



Cost of Hosting An Event Guidance Document

DoD Cost Guidance Portal

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1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of Document

The purpose of the Cost of Hosting an Event Guidance document is to assist DoD employees when using the costing calculator to calculate the approximate costs associated with hosting an event. This tool is intended to ensure that you and your supervisor are fully aware of the costs of hosting events. Sharing the cost estimate with supervisors and approving officials within your DOD Component also generates some level of transparency.

1.2 Background

Effective February 1, 2011, the calculator must be used to estimate costs associated with hosting an event prior to the event and leadership must be informed. For the purposes of this policy, events include (but are not limited to):

- Conferences, Symposia, Training or other Seminars
 - Required for all hosted conferences, symposia, training or other seminars
- Ceremonies (Retirement, Promotion, Awards, Holidays, etc.)
 - Required for all hosted ceremonies

Hosting Events cost estimates are to be done for the benefit of each DoD employee involved in the event as well as each supervisor or approving official. The DoD Component sponsoring or hosting the event is ultimately responsible for submitting a cost estimate and providing a copy to the appropriate level of leadership (i.e., Director, Assistant Secretary of Defense, Under Secretary of Defense, etc.). All leadership, including supervisors and approving officials, are responsible for being aware of these costs. The intent is to ensure cost awareness and transparency at all levels across the DoD.

As stated in the Secretary of Defense 14 March 2011 Memorandum, *Track Four Efficiency Initiatives Decisions* (OSD 02974-11), “All future conferences hosted by OSD, defense agencies and field activities must receive PSA approval to ensure cost-effectiveness and necessity of event.”

DoD employees must follow the methodology principles outlined on the Cost Guidance Portal (<https://www.cape.osd.mil/costguidance>) and Guidance document to estimate costs associated with hosting an event. DoD employees may not rely solely on their own guidance, methods, and tools for estimating costs unless approved by the Cost Guidance Group or the Secretary of Defense.

2 Cost Guidance Portal Access

DoD employees may access the Cost Guidance Portal through the U.S. Department of Defense or Cost Assessment & Program Evaluations (CAPE) Web Sites. Access to the Cost Guidance Portal requires authentication to view and utilize the guidance, methods and tools.

2.1 Authentication

The Cost Guidance Portal is available on the DoD NIPR Net platform. DoD employees may access the Cost Guidance Portal from a Common Access Card (CAC) enabled computer in a *.MIL domain. Other approved domains include: *ndu.edu*, *nps.edu*, and *usma.edu*.

2.2 Workstation Web Browser Setting

Before you begin, confirm your web browser is set to allow pop-ups. If your web browser is blocking pop-ups some of the calculator functionality described below may be restricted.

To check your web browser:

- From the Internet Explorer (IE) menu bar, select Tools,
- Click Pop-up Blocker,
- Click Turn-off Pop-up

2.3 Internet Access

The Cost Guidance Portal may be accessed through the U.S. Department of Defense or the Cost Assessment & Program Evaluations (CAPE) Web Sites.

U.S. Department of Defense Web Site (Defense Link)

