

(d)(1) The Comptroller General of the United States, an appropriate Inspector General appointed under section 3 or 8G of the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.), or an authorized representative of either of the foregoing officials shall have access to and right to—

(i) Examine any of the Contractor's or any subcontractors' records that pertain to, and involve transactions relating to, this contract; and

(ii) Interview any officer or employee regarding such transactions.

(e)(1) Notwithstanding the requirements of the clauses in paragraphs (a), (b), and (c), of this clause, the Contractor is not required to flow down any FAR clause in a subcontract for commercial items, other than—

(i) *Paragraph (d) of this clause.* This paragraph flows down to all subcontracts, except the authority of the Inspector General under paragraph (d)(1)(ii) does not flow down; and

(ii) *Those clauses listed in this paragraph (e)(1).* Unless otherwise indicated below, the extent of the flow down shall be as required by the clause—

(A) 52.203–13, Contractor Code of Business Ethics and Conduct (Dec 2008) (Pub. L. 110–252, Title VI, Chapter 1 (41 U.S.C. 251 note)).

(B) 52.219–8, Utilization of Small Business Concerns (May 2004) (15 U.S.C. 637(d)(2) and (3)), in all subcontracts that offer further subcontracting opportunities. If the subcontract (except subcontracts to small business concerns) exceeds \$550,000 (\$1,000,000 for construction of any public facility), the subcontractor must include 52.219–8 in lower tier subcontracts that offer subcontracting opportunities.

(C) 52.222–26, Equal Opportunity (Mar 2007) (E.O. 11246).

(D) 52.222–35, Equal Opportunity for Special Disabled Veterans, Veterans of the Vietnam Era, and Other Eligible Veterans (Sept 2006) (38 U.S.C. 4212).

(E) 52.222–36, Affirmative Action for Workers with Disabilities (June 1998) (29 U.S.C. 793).

(F) 52.222–39, Notification of Employee Rights Concerning Payment of Union Dues or Fees (Dec 2004) (E.O. 13201).

(G) 52.222–41, Service Contract Act of 1965 (Nov 2007) (41 U.S.C. 351, *et seq.*).

(H) 52.222–50, Combating Trafficking in Persons (Feb 2009) (22 U.S.C. 7104(g)).

(I) 2.222–51, Exemption from Application of the Service Contract Act to Contracts for Maintenance, Calibration, or Repair of Certain

Equipment-Requirements (Nov 2007) (41 U.S.C. 351, *et seq.*).

(J) 52.222–53, Exemption from Application of the Service Contract Act to Contracts for Certain Services-Requirements (Feb 2009) (41 U.S.C. 351, *et seq.*).

(K) 52.222–54, Employment Eligibility Verification (Jan 2009).

(L) 52.226–6, Promoting Excess Food Donation to Nonprofit Organizations. (Mar 2009) (Pub. L. 110–247). Flow down required in accordance with paragraph (e) of FAR clause 52.226–6.

(M) 52.247–64, Preference for Privately Owned U.S.-Flag Commercial Vessels (Feb 2006) (46 U.S.C. Appx. 1241(b) and 10 U.S.C. 2631). Flow down required in accordance with paragraph (d) of FAR clause 52.247–64.

■ 8. Amend section 52.214–26 by adding Alternate I to read as follows:

52.214–26 Audit and Records—Sealed Bidding.

* * * * *

Alternate I (MAR 2009). As prescribed in 14.201–7(a)(2) substitute the following paragraphs (c) and (e) for paragraphs (c) and (e) of the basic clause:

(c) The Comptroller General of the United States, an appropriate Inspector General appointed under section 3 or 8G of the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.), or an authorized representative of either of the foregoing officials, shall have access to and the right to—

(1) Examine any of the Contractor's or any subcontractors' records that pertain to, and involve transactions relating to, this contract or a subcontract hereunder; and

(2) Interview any officer or employee regarding such transactions.

(e)(1) Except as provided in paragraph (e)(2), the Contractor shall insert a clause containing the provisions of this clause, including this paragraph (e), in all subcontracts.

(2) The authority of the Inspector General under paragraph (c)(2) of this clause does not flow down to subcontracts.

