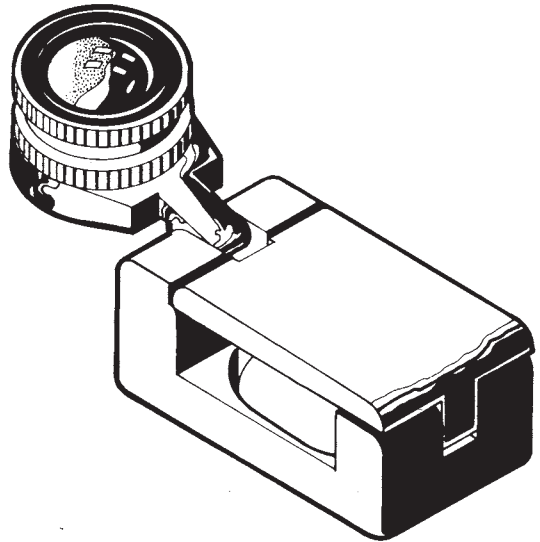




# Guidelines for Contractors Holding Press Sheet Inspections



United States Government Printing Office  
Washington, DC 20401  
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# **ABOUT THIS PUBLICATION**

## **Job Specific Questions**

Questions regarding press sheet inspections for specific jobs should be addressed to the GPO office handling the procurement, either the contracting officer at the appropriate regional office or the GPO Central Office.

## **Additional Copies**

Additional copies of this publication are available as follows:

U.S. Government Printing Office contractors

- Individual copies are available from the GPO Central Office, Quality Assurance Section (202-512-0542).
- Bulk copies are available from the Superintendent of Documents.

## **This Publication**

Comments and suggestions regarding this publication should be addressed as follows:

U.S. Government Printing Office  
Superintendent, Contract Management Division  
Printing Procurement Department (STOP PPS)  
Washington, DC 20401

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# Guidelines for Contractors Holding Press Sheet Inspections

The following describes suggested administrative guidelines for a contractor holding a Government Printing Office press sheet inspection (PSI). Also included is information regarding the administrative guidelines that GPO inspectors and agency representatives will use when attending a PSI.

It is strongly recommended that contractor personnel responsible for press sheet inspections be familiar with the contract under which the work is being performed and aware of the two major documents that, by reference, are part of most GPO contracts. These two documents are "GPO Contract Terms (Solicitation Provisions, Supplemental Specifications, and Contract Clauses)" (*GPO Pub. 310.2*), and "GPO Contract Terms (Quality Assurance Through Attributes Program)" (*GPO Pub. 310.1*). Copies of both are available from the GPO Central Office bid room or GPO regional offices.

Nothing in these guidelines is meant to take precedence over the conformance of the product to specifications, including the Quality Assurance Through Attributes Program (QATAP). A PSI does not take the place of a QATAP inspection. If there is a conflict between any items in these guidelines and the contract, the contract takes precedence.

The outline below relates to the sheetfed printing of a typical booklet, book, or poster. Specialty products and very short or long runs may require different procedures.

*(See the note under "At the Inspection" regarding web production.)*

## **Scheduling an Inspection**

### **Scheduling a Press Sheet Inspection**

Contractors should provide sufficient advance notice of the PSI as required by the contract; a minimum of hours, work days, or calendar days will be indicated. If no leadtime is indicated, call GPO a minimum of 48 hours in advance. The leadtime indicated is required for coordination of travel by the agency that has requisitioned the printing. (*See GPO Pub. 310.2, "Contract Terms," p. 17, art. 14(i)(1).*)

### **Where and When To Call**

To schedule the inspection, call the telephone number indicated in the contract. Some contracts may indicate specific calling hours. Do not call the agency or the contract administrator unless the contract specifically requires you to call.

**Necessary Information**

The caller should have all the necessary contract information available when making the call. You will be asked for—

- Jacket number or program and print order number for term contracts;
- Date, time, and type of the inspection;
- Name and requisition number of the originating agency;
- The QATAP Product Quality Level of the job being inspected (I through V);
- Name of your company (specify whether the inspection is at a subcontractor's plant);
- Address where the inspection will be held; and
- Name and telephone number of the company contact (if the inspection will not be held during your company's office business hours, also provide a nonbusiness-hours telephone number and contact).

