act, the contracting officer shall follow the procedures at 9.105-2(b)(2)(iv).

TABLE 42-1—EVALUATION RATINGS DEFINITIONS

| Rating | Definition | Note |
|------------------------|---|--|
| (a) Exceptional | Performance meets contractual requirements and exceeds many to the Government's benefit. The contractual performance of the element or sub-element being evaluated was accomplished with few minor problems for which corrective actions taken by the contractor were highly effective. | To justify an Exceptional rating, identify multiple significant events and state how they were of benefit to the Government. A singular benefit, however, could be of such magnitude that it alone constitutes an Exceptional rating. Also, there should have been NO significant weaknesses identified. |
| (b) Very Good | Performance meets contractual requirements and exceeds some to the Government's benefit. The contractual performance of the element or sub-element being evaluated was accomplished with some minor problems for which corrective actions taken by the contractor were effective. | To justify a Very Good rating, identify a significant event and state how it was a benefit to the Government. There should have been no significant weaknesses identified. |
| (c) Satisfactory | Performance meets contractual requirements. The contractual performance of the element or sub-element contains some minor problems for which corrective actions taken by the contractor appear or were satisfactory. | To justify a Satisfactory rating, there should have been only minor problems, or major problems the contractor recovered from without impact to the contract/order. There should have been NO significant weaknesses identified. A fundamental principle of assigning ratings is that contractors will not be evaluated with a rating lower than Satisfactory solely for not performing beyond the requirements of the contract/order. |

TABLE 42-1—EVALUATION RATINGS DEFINITIONS—Continued

| Rating | Definition | Note |
|--------------------------|---|--|
| (d) Marginal | Performance does not meet some contractual requirements. The contractual performance of the element or sub-element being evaluated reflects a serious problem for which the contractor has not yet identified corrective actions. The contractor's proposed actions appear only marginally effective or were not fully implemented. | To justify Marginal performance, identify a significant event in each category that the contractor had trouble overcoming and state how it impacted the Government. A Marginal rating should be supported by referencing the management tool that notified the contractor of the contractual deficiency (e.g., management, quality, safety, or environmental deficiency report or letter). |
| (e) Unsatisfactory | Performance does not meet most contractual requirements and recovery is not likely in a timely manner. The contractual performance of the element or sub-element contains a serious problem(s) for which the contractor's corrective actions appear or were ineffective. | To justify an Unsatisfactory rating, identify multiple significant events in each category that the contractor had trouble overcoming and state how it impacted the Government. A singular problem, however, could be of such serious magnitude that it alone constitutes an unsatisfactory rating. An Unsatisfactory rating should be supported by referencing the management tools used to notify the contractor of the contractual deficiencies (e.g., management, quality, safety, or environmental deficiency reports, or letters). |

Note 1: Plus or minus signs may be used to indicate an improving (+) or worsening (–) trend insufficient to change the evaluation status.
Note 2: N/A (not applicable) should be used if the ratings are not going to be applied to a particular area for evaluation.

TABLE 42-2—EVALUATION RATINGS DEFINITIONS
 [For the small business subcontracting evaluation factor, when 52.219-9 is used]

| Rating | Definition | Note |
|-----------------------|--|---|
| (a) Exceptional | Exceeded all statutory goals or goals as negotiated. Had exceptional success with initiatives to assist, promote, and utilize small business (SB), small disadvantaged business (SDB), women-owned small business (WOSB), HUBZone small business, veteran-owned small business (VOSB) and service disabled veteran owned small business (SDVOSB). Complied with FAR 52.219-8, Utilization of Small Business Concerns. Exceeded any other small business participation requirements incorporated in the contract/order, including the use of small businesses in mission critical aspects of the program. Went above and beyond the required elements of the subcontracting plan and other small business requirements of the contract/order. Completed and submitted Individual Subcontract Reports and/or Summary Subcontract Reports in an accurate and timely manner. Did not have a history of three or more unjustified reduced or untimely payments to small business subcontractors within a 12-month period. | To justify an Exceptional rating, identify multiple significant events and state how they were a benefit to small business utilization. A singular benefit, however, could be of such magnitude that it constitutes an Exceptional rating. Small businesses should be given meaningful and innovative work directly related to the contract, and opportunities should not be limited to indirect work such as cleaning offices, supplies, landscaping, etc. Also, there should have been no significant weaknesses identified |