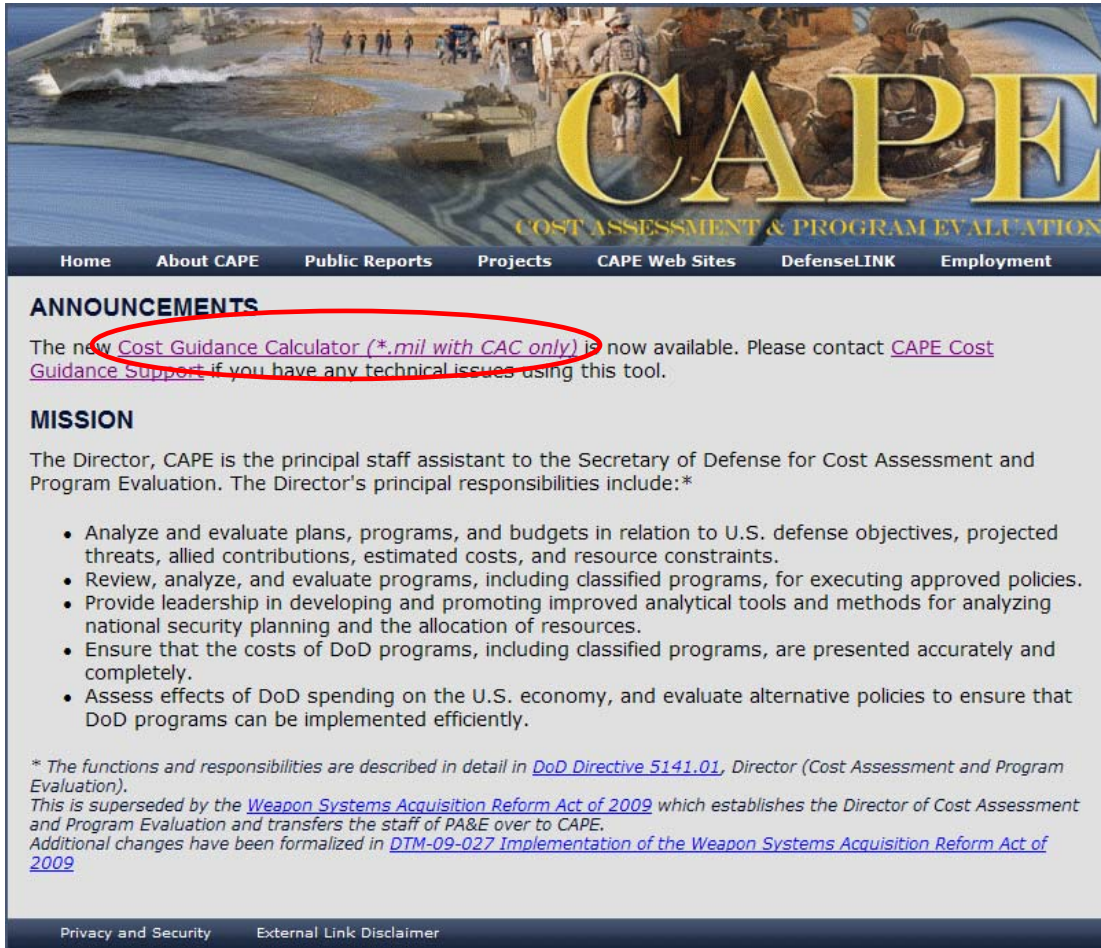
To access the Cost Guidance Portal through the U.S. Department of Defense Web Site, follow the below steps:

- Go to <http://www.defense.gov/>
- Scroll down to the gray shaded area at the bottom; click 'Military/DoD Websites'
- Using the letters at the top, click 'C'
- Scroll down, click 'Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation (CAPE)'
- Under Announcements, click 'Cost Guidance Calculator'

Cost Assessment & Program Evaluations (CAPE) Web Site

To access the Cost Guidance Portal through the Cost Assessment & Program Evaluations (CAPE), follow the below steps:

- Go to, <http://www.cape.osd.mil/>
- Under Announcements, click 'Cost Guidance Calculator'



2.4 Access Errors

If you receive an error when attempting to access the Cost Guidance Portal, please contact your workstation Help Desk. Your Help Desk may need to work with your network/server team to resolve the problem.

Error 403.6

This error occurs when the computer workstation used to access the Cost Guidance Portal does not present an Internet Protocol (IP) address that resolves to a *.MIL address in both a forward and reverse lookup, or does not match.

Error 403.7

This error occurs when the user does not have a CAC or does not select a CAC card certificate when attempting to access the Cost Guidance Portal.

Error 403.13

This error occurs when the CAC certificate has expired, been revoked, or the Cost Guidance Portal server is unable to contact the revocation server to verify the status of the certificate.