If there are different items (e.g., poster and flyer) or different types of press forms (cover and text) to be run, establish a breakdown of when each will run and provide this information so that you and the inspector can coordinate which forms are to be seen.

**Contacting the Agency**

The office you call at GPO will contact the Government agency for which the work is being done. The agency has the following options:

- Requesting GPO to attend;
- Attending with GPO;
- Attending on its own; or
- Waiving the inspection.

After the agency has made a decision, it will contact GPO. GPO will then inform you of who, if anyone, is attending.

**Waived Inspection**

The inspection may be waived by GPO. If it is waived, proceed as you would have, had the inspection not been called for. Attendance at, or waiver of, the inspection does not affect any other provisions of the contract, including requirements for you to supply departmental random copies (blue label) or quality assurance random copies for QATAP inspection.

**Proofs Returned Late**

If a scheduled inspection is based on the return of proofs and they arrive late, necessitating rescheduling of the inspection, call the PSI scheduling number.

Note that the scheduling or rescheduling of inspections does not take the place of the required written requests for delivery extensions, and the approval or denial of such requests.

*(See GPO Pub. 310.2, "Contract Terms," p. 16, art. 12(2).)*

## Before the Inspection

- Problems With Government-Furnished Material** If there is any problem with the Government-furnished material (GFM) or with the latest set of proofs, call and discuss the problem with the contract administrator or the contracting officer. Do not wait to discuss the problem with the person attending the PSI. (See *GPO Pub. 310.2, "Contract Terms," p. 14, art. 7.*)
- Last Proof Corrections** Verify that all changes and corrections marked on the last proofs have been accomplished and the job is ready for a PSI.
- Color Bars** If the contract specifies color bars, check that they meet the contract requirements and are in place as required.
- GPO Imprint Line** Check that the GPO imprint line specified in "Contract Terms" has been set and is in the proper location. (See *GPO Pub. 310.2, "Contract Terms," p. 9, art. 9.*)  
(Example—U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE: 1993-000-000)
- Densitometer** If the contract calls for measurement with any special equipment, such as a densitometer, or for special viewing conditions (ANSI standards, etc.), make sure the equipment is available, in good working order, and properly calibrated.
- Viewing Location and Conditions** While "Contract Terms" indicates that the Government can inspect the product "at all places and times, including the period of manufacture," the inspector will usually defer to your decision regarding viewing in the pressroom or a special viewing area.  
(See *GPO Pub. 310.2, "Contract Terms," p. 17, art. 14(c).*)
- However, the viewing conditions for the press sheet (for example, 5,000-degree Kelvin lighting, as called for by ISO standards) and the viewing conditions for any originals that may need to be viewed must be in accordance with the contract specifications and QATAP. (See *GPO Pub. 310.1, "QATAP," p. 2, art. 1-11 and p. 23, Attribute P-10 procedures.*)
- Makeready** **Your makeready should be completed before the inspector arrives.** Sheets presented to the GPO inspector or the agency representative should incorporate all type and color change requests shown on the last proof and be in exact register, ready for approval.
- If you have any questions regarding the proofs, call and discuss the questions with the contract administrator or the contracting officer. **Do not wait to discuss them with the person attending the PSI.**



**Rescheduling Inspections**

When, after calling to schedule a press sheet inspection, you expect or encounter a production delay, call the same GPO phone number you called when scheduling. If the GPO inspector or the agency representative is kept waiting at a PSI, you can and may be charged for waiting time.

*(See GPO Pub. 310.2, "Contract Terms," p. 17, art. 14(e)(1).)*

**Ethics**

The acceptance by Federal employees of gratuities, no matter how innocently tendered, from those doing business with the Government, may be a source of embarrassment to the recipient and may impair public confidence in the integrity of the conduct of the Government's business. Therefore, a GPO employee "shall not solicit or accept, directly or indirectly, any gift, gratuity, favor, entertainment, loan, service, or any other thing of monetary value from any person with whom he or she transacts business on behalf of GPO." GPO Instruction 655.3A.

