



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Departmental Management

Management Services

Procurement Operations Division

Reporters Building 300 7th Street, SW Suite 353 Washington, DC 20024

ACQUISITION OPERATING PROCEDURE (AOP)

FROM: Shawn E. Kerkes Head of Contracting Activity Designee (with signature) SEP 27 2012

SUBJECT: AOP No. 2: Federal Acquisition Certification for Contracting Officer Representative (FAC-COR)

PURPOSE: The purpose of this Acquisition Operating Procedure (AOP) is to provide supplemental procedures for the Federal Acquisition Certification for Contracting Officer Representative (FAC-COR).

REVISIONS: The AOP is revising the information in the Request the FAC-COR and Training - Continuous Learning Cycle. This replaces AOP No. 3, dated April 24, 2012.

AUTHORITIES: FAR 1.602-2, Office of Federal Procurement Policy, memorandum dated September 6, 2011, Revisions to the FAC-COR; and Agriculture Acquisition Regulation Number 85, Acquisition Workforce Training, Delegation and Tracking System, dated May 9, 2008.

FAC-COR CERTIFICATION:

- a. FAC-COR Certification is an assurance that the individual has the experience, education and training plus personal factors such as business acumen, judgment, character, reputation, and ethics to perform selected COR duties.
b. The FAC-COR will be issued to those individuals that will serve as a COR against a designated contract.

FAC-COR TRAINING, EXPERIENCE AND CONTRACT RISK:

Training should cover COR roles and responsibilities as well as fundamental contract procedures, rules and regulations. The initial training must include the basic COR course.

Table with 5 columns: Level, Initial Training, Experience, Contract Risk, Training Every 2-Years from the Certification Date. Rows include Level I (8 hours, 0 year, Low-risk contracts), Level II (40 hours, 1 year, moderate to high complexity), and Level III (60 hours, 2 years, significant program management).

◆ **FAC-COR REQUEST:**

- a. All requests for a FAC-COR Certification must be submitted through the Federal Acquisition Institute Training Application System (FAITAS) found at www.fai.gov.
- b. The Application for Federal Acquisition Certification- COR (Attachment 1) must be included with the request in FAITAS.
- c. Review the Certification requirements at www.fai.gov, click **Certification**, and scroll to **FAC-COR** to view the certification requirements, FAQs, competencies, etc.
- d. Register at www.fai.gov, click **FAITAS v.2**. If you have an account, enter the ID/ password or click the “**Do you have an account, register here**” link to register. (Note: Your Supervisor must also register if the name does not appear in the “Supervisor” field.
- e. In FAITAS, v.2, under **Help**, click **User Guides** to select the appropriate guide for the step-by-step instructions to complete the request, and the Modules.

◆ **TRAINING - CONTINUOUS LEARNING CYCLE:**

- a. It is the COR’s responsibility to ensure that the required continuous learning point (training) is completed within the 2-year cycle.
- b. The FAI continuous learning cycle is a fixed 2-year cycle based on the issuance date of the FAC-COR Certification. For example, if an individual is FAC-COR certified on **3/5/2012**, then the 2-year continuous learning cycle will be **3/6/2012** to **3/5/2014**. The individual must complete the continuous learning (training) within this period.
- c. CORs should not repeat the same or similar continuous learning within a 4-year cycle. CORs should take other courses relevant to the work to be performed as a COR under the contract. Training that is repeated within the 4-year cycle will not be applied to retain the FAC-COR Certification.
- d. Attachment 2 is a list of recommended continuous training. Continuous learning may be completed via the Internet, televised broadcasts, classroom, etc. See the “Authority” item in this procedure for the various types.
- e. Copies of the training certificates/transcript completed outside FAITAS v.2 must be submitted through the Continuous Learning Module in FAITAS v.2.

◆ **SUPERVISOR OF THE COR:**

- a. Supervisors must ensure that designated individuals with the technical responsibilities and duties for their program areas are fully trained and qualified to help alleviate possible delays in carrying out the contractual requirements. By designating an individual to be a COR, the supervisor is confirming the qualifications of the individual.
- b. Supervisors should designate individuals with adequate technical and management experience to accommodate the complexities or visibility of the contract. Supervisors should assess the COR’s experience as it relates to the type of contract the COR will be managing to determine if additional training is needed, e.g., performance-based acquisition, earned value management, incentive contracts, green purchasing.

◆ **COR DELEGATION LETTER:**

- a. After the individual receives the FAC-COR Certification, the appropriate Contracting Officer will issue, in writing, the COR Delegation Letter that outlines the duties the COR may performed under the contract.

