

§ 1315.2

5 CFR Ch. III (1–1–02 Edition)

this section. Where state, local or foreign authorities impose generally-applicable late payment rates for utility payments, those rates shall take precedence. In the absence of such rates, this part will apply.

(d) *Commodity Credit Corporation payments*. Payments made pursuant to Section 4(h) of the Act of June 29, 1948 (15 U.S.C. 714b(h)) (“CCC Charter Act”) relating to the procurement of property and services, and payments to which producers on a farm are entitled under the terms of an agreement entered into under the Agricultural Act of 1949 (7 U.S.C. 1421 *et seq.*) are subject to this part.

§ 1315.2 Definitions.

(a) *Accelerated payment* means a payment made prior to the due date (see discussion in § 1315.5).

(b) *Acceptance* means an acknowledgment by an authorized Government official that goods received and services rendered conform with the contract requirements. Acceptance also applies to partial deliveries.

(c) *Agency* includes, as defined in 5 U.S.C. 551(1), each authority of the United States Government, whether or not it is within or subject to review by another agency, excluding the Congress, the United States courts, governments of territories or possessions, the District of Columbia government, courts martial, military commissions, and military authority exercised in the field in time of war or in occupied territory. *Agency* also includes any entity that is operated exclusively as an instrumentality of such an agency for the purpose of administering one or more programs of that agency, and that is so identified for this purpose by the head of such agency. The term *agency* includes military post and base exchanges and commissaries.

(d) *Applicable interest rate* means the interest rate established by the Secretary of the Treasury for interest payments under Section 12 of the Contract Disputes Act of 1978 (41 U.S.C. 611) which is in effect on the day after the due date, except where the interest penalty is prescribed by other governmental authority (e.g., utility tariffs). The rate established under the Contract Disputes Act is referred to as the

“Renegotiation Board Interest Rate,” the “Contract Disputes Act Interest Rate,” and the “Prompt Payment Act Interest Rate,” and is published semi-annually by the Fiscal Service, Department of Treasury, in the FEDERAL REGISTER on or about January 1 and July 1.

(e) *Automated Clearing House (ACH)* means a network that performs inter-bank clearing of electronic debit and credit entries for participating financial institutions.

(f) *Banking information* means information necessary to facilitate an EFT payment, including the vendor’s bank account number, and the vendor financial institution’s routing number.

(g) *Contract* means any enforceable agreement, including rental and lease agreements, purchase orders, delivery orders (including obligations under Federal Supply Schedule contracts), requirements-type (open-ended) service contracts, and blanket purchases agreements between an agency and a vendor for the acquisition of goods or services and agreements entered into under the Agricultural Act of 1949 (7 U.S.C. 1421 *et seq.*). Contracts must meet the requirements of § 1315.9(a).

(h) *Contract financing payments* means an authorized disbursement of monies prior to acceptance of goods or services including advance payments, progress payments based on cost, progress payments (other than under construction contracts) based on a percentage or stage of completion, payments on performance-based contracts and interim payments on cost-type contracts (other than under cost-reimbursement contracts for the acquisition of services). Contract financing payments do not include invoice payments, payments for partial deliveries, or lease and rental payments. Contract financing payments also do not include progress payments under construction contracts based on a percentage or stage of completion and interim payments under cost-reimbursement service contracts. For purposes of this part, interim payments under a cost-reimbursement service contract are treated as invoice payments and subject to the requirements of this part, except as otherwise provided (see, e.g., §§ 1315.4(d) and (e), and 1315.9(b)(1) and (c)).

Office of Management and Budget

§ 1315.2

(i) *Contracting office* means any entity issuing a contract or purchase order or issuing a contract modification or termination.

(j) *Contractor* (see *Vendor*).

(k) *Day* means a calendar day including weekend and holiday, unless otherwise indicated.

(l) *Delivery ticket* means a vendor document supplied at the time of delivery which indicates the items delivered, can serve as a proper invoice based on contractual agreement.

(m) *Designated agency office* means the office designated by the purchase order, agreement, or contract to first receive and review invoices. This office can be contractually designated as the receiving entity. This office may be different from the office issuing the payment.

(n) *Discount* means an invoice payment reduction offered by the vendor for early payment.

(o) *Discount date* means the date by which a specified invoice payment reduction, or a discount, can be taken.

(p) *Due date* means the date on which Federal payment should be made. Determination of such dates is discussed in § 1315.4(g).

(q) *Electronic commerce* means the end to end electronic exchange of business information using electronic data interchange, electronic mail, electronic bulletin boards, electronic funds transfer (EFT) and similar technologies.

(r) *Electronic data interchange* means the computer to computer exchange of routine business information in a standard format. The standard formats are developed and maintained by the Accredited Standards Committee of the American National Standards Institute, 11 West 42d Street, New York, NY 10036.

