

Procurement and Property Division Policy Memorandum

Subject: Acquisition Workforce – Contracting Officer’s Representative			Number: 01-04
Distribution: ARS CSREES ERS NASS FD PPD	Date: July 10, 2003	This Replaces: N/A	

Purpose: To provide Contracting Officer’s Representatives (COR’s) an overview in meeting the requirements of Departmental Regulation (DR) 5001-1, Acquisition Workforce Training, Delegation, and Tracking System, and to establish a mechanism to collect and monitor all COR appointments for Research, Education, and Economics (REE) procurements.

Guidance: The Head of the Contracting Activity Designee is responsible for the development of a professional acquisition workforce by assuring compliance with mandatory acquisition training and experience standards provided in DR-5001-1. DR-5001-1 provides guidance for contracting activities to provide their Acquisition Workforce personnel, including COR’s, with competency-based training. It is vital that all COR’s and their supervisors read DR-5001-1 in conjunction with this memorandum to obtain a sufficient understanding of how these regulations impact a COR and their duties.

Requirements for COR's: Employees formally designated as CORs must perform selected pre-award and post-award administrative functions on behalf of the Contracting Officer (CO). In order to perform these functions, COR's are required to have a base of skill, training, and experience that is commensurate with the COR Level for which they are appointed (see table below). DR 5001-1 Sections 20 through 25 and Appendix G outline the COR's responsibilities. In addition, COR's are required to take maintenance training every 2 years.

Training for COR's: Training may be obtained from the Federal Acquisition Institute's (FAI) On-Line University in lieu of formal classroom training. The courses are free. To register for FAI Online University, visit their Web site at: www.faionline.com.

The following courses are recommended for meeting basic course requirements: "COR Mentor" (24 hours) and "Contracting Orientation" (16 hours). For additional training, the following courses are recommended for COR's at Levels II and III and for maintenance training requirements: "Developing Statements of Work," "Evaluating Contract Performance," "Contract Administration," or any equivalent courses in contract regulations. Commercial sources include Management Concepts, Inc., (www.managementconcepts.com) and ESI International (in partnership with George Washington University) (www.esi-intl.com).

Experience for COR's: As outlined in DR 5001-1 Appendix G, there are no experience requirements for Level I COR's. However, Level II COR's must have 1 year of experience as a Level I COR, and Level III COR's must have 1 year experience as a Level II COR. All COR's must demonstrate competency in all COR duties for the respective COR Level.

Determining the COR Level

The CO and Program Manager shall determine when and if a COR is needed, and the COR Level necessary to administer a contract. The COR Level should be determined by defining the complexity of the project, deciding what COR competencies apply to the project, and estimating the skill levels necessary to perform those duties. CO's and Program Managers should use DR 5001-1 Appendix J to determine an appropriate COR level. A COR may be a different COR level for each contract they administer but must be certified at the highest COR level for which they are appointed.

If an employee is given an informal responsibility to perform minimal administrative tasks (i.e., accepting shipments of supplies or delivery of services; and reviewing and approving contractor invoices), then the individual can serve as the CO's "Technical Point of Contact" rather than a formally designated COR. The Technical Point of Contact does not require mandatory training.

COR Level	Contract Level of Complexity	Experience	Base Training Hours	Maint. Training Hours
Technical Point of Contact	Minimal Administrative Tasks	None	None	None
I	Minimal Complexity and Impact	None	24	16
II	Moderate Complexity and Impact	1 year as Level I COR	40	16
III	Significant Complexity and Impact	1 year as Level II COR	56	16

Termination Of COR Certification

A COR's certification will be revoked or terminated if the COR fails to comply with applicable laws and regulations, violates the code of conduct, or fails to maintain the required level of proficiency and skill. Revocation of a COR's certification, for reasons other than separation from REE, will be provided in writing.

Language for Contracting Officer's Representative Appointment Memorandum

The paragraphs below should be added to all COR Appointment Memorandums.

“This appointment requires that you acquire and maintain the skills and training to continue supporting the REE mission as a member of the professional Acquisition Workforce. As a COR with a Level (select one: I, II, or III) certification, you must acquire (select one: 24, 64, or 56) hours of basic training within 6 months of this appointment, if you have not already done so. You will then need to take 16 hours of maintenance training every 2 years, and provide copies of all training certificates to your supervisor and the Policy Branch, Procurement and Property Division (PPD). Please refer to Departmental Regulation 5001-1 and PPD's Policy Memorandum 01-04, on the PPD Web site for additional information on training requirements.

“Your COR designation and certification will be revoked or terminated if you fail to comply with applicable laws and regulations, violate the code of conduct, or fail to maintain the required level of proficiency and skill. Revocation of your certification, for reasons other than separation from ARS, will be provided in writing.”