Application for Federal Acquisition Certification – COR

(Submit with Certification Request in FAITAS)

PART A – EMPLOYEE INFORMATION

Name (Last, First, Middle Initial): _____
 Division/Branch/Address: _____
(Ex: OCIO-ITSD-CRMB, 2150 Centre Ave, Bldg A, Suite 45, Ft Collins, CO 80526)
 Title: _____ Phone: _____ Email: _____

PART B – COR EXPERIENCE

Provide a Narrative of Experience while serving as a COR *or* attach a Resume. The Narrative/Resume must show the years (*Dates from/to, project title, contract complexity/type*) of experience served as COR.

PART C – CONTRACTING OFFICER & CONTRACT REFERENCE

1. Name of the Contracting Officer at USDA Departmental Management managing the existing contract or that will manage the upcoming requirement/project.
2. Provide the existing contract number/project name and the name of the COR/COR being replaced.

PART D – COMPETENCIES AND ALIGNED SKILLS

Technical Competencies and Aligned Skills <i>(check all applicable competencies/skills)</i>	
<p>Acquisition Planning:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Document Sources- Assist to determine and properly document whether a source selection plan is needed.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Methods of Payment- Assist in selecting payment method to minimize the Government's overhead.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Contract Financing- Assist in determining the need for and method of Government financing.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Unpriced Contracts- Assist in preparing unpriced orders and contracts.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Recurring Requirements- Assist in determining whether and how to provide for recurring requirements.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Pricing Arrangements- Assist in selecting the most appropriate pricing arrangements to solicit.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Compliance with FAR Guidelines- Assist in identifying applicable FAR guidelines.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Determine Need for EVM- Mitigate potential</p>	<p><i>(-cont-) Acquisition Planning</i></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Task & Delivery Order Contracts- Suggest ordering vehicles when submitting work package to request work.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Strategic Planning- Advise on developing and implementing strategies to meet mission requirements.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Market Research</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Market Research- Conduct, collect apply, and understand the market place/requirement to provide Sources for the supply/service; and the terms & conditions under which those goods/services are sold to the public.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Sources Information- Gather information of potential sources of an acquisition, for commercial items, and the terms & conditions for which the sources sell the goods and/or services involved.</p>

problems with cost, schedule, and technical risks.

Defining Government Requirements in Commercial/Non-Commercial Terms

- [] **Statements of Work-** Prepare statements of work, SOOs, PWS and other related documents.
- [] **Needs Analysis and Requirements Documents-** Perform an analysis, based on a standard methodology to identify requirements and obligations to assist in the developing requirement/documents.
- [] **Acquisition Strategy-** Assist the CO with developing an appropriate acquisition strategy.

PreAward Communication

- [] **Publicizing Proposed Acquisitions-** Recommend additional methods of publicizing, when appropriate.
- [] **Subcontracting Requirements-** Recommend requirements for subcontracting or make-or-buy situations.
- [] **Solicitation Preparation-** Assist in the preparation of a written solicitation, providing guidance as needed.
- [] **Pre-Quote/Pre-Bid/Pre-Proposal Conferences-** Assist with the pre-quote, pre-bid, or pre-proposal conference.
- [] **Amending/Cancelling Solicitations-** Provide input for amendments/cancellation of a solicitation, when it is in the best interest of the Government and/or Agency.

Technical Analysis (Evaluation) of Proposals

- [] **Evaluate Non-Price Factors-** Apply non-price factors in evaluating quotations, proposals, and past performance.
- [] **Pricing Information from Offerors-** Assist in determining the pricing information required from offerors.
- [] **Evaluation Documentation-** Ability to clearly document reasoning behind proposed evaluation.

Negotiation

- [] **Negotiation Strategy-** Assist in preparing a negotiation strategy to maximize the ability to obtain best value.
- [] **Discussions/Negotiations-** Assist in negotiating an agreement on cost/price, terms and conditions.
- [] **Determining Capability-** Assist in determining and documenting the capability of a firm to effectively perform the terms and conditions of the contract.

Contract Management

- [] **Contract Administration Planning and Orientations-** Define the COR roles/responsibilities by knowing the terms and conditions to which they are assigned; and participate in post-award orientation meetings to review contract milestones and responsibilities.

(-cont-) Contract Management

- [] **Contract Modification and Adjustment-** Request and recommend contract modifications or adjustments and provide the appropriate request documents to the CO.
- [] **Work Order Management-** Submit work package to request work under the contract.