3 Propriety Information

Due to proprietary or competition sensitive information that may be contained in a cost estimate, proper handling of sensitive material should be used. Cost estimates are intended solely for the use of Department of Defense to whom addressed. DoD employees are not permitted to disclose, copy, or distribute to unauthorized individuals. Unauthorized disclosure may result in civil or criminal penalties.

4 Costs to Include in a Cost Estimate

The two elements of costs to include in each estimate are:

- Estimated costs associated with DoD manpower to account for the cost of time spent preparing to host an event and time spent actually hosting the event
- Actual costs associated with government travel, lodging, transportation, per diem, meals and incidentals, etc. incurred while hosting an event or preparing to host an event (DTS)

5 Calculator Fields

The calculator has a real-time calculation feature. The total estimated cost, located at the bottom of the screen, will automatically re-calculate as sections are completed. When all sections have been completed, you must click "Save & Display Results" to generate the cost estimate. The cost estimate will include:

- Total estimated cost for the hosting an event
- Date the cost estimate was generated
- Unique Reference Identification Number

All fields with an asterisk (*) must be completed with accurate information to submit cost estimates and enable printing of labels.

5.1 Event Title *

Type the title of the conference, symposium, training seminar, ceremony, or other event.

5.2 Event Dates *

Click the digital calendar to find the expected date(s) of the event.

5.2.1 Enter the event duration.

Event dates can be entered to the tenth of a day. For example, a DoD employee can enter 0.2 days. Include travel time to and from the event (if applicable).

5.3 Event Location *

Type the location (city, state, and country) of the event.

5.4 Name of Organization Sponsoring the Event *

Type the name of the organization(s) sponsoring the event.

5.5 Total Event Activities Itemized Costs *

The calculator allows for multiple itemized costs to be entered. For each itemized cost incurred, click "Add New Itemized Cost." Select the down arrow to view common itemized costs or type in the name of the Itemized Cost.

Itemized costs associated with hosting an event could include (but are not limited to):

- Reservations for meeting space, lodging, and receptions
- Printing services for programs, presentations, and other documents
- Refreshments (food and beverages)
- Audio/Visual (AV) support
- Gifts (registration, ceremonial, or VIP gifts)
- Web hosting support
- Transportation costs
- Flyovers

Enter the associated costs for each item (in current fiscal year dollars). Enter amounts to the nearest 0.5 man-day or actual man hours for the event oversight and /or execution. Click "Save." The calculator will automatically store the costs (in current fiscal year dollars).

5.6 Total Event Government Manpower Costs*

The calculator will automatically calculate the costs associated with government personnel planning or hosting an event (contractors should not be included). For each government employee planning or hosting an event (or for each type of employee planning or hosting an event), click "Add New Event Activity."

- Select "Government Oversight" or "Event Execution" for each government employee who is expected to host and/or assist in organizing the event.
- Use the drop down menu to choose the rank, grade, or GS-equivalent of the employee who will host or plan the event. Include both military and civilian manpower as applicable, using a new row for each individual.
- Enter the number of days or hours associated with event attendance.
- Click "Save."

The calculator will automatically calculate the manpower costs (in current fiscal year dollars) associated with hosting or planning the event.

5.6.1 Military or Civilian Manpower Composite Methodology

The calculator will automatically calculate the costs associated with government manpower based on the values defined in the columns of the "Total Event Government Manpower Costs," field and using the defined methodology below for Military and Civilian Manpower Rates.

Military Manpower Rates

The calculator will automatically calculate costs associated with government oversight/activity for military personnel are FY 2011 DoD composite rates only. These rates do not include the fully burdened cost of military manpower. That is, they do not account for costs of health care, education assistance, discount groceries, child development and day care facilities, training, recruitment and advertising, DoDEA and family assistance, manpower management, other personnel support, child education (impact aid), Veteran's employment and

training, Veterans' benefits (cash and in-kind), or treasury contributions to retirement, concurrent receipts, or MERHCF. The composite rates used in this calculator are published annually by the Office of the Secretary of Defense, Comptroller, and are available at <http://comptroller.defense.gov/rates/>.