TABLE 42-2—EVALUATION RATINGS DEFINITIONS—Continued
 [For the small business subcontracting evaluation factor, when 52.219-9 is used]

| Rating | Definition | Note |
|--------------------------|--|---|
| (b) Very Good | Met all of the statutory goals or goals as negotiated. Had significant success with initiatives to assist, promote and utilize SB, SDB, WOSB, HUBZone, VOSB, and SDVOSB. Complied with FAR 52.219-8, Utilization of Small Business Concerns. Met or exceeded any other small business participation requirements incorporated in the contract/order, including the use of small businesses in mission critical aspects of the program. Endeavored to go above and beyond the required elements of the subcontracting plan. Completed and submitted Individual Subcontract Reports and/or Summary Subcontract Reports in an accurate and timely manner. Did not have a history of three or more unjustified reduced or untimely payments to small business subcontractors within a 12-month period. | To justify a Very Good rating, identify a significant event and state how it was a benefit to small business utilization. Small businesses should be given meaningful and innovative opportunities to participate as subcontractors for work directly related to the contract, and opportunities should not be limited to indirect work such as cleaning offices, supplies, landscaping, etc. There should be no significant weaknesses identified |
| (c) Satisfactory | Demonstrated a good faith effort to meet all of the negotiated subcontracting goals in the various socio-economic categories for the current period. Complied with FAR 52.219-8, Utilization of Small Business Concerns. Met any other small business participation requirements included in the contract/order. Fulfilled the requirements of the subcontracting plan included in the contract/order. Completed and submitted Individual Subcontract Reports and/or Summary Subcontract Reports in an accurate and timely manner. Did not have a history of three or more unjustified reduced or untimely payments to small business subcontractors within a 12-month period. | To justify a Satisfactory rating, there should have been only minor problems, or major problems the contractor has addressed or taken corrective action. There should have been no significant weaknesses identified. A fundamental principle of assigning ratings is that contractors will not be assessed a rating lower than Satisfactory solely for not performing beyond the requirements of the contract/order |
| (d) Marginal | Deficient in meeting key subcontracting plan elements. Deficient in complying with FAR 52.219-8, Utilization of Small Business Concerns, and any other small business participation requirements in the contract/order. Did not submit Individual Subcontract Reports and/or Summary Subcontract Reports in an accurate or timely manner. Failed to satisfy one or more requirements of a corrective action plan currently in place; however, does show an interest in bringing performance to a satisfactory level and has demonstrated a commitment to apply the necessary resources to do so. Required a corrective action plan. Did not have a history of three or more unjustified reduced or untimely payments to small business subcontractors within a 12-month period. | To justify a Marginal rating, identify a significant event that the contractor had trouble overcoming and how it impacted small business utilization. A Marginal rating should be supported by referencing the actions taken by the Government that notified the contractor of the contractual deficiency. |
| (e) Unsatisfactory | Noncompliant with FAR 52.219-8 and 52.219-9, and any other small business participation requirements in the contract/order. Did not submit Individual Subcontract Reports and/or Summary Subcontract Reports in an accurate or timely manner. Showed little interest in bringing performance to a satisfactory level or is generally uncooperative. Required a corrective action plan. Had a history of three or more unjustified reduced or untimely payments to small business subcontractors within a 12-month period. | To justify an Unsatisfactory rating, identify multiple significant events that the contractor had trouble overcoming and state how it impacted small business utilization. A singular problem, however, could be of such serious magnitude that it alone constitutes an Unsatisfactory rating. An Unsatisfactory rating should be supported by referencing the actions taken by the Government to notify the contractor of the deficiencies. When an Unsatisfactory rating is justified, the contracting officer must consider whether the contractor made a good faith effort to comply with the requirements of the subcontracting plan required by FAR 52.219-9 and follow the procedures outlined in FAR 52.219-16, Liquidated Damages-Subcontracting Plan. |