Performance Management

- [] **Performance Metrics-** Monitor performance by evaluating actual performance processes, workflow requirements, and outputs with pre-determined goals.
- [] **Performance Management-** Monitor contract performance and recommend to the CO actions related to delays in contract performance or need to stop work, and document past performance by accurately characterizing the contractor's actual performance.
- [] **Financial Management-** Monitor the contractor's financial progress and assist with contract enforcement; technical cost, schedule and performance. Review contractor payment requests, review interim invoices (cost reimbursement, LH and T&M contracts) to make sure charges are commensurate with observed performance. Report any discrepancies in invoices to the CO with supporting documentation of representation.
- [] **Contract Reporting-** Monitor and verify contract expenditures, anticipated funding issues or over runs, contract schedule compliance and anticipated schedule delays, contract technical performance and compliance with terms and conditions of the contract to the CO in an efficient and timely manner.
- [] **Inspection and Acceptance-** Inspect and accept deliveries/services and monitor services for conformance with contract/order/agreement terms and conditions to accept or reject. Ensure compliance and completion by the Contractor of all required operations, including the preparation of the any forms or equivalent which shall be authenticated and certified by the COR that the services/supplies have been received and are acceptable. Process inspection report to support payment and maintain documentation of all inspections performed including disposition of the results.
- [] **Specialized Requirements-** Perform contract surveillance and ensure contractor compliance with environmental, health and safety issues for the special requirements inherent in a hazardous material, services contracts, and construction contracts.

PART E- FAITAS ATTACHMENTS

(Attach the documents below in FAITAS)

- Resume: *Must show years (Dates from/to, project title, contract complexity/type) of experience served as COR (attach under Experience)*
- FAC-COR Application *(attach under Experience)*
- FAC-COR certified by another Agency *(attach under supporting Documentation)*

PART F - CERTIFICATION

I certify that the individual above possesses the core Technical and Professional Business Competencies required for Contracting Officer's Representative (COR) that forms the foundation for the required knowledge, skills, and abilities to effectively perform as a COR.

Print Name of Director/Branch Chief: _____

Print Title: _____ Phone: _____

Signature of Director/Branch Chief: _____ Date: _____

RECOMMENDED CONTINUOUS TRAINING COURSES

The Federal Acquisition Institute Training Application System (FAITAS) of the Federal Acquisition Institute (FAI) found at <http://www.fai.gov/> offers online and classroom courses, which are “free of charge.” The list below is not inclusive. Commercial vendors, colleges and universities, etc. may offer other similar related training opportunities pertinent roles of the COR and the acquisition process.

Market Research for Technical Personnel	Performance-Based Payment Overview
Writing Performance Work Statements	Past Performance Information
Writing Statement of Work	Green Purchasing
Cost Estimating for Technical Personnel	Contract Property Fundamentals
Developing Independent Government Cost Estimates	Performance-Based Service Acquisition
Competition Requirements	Managing Performance Based Service Contracts
Evaluating a Contractor's Performance	Strategic Sourcing Overview
COR with a Mission Focus	Commercial Item Pricing
Contracting Officer's Representative Course	Small Business Program Contracting
Overview of Acquisition Ethics	Technical Planning
Contracting for the Rest of Us	Government Contract Law
Technical Review	Contracting Organizational Conflict of Interest
Scheduling	Competition in Contracting Act
Work Breakdown Structure	Fundamental of System Acquisition Management
Best Value Source Section Using Tradeoffs	Intermediate System Acquisition
Federal Appropriation Law	Progress Payments
Risk Management	Program Manager Course
Information Technology Acquisition	Software Acquisition Management
Incentive Contracts	Enterprise Life Cycle Logistics Management
Task and Delivery Order Contracting	Information Systems Acquisition
Terminating Contracts	Construction Contracting
Types of Contracts	Facilities Engineering
Earned Value Management	Architect and Engineer Contracting
Risk Analysis and Management	Project Management
Contractor Proposal Analysis	Changes Under Government Contracts
Acquisition of Commercial Items	Cost Risk Analysis
Contract Source Selection	Cost and Price Analysis
Patent, Technical Data and Computer Software	Introduction to Earned Value Management
Contract Management: Strategies for Mission Success	Interagency Acquisition Basics
Service Contract Act Overview	Contract Claims
Software Cost Estimating	Construction Claims
Forecasting Technique	Rates
Analyzing Contract Cost	Value Engineering
Enterprise Integration Overview	Introduction to Lean Enterprise Concepts
Technical Planning	Quality Assurance Auditing
COR Workshop	Ethics in Federal Contracting
COR/COTR Refresher	Managing IT Projects
Prompt Payment Act and Voucher Examination	Managing Project Quality
Antideficiency Act	Procurement for Project Managers
Customer Service Skills and Techniques	