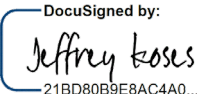




2/25/2021

Acquisition Alert AA-2021-01

MEMORANDUM FOR THE GSA ACQUISITION WORKFORCE

FROM: JEFFREY A. KOSES 
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SENIOR PROCUREMENT EXECUTIVE
OFFICE OF ACQUISITION POLICY (MV)

SUBJECT: Contractor Self-Assessments

1. What is the purpose of this Acquisition Alert?

The purpose of this Acquisition Alert (AA) is to provide guidance for contracting officers when requesting that contractors provide a self-assessment that can be used for reporting in the Contractor Performance Assessment System (CPARS).

2. What are some of the reasons why a contracting officer may request a self-assessment from a contractor?

If you have ever been a supervisor for a large number of employees you know the benefits of having employees provide self assessments prior to finalizing annual assessments. A contractor's self-assessment serves a similar purpose.

Contractor self-assessments can save time while allowing contractors the opportunity to make their case about their performance. Getting the contractor's point of view early on in the process may reduce the back and forth during the 60 day period contractors have to respond to a CPARS notification following the Assessing Official's evaluation in the system.

A contractor actively tracking its performance may have fewer performance

issues. If nothing else, editing someone else's work is much easier and faster than creating an evaluation from scratch.

3. How should a contracting officer request this information from contractors?

Contracting officers may request, but not require, contractor performance self-assessment information in the post-award phase. The contract kickoff meeting is a great time for the contracting officer to have the initial discussion about the request for a contractor performance self-assessment so that the contracting officer gets the full benefits of having the contractor tracking performance and making them more likely to self-correct performance issues. You may also use this process for on-going contracts.

Allowing the contracting officer to consider contractors self-assessments alongside contracting officer representative (COR) reports is a good practice in evaluating contractor performance.

The contractor should not charge for providing a self-assessment.

A sample letter for contracting officers to use for requesting a self-assessment can be found in [Attachment A](#).

4. What should a contractor include in the self-assessment?

We want to receive the self-assessment from our contractors in the same format we need to enter it into CPARS. This is why Attachment A mirrors the required sections¹ in CPARS to include:

- Technical (quality of product or service).
- Cost control (as applicable).
- Schedule or timeliness.
- Management or business relations.
- Small business subcontracting (as applicable).

¹ See FAR 42.1503(b)(2)

- Other (as applicable) (e.g., tax delinquency, defective cost or pricing data, terminations, suspensions and debarments).

5. How should a disagreement with the contractor's performance self-assessment and the contracting officer's past performance evaluation be handled?

- Any feedback the contractor provides on their past performance is only for informational purposes.
- The contracting officer can utilize this information as a "discussion avenue" with the contractor and it should not negate or take the place of the contracting officer's independent assessment.
- There is no requirement for the contracting officer to have discussions with the contractor if there is a disagreement with the contractor self-assessment and contracting officer's past performance evaluation. Contracting officer's should follow the guidance in FAR 42.1503(d) when handling disagreements between the parties regarding the past performance evaluation.
- The contracting officer makes the determination to adopt, respond, or rebut the contractor self-assessment.

6. How frequently should a Contracting Officer request this information from contractors?

The contracting officer should align the contractors self assessment with the past performance evaluations required by FAR 42.1502. Typically, this would be requested on an annual basis and at the time the work under a contract or order is completed. Prior to the official agency evaluation of contractor performance in CPARS, it is best practice for the contracting officer to schedule a meeting with the contractor to collaboratively review the contractor performance self-assessment. This is not a substitute for ongoing communication that should occur throughout the contract between the parties, especially regarding any improvements needed to maintain satisfactory performance. [Attachment B](#) identifies a sample workflow that contracting activities could follow.

7. Where can I get more information?

More information on past performance techniques can be found on the [GSA Acquisition Portal](#). For questions regarding this AA, contact Clarence Harrison, GSA Acquisition Policy Division, at GSARPolicy@gsa.gov.

Attachments

[Attachment A - Sample Letter](#)

[Attachment B - Sample Workflow](#)



Color coding of this template is as follows:

BLACK - standard text

BLUE - text that must be filled in by acquisition team

[Date]

[Contractor's Name]

[Contractor's Street Address]

[Contractor's City, State and Zip Code]

Subject: Contractor Performance Self-Assessment

Dear [Contractor's POC name],

GSA invites [Contractor's Name] to submit via email, their self-identified ratings and assessments for the relevant period of performance to the contracting officer and/or contracting officer's representative by [date] for [contract number]. The most helpful contractor performance self-assessments include the same information found in FAR 42.1503(b)(2), including schedule, management, subcontracting, and cost control, as applicable.

GSA will review the self-assessment information and will consider whether or not to use any or all of the information provided for the official agency evaluation of contractor performance entered in CPARS.

While this contractor performance self-assessment is optional and for informational purposes only, GSA's objective in offering this opportunity is to ensure a collaborative process fostering more effective communication.

Prior to GSA entering the official agency evaluation of contractor performance in CPARS, a meeting may be scheduled with [Contractor's

[Name\]](#) to collaboratively review the contractor performance self-assessment.

In accordance with FAR 42.1503(d), contractors will still be afforded up to 14 calendar days from the CPARS notification of availability of the agency past performance evaluation to submit comments or additional information.

If you have any questions, please contact me by phone at [\[Enter Phone number\]](#), or by email at [\[Enter Email address\]](#).

[\[Enter Contracting Officer's Name\]](#)
Contracting Officer

Contractor Performance Self-Assessment Sample Workflow

Past performance evaluations are required annually per FAR 42.1502, and this requirement is applicable to all agencies. The official ratings should be written, reviewed, and finalized within 120 calendar days of the end of each performance period (see the [CPARS Guidance](#) and [CPARS User Manual](#)). In order to assist with this process, the contracting officer (CO) may request that contractors provide an optional self-assessment for the relevant period of performance. See the sample workflow below.

60 days before Day 1 of the 120 day time limit:

The contracting officer (CO) sends out the Intent to Exercise the next option to the contractor.

The contract specialist (CS) notifies the contracting officer's representative (COR) or agency assessing official to get started on the Contractor Performance Assessment Reporting Systems (CPARS) assessment for the current period.

The CO sends out the sample language in [Attachment A](#) via email to the contractor to request the optional contractor performance self-assessment for the performance period.

30 days before Day 1 of the 120 day time limit:

The contractor should email the optional contractor performance self-assessment information back to the CO and COR.

Prior to the CO or agency assessing official entering the official evaluation of contractor performance in CPARS, a meeting will be scheduled with the contractor to collaboratively review the optional contractor performance self-assessment.

Days 1-30:

The COR or agency assessing official inputs data from the optional contractor

performance self-assessment, as appropriate, and the Government assessment into CPARS.

Days 30-90:

The CO completes their assessment and the CPARS system sends the contractor a notice that the evaluation is available for comment. The contractor can submit comments on the CPARS assessment up to 60 days following the CO's evaluation (see CPARS Guidance). Evaluation information, including any comments submitted, become available for Government source selection officials after the first 14 days (see FAR 42.1503(b)).

Days 90-105:

The CO reviews contractor comments and closes the CPARS assessment. However, if the contractor disagrees with the official agency past performance assessment, the CO does not close the assessment but sends it to the agency reviewing official instead.

Days 105-120:

The CO closes the past performance assessment or if applicable the agency reviewing official closes the past performance assessment.