

	DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE National Institute of Standards and Technology National Voluntary Laboratory Accreditation Program	ISSUE DATE: March 27, 2012
	ASSESSOR BULLETIN	NUMBER: AB-15-2012 LAP: All
SUBJECT: Change in NVLAP Contract Procedures		

The purpose of this bulletin is to announce a change in the contract procedure for on-site assessments. This change, which is necessary in order for NVLAP to comply with the procedures in Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) 13.106-3 and the requirements of the NIST Acquisition Management Division (AMD), is effective immediately.

Currently, a request for quote and price negotiating is conducted by a NVLAP Program Manager. However, as defined by the FAR and interpreted by AMD, the majority of these contract orders will no longer be processed in this manner. For on-site assessments that cannot be sole-sourced to our assessors, the requests for quotes and the negotiating of bids will be done by AMD contract staff. Therefore, for any NVLAP task that cannot be sole-sourced (uniquely qualifying an assessor based on technical ability and availability), an assessor will be contacted by a NIST contract specialist who will ascertain your availability, interest, and proposed cost to perform the task. The contract specialist will request a quote from you as well as two other qualified assessors. AMD, working with NVLAP, will be doing all price negotiations and awarding of contracts.

The contracts will be awarded on a firm fixed-price basis. Firm fixed-price orders will not be modified to increase or decrease the cost, thus, an assessor will be required to bill for the exact amount of the contract award. This will no longer give NVLAP the flexibility to combine on-site assessments on a single contract.

Any proposed changes to an on-site assessment beyond the scope of the contract will have to be discussed in advance with the Program Manager. The Program Manager will determine the mechanism to handle any variances, such as increases to the scope, which may, in some cases, increase the assessor's expenses beyond the contract award amount. As always, any changes must be discussed with the Program Manager prior to the work being performed.

Please direct questions about this bulletin to your assigned Program Manager or Beth Thomas, (301) 975-4521; beth.thomas@nist.gov.

Thank you for your cooperation and patience as we transition to this new procurement process.