The regulations do not prohibit GPO employees from accepting food and nonalcoholic beverages of nominal value at a contractor's plant or place of business on an infrequent basis when the conduct of official business within the plant or place of business will be facilitated and when no provisions exist for individual payment. The acceptance of doughnuts and coffee or their equivalent is permitted when official business will be facilitated. Agency representatives must follow similar regulations.

**Authority of Persons Attending**

**GPO Inspector's Authority**

If a GPO inspector is present, he/she is attending as the contracting officer's technical representative. As such, he/she represents your client, the GPO. If GPO and its client, the agency, are present at the inspection, the GPO inspector will coordinate any agency requests. If there is a dispute, the GPO inspector's authority takes precedence over any agency requests.

*(See GPO Pub. 310.2, "Contract Terms," p. 13, art. 1.)*

GPO inspectors are authorized to set standards for printing attributes, such as type density and color, and to check compliance with various other items in the specifications. They also have limited authority to validly request the contractor to make limited chargeable changes. When the GPO inspector arrives at the PSI, he/she will present you a letter describing his/her authority.

*(See also "Author's Alterations—GPO Inspectors.")*

**Agency Representative's Authority**

If an agency representative attends without a GPO inspector, the representative has been authorized by GPO to perform the press sheet inspection. He/she can set standards for printing attributes, such as type density and color, and check for compliance with various other items in the specifications. However, he/she does not have the contractual authority to request the contractor to perform any changes or author's alterations that require additional costs or will affect the schedule; nor does he/she have the authority to change any requirements of the specifications (including QATAP levels or standards), even if no additional charges or schedule changes are needed.

**Agency representatives requesting changes that require additional costs or that will affect a schedule are without authority and their requests shall have no force or effect unless confirmed by a Government Printing Office contracting officer. (See also "Author's Alterations—Agency Representatives.")**

**Multiple Agency Attendees**

When two or more agency personnel attend, one will be a designated spokesperson (the agency representative). If one is not so named, ask for one to be designated.

**At the Inspection**

**PSI's at a Subcontractor's Facility**

It is recommended that a representative of the firm awarded the GPO contract attend any inspections held at a subcontractor's facilities. It is further recommended that subcontractors be made aware of any provisions of the contract that affect the work they will be performing, including "GPO Contract Terms (Solicitation Provisions, Supplemental Specifications, and Contract Clauses)" (*GPO Pub. 310.2*), and "GPO Contract Terms (Quality Assurance Through Attributes Program)" (*GPO Pub. 310.1*). Copies of both are available from the GPO Central Office bid room or GPO regional offices.

**Starting Without GPO**

If you have been notified that the GPO inspector and an agency representative will attend, and the agency representative arrives early, wait until the GPO inspector arrives before starting the inspection. If the GPO inspector is delayed en route, he/she will call and advise you of the anticipated delayed arrival.

**Holding Time**

At 30 minutes after the scheduled inspection starting time, if neither the inspector nor the agency representative (if expected) has arrived or called to inform you of a delay, immediately call the GPO office that scheduled

the PSI, to get instructions. Should the time be after the GPO office has closed, proceed with the work, and then, if no one has called or arrived by the next business day, call the GPO office as soon as it opens.

**Availability of Copy and Proofs**

Have the final OK proofs, camera-ready reproducibles, or other Government-furnished material (GFM) readily available for the inspector or the agency representative. This will help expedite the inspection process.

**Web Production**

If the presswork is to be done on a web press, it is the contractor's decision whether to continue running or to stop the press during the time the inspector is viewing and approving submitted press sheets. Production until approval (work that does not meet the approved standard) should be considered makeready waste (unless it exactly matches the OK'd sheet). Inform the Government representative of your decision to hold or run the web while awaiting approval. GPO inspectors and agency representatives have been reminded of the need to take the running web into account; however, a running web is not a reason for them to rush the inspection process, or to sign off on contractually unacceptable press sheets.

**Stock Errors**

GPO inspectors and agency representatives have been instructed to check stock for obvious stock deviations from GPO specifications (wrong color, text-weight stock in place of cover-weight stock, etc.). This check is recommended as one of the first steps in the PSI so that a lot of time is not spent on register and color, only to find later that there is a major stock error. *(See also "Stock Specification Change" and "Stock Testing.")*

**Stock Specification Change**

GPO inspectors and agency representatives have been instructed to contact the contracting officer regarding any requests you or they may have for a change in paper stock specifications.