Federal Acquisition Regulation

42.1701

[78 FR 46788, Aug. 1, 2013, as amended at 79 FR 31201, May 30, 2014; 80 FR 4989, Jan. 29, 2015; 81 FR 58644, Aug. 25, 2016; 81 FR 91640, Dec. 16, 2016; 81 FR 93486, Dec. 20, 2016; 82 FR 51776, Nov. 8, 2017; 84 FR 47866, Sept. 10, 2019; 85 FR 11768, Feb. 27, 2020]

42.1504 Contract clause.

Insert the clause at 52.242-5, Payments to Small Business Subcontractors, in all solicitations and contracts containing the clause at 52.219-9, Small Business Subcontracting Plan.

[81 FR 93488, Dec. 20, 2016]

Subpart 42.16—Small Business Contract Administration

42.1601 General.

The contracting officer shall make every reasonable effort to respond in writing within 30 days to any written request to the contracting officer from a small business concern with respect to a contract administration matter. In the event the contracting officer cannot respond to the request within the 30-day period, the contracting officer shall, within the period, transmit to the contractor a written notification of the specific date the contracting officer expects to respond. This provision shall not apply to a request for a contracting officer decision under 41 U.S.C. chapter 71, Contract Disputes.

[60 FR 48230, Sept. 18, 1995, as amended at 79 FR 24213, Apr. 29, 2014]

Subpart 42.17—Forward Pricing Rate Agreements

SOURCE: 62 FR 51258, Sept. 30, 1997, unless otherwise noted.

42.1701 Procedures.

(a) Negotiation of forward pricing rate agreements (FPRA's) may be requested by the contracting officer or the contractor or initiated by the administrative contracting officer (ACO). In determining whether or not to establish such an agreement, the ACO should consider whether the benefits to be derived from the agreement are commensurate with the effort of establishing and monitoring it. Normally, FPRA's should be negotiated only with

contractors having a significant volume of Government contract proposals. The cognizant contract administration agency shall determine whether an FPRA will be established.

(b) The ACO shall obtain the contractor's forward pricing rate proposal and require that it include cost or pricing data that are accurate, complete, and current as of the date of submission (but see 15.407-3(c)). The ACO shall invite the cognizant contract auditor and contracting offices having a significant interest to participate in developing a Government objective and in the negotiations. Upon completing negotiations, the ACO shall prepare a price negotiation memorandum (PNM) (see 15.406-3) and forward copies of the PNM and FPRA to the cognizant auditor and to all contracting offices that are known to be affected by the FPRA.

(c) The FPRA shall provide specific terms and conditions covering expiration, application, and data requirements for systematic monitoring to ensure the validity of the rates. The agreement shall provide for cancellation at the option of either party and shall require the contractor to submit to the ACO and to the cognizant contract auditor any significant change in cost or pricing data used to support the FPRA.

(d) When an FPRA is invalid, the contractor should submit and negotiate a new proposal to reflect the changed conditions. If an FPRA has not been established or has been invalidated, the ACO will issue a forward pricing rate recommendation (FPRR) to buying activities with documentation to assist negotiators. In the absence of an FPRA or FPRR, the ACO shall include support for rates utilized.

(e) The ACO may negotiate continuous updates to the FPRA. The FPRA will provide specific terms and conditions covering notification, application, and data requirements for systematic monitoring to ensure the validity of the rates.

[62 FR 51258, Sept. 30, 1997, as amended at 75 FR 53149, Aug. 30, 2010]