■ 9. Amend section 52.215–2 by adding Alternate I to read as follows:

52.215–2 Audit and Records—Negotiation.

* * * * *

Alternate I (MAR 2009). As prescribed in 15.209(b)(2), substitute the following paragraphs (d)(1) and (g) for paragraphs (d)(1) and (g) of the basic clause:

(d) *Comptroller General or Inspector General.* (1) The Comptroller General of the United States, an appropriate Inspector General appointed under section 3 or 8G of the Inspector General

Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.), or an authorized representative of either of the foregoing officials, shall have access to and the right to—

(i) Examine any of the Contractor's or any subcontractor's records that pertain to and involve transactions relating to this contract or a subcontract hereunder; and

(ii) Interview any officer or employee regarding such transactions.

(g)(1) Except as provided in paragraph (g)(2) of this clause, the Contractor shall insert a clause containing all the terms of this clause, including this paragraph (g), in all subcontracts under this contract. The clause may be altered only as necessary to identify properly the contracting parties and the Contracting Officer under the Government prime contract.

(2) The authority of the Inspector General under paragraph (d)(1)(ii) of this clause does not flow down to subcontracts.

[FR Doc. E9–7029 Filed 3–30–09; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION

NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION

48 CFR Parts 12 and 52

[FAC 2005–32; FAR Case 2008–026; Item VI; Docket 2009–0013, Sequence 1]

RIN 9000–AL25

Federal Acquisition Regulation; FAR Case 2008–026, GAO Access to Contractor Employees

AGENCIES: Department of Defense (DoD), General Services Administration (GSA), and National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).

ACTION: Interim rule with request for comments.

SUMMARY: The Civilian Agency Acquisition Council and the Defense Acquisition Regulations Council (Councils) have agreed on an interim rule amending the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) to implement Section 871 of the Duncan Hunter National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2009 (NDAA) (Pub. L. 110–417) which allows the Government Accountability Office to interview current contractor employees during the audit of the contractor's records. FAR 52.215–2(d)(1), Audit and Records–Negotiation, is revised to allow for the

required access by inserting before the period: "and to interview any current employee regarding such transactions". FAR 52.214–26(c), Audit and Records-Sealed Bidding is revised to allow for the required access by inserting before the period: "and also the right to interview any current employee regarding such transactions".

DATES: *Effective Date:* March 31, 2009.

Comment Date: Interested parties should submit written comments to the FAR Secretariat on or before June 1, 2009 to be considered in the formulation of a final rule.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments identified by FAC 2005–32, FAR case 2008–026, by any of the following methods:

- *Regulations.gov:* <http://www.regulations.gov>.

Submit comments via the Federal eRulemaking portal by inputting "FAR Case 2008–026" under the heading "Comment or Submission". Select the link "Send a Comment or Submission" that corresponds with FAR Case 2008–026. Follow the instructions provided to complete the "Public Comment and Submission Form". Please include your name, company name (if any), and "FAR Case 2008–026" on your attached document.

- *Fax:* 202–501–4067.
- *Mail:* General Services

Administration, FAR Secretariat (VPR), 1800 F Street, NW., Room 4041, ATTN: Hada Flowers, Washington, DC 20405.

Instructions: Please submit comments only and cite FAC 2005–32, FAR case 2008–026, in all correspondence related to this case. All comments received will be posted without change to <http://www.regulations.gov>, including any personal and/or business confidential information provided.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ms. Suzanne Neurauter, Procurement Analyst, at (202) 219–0310 for clarification of content. Please cite FAC 2005–32, FAR case 2008–026. For information pertaining to status or publication schedules, contact the FAR Secretariat at (202) 501–4755.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

