
ARC Monthly Bulletin – February 2014

Valuable information for ARC's customers

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1. Annual Test of Notification System

On Monday, March 10, 2014 we will conduct a test of our Universal Communications System. The system is intended to be used in an emergency event to initiate an automated phone notification informing our customers that we have activated our Business Continuity or Pandemic Plan, and that we will provide additional information regarding the event when possible. Designated points of contact at customer agencies should expect to receive an automated phone call on this day.

For additional information, contact Amy Miller at 304-480-7257 or Amy.Miller@fiscal.treasury.gov.

2. Fiscal Year End 2013 Audit Status

Audits are performed to test the validity and reliability of the financial statements and to assess the agency's system of internal control. The various stages of an audit include: the planning and risk assessment stage, internal control testing, substantive procedures and the finalization stage. Audit stages begin several months before the end of the year and last several months after year end. The goal of an audit is to express an opinion on the financial statements based upon the testing performed.

Currently, 19 of our 24 audited customer agencies have received unmodified "clean" opinions on their financial statements. Other audits are still in progress. The clean opinions are a result of dedicated teamwork with our customers. A great deal of coordination is necessary to provide the support documents necessary to complete the audit schedules, respond to auditor's questions and to wrap up the audits. Our employees and customer agencies work daily with the auditors to complete these tasks. The unmodified opinion is a praiseworthy achievement and all involved should take pride in their accomplishment.

For additional information, contact Mike Foggin at 304-480-7020 or Mike.Foggin@fiscal.treasury.gov.

3. Fiscal Year 2014/2015 Procurement Cutoff Dates

In order to better serve your needs, the Division of Procurement Services (DPS) is establishing cutoff dates for upcoming procurement requests. These dates are based on the type and size of the action and are listed in the tables below.

DPS also requests that you submit a preliminary list of needs – goods or services for which you anticipate submitting purchase requests during the last four months of the current fiscal year. The format for the forecast of new actions and existing (recurring and options) are located on your customer access page, follow the Guidance/References tab to “Procurement Guidance” and open the files titled “Existing Requirements (Recurring-Options)” and “New Requirements”. Submitting your requests by the dates listed will allow our divisions to establish work assignments, perform preliminary market research and work with the requestors preparing the procurement request (PR) package.

You should submit the following items (if applicable) with your procurement requests.

1. Performance Work Statement
2. Quality Assurance Surveillance Plans (QASP)
3. Delivery dates or period of performance
4. Special conditions/instructions. (special delivery instructions, bilingual capabilities, drawings, Section 508 Determinations and Findings, etc.)
5. Independent Government estimate
6. Technical evaluation plan
7. Sole source, limited source, or brand name justification
8. Inherently governmental and critical functions analysis coding and worksheet, signed by the Senior Accountable Official for services over \$25,000
9. For Interagency Agreements only – Agency Locator Code (ALC), DUNS number, and supporting documents

FY15 obligation amounts must be for the entire amount of the Contract/Order, even if the federal government is under a Continuing Resolution. This is the same as FY 14.

We believe that obtaining the majority of these requirements earlier will allow us greater capability to address emergencies that come up during the end of the fiscal year or perhaps new requirements that are funded during the final budget review. It will also allow your primary requisitioners an opportunity to spread out their responsibilities (development of the PR packages, reviewing solicitations from a technical perspective, performing technical evaluations, and answering technical questions). If awards are made earlier in the fiscal year, the excess funds will be returned to your agency and can be used for other requirements. Additionally, it allows the vendor community more time to focus on your requirements which may result in increased competition and better technical and price proposals.

Please note that there are certain mandated federal acquisition requirements, such as advertising, that are not negotiable which can impact the timeliness of the awards. We will do our best to meet your requested award dates, but please note that when the specified cuts off dates are not adhered to, it may make it impossible to meet your desired timeframe.

We recognize that due to the sequestration and budget situations, it is difficult to project all your acquisitions and that your needs may change based on these situations. We are asking you to submit as much information as you know by the deadlines and once additional acquisitions are identified, you notify as soon as possible.

Fiscal Year 2014 Funded Actions

Type of Action	Due Date
New Requirements <\$25,000 (item/service not on a current contract/order)	Forecast – June 2, 2014 PR Packages – July 2, 2014
New Requirements >\$25,000 (item/service not on a current contract/order)	Forecast – May 2, 2014 PR Packages – June 2, 2014
Option Renewals (contract/order in place with optional line items for new period of performance – ex. September 28, 2014 to September 27, 2015)	PR – 45 days prior to the first day of the option period being exercised
Administrative Modifications	July 28, 2014
Interagency Agreements	September 4

Fiscal Year 2015 Funded Actions Starting in October 2014

Type of Action	Due Date
New Requirements <\$25,000 (item/service not on a current contract/order)	Forecast – June 2, 2014 PR Packages – July 2, 2014
New Requirements >\$25,000	Forecast – May 2, 2014 PR Packages – June 2, 2014
Recurring (item/service purchased the previous year) <\$25,000	Forecast – June 2, 2014 PR Package – July 2, 2014
Recurring (item/service purchased the previous year) >\$25,000	Forecast – May 2, 2014 PR Package – June 16, 2014
Option Renewals (contract/order in place with optional line items for new period of performance – ex. October 1, 2014 to September 30, 2015)	PR – 45 days prior to the first day of the option period being exercised
Interagency Agreements	September 4

Please note while we show due dates, you are encouraged to submit your preliminary forecasts and PR packages earlier.

For additional information, contact your Team Lead or Manager of the team servicing your agency or Kathy Estep, Bureau Chief Procurement Officer, at 202-874-6665 or Kathy.Estep@fiscal.treasury.gov.

4. FERS Employee Retirement Contribution Rates Increase by 1.3% for New Hires

Beginning in 2014, the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013, section 401 changes the employee retirement contribution rate to the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS). New Federal employees hired on or after January 1, 2014, with less than 5 years of creditable or potentially creditable civilian service will be placed in the FERS-Further Revised Annuity Employee (FERS-FRAE) system. Under this new system, employees will pay 4.4% of their salary for retirement deductions. This rate is a 1.3% increase from the current 3.1% FERS-Revised Annuity Employee (FERS-RAE) rate.

Currently, the National Finance Center (NFC) is waiting for further guidance from the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to implement the new January 1, 2014, rate change. Until further guidance is issued, NFC will deduct 3.1% instead of 4.4% of salary for FERS-FRAE retirement deductions. Once OPM guidance is finalized, FERS-FRAE employees will owe the additional 1.3% retroactive to their start date.

For additional information, contact the Benefits Service Center at 304-480-8275 or Benefits@bpd.treas.gov.

5. Restoration of Annual Leave

Employees who forfeited annual leave at the end of the 2013 leave year may be eligible to have the leave restored. Agencies may restore annual leave that was forfeited because it was in excess of the employee's maximum leave ceiling if the leave was forfeited because of an administrative error, exigency of the public business, or sickness of the employee.

For more information regarding the qualifying factors for leave restoration, visit the Office of Personnel Management's website at www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/leave-administration/fact-sheets/restoration-of-annual-leave/ or call the Pay and Leave Services Branch at 304-480-8400.

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