Civilian Manpower Rates

The calculator will automatically calculate costs associated with government oversight/activity for civilian personnel are FY 2010 General Schedule rates associated with the District of Columbia region. Once available, these rates will be updated for FY 2011. These rates do not include the fully burdened cost of civilian manpower. That is, they do not account for Title 38 medical premium pay, overtime/holiday/other pay, incentive/performance awards, retention allowance, social security and Medicare (employer's contribution), recruitment/relocation bonuses, health care (employer's share of FEHBP), Permanent Change of Station (PCS), Federal Employee Group Life Insurance (FEGLI), transportation subsidies, worker's compensation payments, retirement accrual (employer's contribution), Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board payments (TSP matching), unemployment insurance payments (FUTA), severance pay/separation incentives, severance health benefits, discount groceries (OCONUS only), recruitment and advertising, training, unfunded civilian retirement, postretirement health benefits (government's share of FEHBP), or postretirement life insurance (government's share of FEGLI). The General Schedule rates associated with the District of Columbia region are published by the Office of Personnel Management, and are available at <http://www.opm.gov/oca/10tables/indexGS.asp>.

Manpower Calculation Assumptions

- 260 man-days per year
- 2,087 man-hours per year
- 21.7 man-days per month

5.7 Cost of Government Travel Expenses and Fees Incurred While Planning an Event*

Total travel costs, as well as the Temporary Duty (TDY) location, should be computed for relevant travel based on actual costs reported from the Defense Travel System (DTS), or other sources if DTS is not available (e.g. vouchers). Travel costs should include all costs associated with travel, such as airfare, lodging, etc.

- For each travel expense incurred in hosting an event, click "Add New Trip Cost."
- If no travel expenses were incurred, enter \$0.
- Click "Save." The calculator will automatically store the costs (in then year dollars) associated with travel.

5.8 Total Event Cost Recovery*

Many events, such as conferences, collect Registration Fees from attendees. This revenue should be considered as a benefit (or a negative cost) associated with hosting an event. To add negative costs:

- Click, "Add New Recovery Cost" and enter the number of government employees and nongovernment employees expected to attend the event (and any other category of participants who receive separate registration fees). One estimation method is to enter the number of participants from previous events.
- Type the total amount of revenue expected to be generated through registration fees. To estimate this revenue, multiply the number of expected attendees times the per-person registration fee amount.
- If no registration fees will be collected, enter \$0.
- Click "Save." The calculator will automatically store the revenue (in then year dollars) associated with event registration fees.

Some events rely on funding other than revenue generated from attendees, such as non-appropriated funds or fees charged for exhibit space. This funding should be considered as a benefit (or a negative cost) associated with hosting an event.

- Type the total amount of other funding (i.e., non-appropriated funds, donations, etc.) to be used towards the event.
- If no non-appropriated funds or donations will be used, enter \$0.
- Click “Save.” The calculator will automatically store the funding (in then year dollars) associated with other event funding.

5.9 Will this Cost Estimate Data be Required on a Recurring Basis?*

Select "Yes" if the cost estimate will be recurring. Selecting "Yes" will ensure a unique Reference ID number is generated for additional estimates. The Reference ID number should be retained for future access. Select "No" if this cost estimate is a onetime event.

5.9.1 Enter the frequency of this recurring estimate (i.e., biennial, annual, quarterly, etc.):

Type in the frequency this recurring estimate will be generated.

5.10 Enter Your Email Address

The calculator will automatically email a copy of the cost estimate to the email address entered in these two fields when the ‘Save and Display Results’ is clicked. The Cost Guidance Group recommends the author of the cost estimate enter their email address.

The author should be the DoD employee preparing the cost estimate. The author should be prepared to walk through their cost estimate (i.e. What is included/excluded in the cost estimate and why?) should your supervisor and/or approving official or Cost Guidance have questions.

The email address entered must match in both fields and result in *.MIL, ndu.edu, nps.edu, or usma.edu domains.