A. Background

Section 871 of the Duncan Hunter National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2009 (NDAA) (Pub. L. 110–417) added language allowing the Comptroller General to interview current employees regarding transactions being examined during an audit of contracting records. The Act revises 41 U.S.C. 254d(c)(1) and 10 U.S.C. 2313(c)(1) by inserting before the period: "and to interview any current

employee regarding such transactions". To implement the Act, FAR clauses 52.215–2, Audit and Records-Negotiation and 52.214–26, Audit and Records-Sealed Bidding, are amended to add the required statutory language. The statute did not specify that Section 871 apply to commercial item contracts and therefore was not applied to FAR clause 52.212–5, Contract Terms and Conditions Required to Implement Statutes or Executive Order-Commercial Items. Section 34 of the Office of Federal Procurement Policy Act (OFPP), 41 U.S.C. 430, exempts commercial item acquisitions from new provisions of law, such as Section 871, unless (1) the law provides criminal or civilian penalties, (2) the law expressly refers to 41 U.S.C. 430 and states that it applies to commercial item contracts, or (3) the FAR Council makes a written determination that it would not be in the best interest of the Federal Government to exempt commercial item contracts. Thus, this new provision was added to the list of inapplicable laws at FAR 12.503(a).

This is a significant regulatory action and, therefore, was subject to review under Section 6 of Executive Order 12886, Regulatory Planning and Review, dated September 30, 1993. This rule is not a major rule under 5 U.S.C. 804.

B. Regulatory Flexibility Act

The Councils do not expect this interim rule to have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities within the meaning of the Regulatory Flexibility Act, at 5 U.S.C. 601, *et seq.* Only a small number of small businesses are audited by GAO. Currently many GAO audits of small business contractors include contractor employee interviews. This Act is designed to cover those incidents in which contractor employees are not able to be interviewed. Therefore, it is not anticipated that interviewing any current employee regarding such contract transactions will have a significant impact.

Therefore, an Initial Regulatory Flexibility Analysis has not been performed. The Councils will consider comments from small entities concerning the affected FAR Parts 12 and 52 in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 610. Interested parties must submit such comments separately and should cite 5 U.S.C. 601, *et seq.* FAC 2005–32, FAR Case 2008–026 in all correspondence.

C. Paperwork Reduction Act

The Paperwork Reduction Act does not apply because the changes to the FAR do not impose information collection requirements that require the

approval of the Office of Management and Budget under 44 U.S.C. Chapter 35, *et seq.*

D. Determination To Issue an Interim Rule

A determination has been made under the authority of the Secretary of Defense (DoD), the Administrator of General Services (GSA), and the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) that urgent and compelling reasons exist to promulgate this interim rule without prior opportunity for public comment. This action is necessary to implement statutory requirements of Section 871 of the Duncan Hunter National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2009 (NDAA) (Pub. L. 110–417) which went into effect October 14, 2008. The Act revises 41 U.S.C. 254d (c)(1) and 10 U.S.C. 2313 (c)(1) by inserting before the period: "and to interview any current employee regarding such transactions". To implement the Act, the clauses at FAR 52.215–2(d)(1) and 52.214–26(c) are amended to add the required statutory language. The Councils believe that the interim rule in the FAR will provide the contracting officer the relevant regulatory guidance needed when addressing requirements outlined in this rule. However, pursuant to Public Law 98–577 and FAR 1.501, the Councils will consider public comments received in response to this interim rule in the formation of the final rule.

List of Subjects in 48 CFR Parts 12 and 52

Government procurement.

Dated: March 25, 2009.

Al Matera,

Director, Office of Acquisition Policy.

■ Therefore, DoD, GSA, and NASA amend 48 CFR parts 12 and 52 as set forth below:

■ 1. The authority citation for 48 CFR parts 12 and 52 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 40 U.S.C. 121(c); 10 U.S.C. chapter 137; and 42 U.S.C. 2473(c).

PART 12—ACQUISITION OF COMMERCIAL ITEMS

■ 2. Amend section 12.503 by adding paragraph (a)(8) to read as follows:

12.503 Applicability of certain laws to Executive agency contracts for the acquisition of commercial items.

(a) * * *

(8) 41 U.S.C. 254d(c)(1) and 10 U.S.C. 2313(c)(1), GAO Access to Contractor Employees, Section 871 of Pub. L. 110–417 (see 52.214–26 and 52.215–2).

* * * * *

PART 52—SOLICITATION PROVISIONS AND CONTRACT CLAUSES

■ 3. Amend section 52.214–26 by revising the date of the clause and paragraph (c) to read as follows:

52.214–26 Audit and Records—Sealed Bidding.