(s) *Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT)* means any transfer of funds, other than a transaction originated by cash, check, or similar paper instrument, that is initiated through an electronic terminal, telephone, computer, or magnetic tape, for the purpose of ordering, instructing, or authorizing a financial institution to debit or credit an account. The term includes, but is not limited to, Automated Clearing House and Fedwire transfers.

(t) *Emergency payment* means a payment made under an emergency defined as a hurricane, tornado, storm, flood, high water, wind-driven water, tidal wave, tsunami, earthquake, volcanic eruption, landslide, mud slide, snowstorm, drought, fire, explosion, or other catastrophe which requires Federal emergency assistance to supplement State and local efforts to save lives and property, and ensure public health and safety; and the release or threatened release of hazardous substances.

(u) *Evaluated receipts* means contractually designated use of the acceptance document and the contract as the basis for payment without requiring a separate invoice.

(v) *Fast payment* means a payment procedure under the Federal Acquisition Regulation at Part 13.4 which allows payment under limited conditions to a vendor prior to the Government's verification that supplies have been received and accepted.

(w) *Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR)* means the regulation (48 CFR chapter 1) that governs most Federal acquisition and related payment issues. Agencies may also have supplements prescribing unique agency policies.

(x) *Governmentwide commercial purchase cards* means internationally-accepted purchase cards available to all Federal agencies under a General Services Administration contract for the purpose of making simplified acquisitions of up to the threshold set by the Federal Acquisition Regulation or for travel expenses or payment, for purchases of fuel, or other purposes as authorized by the contract.

(y) *Invoice* means a bill, written document or electronic transmission, provided by a vendor requesting payment for property received or services rendered. A proper invoice must meet the requirements of § 1315.9(b). The term invoice can include receiving reports and delivery tickets when contractually designated as invoices.

(z) *Payment date* means the date on which a check for payment is dated or the date of an electronic fund transfer (EFT) payment (settlement date).

(aa) *Rebate* means a monetary incentive offered to the Government by Governmentwide commercial purchase

§ 1315.3

5 CFR Ch. III (1–1–02 Edition)

card issuers to pay purchase card invoices early.

(bb) *Receiving office* means the entity which physically receives the goods or services, and may be separate from the accepting entity.

(cc) *Receiving report* means written or electronic evidence of receipt of goods or services by a Government official. Receiving reports must meet the requirements of § 1315.9(c).

(dd) *Recurring payments* means payments for services of a recurring nature, such as rents, building maintenance, transportation services, parking, leases, and maintenance for equipment, pagers and cellular phones, etc., which are performed under agency-vendor agreements providing for payments of definite amounts at fixed periodic intervals.

(ee) *Settlement date* means the date on which an EFT payment is credited to the vendor's financial institution.

(ff) *Taxpayer Identifying Number (TIN)* means the nine digit Employer Identifying Number or Social Security Number as defined in Section 6109 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (26 U.S.C. 6109).

(gg) *Utilities and telephones* means electricity, water, sewage services, telephone services, and natural gas. Utilities can be regulated, unregulated, or under contract.

(hh) *Vendor* means any person, organization, or business concern engaged in a profession, trade, or business and any not-for-profit entity operating as a vendor (including State and local governments and foreign entities and foreign governments, but excluding Federal entities).

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§ 1315.3 Responsibilities.

Each agency head is responsible for the following:

(a) *Issuing internal procedures.* Ensuring that internal procedures will include provisions for monitoring the causes of late payments and any interest penalties incurred, taking necessary corrective action, and handling inquiries.

(b) *Internal control systems.* Ensuring that effective internal control systems are established and maintained as re-

quired by OMB Circular A-123, "Management Accountability and Control."¹ Administrative activities required for payments to vendors under this part are subject to periodic quality control validation to be conducted no less frequently than once annually. Quality control processes will be used to confirm that controls are effective and that processes are efficient. Each agency head is responsible for establishing a quality control program in order to quantify payment performance and qualify corrective actions, aid cash management decision making, and estimate payment performance if actual data is unavailable.

(c) *Financial management systems.* Ensuring that financial management systems comply with OMB Circular A-127, "Financial Management Systems."² Agency financial systems shall provide standardized information and electronic data exchange to the central management agency. Systems shall provide complete, timely, reliable, useful and consistent financial management information. Payment capabilities should provide accurate and useful management reports on payments.

(d) *Reviews.* Ensuring that Inspectors General and internal auditors review payments performance and systems accuracy, consistent with the Chief Financial Officers (CFO) Act requirements.

(e) *Timely payments and interest penalties.* Ensuring timely payments and payment of interest penalties where required.

§ 1315.4 Prompt payment standards and required notices to vendors.

Agency business practices shall conform to the following standards:

(a) *Required documentation.* Agencies will maintain paper or electronic documentation as required in § 1315.9.

(b) *Receipt of invoice.* For the purposes of determining a payment due date and the date on which interest will begin to accrue if a payment is late, an invoice shall be deemed to be received:

(1) On the later of:

¹For availability of OMB circulars, see 5 CFR 1310.3.

²See footnote 1 in § 1315.3(b).