5.11 Cost Estimate Amount

The total cost estimate amount may be found in the “The Estimated Cost of Hosting this Event to the Department of Defense is Approximately” field at the bottom of the calculator.

5.12 Save & Display Results

Once all mandatory fields have been accurately entered into the system, click "Save & Display Results" at the bottom right of the calculator. After clicking "Save & Display Results," the cost estimate summary will popup.

The Cost Guidance Group recommends you bookmark the cost estimate to gain instant access in the future. Follow the below steps to bookmark:

- Click the 'Reference' ID link above and select "Add to Favorites" from the popup menu
- Type a new name for the bookmark; specify the folder that you prefer the bookmark to be saved in, and then click "Add".

To access this cost estimate in the future, simply find this bookmark in your 'Favorites' folder listed in the Internet Explorer toolbar.

6 Create New Cost Estimate by Copying Data from an Existing Cost Estimate

If you would like to create a new cost estimate using data from an existing estimate you must first confirm the existing estimate has the recurrence question set to 'Yes.' Follow the below steps to verify the recurrence question is set to 'Yes:'

Step 1: Locate and open the existing cost estimate you would like to copy from using the URL provided in the cost estimate email summary

Step 2: Click the URL located in the cost estimate email summary to open the existing cost estimate

Step 3: Locate the recurring question at the bottom of the calculator. If set to 'No,' click the drop down arrow and select 'Yes.' You must also establish the frequency. If you are opening a cost estimate created prior to May 6, 2011, you will be prompted to complete this section.

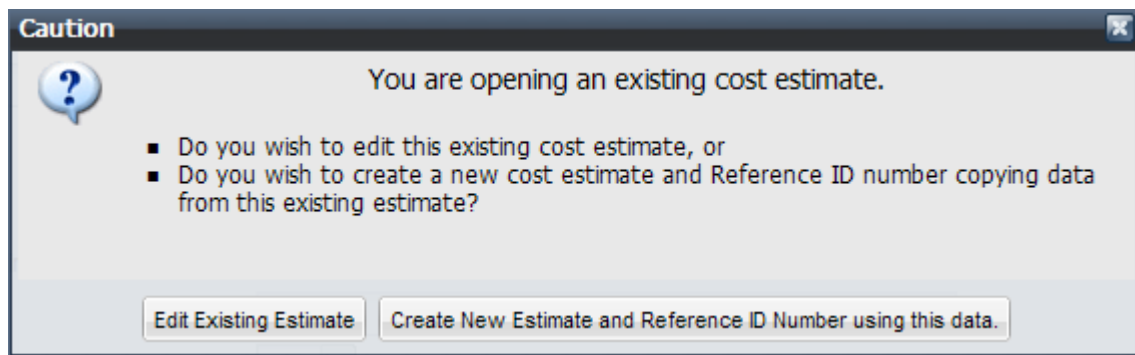
Step 4: Confirm the email address entered at the bottom of the calculator is correct. If the cost estimate does not contain an email, you will be prompted to enter one. The calculator will automatically send an updated cost estimate summary email to this address when the 'Save and Display Results' button is clicked.

Step 5: Click 'Save and Display Results' to update the cost estimate and exit the calculator.

Step 6: Locate and open the new cost estimate email summary in your mail server inbox.

Step 7: Click the URL to open the cost estimate you wish to copy from.

To edit an existing cost estimate that has been established as recurring cost estimate, the calculator will generate a popup window to ask if you would like to open an existing estimate or create a new one.