* * * * *

Audit and Records—Sealed Bidding (MAR 2009)

* * * * *

(c) *Comptroller General*. In the case of pricing any modification, the Comptroller General of the United States, or an authorized representative, shall have the same rights as specified in paragraph (b) of this clause and also the right to interview any current employee regarding such transactions.

* * * * *

(End of clause)

■ 4. Amend section 52.215–2 by revising the date of the clause and paragraph (d)(1) to read as follows:

52.215–2 Audit and Records—Negotiation.

* * * * *

Audit and Records—Negotiation (MAR 2009)

* * * * *

(d) *Comptroller General*. (1) The Comptroller General of the United States, or an authorized representative, shall have access to and the right to examine any of the Contractor's directly pertinent records involving transactions related to this contract or a subcontract hereunder and to interview any current employee regarding such transactions.

* * * * *

(End of clause)

[FR Doc. E9–7030 Filed 3–30–09; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE**GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION****NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION****48 CFR Chapter 1**

[Docket FAR–2009–0002, Sequence 3]

Federal Acquisition Regulation; Federal Acquisition Circular 2005–32; Small Entity Compliance Guide

AGENCIES: Department of Defense (DoD), General Services Administration (GSA),

and National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).

ACTION: Small Entity Compliance Guide.

SUMMARY: This document is issued under the joint authority of the Secretary of Defense, the Administrator of General Services and the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. This *Small Entity Compliance Guide* has been prepared in accordance with Section 212 of the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act of 1996. It consists of a summary of rules appearing in Federal Acquisition Circular (FAC) 2005–32 which amend the FAR. An asterisk (*) next to a rule indicates that a regulatory flexibility analysis has been prepared. Interested parties may obtain further information regarding these rules by referring to FAC 2005–32 which precedes this document. These documents are also available via the Internet at <http://www.regulations.gov>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Hada Flowers, FAR Secretariat, (202) 208–7282. For clarification of content, contact the analyst whose name appears in the table below.

LIST OF RULES IN FAC 2005–32

Item	Subject	FAR case	Analyst
I	American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (the Recovery Act)—Buy American Requirements for Construction Material (Interim).	2009–008	Murphy.
II	American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (the Recovery Act)—Whistleblower Protections (Interim).	2009–012	Parnell.
III	American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (the Recovery Act)—Publicizing Contract Actions (Interim).	2009–010	Gary.
IV*	American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (the Recovery Act)—Reporting Requirements (Interim).	2009–009	Woodson.
V	American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (the Recovery Act)—GAO/IG Access (Interim).	2009–011	Chambers.
VI	GAO Access to Contractor Employees (Interim)	2008–026	Neurauter.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Summaries for each FAR rule follow. For the actual revisions and/or amendments to these FAR cases, refer to the specific item number and subject set forth in the documents following these item summaries.

FAC 2005–32 amends the FAR as specified below:

Item I—American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (the Recovery Act)—Buy American Requirements for Construction Material (Interim) (FAR Case 2009–008)

This interim rule implements the Buy American provision, section 1605, of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. It prohibits the use of funds appropriated for the Recovery Act for

any project for the construction, alteration, maintenance, or repair of a public building or public work unless all of the iron, steel, and manufactured goods used in the project are produced in the United States. However, section 1605 requires that the Buy American requirement be applied in a manner consistent with U.S. obligations under international agreements. Moreover, because Congress intended that least developed countries be excepted from section 1605, least developed countries can continue to be treated as designated countries. Section 1605 also provides for waivers under certain limited circumstances.

Item II—American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (the Recovery Act)—Whistleblower Protections (Interim) (FAR Case 2009–012)

Subpart 3.9 of the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) is revised to add section 3.907. Section 3.907 provides procedures for whistleblower protection, when using funds appropriated or otherwise provided by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Pub. L. 111–5).

Section 3.907 provides that non-Federal employers are prohibited from discharging, demoting, or discriminating against employees as a reprisal for disclosing certain covered information to certain categories of Government officials. This section