

Federal Acquisition Regulation

31.201-4

Government are limited to those allocable costs which are allowable pursuant to part 31 and applicable agency supplements.

[48 FR 42301, Sept. 19, 1983, as amended at 59 FR 67045, Dec. 28, 1994]

31.201-2 Determining allowability.

(a) The factors to be considered in determining whether a cost is allowable include the following:

(1) Reasonableness.

(2) Allocability.

(3) Standards promulgated by the CAS Board, if applicable; otherwise, generally accepted accounting principles and practices appropriate to the particular circumstances.

(4) Terms of the contract.

(5) Any limitations set forth in this subpart.

(b) Certain cost principles in this subpart incorporate the measurement, assignment, and allocability rules of selected CAS and limit the allowability of costs to the amounts determined using the criteria in those selected standards. Only those CAS or portions of standards specifically made applicable by the cost principles in this subpart are mandatory unless the contract is CAS-covered (see 48 CFR 9903). Business units that are not otherwise subject to these standards under a CAS clause are subject to the selected standards only for the purpose of determining allowability of costs on Government contracts. Including the selected standards in the cost principles does not subject the business unit to any other CAS rules and regulations. The applicability of the CAS rules and regulations is determined by the CAS clause, if any, in the contract and the requirements of the standards themselves.

(c) When contractor accounting practices are inconsistent with this subpart 31.2, costs resulting from such inconsistent practices shall not be allowed in excess of the amount that would have resulted from using practices consistent with this subpart.

(d) A contractor is responsible for accounting for costs appropriately and for maintaining records, including supporting documentation, adequate to demonstrate that costs claimed have been incurred, are allocable to the con-

tract, and comply with applicable cost principles in this subpart and agency supplements. The contracting officer may disallow all or part of a claimed cost which is inadequately supported.

[48 FR 42301, Sept. 19, 1983, as amended at 57 FR 39590, Aug. 31, 1992; 61 FR 31656, June 20, 1996]

31.201-3 Determining reasonableness.

(a) A cost is reasonable if, in its nature and amount, it does not exceed that which would be incurred by a prudent person in the conduct of competitive business. Reasonableness of specific costs must be examined with particular care in connection with firms or their separate divisions that may not be subject to effective competitive restraints. No presumption of reasonableness shall be attached to the incurrence of costs by a contractor. If an initial review of the facts results in a challenge of a specific cost by the contracting officer or the contracting officer's representative, the burden of proof shall be upon the contractor to establish that such cost is reasonable.

(b) What is reasonable depends upon a variety of considerations and circumstances, including—

(1) Whether it is the type of cost generally recognized as ordinary and necessary for the conduct of the contractor's business or the contract performance;

(2) Generally accepted sound business practices, arm's length bargaining, and Federal and State laws and regulations;

(3) The contractor's responsibilities to the Government, other customers, the owners of the business, employees, and the public at large; and

(4) Any significant deviations from the contractor's established practices.

[52 FR 19804, May 27, 1987]

31.201-4 Determining allocability.

A cost is allocable if it is assignable or chargeable to one or more cost objectives on the basis of relative benefits received or other equitable relationship. Subject to the foregoing, a cost is allocable to a Government contract if it—

(a) Is incurred specifically for the contract;

(b) Benefits both the contract and other work, and can be distributed to them in reasonable proportion to the benefits received; or

(c) Is necessary to the overall operation of the business, although a direct relationship to any particular cost objective cannot be shown.

31.201-5 Credits.

The applicable portion of any income, rebate, allowance, or other credit relating to any allowable cost and received by or accruing to the contractor shall be credited to the Government either as a cost reduction or by cash refund. See 31.205-6(j)(4) for rules governing refund or credit to the Government associated with pension adjustments and asset reversions.

[48 FR 42301, Sept. 19, 1983, as amended at 54 FR 34755, Aug. 21, 1989; 63 FR 58597, Oct. 30, 1998]

31.201-6 Accounting for unallowable costs.

(a) Costs that are expressly unallowable or mutually agreed to be unallowable, including mutually agreed to be unallowable directly associated costs, shall be identified and excluded from any billing, claim, or proposal applicable to a Government contract. A directly associated cost is any cost which is generated solely as a result of incurring another cost, and which would not have been incurred had the other cost not been incurred. When an unallowable cost is incurred, its directly associated costs are also unallowable.

(b) Costs which specifically become designated as unallowable or as unallowable directly associated costs of unallowable costs as a result of a written decision furnished by a contracting officer shall be identified if included in or used in computing any billing, claim, or proposal applicable to a Government contract. This identification requirement applies also to any costs incurred for the same purpose under like circumstances as the costs specifically identified as unallowable under either this paragraph or paragraph (a) above.

(c) The practices for accounting for and presentation of unallowable costs will be those as described in 48 CFR

9904.405-50, Accounting for Unallowable Costs.

(d) If a directly associated cost is included in a cost pool which is allocated over a base that includes the unallowable cost with which it is associated, the directly associated cost shall remain in the cost pool. Since the unallowable costs will attract their allocable share of costs from the cost pool, no further action is required to assure disallowance of the directly associated costs. In all other cases, the directly associated costs, if material in amount, must be purged from the cost pool as unallowable costs.

(e)(1) In determining the materiality of a directly associated cost, consideration should be given to the significance of (i) the actual dollar amount, (ii) the cumulative effect of all directly associated costs in a cost pool, or (iii) the ultimate effect on the cost of Government contracts.

(2) Salary expenses of employees who participate in activities that generate unallowable costs shall be treated as directly associated costs to the extent of the time spent on the proscribed activity, provided the costs are material in accordance with subparagraph (e)(1) above (except when such salary expenses are, themselves, unallowable). The time spent in proscribed activities should be compared to total time spent on company activities to determine if the costs are material. Time spent by employees outside the normal working hours should not be considered except when it is evident that an employee engages so frequently in company activities during periods outside normal working hours as to indicate that such activities are a part of the employee's regular duties.

(3) When a selected item of cost under 31.205 provides that directly associated costs be unallowable, it is intended that such directly associated costs be unallowable only if determined to be material in amount in accordance with the criteria provided in paragraphs (e)(1) and (e)(2) above, except in those situations where allowance of any of the directly associated costs involved would be considered to be contrary to public policy.

[48 FR 42301, Sept. 19, 1983, as amended at 59 FR 67045, Dec. 28, 1994]