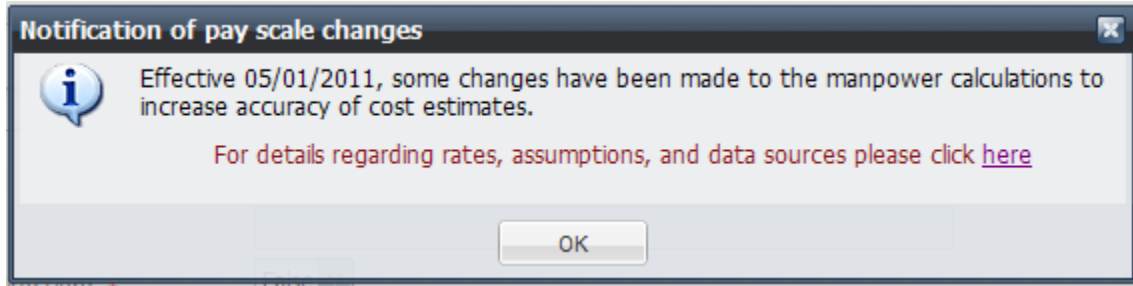
Step 8: Click 'Create New Estimate and Reference ID Number using this data.' The calculator will create a new cost estimate with a new Reference ID Number and copy data from the estimate you are opening from. At this time, the calculator will automatically recalculate the manpower rates in effect at the time.

Step 9: If the cost estimate does not contain an email address, you will be prompted to enter one. The Cost Guidance Group recommends using the cost estimate author's email address.

Step 10: Click **'Save and Display Results'** to save the new cost estimate with the associate Reference ID. The calculator will automatically email a copy of the cost estimate to the email addresses entered into the calculator.

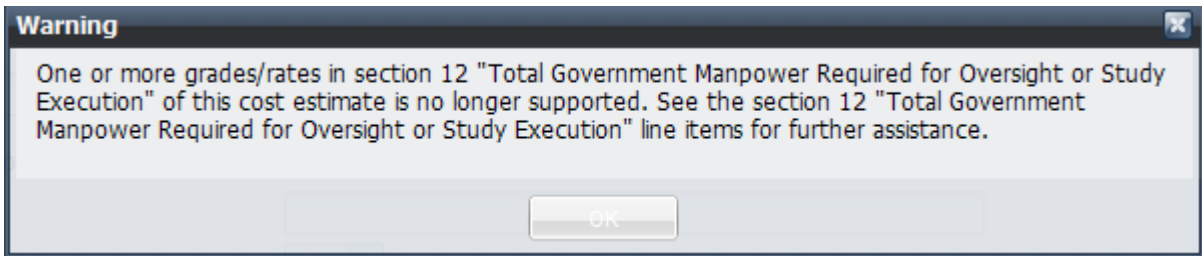
6.1 Manpower Rates

If the manpower rates changed since the cost estimate you are copying from was created, you will receive a popup notifying you of a pay scale change.



6.1.1 Warning Pop-up for Eliminated Manpower Grades

If you are copying an existing cost estimate that contains eliminated manpower grades, you will receive a popup warning notifying you of the eliminated manpower grade change(s).



The warning will indicate the calculator section that will need to be changed prior to saving. Once opened, the calculator will also reflect a warning in the row that needs updating.

12. Total Government Manpower Required for Oversight of Report/Study Execution ⓘ: *

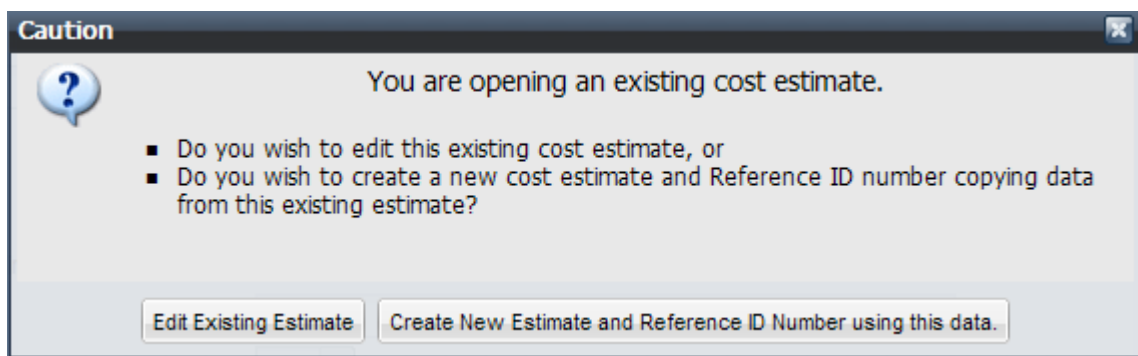
+ Add New Oversight/ Study Activity - Delete					
Oversight/Activity	Description	Grade ▾	Manpower	Qualifier	Estimated Cost (\$K)
Study Activity	*WARNING (old grade was ES-5)* zxcvzxc		1	FTE	\$0.0k
Study Activity	*WARNING (old grade was ES-4)* zxcvzxcv		1	FTE	\$0.0k