**Questioned Stock**

If a GPO inspector or the agency representative believes that the stock does not meet specifications, he/she has been instructed to contact GPO. The contracting officer will advise you how to proceed. In each situation the decision how to proceed will require individual analysis. *(See also "Stock Testing.")*

**Stock Testing**

The approval of a press sheet by a GPO inspector or an agency representative does not constitute an approval of the stock.

Contractors should understand that neither agency representatives nor GPO inspectors can test paper on site and that stock must be tested at GPO's lab, for conformance to specifications. *(For further information on stock testing, see the publication "Government Paper Specification Standards.")*

**Number of Sheets per Pull**

The GPO inspector or the agency representative will request **at least three consecutive sheets** from each press pull so that he/she can compare the sheets if defects are seen. For web-printed jobs with multiple webs, or multiple images around the cylinder, at least three copies of all images will be requested.

**Returning Marked-Up Sheets**

If corrections are indicated on a sheet returned to you, the GPO inspector or the agency representative will want that sheet returned with the next pull; this will enable the inspector to track the changes as they are made. The GPO inspector or agency representative will take a marked-up sheet from each pull at the conclusion of the press sheet inspection.

**Author's Alterations—GPO Inspectors**

If chargeable author's alterations are required and a GPO inspector is present, he/she will confer with you to ascertain the effect the alterations will have on costs and the schedule. GPO inspectors have limited authority to approve costs incurred by author's alterations. If the costs are beyond the inspector's limits for approval and it is during GPO business hours, the inspector will call the contracting officer and request an oral OK for you to proceed with the alterations. This oral OK does not take the place of the contractor's letter to the contracting officer detailing the alterations and associated costs or a requested schedule adjustment. *(See also "Request for Contract Modifications.")*

**Author's Alterations—Agency Representatives**

Agency representatives attending inspections on their own are authorized to set standards for printing attributes, such as type density and color, and to check for compliance with various other items in the specifications. **However, agency representatives do not have the authority to request the contractor to perform any author's alterations that require additional costs or will affect the schedule.** *(See also "Agency Representative's Authority.")*

Should such alterations be required and a GPO representative not be present, the agency representative or you should call the contracting officer and request oral approval from GPO to make the changes. If it is after

GPO office hours, the agency representative should have a night telephone number to reach the contracting officer.

*(See also request for "Contract Modifications.")*

### **Documenting Author's Alterations**

It is the contractor's responsibility to keep track of any author's alterations (time, date, person requesting and authorizing the change, labor and materials used, etc.) and to send a letter to the contracting officer, providing these details and requesting payment or an adjusted delivery date, or both, if required.

*(See also "Request for Contract Modifications.")*

### **Signing Off**

When the inspector or the agency representative is ready to sign a sheet, he/she will sign "OK FOR COLOR."

This approval will encompass:

- Type quality and uniformity (QATAP Attribute P-7);
- Halftone match (QATAP Attribute P-8);
- Solid or screen tint color match (QATAP Attribute P-9); and
- Process color match (QATAP Attribute P-10).

Note: the tolerances in QATAP are production tolerances, not standard-setting allowances.

**He/she will not be signing for margins, hickies and spots, backup, or all the other things that are the printer's responsibility.** Thus, he/she has been instructed not to sign a ruled-out sheet except in very special circumstances, such as during certain form inspections.

GPO inspectors and agency representatives have been instructed to sign three consecutive sheets for each press form. **They will leave two of them with you.**

*(See also "Saving Approved Sheets.")*

### **Conditional Sign-Off**

If color and the meeting of other standards that the GPO inspector or the agency representative is there to set are good, but cannot be OK'd because of problems such as gear streaks or ghosting, and these problems cannot be corrected in a reasonable length of time, the inspector or the representative may sign off "OK FOR COLOR AS MARKED," and then discuss the problems with you before leaving your plant. It is then the contractor's responsibility to correct the problems and to match the signed-off standard(s) for characteristics such as type density, solid or screen color, and process color match.

