46.202-4 Higher-level contract quality requirements.
(a) Requiring compliance with higher-level quality standards is appropriate in solicitations and contracts for complex or critical items (see 46.203(b) and (c)) or when the technical requirements of the contract require—
(1) Control of such things as work operations, in-process controls, and inspection; or
(2) Attention to such factors as organization, planning, work instructions, documentation control, and advanced metrology.
(b) When the contracting officer, in consultation with technical personnel, finds it is in the Government’s interest to require that higher-level quality standards be maintained, the contracting officer shall use the clause prescribed at 46.311. The contracting officer shall indicate in the clause which higher-level quality standards will satisfy the Government’s requirement.
Examples of higher-level quality standards are ISO 9001, 9002, or 9003; ANSI/ISO/ASQ Q9001, Q9002, or Q9003; QS–9000; AS–9000; ANSI/ASQ E4; and ANSI/ASME NQA–1.

46.203 Criteria for use of contract quality requirements.
The extent of contract quality requirements, including contractor inspection, required under a contract shall usually be based upon the classification of the contract item (supply or service) as determined by its technical description, its complexity, and the criticality of its application.
(a) Technical description. Contract items may be technically classified as—
(1) Commercial (described in commercial catalogs, drawings, or industrial standards; see part 2); or
(2) Military-Federal (described in Government drawings and specifications).
(b) Complexity. (1) Complex items have quality characteristics, not wholly visible in the end item, for which contractual conformance must be established progressively through precise measurements, tests, and controls applied during purchasing, manufac-