




February 20, 2014

MEMORANDUM FOR FAS ACQUISITION ACTIVITIES

FROM: THOMAS A. SHARPE, JR.   
COMMISSIONER  
FEDERAL ACQUISITION SERVICE

SUBJECT: Enhancing Proper Procurement Controls and the  
Contracting Officer's Autonomy within the  
Procurement Function

On June 4, 2013, the Office of Inspector General (OIG) issued its report, *Improper Management Intervention in Multiple Award Schedule Contracts*, in which the OIG found instances of improper management intervention that undermined the authority of contracting officers and resulted in inflated pricing and/or unfavorable contract terms. In response to that audit report, I provided that it will be my top priority to ensure that focus would be placed on proper business and procurement controls.

Contracting Officers are given authority on behalf of FAS to create the acquisition solutions that comply with the acquisition framework we must work within to provide our customers the right solutions at the right price. As Contracting Officers, your sound business decisions not only serve our customers, but ensure we are accountable to the public at large. Management's role is to ensure proper implementation of delegated procurement authorities, proper training, support and oversight of the acquisition workforce, and ensuring the procurement process works effectively and with integrity. Together, our acquisition workforce and managers make a formidable team.

In the last 6 months, FAS has been working diligently to improve our procurement controls. Procurement controls have been increased through the use of Procurement Management Reviews to identify best practices and close skill gaps; increased training, development and management of the acquisition workforce; increased exposure of the acquisition workforce to different FAS offerings; and increased focused on strengthening our acquisition workforce's knowledge and skills through certifications such as FAC-C, FAC-COR and FAC P-PM. To continue this progress, I have also identified moving the FAS procurement controls posture to a "GREEN" rating as a significant focus in the FY14 FAS Performance Plans

I have pledged my continued support of the acquisition workforce as we continue invest in FAS as America's best buyers. I am committed to supporting all of the Contracting

Officers which exercise their independent authority and judgment to make awards decisions on behalf of the Government. Contracting Officers have a large degree of independence in their contracting decisions and judgments and should not be pressured to execute any contracting action which is not in the best interest of the Government. It is important that acquisition personnel report concerns of inappropriate pressure or undue influence to the supervisory chain and/or SPE and OIG, as appropriate, "to remain vigilant in ensuring that this agency conducts its acquisitions at the highest level of quality and integrity."

To assist the acquisition workforce in documenting stakeholder interest in contracting actions, a Acquisition Policy and Procedure directive will be issued that will provide guidance on what stakeholder interests should be documented, where it should be filed in the contract, where to submit documents that are required to be referred to other offices, and who to contact in situations of interference.

I'm proud of the work you do and how far we've come. If you have questions, comments or concerns please don't hesitate to post them to my Chatter page.