

the contract price or unit price may not be delegated below the secretarial level, except in extraordinary cases or classes of cases when the agency head finds that special circumstances clearly justify such delegation.

(d) Regardless of dollar amount, authority to indemnify against unusually hazardous or nuclear risks, including extension of such indemnification to subcontracts, shall be exercised only by the Secretary or Administrator of the agency concerned, the Public Printer, or the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Tennessee Valley Authority (see 50.403).

#### 50.202 Contract adjustment boards.

An agency head may establish a contract adjustment board with authority to approve, authorize, and direct appropriate action under this part 50 and to make all appropriate determinations and findings. The decisions of the board shall not be subject to appeal; however, the board may reconsider and modify, correct, or reverse its previous decisions. The board shall determine its own procedures and have authority to take all action necessary or appropriate to conduct its functions.

#### 50.203 Limitations on exercise of authority.

(a) The Act is not authority for—

(1) Using a cost-plus-a-percentage-of-cost system of contracting;

(2) Making any contract that violates existing law limiting profit or fees;

(3) Providing for other than full and open competition for award of contracts for supplies or services; or

(4) Waiving any bid bond, payment bond, performance bond, or other bond required by law.

(b) No contract, amendment, or modification shall be made under the Act's authority—

(1) Unless the approving authority finds that the action will facilitate the national defense;

(2) Unless other legal authority within the agency concerned is deemed to be lacking or inadequate;

(3) Except within the limits of the amounts appropriated and the statutory contract authorization (however, indemnification agreements authorized by an agency head (50.403) are not lim-

ited to amounts appropriated or to contract authorization); and

(4) That will obligate the Government for any amount over \$25 million, unless the Senate and the House Committees on Armed Services are notified in writing of the proposed obligation and 60 days of continuous session of Congress have passed since the transmittal of such notification. However, this paragraph (b)(4) does not apply to indemnification agreements authorized under 50.403.

(c) No contract shall be amended or modified unless the contractor submits a request before all obligations (including final payment) under the contract have been discharged. No amendment or modification shall increase the contract price to an amount higher than the lowest rejected bid of any responsible bidder, if the contract was negotiated under 10 U.S.C. 2304(a)(15) or 41 U.S.C. 252(c)(14), or FAR 14.404-1(f).

(d) No informal commitment shall be formalized unless—

(1) The contractor submits a written request for payment within 6 months after furnishing, or arranging to furnish, supplies or services in reliance upon the commitment; and

(2) The approving authority finds that, at the time the commitment was made, it was impracticable to use normal contracting procedures.

(e) The exercise of authority by officials below the secretarial level is subject to the following additional limitations:

(1) The action shall not—

(i) Release a contractor from performance of an obligation over \$50,000;

(ii) Result in an increase in cost to the Government over \$50,000;

(iii) Deal with, or directly affect, any matter that has been submitted to the General Accounting Office; or

(iv) Involve disposal of Government surplus property.

(2) Mistakes shall not be corrected by an action obligating the Government for over \$1,000, unless the contracting officer receives notice of the mistake before final payment.

(3) The correction of a contract because of a mistake in its making shall not increase the original contract price

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to an amount higher than the next lowest responsive offer of a responsible offeror.

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### Subpart 50.3—Contract Adjustments

#### 50.300 Scope of subpart.

This subpart prescribes standards and procedures for processing contractors' requests for contract adjustment under the Act and Executive Order.

#### 50.301 General.

The fact that losses occur under a contract is not sufficient basis for exercising the authority conferred by the Act. Whether appropriate action will facilitate the national defense is a judgment to be made on the basis of all of the facts of the case. Although it is impossible to predict or enumerate all the types of cases in which action may be appropriate, examples are included in 50.302 below. Even if all of the factors in any of the examples are present, other considerations may warrant denying a contractor's request for contract adjustment. The examples are not intended to exclude other cases in which the approving authority determines that the circumstances warrant action.

#### 50.302 Types of contract adjustment.

##### 50.302-1 Amendments without consideration.

(a) When an actual or threatened loss under a defense contract, however caused, will impair the productive ability of a contractor whose continued performance on any defense contract or whose continued operation as a source of supply is found to be essential to the national defense, the contract may be amended without consideration, but only to the extent necessary to avoid such impairment to the contractor's productive ability.

(b) When a contractor suffers a loss (not merely a decrease in anticipated profits) under a defense contract because of Government action, the character of the action will generally deter-

mine whether any adjustment in the contract will be made, and its extent. When the Government directs its action primarily at the contractor and acts in its capacity as the other contracting party, the contract may be adjusted in the interest of fairness. Thus, when Government action, while not creating any liability on the Government's part, increases performance cost and results in a loss to the contractor, fairness may make some adjustment appropriate.

##### 50.302-2 Correcting mistakes.

(a) A contract may be amended or modified to correct or mitigate the effect of a mistake. The following are examples of mistakes that may make such action appropriate:

(1) A mistake or ambiguity consisting of the failure to express, or express clearly, in a written contract, the agreement as both parties understood it.

(2) A contractor's mistake so obvious that it was or should have been apparent to the contracting officer.

(3) A mutual mistake as to a material fact.

(b) Amending contracts to correct mistakes with the least possible delay normally will facilitate the national defense by expediting the contracting program and assuring contractors that mistakes will be corrected expeditiously and fairly.

##### 50.302-3 Formalizing informal commitments.

Under certain circumstances, informal commitments may be formalized to permit payment to persons who have taken action without a formal contract; for example, when a person, responding to an agency official's written or oral instructions and relying in good faith upon the official's apparent authority to issue them, has furnished or arranged to furnish supplies or services to the agency, or to a defense contractor or subcontractor, without formal contractual coverage. Formalizing commitments under such circumstances normally will facilitate the national defense by assuring such persons that they will be treated fairly and paid expeditiously.