7 Edit an Existing Cost Estimate Established as Recurring

Follow the steps below to access an existing cost estimate that has been established as recurring.

Step 1: Locate and open the existing cost estimate by clicking the URL located in the cost estimate email summary.

When opening a recurring cost estimate, the calculator will prompt you with the below caution window.



Step 2: Click, 'Edit Existing Estimate' to edit an existing cost estimate. The calculator will load the cost estimate associated with the URL.

Step 3: Edit the existing costing estimate. If the cost estimate does not contain an email address, you will be prompted to enter one. The Cost Guidance Group recommends using the cost estimate author's email address.

Step 3: Click '**Save and Display Results**' to save updates to the cost estimate and exit the calculator. The calculator will automatically email a copy of the cost estimate to the email addresses entered into the calculator.

7.1 Manpower Rates

When you edit an existing cost estimate, the manpower rates will remain the same. Meaning, if you modify the manpower rates on an existing estimate, the calculator will use the rates in effect at the time the original cost estimate was created.

8 DoD Cost Guidance Portal Support

For additional guidance, please contact your DoD Component Point of Contact (POC). To locate your DoD Component POC, click Costing Support in the bottom menu bar found on any Cost Guidance Portal web page.

For technical support related to calculator functionality, please click Technical Support.

[Cost Guidance Home](#) | [Proposals & Initiatives](#) | [Studies & Reports](#) | [Attending Events](#) | [Hosting Events](#) | [FAQ](#)

DoD Cost Guidance Portal

CAPE COST ASSESSMENT & PROGRAM EVALUATION

Cost Guidance Home Page

❖ **Cost Guidance Initiatives**

This web site contains guidance, methods, and tools to assist DoD employees in estimating costs associated with:

- DoD policy proposals and initiatives ([Proposals & Initiatives](#))
- DoD studies and reports ([Studies & Reports](#))
- Attending conferences, training, ceremonies, etc. ([Attending Events](#))
- Hosting conferences, training, ceremonies, etc. ([Hosting Events](#))

❖ **History**

- On August 9, 2010 - Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates [unveiled his ideas for an efficiency and savings campaign](#) to be employed across the DoD
- September 30, 2010 - Director, Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation, [established the Cost Guidance Group](#) to develop guidance, methods, and tools to estimate costs associated with various DoD business activities
- December 1, 2010 - Cost Guidance Group released a beta form of the Cost Guidance Web Site and began training users and evaluating tools
- December 27, 2010 - Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates [directed that cost guidance tools provided on this web site must be used beginning February 1, 2011](#)
- February 1, 2011 - Implementation date for mandatory use of guidance, methods, and tools provided on this web site
- May 6, 2011 - [Enhancements made to the cost guidance calculators](#) associated with 'Studies & Reports,' 'Attending Events,' and 'Hosting Events'
- August 19, 2011 - [Enhancements made to the cost guidance portal](#), including format changes, guidance clarification, and additional support through a frequently ask questions page

❖ **Supporting Documents and Contacts**

For information on cost methodologies, please review the Guidance Documents ([Studies & Reports](#), [Attending an Event](#) and [Hosting an Event](#)). Further details may also be found in the [FAQs](#).

For additional guidance, please contact your DoD Component POC found in [Costing Support](#).

For technical support related to calculator functionality, please contact [Technical Support](#).

[Costing Support](#) | [Technical Support](#) | [Privacy and Security](#) | [External Link Disclaimer](#)