**Unsignable  
Sheets—  
GPO  
Inspectors**

If the GPO inspector is not able to approve a particular form or the entire job because it does not meet specifications or match the approved standard, he/she will discuss the problem with you. If you indicate that corrections can be made in a reasonable amount of time, the inspector will remain in the plant (or the local area) while corrections are made. If the inspector can still not give approval, he/she may discuss the situation with you, detailing the following options:

- Proceeding on your own without an inspection and with a Quality Assurance Through Attributes Program (QATAP) inspection of the finished product;
- Submitting new proofs (if the last proofs were not approved), and incurring the costs for a rescheduled PSI; and
- Regarding the potential for default.

It is recommended that you also speak directly with the contracting officer regarding these options.

**Unsignable  
Sheets—  
Agency  
Representatives**

If the agency representative is not able to approve a particular form, he/she will discuss the problem with you. If you indicate that corrections can be made in a reasonable amount of time, the representative will remain in the plant (or the local area) while corrections are made. If the agency representative still cannot approve the form, he/she has been instructed to contact GPO.

**Calling the  
Contracting  
Officer**

**Do not hesitate to call the contracting officer if any questions arise that the agency representative or the GPO inspector cannot answer.**

***After the Inspection***

**Request for  
Contract  
Modifications**

If anything has occurred during the PSI that you believe warrants additional charges or a schedule change, send a letter as soon as possible after the PSI to the contracting officer, detailing any author's alterations and additional costs incurred. Also address any requested schedule changes. Remember, the sooner the letter is received, the sooner your request can be considered.

*(See also "Author's Alterations." See GPO Pub. 310.2, "Contract Terms," p. 13, art. 4, and p. 16, art. 12(c)2.)*

**Saving  
Approved  
Sheets**

**Save one approved sheet for your files and send the other one along with the delivered reproduci-  
bles (negatives, etc).**

**Matching  
Film to  
Product**

Make any corrections necessary to the final film (needling spots, etc.) that were made on press to ensure that the film delivered to the Government corresponds to the product delivered.

*(See GPO Pub. 310.2, "Contract Terms," p. 9, art. 10.)*

**REMEMBER:**

- Press sheet inspections set standards for specific attributes for your production staff to maintain during the run.
- The standards that are set at the inspection are the standards by which the finished product can be measured, as they are defined by the contract and by the Quality Assurance Through Attributes Program (QATAP).
- An approval of a press sheet is not an approval of the entire run.



**U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE**

Printing Procurement Department

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Jacket/Program (Print Order): \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Contractor:

This letter is to introduce (Inspector's name—typed before issue—) of the United States Government Printing Office. He/she is an official press sheet inspector for this office and is attending the press sheet inspection (PSI) as the contracting officer's technical representative. He/she is authorized to set standards for printing attributes, such as type density and color, and to check compliance with other items in the specifications. (For details, see GPO Pub. 315.3, "Guidelines For Contractors Holding Press Sheet Inspections.")

As the contracting officer's technical representative, (Inspector's name—) also has limited authority to request author's alterations. Therefore, he/she may validly request limited chargeable changes at a PSI. If such changes are requested, you still must write to the contracting officer, detailing your costs, and request payment for the change. (For details see GPO Pub. 310.2, "Contract Terms," p. 13, art. 4, and p. 16, art. 12(c)2.)

Please note that—

The purpose of this inspection is to set specific standards and ensure compliance with contract specifications for certain elements of press and/or bindery work.

This PSI is not being done for the purpose of approving all production standards; nor is it being done to approve the finished product under the Quality Assurance Through Attributes Program (QATAP), if applicable. When the GPO inspector signs his/her approval, the press sheet, folded signature, or other approved item becomes the production standard, but only for the elements approved.

Changes in the contract, such as billable author's alterations, may be made only by a Government Printing Office contracting officer or GPO staff member who is the contracting officer's authorized representative. Any failure to follow this guidance may be cause for nonpayment of additional costs incurred by your firm or possible rejection of the work you produce.

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation in this matter. If you have any question concerning your contract or this order, please do not hesitate to contact the contracting officer.

Sincerely,

Meredith L. Arneson  
Manager  
Printing Procurement Department





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