

(b) Personnel, other than those designated in 801.602, may determine quality, quantity and delivery requirements for items or services to be purchased. However, under no circumstances will individuals who have not been delegated contracting authority commit the Government for purchases of supplies, equipment or services. Individuals making such commitments may be held financially liable for the amount of the obligation.

801.602 Contracting officers.

(a) Except as otherwise provided by law, VA regulations, VAAR and FAR, the authority vested in the Secretary to do the following is delegated to the Senior Procurement Executive and is further delegated to the Procurement Executive:

(1) Execute, award, and administer contracts, purchase orders, and other agreements (including interagency agreements) for the expenditure of funds involved in the acquisition of personal property, service (including architect-engineer services), construction, issuing Government bills of lading, and for the sale of personal property, leases, sales agreements and other transactions;

(2) Prescribe and publish acquisition policies and procedures;

(3) Establish clear lines of contracting authority;

(4) Manage and enhance career development of the procurement work force;

(5) Examine, in coordination with the Office of Federal Procurement Policy, the procurement system to determine specific areas where Governmentwide performance standards should be established and applied, and to participate in the development of Governmentwide procurement policies, regulations and standards; and,

(6) Oversee the competition advocate program.

(b) Further delegation to execute, award, and administer contracts, purchase orders and other agreements will be made in accordance with the Contracting Officer Certification Program as prescribed in (VAAR) 48 CFR 801.670 and 801.690.

[61 FR 1526, Jan. 22, 1996]

801.602-2 Responsibilities.

(a) In the administration of a contract, many problems can and do arise that make the advice and assistance of the General Counsel either desirable or necessary. The final decision as to the action to be taken, however, must be made by the contracting officer in each instance. To reduce to the absolute minimum the possibility of litigation resulting from his/her decision, the contracting officer shall, except as provided in paragraph (c) of this section, submit the problem through channels in sufficient detail to the General Counsel for advice or assistance.

(b) While legal review and concurrence of the General Counsel is required prior to a default termination, in some cases where a quick response is necessary, this review can be expedited by express mailing or telefaxing the default letter and related documents which are required to make an evaluation directly to the General Counsel (025). The default termination letter should contain, at a minimum, the following:

(1) The proposed termination (FAR 49.102);

(2) An explanation of what necessitated the default, including the reasons why the contracting officer considers the contractor to be in default;

(3) A statement that the factors set forth in FAR 49.402-3(f) have been fully considered; and

(4) Final decision language and appeal rights.

(c) Contracts containing a mutual termination clause may be terminated without reference to the General Counsel.

[49 FR 12583, Mar. 29, 1984, as amended at 54 FR 31962, Aug. 3, 1989]

801.602-3 Ratification of unauthorized commitments.

(a) Contracting officers shall not ratify contractual commitments made by other VA personnel without prior approval as prescribed below. Such unauthorized commitments include commitments made by other contracting officers which exceed their respective contracting authority as well as unauthorized commitments made by individuals lacking contracting authority.